



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Climate Action Committee

Gillian Martin
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Rural Affairs
Scottish Government

Hannah Mary Goodlad
Minister for Public Finance
Scottish Government

15 October 2026

Dear Gillian and Hannah Mary,

Inquiry into the environmental impacts of hyperscale data centres

I am writing to you on behalf of the Climate Action Committee to notify you of the Committee's inquiry into the [environmental impacts of hyperscale data centres](#). On 3 September 2026, the Committee agreed to undertake this inquiry, and on 17 September it agreed its approach to this.

The Committee wants to find out:

- about the potential impacts of the operation and construction of hyperscale data centres on:
 - water quality and consumption
 - air quality
 - nature and biodiversity, including soil quality
 - noise pollution
 - energy use, and associated generation (including of back up generation)
- emissions, and where emissions could be avoided by, for example, using waste heat how any negative impacts, can be mitigated or avoided

Contact: Climate Action Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP.
Email climateaction.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Climate Action Committee

- what systems are, or should be, in place to support avoidance or mitigation of negative environmental impacts
- what can Scotland learn from other countries on the environmental impacts of hyperscale data centres
- how building and running hyperscale data centres might impact on achieving climate and nature goals

The inquiry aims to:

- increase public awareness of the environmental impacts of AI use and data centres in Scotland
- contribute to public and parliamentary debate and understanding on this issue from an environmental perspective
- influence Scottish Government action to address the climate and nature crises through its policy on data centres

The Committee agreed to take evidence on data centres in October and November 2026. It also agreed it may undertake further work on this issue, and will consider its approach to that work at a later date.

The Committee launched a joint call for views with the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee on 7 October 2026. While the Climate Action Committee wants to understand the environmental impacts of potential hyperscale data centre construction and operation in Scotland, the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee is interested in understanding the possible economic and energy implications.

Responses are invited via both a [detailed call for views](#) and a [short survey](#). The consultation closes on 15 November 2026.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart McMillan MSP
Convener

Contact: Climate Action Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP.
Email climateaction.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.