

**Policy Manifesto for Scotland's Environment,  
People and Economy:**  
*A Charter for Sustainable Development*





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**A Charter for Sustainable Development**

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## **Making the connections – well being and quality of life.**

Throughout this document you will see explicit reference to how good developments for the environment can bring about social and economic benefits too.

The importance of the environment to our society and economy is often just taken for granted. Rather than pay lip service to the importance of our environment to all our lives, this document starts to highlight some of the specific opportunities there are by making the connections between our environment, economy and society.

Many connections to our quality of life might seem obvious - for example that clean air, access to open space and good food can bring about better health and wellbeing while helping to prevent illness and generate local employment. Yet, it is important to acknowledge these links in the decision making process. It is vital we recognise that taking a decision based purely on the economic advantage in the short term without recognising the social and environmental implications of that decision, can be detrimental in the long term. We need to make these links in order to identify where real progress may lie.

The opportunities to develop solutions, and avoid creating problems, will be much greater when we really think and act in an integrated way. Enjoy picturing the success that could be achieved if we did make these connections, from the suggestions in each section – but remember, this is just a start...

## **About this document**

This manifesto is drawn from priority issues and commitments that LINK members and Task Forces have identified for 2007-2011. These have been discussed and co-ordinated through member organisations and by the Task Forces working in particular areas of expertise.

It has been drawn together as a discussion document in the run up to 2007 Holyrood Election and particularly to inform policy development processes in the political parties.

Demonstrating the importance of integrating social, economic and environmental matters for sound decisions – this manifesto focuses on sustainable development. The specific benefits from the proposals outlined to the society and economy are highlighted throughout the document.

The vision is that sustainable development should deliver a future that ensures a thriving, rich and diverse environment. An environment that underpins a strong happy society in Scotland where people are fulfilled, healthy and have a high quality of life supported by a stable, secure and robust economy.

In specific areas, the vision is set out alongside the steps Government needs to take to help Scotland to get there. The specific commitments that could be made for the next Government in Scotland are identified.

This vision cannot be achieved without good governance and the importance of this is outlined in a dedicated section within this document and also throughout each specific area.

## **Sustainable Development**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011:**

- ✓ **The Scottish Parliament should be given a duty to conduct an annual audit of sustainable development progress in co-operation with Audit Scotland.**
- ✓ **Social and environmental wellbeing/sustainability should be Scotland's overarching objective and measure of progress, replacing that of economic growth which will undermine all other efforts towards sustainable development.**

**Sustainable Development** is the ultimate cross-cutting issue. This whole document is about sustainable development. The environmental crisis which drives the urgent need for a move towards Sustainable Development requires radical changes to our lifestyle in the next few decades.

The sustainability appraisal of the last two spending review proposals has been a first stab at this necessary integration. The introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessment, including the Scottish Executive's commitment to go beyond European legal requirements, will also help to ensure that the environmental component of options is more clearly laid out before decision makers. The Cabinet Sub-Committee on a Sustainable Scotland clearly has great potential but still appears to make only a small difference to 'business as usual'.

Government must put in place the structures and procedures that will ensure that sustainable development considerations are built into decision-making in the public sector and must specify how progress on sustainable development is to be measured and audited.

At the UK level, it has been positive to see the language in the Sustainable Development Framework change from being about the economy from the 1999 aim of "maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment" to the more sophisticated 2005 goal of "a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment." Whilst Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy highlights the need to deliver sustainable communities, social inclusion and well being it retains the commitment that 'economic growth is our top priority'.

The pursuit of economic growth will continue to block progress on sustainable development and the focus should be shifted from the *size* of the economy to its *quality*. Increasing GDP does not necessarily mean improving the things that matter - quality of life, well being or 'happiness.' Indeed in a world where climate change increasingly imposes cost of adaptation and compensation on society GDP is likely to rise and quality of life to fall. A useful discussion of this issue can be found in the UK Sustainable Development Commission's report 'Redefining Progress'.<sup>1</sup>

Indicators set should include a top-level set of aggregate measures in order to communicate overall progress towards sustainable development. To accompany

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/news/resource\\_download.php?attach\\_id=BWZ5VHT-3O2M0Y9-550DVUH-TL5P6U4](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/news/resource_download.php?attach_id=BWZ5VHT-3O2M0Y9-550DVUH-TL5P6U4)

ecological footprint an indicator reflecting genuine economic progress (eg Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare) and social progress is required. These aggregate indicators should be supplemented with a measure for well-being and supported by policy specific indicators in the three areas of environment, economy and society (including indicators which measure health problems related to environmental problems).

The report from the seminar, 'Are We Measuring Up to Sustainable Development?' provides useful background on this topic,<sup>2</sup> as does the UKSDC report 'Redefining Progress'.<sup>3</sup>

Government is not always the best agent for raising public awareness. However, it should encourage and support the efforts of other institutions in civil society to lead the way. Promoting public awareness, understanding, attitudes, and capacities should be the highest priority.

### **Vision 2007-2011**

There are few technical or other limitations to Scotland's potential in achieving dramatic changes towards a culture of sustainability which would reduce our damaging impact on the planet and the future, whilst also preparing this country to compete successfully and survive in the face of the many strictures which will undoubtedly press ever harder upon us as limits are exceeded globally.

An aware society takes more self reliant care of its own situation, pays more responsible attention to the needs of others now and in the future, creates the demands for sustainable products and services to which industry can respond, and supports the political moves which are needed to motivate and if necessary force the laggards to follow the pioneers.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.scotlandsfingerprint.org/news\\_events/seminar140605/seminar140605.php](http://www.scotlandsfingerprint.org/news_events/seminar140605/seminar140605.php)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/news/resource\\_download.php?attach\\_id=BWZ5VHT-3O2M0Y9-550DVUH-TL5P6U4](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/news/resource_download.php?attach_id=BWZ5VHT-3O2M0Y9-550DVUH-TL5P6U4)

## **Good Governance**

### **Key Asks for 2007 – 2011:**

- ✓ **Government will be consistent in its approach to high level working groups by ensuring that there is a genuine balance in the representation of the economic, social and environmental interest and expertise.**
- ✓ **Scotland will ensure that its structures ensure that real participation happens because real rights exist. Establishing real participation in all decision making processes backed by real rights, providing accountability to third parties.**

**Where** there has been good governance in the first two terms of the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Environment LINK has witnessed good progress.

