

Response submitted online

ANON-1YWG-YZ3C-H

12th January 2021

Environment, Climate Change & Land reform Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

EAUC-Scotland
Queen Maragret Univeristy
Musselburgh
EH21 6JU
0131 474 0000
scotland@eauc.org.uk

www.eauc.org.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below our response to the Call for Views on the Climate Change Plan Update.

Call for Views: Climate Change Plan Update

EAUC-Scotland:

Response on behalf of our Members (Scotland)

About the EAUC

Our passion is to create a world with sustainability at its heart. That's our vision. We exist to lead and empower the post-16 education sector to make sustainability 'just good business'.

The membership of the EAUC comprises higher and further educational institutions, with a combined budget of some £25 billion, responsible for educating over 2 million students supported by half a million staff.

We have regional and country chapters, with member institutions connected deeply with business, industry, health and civic bodies at local levels, with reach internationally via their research, innovation and student mobility.

EAUC-Scotland's Approach to the Inquiry

Due to time constraints, EAUC-Scotland collected views via the Responsible Universities Group Scotland (RUGS) and the College Development Network (CDN) Climate Emergency Experts Group.

Response to the Consultation:

Q1. What is your assessment of the progress to date in cutting emissions within the sector/sectors of interest and the implementation of the proposals and policies set out in previous Climate Change Plans (RPP1-3)?

Clearly the scale of change needed to deliver net zero is huge. The Further & Higher Education (FHE) Sector has made excellent progress to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, educate for sustainability, invest in infrastructure and engage with our students, staff and stakeholders.

Within [Public Bodies Climate Change Duties \(PBCCD\) reporting](#), emissions reductions achieved to date have been largely delivered from the decarbonisation of the national grid and energy efficiency improvements (Carbon Management Plans, Salix Recycling Fund, Colleges Energy Efficiency Pathfinder project etc). There has also been progress in waste and travel emissions but direct Scope 1 emissions remain relatively consistent.

EAUC-Scotland thinks the progress of the Further & Higher Education (FHE) Sector is appropriate to the sector's capabilities and resources. The sector is currently focused on how it can contribute to decarbonising heat, travel and transport and embodied carbon within our new developments. As a sector, we are already working together and collaboration is a key aspect of the process for urban and rural settings alike. This collaborative effort has already started with initiatives underway in our major cities.

Q2. Do you think the scale of reductions proposed within the sector(s) are appropriate and are the proposals and policies within the CCPu effective for meeting the annual emissions targets and contributing towards the 75% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 and net-zero by 2045 targets?

EAUC-Scotland supports the proposed scale of reductions. However, the CCPu is missing a clear definition of the sources of GHG emissions that should be included in net zero targets for each sector. Net zero 'direct' emissions implies only [GHG Protocol](#) Scope 1 but this should be clarified.

In relation to electricity, current PBCCD reporting uses a UK emissions factor which does not reflect the lower emissions associated with electricity produced and consumed in Scotland. EAUC-Scotland would like to see this replaced with a Scottish electricity emissions factor to more accurately account for the rapid expansion of renewables in Scotland.

The Further & Higher Education (FHE) Sector would also like to see clear guidance around the use of offsetting in net zero plans, in particular:

- Will offsetting be allowed, and if so, for which sources of emissions?
- Will international offsets be permissible?

Q3. Do you think the timescales over which the proposals and policies are expected to take effect are appropriate?

EAUC-Scotland supports the proposed timescales, however it is essential that appropriate financial, staff and intellectual resources be made available to deliver the necessary changes.

In terms of speed of emissions reduction, when one considers heat decarbonisation for instance, the scale of physical infrastructure that needs to be deployed and the labour and skills needed to make this shift a success across our existing estate is a major focus for the FHE Sector. This shift is going to need massive investment in our existing estates to enable the change and the £95 million pledged to decarbonise the public sector estate is very welcome. However, it is essential that this funding is made accessible to colleges who are currently unable to access existing decarbonisation funds such as [Salix funding](#).

It is also important to consider how this decarbonisation investment adds to the existing backlog maintenance challenge that the FHE Sector faces.

Q4. To what extent do you think the proposals and policies reflect considerations about behaviour change and opportunities to secure wider benefits (e.g. environmental, financial and health) from specific interventions in particular sectors?

EAUC-Scotland supports the whole systems approach to achieve our net zero and adaptation ambitions. The systems approach and joined up thinking is very much needed if we are to successfully embed net zero infrastructure across existing and new city and rural development plans at scale and at speed. Development Plans and the systems approach needs to factor in climate mitigation and adaptation infrastructure, nature based solutions for biodiversity and health and well-being of our communities, rural and urban.

With reference to education and skills development, EAUC-Scotland supports the six priority areas outlined in the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP). However, stronger emphasis, action and support could be placed on learners currently within the education system. It is crucial that today's learners, as well as yesterdays and tomorrows, are equipped with the skills and knowledge to help create and shape a net zero Scotland.

Presently, outside of core sustainability topics, many learners remain dependent on interested teaching staff to link a learner's topic to how this can support a sustainable Scotland. Furthermore, learners often lack key behavioural traits and soft skills including personal leadership, team development and collaboration, and an understanding of their own needs and learning styles (as highlighted in EAUC and Change Agents UK October 2020 Report – [Future Graduate Skills: A Scoping Study](#)).

Consequently, EAUC-Scotland recommends that the CCPu and CESAP include further provision and support for current learners and teaching staff, including:

- Proactive review of curriculum content by SQA ahead of original course review timelines;
- Embedding of Learning for Sustainability principals and methods within teacher training and support for newly qualified teachers to embed these within schools;
- Inclusion of sustainability criteria, including curriculum content, within the How Good Is Our College assessment framework;
- Include sustainability criteria as part of college and university research funding applications;

- Ensure secondary school learners have the opportunity to undertake formal leadership and learning development exercises, such as Myers-Briggs or Belbin Tests.

Q5. To what extent do you think the CCPu delivers a green recovery?

EAUC-Scotland believes that the comprehensive range of proposals and policies in the CCPu will deliver a green recovery. The FHE sector is certainly able to help to stimulate this for the reasons set out above e.g. heat decarbonisation of our estate, our procurement strategies with short and resilient supply chains.

For instance, the FHE Sector is able to act as a willing partner in city wide district heating that is brought forward via Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES). If we can act as anchor loads for planned district heat networks it helps to de-risk the cost of capital investment in the heat network for example. This is already happening at the new National Manufacturing Institute (NMIS) which is currently being constructed. At NMIS and the surrounding AMIDS site, the University of Strathclyde and Renfrewshire Council and Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme (LCITP) are partnering to enable the ambient heat loop network that will take waste heat from Laigh Park STW and distribute it to the AMIDS and NMIS site next to Glasgow Airport. This is an example of the sort of collaboration, innovation, vision and commitment that is needed to enable a green recovery.

Yours sincerely,



Matt Woodthorpe, Scotland Programme Manager, EAUC-Scotland