

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
Wednesday 7 January 2026
1st Meeting, 2026 (Session 6)

Draft Climate Change Plan

Introduction

1. The Rural Affairs and Islands (RAI) Committee has agreed to scrutinise the Scottish Government's draft Climate Change Plan (CCP). The CCP is a document which outlines how the Scottish Government intends to meet emissions reduction targets across all portfolio areas and sectors of the economy.
2. At its meeting on 7 January, the Committee will begin its consideration of the draft CCP by taking evidence from three panels of witnesses. First, the Committee will hear from stakeholders on issues relating to peatlands, before turning its attention to forestry by taking evidence from two panels of witnesses comprised of academics, NGOs and representatives from the commercial forestry sector.

Background

3. The draft CCP was published on 6 November 2025. It includes a range of policy measures and other mechanisms aimed at reducing carbon emissions during the period 2026 to 2040 and maintaining progress towards Scotland becoming a 'net zero'¹ nation by 2045. [The draft CCP and its accompanying documentation are published on the Scottish Government's website](#)
4. Scrutiny of the draft CCP is currently being undertaken by a number of parliamentary committees and each committee will focus its attention on issues that are directly relevant to their individual areas of responsibility. This joint effort is being led and coordinated by the Net Zero, Energy and Transport (NZET) Committee. Further information on the scrutiny work carried out by the NZET Committee in relation to the draft CCP can be found on its website.
5. Now the draft CCP has been laid, Scottish Parliament committees with an interest in the plan must consider its contents and report their findings within 120 days (by 5 March). Thereafter, the Scottish Government may decide to revise the CCP to reflect issues raised as part of this scrutiny process and it has committed to publishing a finalised version before the dissolution of Parliament.

¹ Net zero is defined as the point when emissions entering the atmosphere are balanced by removals out of the atmosphere.

RAI Committee scrutiny of the draft CCP

6. The RAI Committee's scrutiny work on the draft CCP will specifically focus on two chapters related to its remit:
 - Agriculture
 - Land use, land use change and forestry
7. Following its evidence taking on 7 January, the Committee will hold further stakeholder evidence sessions focussed on agriculture at its meeting on 14 January, before taking concluding evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands and her officials at on 28 January. It will then publish a report on its findings prior to the statutory reporting deadline of 5 March.

Clerks to the Committee
December 2025