In those areas where the culture change needed to adapt to devolution has been slower – in particular with regard to responding to the Consultative Steering Group (CSG) principles of accountability, openness, participation and transparency, progress has stalled and the quality of the decision making has been poorer. It is clear there is still work to do to ensure better governance of Scotland's environment and demonstrate the opportunities and progress that can be achieved with devolution.

LINK would like to see real rights and real participation enshrined in Scotland to make for even better democracy through full implementation of the Aarhus Convention and by working to the CSG's founding principles, by:

### **1. Democracy**

- Ensuring that the mechanisms and capacity are there for Parliament and the public to be enabled to undertake full and sound scrutiny of all environmental legislation including secondary legislation and better scrutiny of policy
- Ensuring that the Parliamentary structures are better placed to scrutinise for sustainable development; with the Audit Committee remit extended to incorporate sustainable development or alternatively the establishment of a mainstream Committee on Sustainable Development (like that on equal opportunities)
- Ensuring transparent scrutiny of all spending plans for delivery of sustainable development is undertaken (ie to build on CSCSS process, requiring Audit Scotland to monitor process and report to new Sustainable Development Committee)

### **2. Effective government**

- Ensuring proper integration of sustainable development across Government - as in SDS response (ie CSCSS, SD Unit in FMs office, protocols to enforce SD across SE, scrutiny by SD Committee, etc)

### 3. Effective Participation

- Embedding participation that offers equal rights to all participants firmly within the decision making space

Participation that is detached from the decision making process (however subtly) will only result in frustration, which over time will effectively discourage valuable stakeholders from engaging. Consultation is a very weak form of participation made all the weaker when the majority of respondents are ignored. Participation should be recognised as having the potential to offer real benefits in terms of support, legitimacy and relevance. However, it also comes with significant risks that are currently poorly appreciated and threaten to damage genuine opportunities. For instance, greater inclusion (often apparently the default position of the Executive) does not automatically equate to greater/better democracy. If stakeholders are to feel empowered the decision has to be of relevance to them and they have to be able to see their contribution in the final outcome.

- Avoidance of pseudo-participation/involvement by creating "working groups/forums" dominated by Executive/agencies where communities/NGOs/private sector are outnumbered and ignored, but then said to have been "fully involved"

### 4. Access to justice

- An integrated and independent decision-making system for determining the use/abuse of environmental assets - eg civil environmental tribunal and environmental court to hear legal appeals on these issues
- Ensuring the right of appeal/access to Tribunal/Courts, at reasonable costs, to all citizens and NGOs with relevant interest (not "title and interest to sue" but interest in terms of remit - see Aarhus)
- Better investigation of and prosecution of environmental crime (more and better resourced environmental/wildlife police/PFs); more training for these and Sheriffs and Court staff; increased penalties for environmental crimes

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## **Biodiversity**

**Biodiversity conservation requires a commitment to prioritised action – yet the current process consistently fails to recognise the urgency with which the loss of species and habitats must be addressed.**

### **Key Asks for 2007 – 2011:**

- ✓ **To halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010.** It is essential we prevent any further loss of Scotland's natural heritage. The UKBAP provides a good tool to do this but urgency is required in its implementation to meet this target.
- ✓ **To bring all designated sites into favourable condition.** We must conserve those sites representative of Scotland's outstanding natural heritage and enable them to act as refuges and depositories within and from which species and habitats can move as climate changes.

**The Nature Conservation (Scotland) 2004 Act** has provided a sound legislative basis for protecting and enhancing Scotland's biodiversity through the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. However, the current process of implementation is effectively failing the Act and threatening to frustrate Scotland's contribution to halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010. Real commitment is needed to deliver appropriate protection policies and provide the necessary funding and resources.

The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy is weakened by the absence of targets and actions; these are to be found in the non-statutory Implementation Plans. The current set of implementation plans is unlikely to make a substantial contribution to the UK's commitment to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010. Urgent cross cutting issues, including climate change, are without targets and actions.

Biodiversity indicators should be selected to assess progress towards these goals. Such indicators have already been developed by the action plan and science working-group of the Scottish Biodiversity Forum. These should be considered alongside the 2010 EU Target Indicators developed by the UK Biodiversity Indicators Working Group. Adoption of these would prevent any 'reinvention of the wheel' and offer a simple example of policy integration.

### **Public Benefits of Biodiversity:**

#### **Society**

Biodiversity contributes to the well being of Scotland; it provides the resources to sustain and enhance our health; it offers educational opportunities and it contributes to the regeneration of sustainable communities. Access to wildlife-rich green spaces creates a positive sense of place and enhances the quality of life for those who live and work there. Importantly, it also provides the opportunity for a wide range of physical and mental health benefits through green exercise.

#### **Economy**

A rich and diverse natural heritage is a cornerstone of a high quality sustainable economy. Scotland's striking natural heritage means it is well positioned to develop a strong and sustainable economy that values biodiversity. Some 92, 800 FTE Scottish

jobs are based on 'a high quality natural environment' (SNH 2004). It would follow that the more we can do to conserve and enhance our biodiversity the more jobs it will support e.g. tourism. The socio-economic value of Scotland's biodiversity must be championed.

The long term vision is that Scotland's natural heritage, on both land and sea, is complete in its diversity, composed of fully functioning ecosystems and resilient to accelerated environmental change. Progress towards this vision can be assessed through achievement of the following outcomes:

#### **Vision for 2007-2011:**

**The loss of biodiversity will have been halted.** On 15-16 June 2001, the heads of state and government of the EU met at the [European Council summit in Gothenburg](#) and committed themselves to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010. To this end, coordinated action must be taken to secure support for biodiversity from all sectors of Scottish society, including sectors such as business.

#### **Longer Term Vision:**

**By 2015 the loss of biodiversity will have been reversed** and native species and habitats are expanding throughout their range.

- To progress this vision there needs to be a clear commitment to:
- Embed biodiversity conservation throughout all government policy development and implementation. Good governance is an essential prerequisite for biodiversity conservation.
- Protect threatened species and habitats. At the time of the last UKBAP review 29% of species and 37.8% of habitats were still declining or lost in Scotland. Sufficient funding must be in place to enable effective conservation for priority species and habitats. The small sums available through the Scottish Executive's Biodiversity Action Plan grant scheme, while welcome, are inadequate to make a substantive contribution to this vision.
- Protect our finest wildlife sites. The Scottish Executive already has a target to ensure "80% of features cited on SSSIs are in favourable condition by 2008" and this should be extended to 100% of features by 2010.
- 'Green' the wider countryside. Scotland's fragmented landscape presents a barrier to the dispersal and persistence of species and habitats. The wider countryside must be able to accommodate species dispersal if Scotland's natural heritage is to be restored and able to respond to climate change.

