



## Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

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Office of the First Minister  
St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

22 May 2009

Dear First Minister,

### **Early action in the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill**

We are the leaders of the groups in Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, a coalition of more than sixty charities, unions and churches representing more than two million people in Scotland. We are writing to you to ask you to show international leadership by improving the proposals for action in the early years of the Climate Change Bill.

The Scottish Government is to be commended for having brought forward a Bill that concentrates our efforts on tackling climate change at this crucial time. We share your desire for this to be a world-leading piece of legislation and believe it can be done, provided there is a genuine commitment to early action in the Bill.

We welcome the proposed shift of the interim greenhouse gas emissions target from 2030 to 2020, but we are very disappointed at the Government's amendments setting the 2020 target at only 34%. If emissions continue to fall at their present rate, we are already on track to make a 32% cut by 2020. The claims made about the Climate Change Bill being "world-leading" cannot be justified if in a decade it delivers merely a 2 per cent improvement on business-as-usual.

One of the key things the scientists tell us is that we must take early action – we cannot start slow and leave all the real savings to people in the future, when it will be more expensive, more difficult and less effective in tackling climate change. There is common agreement that global emissions need to peak and then decline by 2015 if we are to keep the total warming below the 2°C danger threshold. Scotland, like all other industrialised nations, should therefore try to reduce emissions quickly in the next decade.

We have in the past described the Bill as "potentially world-leading." The Government's proposed targets of 34%, rising to 42% only if other nations make specified commitments at Copenhagen, not only suggest a reluctance to lead internationally but also copy exactly the targets set by the UK Government. Scotland has superior renewable energy potential, a skilled engineering workforce, and a more progressive political culture than most of our partners: we should be leading, not following, on climate change.

Your own announcements suggest that you know this to be the case. In the Scottish Parliament debate on your legislative programme, you promised that "in every respect the legislation will be more ambitious than the Labour Government legislation." However, in this most crucial respect, it is a carbon copy of the Labour government legislation.

In your capacity as MP for Banff and Buchan, you signed an Early Day Motion on 21 April this year stating that adopting a target of 42% cuts by 2020, without reliance on international carbon credits, right away “would show international leadership on climate change legislation”, and calling on the UK Government to set such a target. It is hard for us to understand why your Government would appear to think Scotland is less well equipped to show leadership on climate change than the UK is.

Finally, your manifesto gave a clear commitment that your Climate Change Bill would deliver at least 3% reductions every year. That would give a 43% reduction by 2020. This was your key promise to voters concerned about the environment; we urge you to honour this commitment and now set a minimum target of 42% for 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Robinson  
Chair, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

Jeni McKay  
Director, SEAD

Dr Richard Dixon  
Director, WWF Scotland

Andrew Warren  
Director, Association for the Conservation of Energy

Gurjit Singh  
President, National Union of Students Scotland

Judith Robertson  
Head of Oxfam Scotland

Dave Watson  
Scottish Organiser, Unison Scotland

Stuart Housden  
Director, RSPB Scotland

Duncan McLaren  
Chief Executive, Friends of the Earth Scotland

Reverend Ian Galloway  
Convenor of the Church and Society Council of the Church of Scotland

John Riley  
Chairman, Scottish Action on Climate Change

Pete Chirnside  
National Manager, Tearfund Scotland

Colin Howden  
Director, Transform Scotland

Steve Hughes  
Chief Executive, A Rocha Scotland

Gavin McLellan  
Head of Christian Aid Scotland

Ruth Bush  
President, Heriot-Watt University Students Association

Rachel Nunn  
Programme Manager, Going Carbon Neutral Stirling

Kate Mavor  
Chief Executive, National Trust for Scotland

Tom Brock  
Chief Executive, Scottish Seabird Centre

Dave du Feu  
Lead Organiser, Spokes

Paul Chitnis  
Chief Executive, SCIAF

The Most Reverend Doctor Idris Jones  
Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church and Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway

Liz Murray  
Head of Campaigns and Networks Scotland, WDM

Angela Douglas  
Woodland Trust Scotland Director

Ellen Charlton  
Chairperson, National Commission for Justice and Peace (Scotland)

Mhairi Owens  
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