

Good progress made in Scotland to reduce emissions

Embargo until: Tuesday 31st January 2012

Issue No: 48

Good progress has been made in Scotland since 2009 to reduce emissions in order to tackle climate change, according to the Committee on Climate Change (CCC). The CCC today published its first progress report on emission reductions in Scotland, as requested by Scottish Ministers under the Climate Change Act (2009).

Emissions fell in Scotland by 7% in 2009, mainly due to the impact of the recession and a reduction in economic output. Emissions are however likely to have risen in 2010, as a result of the cold temperatures at the start and end of 2010, and due to increased economic activity.

The Committee assessed the progress that has been made towards meeting legally binding targets to reduce emissions by 42% by 2020, finding that:

- Good progress has been made to invest in renewable forms of electricity, with new capacity being added to the grid at the rate required to meet targets.
- There has been outperformance of targets for renewable heat.
- Preparations are progressing for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) projects, including putting in place a regulatory framework for each stage of CCS.
- There has been some progress made in improving the efficiency of buildings, purchasing more efficient vehicles, piloting public transport initiatives and in encouraging farmers to take up measures to tackle climate change.

However, in order to sustain this progress, new policies will be required, and there is an important role for the Scottish Government to play in ensuring that UK-wide policies are adopted in Scotland e.g. in helping to ensure that policies like the Green Deal, Renewable Heat Incentive and Electricity Market Reform are effective.

There are also some areas of policy that are devolved to the Scottish Government and where they could have an impact in ensuring emission reductions are achieved.

These include encouraging more people to use public transport, through rolling-out the Smarter Choices scheme, protecting the carbon stocks in Scotland's peat land soils, and encouraging farmers to take action to reduce emissions.

David Kennedy, Chief Executive of the CCC said:

“Good progress has been made by the Scottish Government in reducing emissions across the economy. Going forward, it will be important for the Scottish Government to continue to support the implementation of policies at both UK and national level to further cut emissions, resulting in climate change and wider economic benefits.”

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Notes to Editors

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC)

The CCC is an independent statutory body established under the Climate Change Act to advise the UK Government on setting carbon budgets, and to report to Parliament on the progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions: www.theccc.org.uk/.

- The report is available from the CCC's website at: www.theccc.org.uk/reports

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