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## **Education**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011**

- ✓ **Sustainable Development is at the centre of the schools' modernisation programme, the new schools' curriculum, and a core principle for all schools. Official guidance is available on integrating sustainable development into all learning and teaching and also into all aspects of schools including ethos, management structure and estates management.**
- ✓ **Sustainable Development is fully supported by the policies of the Further and Higher Education Funding Council and sustainable development literacy is incorporated into the Scottish Qualification Authority's normal curriculum design and review process.**

**Scotland's education system** is already well respected throughout the world and Scotland is acknowledged to punch well above its weight in producing innovation. Building on these strong foundations, in the future everyone in Scotland will have the opportunity to gain the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes sustainable development requires, through the formal education system, through their communities and through their workplaces; enabling everyone to be effective contributors to a sustainable Scotland.

### **The Vision 2007-2011**

Government needs to state its clear commitment to sustainable development education as a priority that is incorporated into national sustainable development plans and national education plans for schools as well as further and higher education. Leading by example, the government will integrate the principles of sustainable development into all aspects of government staff training. Initiatives that enable widespread awareness and understanding of sustainable development and sustainable development education should be funded and promoted by Government.

### **School Education**

Sustainable development will become a core principle of the curriculum and official guidance will be produced on integrating sustainable development into all learning and teaching. Teacher training at all levels should include sustainable development as a core principle. In schools, sustainable development will be a core principle and official guidance will be available on integrating sustainable development into all aspects of schools including ethos, management structure and estates management. Teachers will be supported by an online community where examples of sustainable development best practice, resources and training can be accessed and exchanged. Renovation work carried out on schools will be done in line with the principles of sustainability, and incorporating the principle of sustainability into all aspects of school design and build will be a standard requirement..

### **Further and Higher Education**

Sustainable development will be fully supported by the policies of the Further and Higher Education Funding Council and sustainable development literacy is incorporated into the Scottish Qualification Authority's (SQA) normal curriculum design and review processes. Government needs to make funding available to promote research and development into sustainable development and sustainable development education. There will be a duty

for all building or renovation work, carried out on the higher and further education estate and financed by public money, to be done in line with the principles of sustainability and guidance is available on integrating sustainable development into all aspects of design and build.

### **Longer Term Vision**

In the longer term, government will align its policies, mandates, and other such frameworks to support sustainable development education. Scotland will be acknowledged as a world leader in the field of sustainable development education in schools and will established centres of excellence in sustainable development education for both the Further and Higher education sectors.

A high level of public understanding of sustainable development and sustainable development education will be attained. Government initiatives to raise public awareness of sustainable development and sustainable development education will signpost the way to practical support and resources for individuals and groups wishing to undertake sustainable development. Programmes, tailored to local needs, will be put in place across all of Scotland's local authorities, offering practical support for communities and groups undertaking to act more sustainably. Local authority support programmes will link to wider government sustainable development initiatives to demonstrate government's commitment to sustainable development and support for individual behaviour change.

As the demand for new sustainable technologies and processes grows there will be huge potential for Scotland to seize the initiative and become a world leader in this field. With an ambitious programme of sustainable development education Scotland also has the potential to become a world leader in 'sustainable thinking', exporting new ideas around the world.

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## **Energy and Climate**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011:**

- ✓ **The Scottish Executive should set *annual* targets, and provide *annual* reports on progress:**
  - towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions of 12.5% by 2010 and 60% by 2050
  - 20% energy efficiency improvements by 2010
  - 50% of electricity from renewables using a broad range of technology by 2020
  
- ✓ **A fully funded programme to deliver the above which includes expansion of existing programmes and new measures targeting the fuel poor and small businesses**

**Climate Change is happening already, it will get worse and urgent action is needed now to prevent the worst consequences.** From the weather disasters around the world to breeding times of birds, there is no question that things are changing, with seven of the 10 hottest years since 1961 occurring in the last decade. The more we do today to reduce emissions the less damage will happen in the future and the cheaper it will be to cope with change. Taking action on climate change will have extra benefits - as well as avoiding the worst damage from the changing weather and addressing problems already being faced in farming and fisheries, Scotland will create jobs, and reduce air pollution and related health problems.

Scotland needs ambitious greenhouse gas targets and a programme to achieve them. Clear national and sectoral targets are needed so that everyone – businesses small and large, the public, farmers, local councils - can see what is expected of them and what needs done to meet international targets. Scotland should aim for a 12.5% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions on 1990 levels by 2010, and for a 60% cut in CO<sub>2</sub> by 2050. Scotland needs to make year-on-year progress in all sectors towards these targets, with regular reports on progress to Parliament.

Scotland needs energy efficiency targets for domestic, commercial and industrial buildings, land use and food production. Every year thousands of Scots die from conditions related to cold, damp housing. Solving this national disgrace is now a priority for Scotland and doing it right will reduce the 25% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which come from people's homes. Between 1990 and 2002, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the Commercial sector rose by 35%, mainly because of increasing energy use within buildings. The priority should be for demand-reduction, with the carrot of investment and incentive packages, and the stick of regulatory and financial measures.

The Scottish Executive should promote a wide range of renewable energy schemes within a Scottish Energy Strategy. The Executive should consult on and prepare a **Scottish Energy Strategy**:

- to co-ordinate and drive forward action on demand reduction and energy efficiency
- to maximise the opportunities for renewable energy and
- to prevent ad hoc development in areas that require protection.

There should be significantly improved planning and funding within the framework of a national energy strategy to support all renewables, with increased effort on small scale and micro renewables and those which produce heat, including Combined Heat and Power schemes. Nuclear power is expensive and dangerous, and there is no need for new reactors in Scotland's future energy provision.

Scottish Ministers have emphasised that the Executive's objective is to deliver renewables without environmental harm. To achieve this will require a strategic approach, including a national, locational framework and more effective national planning guidance to help plan renewables and associated electricity grid improvements.

**The Scottish Executive should commit to adapting to climate change in a sustainable manner and without compromising efforts to reduce the causes of climate change**

Scotland's rural, urban, marine and coastal habitats are going to be affected by climate change. We need strategies and investment to reduce the impact on Scotland's biodiversity and allow species and habitats to adapt, where necessary. It is essential that we conserve important natural carbon stores such as peatlands and avoid damage to these habitats. Solutions to future flooding problems should be based on sustainable flood management approaches which conserve and enhance natural habitats.

