LINK GATHERING Discussion and action points SEPTEMBER 2007, PERTH
Behaviour Change – Getting Ahead of the Curve

PRESENT
LINK Members: Alistair Beeley, NEMT; Andrew Fairbairn, WTS; Anne Youngman, BCT; Calum Duncan, MCS; Dave Morris, RAS; Drennan Watson, Cairngorms Campaign; Duncan McLaren, FoES; Frank Bracewell, FoLL and SCNP; Gordon Gray Stevens, SNW; Gus Jones, BSCG; Helen McDade, JMT; Ian McCall, RAS; Ian Price, RSPB; Jenny Mollison, SAGS; Jess Pepper, WWF; John Mayhew, NTS; Jonathan Wordsworth, CSA; Jonny Hughes, SWT; Judy Wilkinson, SAGS; Jules Weston, WWFS; Lloyd Austin, RSPB; Michael Scott, LINK Hon Fellow; Niall Lobley, SCRA; Nigel Hawkins, JMT; Peter Stevik, HWDT; Richard Spencer, McofS; Roger Powell, SCRA; Sena MacKay, Saltire Society; Simon Milne, SWT; Simon Pepper, LINK Hon Fellow
Staff: Adean Lutton, Alice Walsh, Jen Anderson, Jane Herbstritt,

Apologies: Buglife; Butterfly Conservation; Scottish Raptors Studies Group; Soil Association Scotland; Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; Bob Aitken, LINK Hon Fellow

1. BACKGROUND
In its discussions around the celebration of LINK's 20th anniversary year, the LINK2020 project highlighted the need for environmental NGOs to engage in a wider movement for individual action in response to climate change. The LINK Campaigns Review Group also gave similar conclusions, proposing an analysis of the barriers to change and ways that the LINK network can help member bodies and their supporters to act.

Simon Pepper was therefore contracted in July to firstly explore the 'case for concern and initiative' more widely within LINK, and also with other allies in the wider voluntary sector and with stakeholders in government and business, and secondly to provide a broad scoping on a range of ideas, options and mechanisms to consider in relation to LINK's internal forward programme of work and potentially in terms of shared action with other networks.

The outcomes of these consultations were circulated to LINK members and a LINK 'gathering' was organised in September 2007. John Mayhew, LINK Chair, chaired the meeting to review LINK's position on climate change and to consider the best way forward for LINK's future work programme and campaigns. John introduced the day by saying that LINK's three strategic aims of exchanging information; engaging in informed debate and agreeing on joint collaborative actions were also the aims of the gathering.

A summary of the main points from the presentations given by Duncan McLaren and Simon Pepper, and the outcomes from the workshops and discussions are given below.

2. SUMMARY OF THE TWO MAIN PRESENTATIONS
Duncan McLaren: Climate Change Facts and Implications for LINK
Using a series of graphs, charts and diagrams Duncan summarised the current status of knowledge about climate change, including that
• the increase in carbon emission and the effects of climate change is very fast; the rate of melting of the Greenland icecap is increasing exponentially because the melt waters, being darker than reflective ice, are absorbing more infrared radiation; climate modelling is now considered accurate - as certain as the certainty of the theory of gravity; the timescales for icecap melting is in decades rather than centuries; most of the world's cities, particularly in China and the Far East are with 15m of sea level
• people individually account for 44% of carbon emissions, and so each person's actions can make a difference
• three tipping points are: loss of permafrost land due to increased air temperatures as this land releases methane and other stored gases; the increase in the number and areas of wildfires; and the acidification of the oceans

Duncan concluded that LINK should be urging for 80% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Other points raised by Duncan were:

The implications of climate change for Scotland are for example, costs of new coastal protection measures and sustainable flood management; changing agricultural systems; and support for businesses affected negatively, such as fisheries and tourism.

Wider implications are that as climate change moves into mainstream politics, the influence of LINK and environmental NGOs will decline; with poor carbon accounting, there will be more opportunities for green cons and endorsement by LINK or its members could easily be misplaced; there will be apparent choices between climate change and other environmental values – e.g. tidal power vs estuarine habitats or biofuels vs set aside; and new politics and new governance will emerge as current political systems are not geared up to tackle such long-term transitions.

Areas where LINK might need to do more included: wider campaigning on climate to influence businesses and public; work on non-energy sources of emissions (such as transport, agriculture, waste); engagement with local authorities; making climate change a 'social justice' issue; climate reporting and accounting; and integrating adaptation.

Duncan concluded by summarising the different views of climate change as follows:

View	Taken By
There is a problem, but it might be exaggerated/ won't affect voting choices	Business, People, Politicians
Most emissions come from other countries, so we can or even should do nothing	People, Politicians
It will be expensive and inconvenient to cut emissions/make us uncompetitive/raise taxes	Business, People, Politicians
We can't make a difference alone (but I will if you will)	People, Politicians
Most of the public won't accept higher prices for greener products	Business
Consumers have to take responsibility	Business

Simon Pepper added that, from Duncan's analysis, it was clear that there were three levels of imperative:
- The world's human population must change the way that it meets its needs, especially in relation to energy
- Scotland cannot isolate itself from this obligation
- We need to change soon.

He also pointed out the dangerous distraction of the 'denial industry', fanned by the media which feeds on controversy. The facts of climate change were indisputable, and denial was more about an unwillingness to accept the implications – an issue of behaviour rather than scientific fact.

