

## LINK's 5 GREEN TESTS

### Applied to the Scottish Government Economic Recovery Plan

The Scottish Government released its proposals for the post-Covid economic recovery on 5 August 2020:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/economic-recovery-implementation-plan-scottish-government-response-to-the-advisory-group-on-economic-recovery/>

The “Economic Recovery Implementation Plan” includes a list of 45 planned actions.

In advance of the release of this report, LINK had devised and published a set of [5 tests](#) by which to judge whether the economic recovery would be “green” as previously promised by Government.

The tests are:

Every individual policy/action adopted must be based on sound evidence, must not increase carbon emissions, must not damage nature and must not harm social wellbeing.

Green recovery policies, taken together as a package, must ensure these additional four tests are met, while each individual policy/action must contribute to at least one of:

2. Reduce pollution;
3. Improve adaptation to climate change and reach net zero by 2045;
4. Secure sustainable consumption of natural resources;
5. Improve biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The contributions must be quantifiable and reportable.

It is important to note the qualification that all planned policies or actions must be quantifiable and reportable. This does not allow for unverified assumptions to be made for any of the 45 actions.

Examples of applying the tests:

Action 43: Commits to continuing to work with other agents to create opportunities for people to get back into work. The opportunity could have been taken here to emphasise a particular commitment to green jobs. It cannot be assumed that anything will be different from the current process. Therefore, this action fails the tests.

Action 34: Although no specific mention is made of eco-housing, there is reference to the Scottish National Investment Bank, yet to be launched, investing in high-quality housing. Since the Bank has a principal mission to support the attainment in net-zero – then it may be assumed that this action passes the tests.

The results of applying the tests are presented in the following table.

### Key messages:

There are 17 plans, out of 45 (40%), which pass the tests. Of these, 16 (37%) pass on contribution to mitigating climate change, 7 (16%) at least in part pass on consumption of resources, 6 in part (14%) pass on reducing pollution and 5 in part (12%) pass on improving biodiversity.

There are also plans that could be considered environmentally neutral but socially positive. These actions have not been scored (28%), given that while there is no direct environmental impact (positive or negative), building a healthy society with strong social responsibility is key to a society that treads more lightly on global natural resources.

Given that a green recovery must tackle both the climate and nature emergencies, only 12% tackling the nature crisis is insufficient.