**Vision 2007-2011**

The Scottish Executive will have delivered a 3% year on year reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a 2.4% increase in energy efficiency. The target for 20% of Scotland's electricity consumption from renewables will have been exceeded and progress is being made towards the 2020 target, without the need for new nuclear.

An energy strategy and increased funding will be in place to support demand reduction, and a broad mix of renewables, with micro renewable generation providing at least 6% of energy consumption. Renewables development will be supported by improved strategic guidance for the planning of grid upgrades and renewable energy developments on land and at sea.

Adaptation strategies will be in place for all sectors of Government which take account of the need to conserve biodiversity and natural ecosystems.

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## **Food and Farming**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011:**

- ✓ **Agricultural support payments will be entirely re-directed towards the delivery of public benefits**
- ✓ **The Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture and Executive actions within the sector will become fully integrated with other government action plans and strategies**

**Farming** in Scotland should focus on: producing adequate supplies of safe, healthy food whilst protecting the natural resources of soil, air and water; helping to protect and enhance wildlife, habitats, and cultural heritage; providing jobs in rural areas and contributing to a diverse rural economy and a welcoming countryside.

Strategic policy support for Scottish food and farming systems should concentrate on delivering the dietary and nutritional needs of society in an ecologically integrated manner. Currently, Scottish farming makes a significant contribution towards greenhouse gas emissions and pollution in the UK: farming policy needs to tackle this problem. Policies that deliver fresh, local and organic food need to be prioritised. The Common Agricultural Policy should be further reformed, making support payments solely dependent on delivering demonstrable public benefits. All identified significant environmental (both natural & cultural) sites and habitats need to be in a stable or improving condition and all farms should have had an environmental audit whether in receipt of agricultural support payments or not.

### **Mechanisms to achieve this include:**

- **Area-based agricultural payments** - the only equitable distribution of funding is on an area basis tied to delivering specified public benefits.
- **Agricultural support payments focused on the delivery of public benefits.** Cross-compliance, including the definition of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC), should be strengthened to ensure that Tier 1 of LMCs achieves this.
- **Land Management Contracts** - fully-funded Land Management Contracts (LMCs) available to all farmers and crofters, to be flexible, targeted, and reflect local priorities as well as national and international objectives.
- **Land Management Plans and audits** - mandatory plans to accompany all LMCs and to cover requirements of all three tiers.
- **Advice** - appropriate & properly supported advisory services in place.
- **Modulation** - a continued and increasing transfer of money from Pillar 1 to Pillar 2 in order to adequately fund agri-environment and rural development programmes.
- **Less Favoured Areas** - reform of Less Favoured Areas (LFA) support to deliver environmental outcomes in line with Rural Development Regulation Axis 2 objectives.
- **Policy Integration** - full integration of agriculture and rural development policy with other policies.
- **Strategy Integration** - the Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture should be fully reviewed and integrated with the Scottish Sustainable Development Strategy; the Scottish Rural Development Strategy; the Scottish Forestry Strategy; the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy; the Scottish Food and Drink

strategy; the Scottish Diet Action Plan; the Climate Change Programme; the National Transport strategy; the Physical Activity Strategy; implementation of the Land Reform Act, national and regional Biodiversity Action Plans and other associated forward planning mechanisms.

- **Research – helping to develop** a policy of improvement and refinement of support measures.

### **Longer Term Vision**

In the future, Scotland's lead in the development of the concepts of environmental justice will have continued and extended into the development of food justice with a focus on issues of social inequalities and access.

### **Public Benefits – Social and Economic**

The people of Scotland will benefit from an increased supply of fresh, local and organic food, with the health benefits associated with an improved national diet; a countryside rich in wildlife, natural and cultural heritage for the public to enjoy; increased recreation and access opportunities, and more sustainable rural communities.

This will result in strengthened rural economies based on a profitable and sustainable agricultural base and local food economies that maintain money and jobs in rural areas. The best value from taxpayers' money will be achieved by achieving multiple objectives through rural development spending.

There will be a more equitable use of public funding; one which delivers real environmental benefit for the countryside and will be fully appreciated by taxpayers. Stronger, more sustainable rural communities will be involved in local decision-making processes. All food and farming policy will be openly seen as benefiting from the input of all sections of Scottish society and therefore free to deliver genuine environmentally just policies.

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## Historic Environment

### Key Asks for 2007 – 2011:

- ✓ **A statutory duty of care for the historic environment will form part of a new Historic Environment Act for Scotland revising existing legislation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**
- ✓ **Statutory Historic Environment Record services will be adopted by all local authorities and resources supplied to service them properly.**

**The 'Historic Environment' is all around us.** It is both the special monuments and the everyday features that have developed through human history. It is the evidence that people have left behind of 10,000 years of living in Scotland. It includes everything from archaeological remains to great castles; from terraced houses to ornate gardens. However, it is often taken for granted. The historic environment should be recognised as an important asset in its own right, giving identity and significance to both urban and rural communities throughout Scotland. Valuing the historic environment will aid the regeneration of rural and urban communities when it is factored into visitor strategies, education, supporting the sustainable use of existing built assets, and encouraging the continued practice of traditional skills. Scotland could become internationally recognized as an exemplar of best practice by the proper conservation of its cultural heritage.

Locally, statutory Historic Environment Record Services in each local authority would promote the sustainable use of existing buildings and monitor and protect buried archaeological resources. Record Services would operate to an accredited set of national standards and conservation officers would be appointed as required. Public access to comprehensive environment data for the whole of Scotland through accessible online GIS databases should be part of the basic standard to be met.

The planning system should have a presumption in favour of retaining existing buildings and promote sustainable building design through renewable sourcing requirements and the use of traditional materials and investment in traditional skills. A community focus for any new-build will focus on respecting historic cores, conservation areas and existing historic landscapes.

Nationally, a statutory duty of care for the historic environment should be placed on all bodies and individual owners as part of a new Historic Environment Act for Scotland. This would protect and enhancing Scotland's historic environment, setting appropriate standards and targets and committing Scotland to a fully integrated sustainability policy. Sufficient resources need to be made available to local and central government to allow them to carry out their many duties in respect of the historic environment.

Protection of the historic environment needs to be fully integrated with other environmental and social policies, targets and objectives. Rural industries like farming and forestry should fully embrace land management contracts that operate to ensure inclusive environmental standards and priorities are adopted. There should continue to be a presumption in favour of the preservation in situ of buried archaeological deposits. Resources and efforts should be targeted at protecting those features such as maritime and coastal archaeology, archaeological features and deposits in arable land and development areas that are most at risk from both human-induced and natural change.

