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|  | **LINK Members’ Congress 2015**  **Realising the Sustainable Development Goals in Scotland**: the crucial role of LINK |

**Monday 16 November, Hilton Hotel, Dunblane**

**Background** This Members’ Congress will explore with others in the policy community what it means to be an effective environmental non-government organisation. We will hear from speakers with good experience at the heart of government, business and environmental organisations who will share their insights about how eNGOs and the private sector help to shape change, and their observations of what it means to be effective.

In facing up to challenging environmental needs and responsibilities, the lines between the roles of government, charitable, and business sectors are tending to get less distinct. All sectors agree we must work together to realise sustainable development goals, using the diversity of roles, skills and approaches to maximum effect. This is an opportunity to reflect on how this is working out in practice, particularly for the environment and for the environmental NGO sector, itself with a wide agenda and a very diverse range of skills and approaches. There will be time to share experiences of what is going well and not so well, to assess why, and to discuss some of the strategic issues LINK and its members need to be thinking about in relation to our role as citizen led environmental non-government organisations.

**Who is it for?**   
All LINK member bodies and Supporters – Directors and Staff, Trustees, Honorary officers and Volunteers. We warmly welcome others with an interest in how the voluntary sector contributes to realising Sustainable Development Goals. Contact Alice Walsh [alice@scotlink.org](mailto:alice@scotlink.org) or Karen Paterson [karen@scotlink.org](mailto:karen@scotlink.org) to reserve your place.

In the evening we will be joined by the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, **Dr Aileen McLeod** MSP, for a networking reception including a buffet dinner.

LINK Members’ Congress is held over 2 days, the second day for internal LINK meetings – the AGM and Strategic Planning.

**Next steps**Please complete the booking form overleaf to reserve your place in good time before **15 October.** Choose one workshop from the programme. The case studies will be chosen to best reflect the interests and experience of participants.

**Venue** The venue is the Doubletree by Hilton Dunblane Hydro. It is a 10-15 minute walk from Dunblane railway station. Please let us know in advance if you need assistance, as pick up can be arranged.

**Realising the Sustainable Development Goals in Scotland**:   
the crucial role of LINK

**Programme** *Registration and coffee from 10.00*

**11.45** **Welcome** and aims of the day, **Helen Todd**, LINK Chair

**12.00** **How the eNGO sector can help in realising SD goals** a Government perspective, including the value of the ‘critical voice’ among other roles. **Bridget Campbell**, Director, Environment and Forestry Directorate, Scottish Government.

**12.15 Both sides now**. Reflections on the strengths of the eNGO sector from **Ross Finnie**, LINK President and former Environment and Rural Development Minister.

**12.30** **How the private sector influences government and the wider policy community** How the private sector works with Government and the wider policy community - perceptions from **Ross Martin**, CEO Scottish Council for Development and Industry.

**12.45 Partnership working between eNGOs and government**: How effective has partnership working between eNGOs and government in Scotland and beyond been; strategic considerations and perspectives. **Jonathan Hughes,** Chief Executive of the Scottish Wildlife Trust, former LINK trustee and a member of the global Council of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

**13.00 How strong and independent is the eNGO voice?** An analysis of the effectiveness of eNGOs in relation to solving the biodiversity crisis and other challenges over the last 20 years. **Deborah Long**, former LINK Chair, head of Plantlife Scotland and convenor of LINK’s Wildlife Forum.

**13.15 Lunch**

**14.15 Workshops** reflecting above discussions with case studies relevant to participants (potential topics below, these may change). Participants choose **one topic** in advance.

1. **The roles of government, the eNGOs and the wider policy community in effecting change**: *potential case studies from – land use; forestry*
2. **How the private sector influences government and the wider policy community including eNGOs:** *potential case studies from – the marine sector; deer management*
3. **Partnership working between eNGOs and government**: *potential case studies from – wildlife crime; national parks*
4. **How strong and independent is the eNGO voice?:** *potential case studies from – wildlife protection; agriculture & food*

Each workshop to draw out:

1. evidence of success in moving towards environmental sustainability with emphasis on the eNGO contribution involved
2. what this has meant in practical and strategic terms for different eNGOs
3. how past experience should inform future action
4. new ways of working to consider to increase impact & improve environmental outcomes.

**4.00** **Plenary discussion**

**5.00 Final remarks** – and implications for LINK, member bodies and other sectors to consider

**6.30** **Networking drinks and dinner** until late. The Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, **Dr Aileen McLeod** MSP, will join us for the evening.

**Congress 2015 Booking Form**

Please reserve a place for me at the LINK Congress 16 &17 November 2015 at the Hilton Hotel Dunblane

Name:

Organisation: Email address:

Any special dietary needs (vegetarian options are routinely provided):

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| **For LINK Members**  Workshop preference:  Dinner……………………………………………………………………………………………Yes/No  Accommodation required overnight ………………………Yes/No  Single room (supplement applies)………………………………………………...Yes/No  Attending Tuesday AGM & Strategic Planning meetings ………..………………………………Yes/No  **Cost to members** for the 2 days including accommodation is £80 (shared twin). For a single room £110. Monday’s discussions and evening (including dinner) £60. Evening only £40. Conference only £30. |

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| **For LINK Supporters and Guests**  Workshop preference:  Dinner ………………………………………………………………………………Yes/No  **Cost**  Monday discussions £30. Conference & evening £60. Evening only £40  If you would like to stay overnight, please use [this link](http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/E/EDIDUDI-GSCEL-20151111/index.jhtml)\* to make your booking direct with the Hotel **by 15 October.** The cost will be cheaper than via other websites. |

Please return this **booking form** and appropriate **payment** to [alice@scotlink.org](mailto:alice@scotlink.org), [Karen@scotlink.org](mailto:Karen@scotlink.org) or post to Scottish Environment LINK, 2 Grosvenor House, Shore Road, Perth PH2 8BD to arrive **by 15 October.**

You can pay by cheque to ***Scottish Environment LINK***or by BACS to sort code 16-58-10 Account no: 20041411 with ref: LINK Congress, your surname and organisation. Invoice /receipt issued on request. **Payment must be received by 15 October.**

\*http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/E/EDIDUDI-GSCEL-20151111/index.jhtml