



## Briefing Note: International Voices Must Be Heard in the Debate on Scotland's Climate Change Bill

*On the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 the CPG on International Development convened to discuss climate action, and the opportunity for Scotland's new Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill to lead the world in climate action. This briefing summarises discussions from the meeting.*

Members of the CPG on International Development include members of Scotland's International Development Alliance (the Alliance), including SCIAF, Oxfam, Tearfund Scotland and IIED, whose partners are witnessing and experiencing first-hand the devastating impact climate change.

As a result, members of the Alliance are calling for MSPs to vote for a Climate Change Bill that:



- **Sets a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 at the latest, and a reduction of 77% by 2030**
- **Ensures that future finance budgets are consistent with our climate targets**
- **Commits to bold policy action on homes and farming that help deliver a cleaner, healthier, more prosperous Scotland**

## Why urgent and bold action is needed from high-emitting countries like Scotland

Despite doing least to cause the problem of climate change, it is poor communities around the world that are most vulnerable to the devastating impacts of changing weather patterns, floods, droughts and storms. Climate change impacts nearly every aspect of people's lives. It also threatens to undo all the progress we've previously made on tackling global poverty.

The new climate change bill offers the Scottish Parliament the opportunity to take a bold step and put Scotland at the forefront of global efforts to reduce the effects of climate change. In 2009, the Climate Change Act was passed with support from across all parties. That Act enshrined a target to reduce Scotland's emissions by 80% by 2050. At that time, this was an ambitious and world-leading position. However, since 2009 the world has changed. Mounting scientific evidence has shown that the effects of climate change are worse than previously thought.

*Scotland for a fairer world.*



In 2015, the Paris Agreement offered hope to all countries of the world. It listened to the cries of the poorest and achieved a monumental global agreement to reduce emissions to ensure global average temperature increases are kept well below 2°C and ideally limited to 1.5°C, to prevent catastrophic climate change.

In October 2018, the IPCC special report on 1.5°C confirmed the need to meet that 1.5°C target, and the urgency with which we need to act to achieve it. To meet Paris, we all must increase our ambition as quickly as possible.

**The Scottish Parliament has the opportunity to fulfil this call to action by passing new legislation that sets a net-zero GHG target by 2050.**

**“The Paris Climate Agreement was a landmark of international diplomacy, but it is not self-executing. Fulfilling its objectives will require ambitious domestic actions in all countries”**

Dr Achala Abeyesinghe, IIED

## Hearing from the Experts

**Howard Msukwa, Vice Chair of Kaporo Smallholder Farmers Association, Malawi** reported how climate change is affecting rice farmers, with changing patterns of rainfall; and about effective ways of countering this. He commended the Scottish Government's Climate Justice Fund, but said more must be done, emphasising that a bold climate bill in Scotland would set an example for other nations to follow.

**Elisa Morgera, Professor of Global Environmental Law at the University of Strathclyde** spoke about climate change being one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss. She pointed to the usefulness of existing UN frameworks such as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, and 2018 Framework Principles of Human Rights and the Environment. She argued that governments around the world, including the Scottish Government, must implement regulation and monitoring of the private sector in order to secure the biodiversity essential for maintaining human rights standards.

**Dr Geraldine Hill, Advocacy Manager at SCIAF** gave an overview of Scotland's climate journey since the 2009 Climate Bill through to the Paris Agreement in 2015 and now the new Bill. She said:

*“With the new Climate Change Bill now before Parliament, MSPs have an important opportunity to increase Scotland's climate action, by setting ambitious targets that increase action over the next decade and eliminate our contribution to climate change by 2050”*

She highlighted that Scotland must enshrine bold targets to meet its moral responsibility to act given the historic contribution it has made to climate change, noting that this would also create thousands of jobs, improve health, reduce poverty, and reflect Scotland's global leadership on climate change.

*Scotland for a fairer world.*



**Dr. Achala Abeysinghe, Principal Researcher and Team Leader of global climate law, policy and governance team at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)**, then gave a short overview and the background of the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group, and presented how the LDCs are leading the climate fight both at the global and national level.

She emphasised that keeping global temperature increases to 1.5°C is both essential and achievable, and that it is a matter of justice that developed countries much take a leadership role in increasing ambition:

*“If you do not increase your ambition to close the emissions gap LDCs will become even more vulnerable, increasing the cost of adaptation, and loss and damage suffered in their countries”.*

## 100 Voices campaign

The CPG also showcased the “[100 voices for 100%](#)” campaign, a series of 100 pictures and testimonies that demonstrate an impressive breadth of support for a strong climate bill in Scotland; explaining why what Scotland does matters in communities around the world.

These 100 voices from disparate communities and nations touched by climate change, are all calling on the Scottish Government to set bold and ambitious targets that would see Scotland reach net zero GHG emissions by 2050. Together they provide a powerful testimony about the importance of looking beyond our own borders and understanding the global consequences of our actions and inactions.

## Our asks

**Members of the Alliance are calling for MSPs to vote for a Climate Change Bill that:**

- Sets a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 at the latest, and a reduction of 77% by 2030
- Ensures that future finance budgets are consistent with our climate targets
- Commits to bold policy action on homes and farming that help deliver a cleaner, healthier, more prosperous Scotland

For further information on these campaign asks visit: <http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/>. For further information on Scotland's International Development Alliance contact Lewis Ryder-Jones at [lewis@intdevalliance.scot](mailto:lewis@intdevalliance.scot)

*Scotland for a fairer world.*