## **Vision 2007 – 2011**

By 2011, 90% of Scotland's upstanding archaeology, built heritage and historic landscapes should be under planned maintenance to keep them in a stable, if not improving condition. They will be recognised as key environmental and educational assets and fully appreciated as items and areas of value by the communities in which they are found. As well as the stated key asks, LINK would also require further action within the period of the next parliament to include:

- The implementation of Sustainable Development strategies inclusive of historic environment interests both central and local levels with significant financial penalties for non-compliance. All Development Plans made to comply with sustainable principles that identify and protect historic environment assets.
- Producing a root-and-branch review of heritage protection legislation giving comprehensive protection to Scotland's cultural heritage appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Compulsory Historic Environment Audits for all land, projects and buildings in receipt of public funds with the findings informing future management plans.
- Identifying all key archaeological & historic landscapes through a fully mapped historic environment survey of Scotland.
- The publication of annual State of the Historic Environment reports to inform evidence-based policy making.
- A requirement for accredited historic environment training standards for all land managers, planners & officials working in this field.
- Appointing a network of community heritage advisers to work with communities and individuals covering all local authority areas.
- Agreed management plans to protect all significant archaeological & historic sites & areas, assets & historic buildings in receipt of public subsidy.
- Maintaining traditional skills and setting targets in order to retain and to increase the number of rural practitioners.

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## Landscape

### Key Asks for 2007- 2011

- ✓ **Legislation brought forward and implemented to renew National Scenic Areas (NSAs) as a useful tool for protecting landscape. This would involve implementing a statutory provision for protection of NSAs, including the ability to create new NSAs, allow boundary review and management and give provisions for promotion of NSAs (as recommended by SNH in 1999, in “Advice on NSAs”).**
- ✓ **A statutory duty will be placed upon all government bodies and local authorities to provide for natural, wild land and cultural heritage landscape protection, in the same manner as required under the Nature Conservation Act 2004**

### Public Benefits: Society and Economy

**Scotland’s wild landscapes** are renowned around the world for their beauty. Tourism is Scotland's biggest industry and the vast majority of tourists give Scotland's unspoiled landscape and/or scenic heritage as their prime reason for visiting. Scots themselves visiting different parts of Scotland are a key component of that tourist market. Our economy depends upon the sustainable use of Scotland's landscape. Maintenance of an attractive landscape is also vital to attracting investment into an area while conversely, damaged landscapes can be detrimental to economic growth in particular areas.

A good environment enhances our health and well being. We need to invest in managing landscapes, ensuring that everyone in Scotland can experience something of its beauty and wonder. There is significant evidence that a poor environment is costing Scottish citizens their health. This has knock-on effects for the economy – both through lost productivity and increased healthcare costs. Increasingly, frustration is evident in communities whose environment is blighted by unsustainable development, destroying more of Scotland’s fantastic landscape – often irreparably. These communities need to see that action, not rhetoric, is behind government’s expressed desire to value their environment.

Landscape needs to be recognised as a key part of our heritage. When development decisions are made, the social, health and economic value of unspoiled landscape needs to be taken into account, over and above “environmental” concerns. We need legislative protection for special areas which is equivalent to that already in place for biodiversity. This will enable:

- the damaged and degraded landscapes across the country to be restored
- protection of the most precious places
- protection of the spaces that offer such a unique resource to everyone, living nearby, visiting from far afield or just for the day

### **Further action required –**

- Clear new guidance to local authorities clarifying irreversible designation of recognised landscape important areas such as Areas of Great Landscape Value.
- Assurance through CAP land management contracts that land managers, as beneficiaries, have a duty to ensure the quality of our landscape is enhanced.
- A Scottish Energy Strategy, coupling energy efficiency with production and early national spatial policy guidance (within 1 year) for the siting of wind farms both onshore and offshore (below and above 50MW and transmission lines at all scales) to enable renewable developments to be located.
- Updated national planning policy recognition of the importance of wild land to both local, recreational communities and national tourism.
- Commitment to robust green belt guidance, which seeks an effective balance between essential growth and strong protection and enhancement of the attraction of green spaces for health, community well being, heritage and biodiversity benefits.
- Implementation of recommendations contained in the ‘Review of Land Managed by Forestry Commission Scotland’ and realistic targets for the various recommendations.
- Reducing grazing by red deer sufficiently to allow habitat regeneration.
- National Park Plans which demonstrate best integrated rural management practice
- 5 demonstration projects where community village planning and design can be adopted as templates for the rest of the country.
- A rural landscape strategy which demonstrates a 5% improvement in satisfaction of views from transport routes from present baseline levels.

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## Marine

### Key Asks for 2007 – 2011:

To build a sustainable future for Scotland's coasts and seas, a Marine (Scotland) Act is needed to deliver:

- ✓ **A Marine Spatial Planning system in Scottish waters**
- ✓ **A comprehensive network of Marine Protected Areas for nationally important species and habitats**

### Sustainable seas for all

Scotland is committed to building a sustainable future<sup>4</sup>. The common goal is:

**"to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations"**

Generations in perpetuity have the right to earn a sustainable living from the sea, eat fresh uncontaminated seafood, enjoy clean beaches and unpolluted water, SCUBA-dive above undisturbed sea beds or witness the spectacle of Scotland's marine wildlife. If we continue to compromise the integrity of Scotland's marine environment, such rights will be squandered and the quality of life of current and future generations greatly diminished.

### Why the current system is unsustainable

At least 85 pieces of legislation, and 13 UK and Scottish departments, govern Scotland's marine environment. As a result, marine regulation is **piecemeal** and management is: **sectoral** rather than integrated; **reactive** rather than planned; driven by **short term** decisions rather than on a long-term basis and based on resource **exploitation** rather than limited by the capacity of the marine ecosystem to support uses. As a result, fish stocks, marine species and habitats, economic activities and coastal communities are all struggling.

### Building a sustainable future for Scotland's seas

We are calling for a **Marine (Scotland) Act** to deliver a **Marine Spatial Planning** system and proper **protection** for Scottish marine species and habitats, founded on the five guiding principles of sustainable development:

#### 1. Living within Environmental Limits

For sustainable coasts and seas, this means safeguarding marine ecosystem diversity on which all economic activity is founded. This 'ecosystem approach' requires a comprehensive network of **Marine Protected Areas** for species and habitats of Scottish importance, complementing European Natura 2000 sites and the proposed Coastal & Marine National Park.

