



Scottish
Environment

LINK

1 May 2019

Dear First Minister

We are writing as Scottish Environment LINK to underline how much we welcome your statement to declare a climate emergency in Scotland and your commitment to Scotland's responsibility to tackle it.

We also welcome your commitment to go further and faster if advice supports that in Scotland's move towards being carbon neutral. Scotland's environment is vulnerable, but it is also one of our greatest allies in tackling climate change. From our peatlands to our soils and seas, Scotland's nature stores an extraordinary amount of carbon. Scottish peatlands, for example, store 1.7 billion tonnes of carbon, equivalent to 140 years' worth of Scotland's total annual greenhouse gas emissions¹.

A healthy natural environment is key for responding to the climate emergency.

Our member bodies look forward to working with your Government to improve protection and do more to restore nature. The recent poll² commissioned by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland found that impacts on wildlife was one of the top reasons that people in Scotland are concerned about climate change.

Scotland is in a strong position to lead the way both in tackling climate change and in demonstrating that there needs to be no tension between protecting our environment and its natural capital and supporting a healthy and just economy. Through our actions, we need to live up to the reality of the climate emergency.

We hope that the publication of the UK Committee on Climate Change advice will provide a starting point for these important and very urgent discussions to take place. We look forward to supporting your government in leading the way and in finding innovative ways to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and inequalities as well as protecting and supporting a healthy natural environment.

Yours sincerely

Dr Deborah Long
Chief Officer

¹ <https://www.nature.scot/peatland-action-case-study-whats-connection-between-peat-and-carbon-storage>

² <https://www.stopclimatechaos.scot/70-of-people-in-scotland-support-further-action-on-climate-change-amid-surgeing-levels-of-concern-poll-shows/>