**SCOTTISH ENVIRONMENT LINK**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**7th November 2019**

**Circular economy proposals need top-level targets says Scottish Environment LINK**

The Scottish Government consultation (2) for a Circular Economy Bill, published today, contains proposals for reducing waste but does not include the high-level targets which LINK has been calling for with the support of 35 Scottish organisations (3).

The consultation paper suggests introducing charges on single-use items such as coffee cups; strengthening obligations on reporting waste; placing additional requirements on local authorities to improve household recycling; and measures to prevent waste crime.

Campaigners welcomed the document but said that these measures won’t add up to the radical change we need to address our impact on the environment. The quantity and nature of the products we use and consume is a key driver of our ecological and climate emergencies (4). Research has shown that we consume 3 times our share of planetary resources (5).

Matthew Crighton, Convenor of Scottish Environment LINK’s Economics Group says

“We’re pleased that the Scottish Government has raised aspirations with this consultation, but they won’t be met by the measures which it is proposing. In light of the Climate Emergency and the damage we are doing to nature we should be aiming at far-reaching changes to how we make, sell and consume. The proposals here, though all welcome, don’t come close to that.

‘Instead of relying so much on voluntary action by forward-thinking companies and individuals, we need to set statutory targets for reductions in the resources we use, in parallel with our climate change targets. Government should use the bill to create the mechanisms through which producers and retailers will be required to build repair, re-use and recycling into the products they place on the market.

“We hope that this consultation stimulates a wide-ranging debate about how we move rapidly away from the linear model of ‘take, make, dispose’ which is ravaging our planet. It gives an excellent introduction to why a circular economy is important, which everyone should read, and it offers an opportunity to convince politicians and the public that a more thorough approach is needed to bridge the gap between aspiration and delivery”.

Deborah Long, Scottish Environment LINK Chief Officer says

‘Scottish Government have an opportunity to bring forward ambitious and meaningful proposals which could really make a difference to our impact on the climate and biodiversity emergencies. Having ambitious targets and an accompanying framework could drive policy across government to steer our economy to one that is more circular and more sustainable. What we have instead are proposals which continue to tinker at the edges of the problem.’

**ENDS//**

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**Notes for editors**

(1) Scottish Environment LINK is the forum for Scotland's voluntary environment community, with over 35 member bodies representing a broad spectrum of environmental interests with the common goal of contributing to a more environmentally sustainable society. LINK is a Scottish Charity (SC000296) and a Scottish Company Limited by guarantee (SC250899). LINK is core funded by Membership Subscriptions and by grants from Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Government and Charitable Trusts.
www.scotlink.org

(2) Scottish Government Circular Economy Bill consultation <https://consult.gov.scot/environment-forestry/circular-economy-proposals-for-legislation/>

(3) Over 35 organisations, including organisations with interests in health, education, construction, the bio-economy, repair, finance, recycling, plastics, waste management and overseas development; want to see ambitious circular economy proposals, crucially with consumption reduction targets centre stage <http://www.scotlink.org/wp/files/documents/CE-Bill-call-for-Aug-19-logos-3.pdf>

(4) The production and processing of the products we consume and use is the key driver of biodiversity loss – a International Resource Panel report puts it at 90% of biodiversity loss. This is because of loss of and pollution of habitats. <https://resourcepanel.org/reports/global-resources-outlook>

Additionally, our carbon impact is tied to our consumption, with about 80% of our carbon footprint being from emissions embedded in the goods we use and consume <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-carbon-footprint-2015/pages/4/>

(5) This is based on ecological footprint data for the UK <https://data.footprintnetwork.org/?_ga=2.59762477.186067404.1573138714-1075653858.1573138714#/>