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<sup>4</sup> Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy: Document setting out action which we will take in Scotland to turn the shared priorities set out in the UK Framework for sustainable development into action (December, 2005)

## **2. Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society**

For sustainable coasts and seas, this means proper local participation in fisheries management or coastal zone decision-making. Decisions at sea with consequences for local communities are currently not made in a manner fully integrated across sectors. A legally enforceable **Marine Spatial Planning** system would deliver just, accountable planning decisions benefiting local communities, business and industry and the marine ecosystem on which they all depend.

## **3. Achieving a Sustainable Economy**

For sustainable coasts and seas, this means recognising a biologically diverse, uncontaminated coastal and marine environment is a pre-requisite for a sustainable economy. Wildlife watching boats need birds, seals, whales, dolphins and basking sharks to watch; fishing boats need fish and shellfish to catch; juvenile fish and shellfish need undisturbed sea beds on which to grow; aquaculture needs clean water in which to farm; renewable marine energy needs a predictable source of wind, wave and tidal power and coastal communities need safe clean beaches to attract tourism revenue. The status quo perpetuates a competitive free-for-all at sea. Properly safeguarding the marine ecosystem integrity on which economic activity depends needs a robust network of marine protected areas as part and parcel of a Marine Spatial Planning system.

## **4. Promoting Good Governance**

For sustainable coasts and seas, this means reducing duplication, increasing co-ordination and maximising resources. The streamlined solution is new legislation, a **Marine (Scotland) Act**, to deliver Marine Spatial Planning, suitable local management structures, protection for nationally important marine areas and a **Duty of Care** for Scotland's marine environment.

## **5. Using Sound Science Responsibly**

For sustainable coasts and seas, this means less duplication and more co-ordination. A lead Marine Body is needed to co-ordinate the science and policy delivery aims needed to fulfil the Marine & Coastal Strategy Objectives.

### **Why a UK Marine Bill would not protect Scotland's seas**

Although marine species and habitats straddle political boundaries, Westminster jurisdiction over most marine activities stops outside Scotland's 12 nm limit:

***“Where they have responsibility for the management of their territorial waters it will be for the devolved administrations to determine the need to bring forward any new legislation”.*** Charting Progress Box 6A, Action 7: Marine Stewardship

So, even if a UK Marine Bill delivers a commitment to Marine Spatial Planning and new MPAs, UK government could neither enforce the latter within 12nm of Scotland's coast nor influence devolved activities out to 200nm. Joined-up management in Scottish territorial waters requires devolved legislation. A **Marine (Scotland) Act** is essential to plug the glaring gap a UK Marine Bill will leave, and deliver **sustainable development** in Scotland's coasts and seas

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## **Outdoor Recreation and Access**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011:**

- ✓ **Invest in the health of Scotland's people and sustainable transport by committing to improve infrastructure for walking, cycling and public transport.**
- ✓ **Fund the implementation of the Land Reform legislation on access with adequate resources for path networks, outdoor education, access officers and access forums.**
- ✓ **Make the policy and funding links with health and land management through better co-ordination and joined up decision making to support the developments above.**

**Walking** and outdoor activities are key to making a difference to the lives of Scotland's people.

Good quality environments not only encourage people to get out and take part in outdoor recreation opportunities but also, essentially, improve the quality of life and sense of well being for everyone.

Outdoor recreation opportunities improve our quality of life and bring significant health benefits. Scots need to get more active and outdoor recreation – particularly walking - has been shown to be the most effective way of achieving this. Improved access to the outdoors improves environmental awareness and understanding

Improved access opportunities bring economic benefits – it is good for tourism and contributes significantly to local economies. Outdoor recreation is already worth hundreds of millions of pounds annually to the Scottish economy. Attractive places for people to live and work are places where businesses are attracted to and where they can thrive. Improved access can be a significant part of regeneration projects.

Improving access opportunities can improve community development - empowerment that can give communities renewed purpose and strength. Communities can take a very active role in planning and developing their own path networks and other access opportunities. Where the process allows real participation in decision-making access initiatives can strengthen and develop the relationship between local communities and local authorities. Improved outdoor recreation opportunities offer good value for money in terms of participation levels, inclusion and the positive effects on health and well-being.

There is a need to ensure that funds are spent where they deliver most benefit. We need to ensure that access takes place in a well-managed and cared for environment, so resources must be made available to manage paths and access to the highest quality.

## **Vision for 2007 - 2011**

By 2011 Scotland should have the best outdoor access arrangements in Europe. Scots should be able to choose to walk (and cycle, etc) for pleasure and travel and we should be more physically active and our health and quality of life will be better as a consequence.

## **The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003**

The Scottish Parliament's land reform legislation was a massive step forward. It gives us a framework for access that secures our traditional rights and freedoms, and provides a modern system for protecting access and developing new path networks. By 2011 major strides should have been made in implementing this legislation – establishing the framework for the best outdoor access opportunities in Europe.

## **Path Networks**

Local authorities must have drawn up Core Path Plans "sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable access throughout their area" by 2008. This will include routes that are seen as achievable in the subsequent 1-2 years - clearly limited by resources.

There is a need to take a more visionary and aspirational view of what is achievable in terms of a wider network of routes - for both recreation and transport - and what can be achieved beyond 2011. This will require a long-term commitment of resources - including ongoing maintenance as well as capital expenditure.

## **Physical Activity**

Scotland should at least aim to achieve the targets in the Physical Activity Strategy. Its target for 2022 is 50% of adults and 80% of children meeting minimum recommended activity levels. This requires a 1%/year increase across the population (1% each year over the period 2007-2011).

## **Transport**

There needs to be a significant shift in the approach taken by the Executive - with priority given to improved provision for active travel, whether by walking, cycling or public transport. This is also important for social justice, as people on lower incomes tend to rely upon public transport and walking, rather than using cars.

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## **Transport**

### **Key Asks for 2007 – 2011:**

- ✓ **Interim targets and an action plan to achieve the existing Executive commitment to stabilise road traffic levels at 2001 levels by 2021.**
- ✓ **80% of Executive transport spending to be ring-fenced for cycling, walking and public transport by 2011.**

**Our** current patterns of transport are widely recognised as unsustainable. Both road and air transport continue to grow, with 18% more traffic on Scotland's roads and 90% more air passengers in 2003 than in 1993<sup>5</sup>. Carbon dioxide emissions from transport represent 23% of the UK's total domestic emissions, and rose by 8% between 1990 and 2003<sup>6</sup>, contributing to climate change.

Encouraging sustainable transport is about more than exhortations to individuals to make more sustainable and healthier choices. What is required is a shift in policies and funding priorities at both national and local levels. We must change the way we design our communities so that a car is not required for everyday trips to work, school, or to shops.

