

Sent on behalf of **THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE GROUP**

Press release

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NEW REPORT: EIGHT POINT PLAN FOR SCOTLAND'S GREEN RECOVERY

- + Key actions for Scottish Government to ensure the recovery post COVID-19 sets a path to net zero
- + Shows how climate emergency can be a thread throughout Government's economic recovery plans
- + Case studies available below

A group of civic and business leaders are today (Mon 13 July) setting out the practical solutions that the Scottish Government should implement now, in order to move Scotland towards a net-zero economy, post Covid-19. [1]

The Climate Emergency Response Group (CERG) [2] welcomes the Scottish Government's Commitments [3] to a green recovery which supports a transition towards a greener, net zero and wellbeing economy. [4]

Recent polling shows the public want to see government tackle the climate emergency with the same urgency as COVID-19 [5] reflecting increasing concern at the risks posed by a warming world.

The recent report from the Scottish Government's Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) [6] stated that 'responding to climate change needs to be a thread through every policy action.' This package of proposals shows how this can be done to create a genuine green recovery which also creates jobs and helps the economy.

CERG proposes four priority areas and four strategies that can both help the economy to recover and set Scotland on a course for net zero climate emissions. These should be implemented as part of the Scottish Government's actions to mitigate the economic crisis and build a fairer, greener Scotland. The report builds on CERG's previous work on the climate emergency response. [7]

The eight proposals would reap a wide range of benefits – jobs, improved health and well-being, as well as reduced carbon emissions. With Scottish Government finances stretched by the crisis, it is essential that scarce resources help tackle the climate emergency and rebuild the economy post-COVID-19, targeting those hardest hit by the crisis. The report includes innovative ways to pay for proposed activities.

There are the four priority areas:

- Retrofit buildings for a net-zero Scotland
- Rural jobs creation programme
- Green Enterprise Support
- City and Town Infrastructure Transformation Programme

And four cross-cutting strategies:

- Unlocking private investment with greater policy certainty

- Green Scrappage Scheme
- Green Future Skills
- Expanded Capital Investment Stimulus

These proposals are not only good for a net-zero future, but also for jobs, health and well-being, and helping to address inequalities.

Fabrice Leveque, Head of Policy at WWF Scotland said:

“A decade ago, Governments around the world responded to the financial crisis with business as usual with only 16% of the UK stimulus going to clean measures. We’re still reaping the consequences. We need to learn the lessons of the past and build back a better, greener and fairer economy that is resilient to the climate emergency accelerating before our eyes.

“A wealth of evidence shows that steps to make our economy lower carbon can secure jobs and bring other benefits like cleaner air, warmer homes and better health.”

On business, Sara Thiam, Chief Executive, Scottish Council for Development and Industry said:

“The economy is re-opening after huge disruption and there are clear opportunities to invest in green industries that can make our economy cleaner, more productive and resilient to future threats. We need, and future generations deserve, a just transition to a low carbon future.”

On transport, Daisy Narayanan Director of Urbanism at Sustrans said:

“As the economy re-opens, it’s vital that we don’t see a ‘business as usual’ return in car use, and the associated emissions and poor air quality that would go with that. Ideas like the Community Health & Wellbeing Fund, Zero Emission Zones and 20-minute neighborhoods will ensure that the temporary gains in walking and cycling enjoyed by many during the lockdown are made permanent.”

On retrofitting for a net zero Scotland, Mike Thornton, Chief Executive at Energy Saving Trust said:

“Energy efficiency retrofits can be transformative for individual householders, as well as for the economy and the climate on a large scale. Thousands of households who have already benefited from warmer, comfier homes will sing their praises. The quality of our homes has never mattered more than in lockdown and making them fit for the future can cut emissions today, tackle fuel poverty and create jobs around the country.”

On rural jobs, Sarah-Jane Laing, Chief Executive at Scottish Land and Estates said:

“The rural economy has been hit hard by the COVID-19 lockdown. Providing support for forestry, new skills and new agricultural practices can help deliver crucial new jobs in rural communities that will also deliver a resilient and greener future for the whole of Scotland.”

On green enterprise and skills, Iain Gulland, Chief Executive at Zero Waste Scotland said:

“Lockdown has highlighted the strengths and weaknesses in our supply chains and skills, and the opportunities that both bring to overcome the climate crisis as we rebuild. Companies and communities have collaborated on innovative new solutions during the pandemic, from local partnerships delivering food to those who need it most, to factory production lines switching from manufacturing cars to ventilators.”

“As we emerge from lockdown there is an option to help more sustainable enterprises and models grow, supporting valuable green jobs in the circular economy keeping everything in a ‘loop’ of use to cut waste and carbon emissions to help end the climate emergency.”

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Examples of how policies could work in practice:

Green Future Skills:

Schemes to create new opportunities for young people and to provide reskilling and retraining for those in high carbon industries, to create the future ‘frontline’ workers for the climate emergency. These include a ‘Climate and Nature Emergencies Service Programme’ for young people; a ‘Renewables Transition Training Fund’ to help workers join that industry and ‘Green Modern Apprenticeships’ to fill gaps such as electric vehicle and heat pump expertise.

Retrofit for a net-zero Scotland:

Existing Scottish Government home insulation schemes like Warmer Homes Scotland can be doubled so that 30,000 homes a year are made warmer and healthier and lifted out of fuel poverty. Local supply chains stand to benefit from the increased construction activity.

Rural jobs:

A rural skills and jobs matching scheme to protect the supply of entry-level jobs by supporting the underemployed or unemployed to diversify their skills. For example, in agriculture, new entrants could be attracted to the industry whilst experienced staff learn new climate friendly techniques.

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For background to the report and the Climate Emergency Response Group contact the secretariat, Elizabeth Leighton on 07792647005

NOTES TO EDITORS

[1] Eight Policy Packages for Scotland’s green recovery <https://bit.ly/CERGGreenRecovery>

[2] The [Climate Emergency Response Group](#) brings together leaders and influencers in Scottish society who welcome the First Minister’s commitment to net zero greenhouse gas emissions in Scotland by 2045, and who believe the time is right to support strong changes to policy and programmes in response to the climate emergency.

The organisations supporting CERG’s important work to enable informed green recovery policy development are: AC Whyte, Alexander Dennis, Changeworks, Confor, CPT-UK Scotland, Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council, EIT Climate-KIC, Energy Saving Trust, Everwarm, Federation of Master Builders, Green Investment Bank, GreenPower International, Institution of Civil Engineers, Jacobs, James Hutton Institute, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Kensa Group, Locogen, Mitsubishi, National Society of Apprentices, National Farmers Union Scotland, Nourish, Poverty Alliance, Scottish Council for Development and Industry, Scottish Land & Estates, Scottish Power, Scottish Renewables, Scotch Whisky Association, Sustainable Scotland Network, Star Renewable Energy, Sunamp Heat Batteries, Sustrans, University of Edinburgh, Vegware, Wellbeing Economy Alliance, Woodland Trust Scotland, WWF Scotland, 2050 Climate Group

[3] Scottish Government statement on climate change plans and a green recovery: <https://www.gov.scot/news/climate-change-plan-update/>

[4] Terms of reference for the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER): <https://www.gov.scot/groups/advisory-group-on-economic-recovery/>

[5] Independent, 16.04.2020 '[Public want radical response to climate change with same urgency as coronavirus, poll finds](#)'

[6] AGER report <https://www.gov.scot/publications/towards-robust-resilient-wellbeing-economy-scotland-report-advisory-group-economic-recovery/>

[7] 12 immediate actions for Scotland's response to the climate emergency <https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-08/Climate%20Emergency%20Statement.pdf>