

Note of SEPA LINK meeting 7 March on SEPAs Climate Change Plan.

Sam Gardner (WWF Scotland) and Jim Densham (RSPB Scotland) met with Alan Speedie, Paula Charleson and Neil Deasley to discuss SEPA's forthcoming updated Climate Change Plan. This is scheduled for publication in May/June. They have been consulting on this review in recent months. SEPA were therefore keen to hear our views on their progress with SEPA's previous Climate Change Plan and what we would like to see in the new version. Alan Speedie is leading the work to draw up the updated plan.

The previous SEPA plan had been somewhat inward looking but they now want this internal CC work to be Business as Usual and for the new Plan to be more outward facing and influencing others. They believe there is legitimacy for SEPA to be working and saying more on climate change. They are aware of the need to do more on climate adaptation and to understand the interlinkages between mitigation, adaptation and sustainability.

We discussed

- issues of implementing the public bodies duty; SEPA support, guidance and compliance checking for other public bodies.
- working more to advise on resource efficiency
- investigating carbon assessments for large developments (similar to carbon guidance for windfarms on deep peat)

We suggested that SEPA may be able to run a 'platform' or host a series of events which raises the debate around climate change and interlinkages. They would need to own or lead this process but would be more about influencing and raising debate.

We said that SEPA must be the leader on environmental protection in Scotland and climate change comes with that. They need to use the right language to express regulation has climate and other benefits and ensuring environmental compliance is the right thing to do.

On Adaptation we asked that their Climate Plan includes:

- principles of adaptation - governing how they aim to act
- improved monitoring of environmental monitoring to understand the impact of climate change - they mentioned CAMERAS work and the CC Science group in SEPA. They also mentioned work on ecosystem services.
- climate-proofing of strategies and policies which SEPA has responsibility for, e.g. River Basin Management Plans
- the need to address action at a landscape- scale, such as working at a catchment scale.
- demonstration of real delivery on the ground, such as pilot projects, and to show that these are testing adaptation responses and working to improve resilience in addition to other env benefits, e.g. water quality.

SEPA are keen to share further ideas and Plan drafts with us and more widely within LINK.

Jim Densham