### **Public Benefits**

#### **Economy**

The CBI estimates the cost of congestion to British business at around £1bn per annum. Investing in public transport and providing an alternative to the private car can help to reduce this burden.

Meanwhile, recent research has found that the aviation industry acts as a net drain on the economy of Scotland<sup>7</sup>. While over 1.5 million incoming visitors used Scottish airports in 2004, bringing around £866m into the Scottish economy, nearly 4 million trips were made by Scots travelling out of the country, spending £2.1bn overseas. The net economic impact of aviation in that year was a cost to the Scottish economy of around £1.4bn. Were aviation to pay its way, this drain could be reduced.

#### **Society**

The health and social benefits of reducing traffic are considerable. At present, two thirds of adult Scots fail to take the minimum level of physical activity required for their health. This is partly because we are less active: the growth in car use means that the average person now walks 66 miles a year less than we did 25 years ago<sup>8</sup>. Funding focused on walking, cycling and public transport can help to reverse this trend. A transport policy that focuses on promoting healthy and active travel modes will help to avert the obesity time bomb, and will benefit taxpayers by reducing costs on the NHS.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/bulletins/360/00360-04.asp>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft\\_about/documents/page/dft\\_about\\_038326-12.hcsp](http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_about/documents/page/dft_about_038326-12.hcsp)

<sup>7</sup> Friends of the Earth, 2005, "Why airport expansion is bad for regional economies"

<sup>8</sup> National Travel Survey, quoted in House of Commons Health Committee Obesity report, 2004

34% of Scotland's households do not have access to a car, and many of these are from low-income groups<sup>9</sup>. Targeting investment into public transport can help to reduce social exclusion. Busy roads often cause community severance and community safety suffers as fewer people are out and about on the streets on foot and by bicycle.

### **The Vision 2007-2011**

By 2011 cycling and walking will be attractive, everyday options which most people choose for the majority of short trips. Investment in Scotland's cycling and walking infrastructure will have more than doubled, with strategic funding for completion of the National Cycle Network. Every child in Scotland will have a Safe Route to School, and Home Zones will be standard practice in all new housing developments. Road user charging will have been introduced in Scotland's major cities, reducing congestion and the associated economic and environmental costs.

Services will be provided in ways which minimise the need to travel, and planning policies will ensure that all new developments assist in delivering sustainable development. Road traffic levels will have been stabilised and Scotland will be served by excellent public transport. Air travel will have been included in phase two of the European Emissions Trading Scheme, ensuring that those using air travel pay a price that reflects the economic and environmental costs which aviation bears on society.

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<sup>9</sup> Transform Scotland, 2005, 'Socially-just transport'

## Water

**Water resource policies should promote sustainable land and water management across all sectors, resulting in a healthy water environment and wetlands rich in wildlife.**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011:**

- ✓ **To ensure full implementation of the Water Environment & Water Services Act (WEWS)**, including fully established River Basin Management Plan and sub-basin planning, a partially operational programme of measures (including regulations for the control of diffuse pollution), pricing policies in place across all sectors that reflect the polluter pays principle – allowing full cost recovery, and revised statutory flood management policies
  
- ✓ **Meet the environmental objectives of the Quality & Standards III investment programme (2006-2010) and include water management objectives within Q&S IV (2010-2014)**. Pricing policies for Q&S IV should also reflect the polluter pays principle and bring about reduced water leakage.

**Water** is essential for life. Therefore, water protection should be high on the agenda of any government. The implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) through the Water Environment and Water Services (WEWS) Act provides us with an unmissable opportunity to put in place a system of integrated river basin planning. This is the most efficient way to achieve sustainable water use, by considering all the different activities in a catchment that affect the health of our waters. If properly implemented, the Act will be good news for people, society, habitats and wildlife it supports. Through its integrated catchment management, it has the potential to improve many of the things that currently threaten water environment and habitats, such as pollution, modifications, non-native species and water abstractions. Full implementation of the Act will also provide a tool to adapt to climate change impacts, and will also result in the reduction of flood risks.

In the longer term, we need sustainable flood management policies that deliver reduction in the damage caused by flooding, ensure protection and enhancement of the environment and act as a sustainable solution to adapting to the impacts of climate change. Scotland needs to have efficient and reliable water and sewerage services that do not damage the water environment, and a clean, safe and plentiful supply of drinking water. It is therefore essential, that as a step towards this target, the government ensures that all environmental obligations in the Quality and Standards III are fully met. In future this can be achieved through full integration of investment programmes with WFD objectives.

## **Public Benefits**

### **Society**

Better quality of life; cleaner, safer and more natural water environment; safe, secure and reliable water supply; thriving wildlife, fishing and other recreational activities; protection from floods that works with, rather than against natural processes.

## **Economy**

Safe and affordable water supply; guaranteed income from recreational activities; lowering the costs of flood related damage; lowering the costs of treatment for drinking water; and minimising the cost associated with pollution clean up operations.

## **Good Governance:**

The Water Framework Directive will only deliver its benefits if the government and government agencies take an integrated approach to its implementation. The lead organisation and the Scottish Ministers must ensure effective and early public participation, and full integration with existing and new policies.

## **The Vision 2007- 2011**

- Fully established River Basin Management Plan and sub-basin planning with an effective system of public participation.
- Partially operational programme of measures, including regulations for the control of diffuse pollution.
- Pricing policies in place across all sectors that reflect polluter pays principle and allow full cost recovery.
- Revised statutory flood management policies (revised 1961 Act, SPP7 and PAN 69) based on sustainable principles and soft-engineering approach will act as a tool to adapt to climate change impacts inland and at coasts.
- On target to achieve the objectives of the phase one of the Quality and Standards III investment programme (2006 – 2010).
- Objectives for Quality and Standards III phase two (2010 – 2014): incorporate significant water management issues and form a major part in the RBMP's programme of measures to achieve good ecological status.
- Set clear targets for reducing water leakage.
- Pricing policies for 2010–2015 to reflect polluter pays principle.

## **Longer term vision**

- Fully functional integrated planning system for water management.
- Fully operational programme of measures.
- Achievement of good ecological status/potential of all water environment (subject to 'approved' derogations) and sustainable use of water resources.
- Preparing to meet environmental objectives for the second river basin management plan.
- Plan further investment through Quality and Standards IV to meet the objectives of the second river basin management plan.
- Full public participation in determining priorities for the Q&S IV programme.
- Deliver targets for reducing water leakage.
- Work towards introducing volumetric charging for domestic (in priority areas) and business (all) water users.
- There should be fully operational sustainable flood management policies resulting in the reduction of flood risk to rural areas and a more effective management/storage of flood waters based on catchment approach and full public participation.

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## **Waste**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011:**

- ✓ **An efficient resource use strategy which focuses on waste minimisation, further supports recycling, extends beyond the current focus on domestic waste and signposts a path towards a zero waste Scotland. A resource map for Scotland should be published, charting recycling facilities and market/procurement opportunities.**
  
- ✓ **An end to large-scale incineration of waste (or energy from waste) which is highly inefficient in resource use terms, and is contrary to efforts to reduce waste volumes**

**Scotland's** track record on waste and resource use has undermined efforts to achieve sustainable development for many years. Materials and waste in Scotland make up 38% of Scotland's footprint and whilst household waste recycling is at last increasing (and on track to deliver 25% recycling by end of the year), efforts to improve Scotland's record on waste risk being undermined by the lack of commitment to reducing waste and recycling from business and industry (particularly the construction industry).

Scotland must set itself on a path towards greater resource efficiency by eliminating waste from society. Rather than spending time sorting growing volumes of waste, people at home, at work and in their communities need to use resources more carefully. Making less rubbish in the first place would deal with waste mountains and pollution, save money and create business opportunities..

### **Vision 2007-2011**

By 2011, Scotland's waste footprint will begin to decline as a result of efficient resource use and we will be on track towards zero waste. Job opportunities in refurbishment and recycling will be fully exploited in Scotland and procurement initiatives used to stimulate locally driven supply of recycled products with materials collected, sorted, re-used/recycled in local areas. With a more ambitious commitment to recycling and reducing waste volumes recycling rates in Scotland could match those in parts of Europe of over 50% and Scotland could realise the huge job opportunities that this presents.

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## **Woodland**

### **Key Asks for 2007-2011:**

- ✓ All Scottish woodland to be under UK Woodland Assurance Standard UKWAS certification.
- ✓ The restructuring (restocking with native woodlands), and expansion of Scottish woodlands to make them more accessible, and give greater recognition to the associated quality of life, health and environmental benefits and their non-market contribution to the economy

**Public money subsidises the forestry sector** so public money invested in forestry and woodland **must** demonstrate public benefit. Any increase of forest cover should recognise how afforestation can deliver multiple benefits including those to health, education, social inclusion and biodiversity. Woodland creation could contribute to carbon storage whilst also providing benefits for wildlife, recreation, landscape and communities. However we must also protect what we've got - we continue to lose Scotland's ancient woodlands, a habitat that has evolved over centuries and which cannot be recreated – this should be halted.

### **Public Benefits: Economic and Social**

Woodlands provide areas rich in wildlife and cultural heritage for recreation which can improve air quality in urban areas helping reduce respiratory diseases as well as heart disease, stress and obesity. Woodland can also foster community cohesion and enterprise through involvement or ownership of local woodland and help regenerate damaged, under-used and neglected areas and improve the physical environment in an urban context. Tourism and the use of both timber and non-timber forest products can help sustain rural communities. Public opinion has consistently shown that the top priorities for woodland should be to improve wildlife, walking opportunities and to help prevent global warming.

### **Vision 2007-2011**

By 2011, Scotland's woodlands should be under sustainable management, improving the quality of life for people, the variety of habitats for wildlife and making a positive contribution to the rural and urban environments.

### **Achieving the Vision: Sustainable Woodland**

- Scottish Executive, Scottish local authorities and other public bodies in Scotland should be obligated to procure Forest Stewardship Council certified timber which will be used in new public buildings and affordable housing
- All Scottish forestry will be under UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) certification.
- All grants for timber grown for commercial use need to demonstrate public benefit across all three pillars of sustainability
- A more integrated approach to land use taking in agriculture, forestry, biodiversity and water needs to be developed

### **Woodlands Communities and Enterprise**

- Woodland projects for communities near existing woodlands or derelict land should aim to improve community cohesion and health.
- VisitScotland needs to work with heritage specialists and local communities to promote Scotland's rich and unique woodland heritage

### **Woodfuel**

- A renewable heat strategy needs to be developed
- Grants for the installation of woodfuel heating should be targeted at communities within or near a forest resource and a number of small to medium scale demonstration projects should be developed
- New public buildings, especially those near to a timber resource, should be required to use woodfuel for heating/CHP
- All new woodland planted for woodfuel needs to be sustainably managed under the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

### **Adapting to Climate Change**

- Climate change should cut across forestry decisions by, for example, encouraging harvesting through continuous cover, reducing timber mileage and ensuring appropriate sites for planting (not on peat)
- New forest-based enterprises should be localised and there should be a requirement for the existing timber industry to reduce their emissions and increase efficiency
- Conservation of all semi-natural habitats should be prioritised; woodland creation needs to protect and extend these sites, particularly ancient woodland, contributing to the development of Forest Habitat Networks

### **Education**

- Forest Education Initiative should increase the number of Forest Schools to introduce children to a sustainable woodland culture and work with eNGOs to engage schools in use of woodlands as 'outdoor classrooms'

### **Scotland's Historic Woodland**

- Halt the loss of ancient and semi natural woodland.
- Create a programme to restore ancient woodland sites planted with conifers and important open ground habitats.
- Identify key woodland heritage sites draw up appropriate management plans to be promoted by tourism.

### **Biodiversity**

- The area of new native woodland (around 4% of land area at present) should be significantly increased
- Develop Action Plans to restore sites of high biodiversity value in particular UK BAP priority HAPs for open-ground
- Put plans in place to return deer number to sustainable population levels

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## **A Sustainable Scotland: Good for society and the economy**

As we have laid out in detail throughout this document, a sustainable Scotland benefits society and the economy as well as protecting our environment. We have set out in detail how social, economic and environmental justice are intertwined. No longer can sustainability be seen as peripheral to Scotland's wellbeing: it must be at the heart of policy. This document, therefore, is our challenge to Scotland's politicians and political parties: speaking on behalf of our 500,000 members in Scotland, we have set out the steps Scotland needs to take to become truly sustainable. Your challenge is to deliver!

### **More about LINK**

**Scottish Environment LINK** is the forum for Scotland's voluntary environment organisations - 36 member bodies representing a spectrum of environmental interests with the common goal of contributing to a more environmentally sustainable society. LINK provides a forum and network for its members; and assists communication between members, government and civic society.

Find out more about LINK on our website: [www.scotlink.org](http://www.scotlink.org)

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