The points discussed by the meeting included: the general public have a misunderstanding and sometimes mistrust of science and we need to engage with why and what people misunderstand; the issues should be driven by morals and values and not just scientific facts; we all have to become comfortable with uncertainty and changing situations; that environmental NGOs are considered more trustworthy than businesses or politicians; the scale of climate change and the messages are too big and overwhelming for an individual to take on; people's experiences affect what they do or think.

Simon Pepper: The Emerging Agenda on Behaviour Change
   The role of the people is crucial. 44% of emissions are produced directly by people; as voters and customers their attitudes and actions also empower (or hinder) the roles of government (laws and regulations, incentives and penalties) and business (goods and services for the customer);
   • To date the tactics of all sectors seeking to influence behaviour change are chaotic – inconsistent, over-reliant on 'inform, advise, expect action'; uncoordinated, poorly targeted, and distracted by denial issues;
   • There is a need to deliver a whole enabling framework, in a consistent and co-ordinated way:

CONDITIONS NEEDED	WHO DELIVERS (bold = main role)
Physical alternatives	**Govt Business** Media NGOs
Regulation/enforcement	**Govt** Business Media NGOs
Financial stimulation	**Govt** Business Media NGOs
Education/information	Govt Business **Media NGOs**
Social modelling/support	**Govt Business Media NGOs**
Organisational change	Govt **Business Media NGOs**
Values and morality	**Govt Business Media NGOs**

- The last three categories of this framework are key in effecting behaviour change ,taking much more account of social psychology;
- There is great potential for a collaborative approach between the sectors in the right hand column of this framework;
- NGOs (including Link) have unique access to key audiences;but must clean up their own act first, if they are to have credibility;
- Other sectors, (government, agencies, social NGOs, Local Authorities, business networks,) are keen to discuss potential for collaboration.

For LINK and its member bodies, Simon concluded by suggesting that we should:
Accept the case for action
Commit to actively contributing
Do it yourself, i.e. get own house in order
Influence own audiences
Collaborate with other sectors

The points discussed by the meeting included: who is the real audience and the importance of targeting it; LINK is in a strong position that it can reach both government and people, and the government will act if they feel they have public support; we need to tell people the level of change required; the importance of continuous, adaptive dialogue; whilst these issues are urgent, LINK and its members need to allow time for development and to get things right; members may need to have organisational change and this requires time and internal discussions; some organisations may not achieve this on their own and may need peer or LINK support; organisations need to make their mission statements consistent with the climate change agenda; different parts of an organisation may be at different stages; this requires time to plan and co-ordinate, and it may require a longer timescale with big changes coming later; recognise and acknowledge what has been done already by an organisation; this is a process of people co-learning their way to solutions and it is important that an organisation gives time and an opportunity for structured reflection. Organisations are like people in the way they respond to change.

3. SUMMARY OF THE FOUR WORKSHOPS
The four workshop groups considered the eight proposals below, each giving particular consideration to two, with the following conclusions:

FOR LINK MEMBER ORGANISATIONS:
1. Emissions audit, commitments, monitoring, reporting
Yes. Useful to have chart of progression and commitments by all to moving forward on that, ticking as they go. External consultant could help ensure consistency of approach. Important that all learn from each other's experience and that we share that within and beyond LINK.

2. Learn about mass behaviour change, what helps and hinders
Yes. All want to interact better within the membership and more widely and this must involve two-way dialogue, with listening by all parties essential for learning process. Also important to learn about the way in which business promotes behaviour change. And to explore the need for a 'different kind of politics' (Duncan McLaren). Starting point could be a seminar with someone like Chris Rose. The network's own Education Officers are a key resource.

FOR LINK:

3a. Assistance in preparation of an emissions audit and climate change position statement audit for every LINK member
Yes. Guidance from LINK, or members further down this road on this, will be really helpful. The focus may be more on members' operations and staff than their memberships, and on Scotland, rather than wider. Statement should cover env impact in general, not just carbon. NGO operations on land owned/managed/advised on (e.g. allotments or reserves) are also relevant. A checklist provided by LINK of the points which should be considered will be useful. Also sources of information. Can SEPA play a role for us here? Who should verify after? Getting these statements out into the public domain also matters.

3b. Good advice/guidance/training/materials on climate change communications
Yes. Important that LINK helps members by having consistent advice ready (FAQ-style). This should be done at group level, not individually – get people together to share best practice; could be smart and do this locally, rather than nationally. This needs a 'big soundbite', i.e. short statement of how important climate change is and what it means for Scotland. Involve grassroots in developing guidelines. And there is a need for wider communications beyond LINK. See http://www.11thhouraction.com/ which relates.

4. Develop climate strategy for LINK providing role differentiation between different member organisations
Yes. But make sure we have our policies in place before we define the strategy of how to get there. See under 5 and 6 below, before reading further.
Once the policies are in place (see 5,6) the strategy will involve carrying on our task force and day-to-day advocacy, with additional multiple audits. We should audit and recognise the strengths of each organisation and ensure this is a flexible process which allows growth and encourages involvement at various levels, joining as soon as they can, and staying on board till the 'end' of the process.

5. Clear policy on climate change/energy
Yes. Agree common policy focussing on obvious things (targets, reporting) by developing our existing work plans in more detail. Aim to have not too much detail so as to prevent sign-up but sufficient detail to avoid divisions. This will involve revisits to our climate and energy policy and development of other policies such as land use, transport which are not yet fully included. The policy should be referred to as our 'climate' (not 'energy') policy. Sign-up should reach up and down member organisations to include boards, trustees and departments not normally involved in the network's operations. Approach should be to seek consensus, not 'compromise'.

6. Clear policy on transmission and renewables and locational issues
Yes. Covered by and part of the policy and sign-up process at 5.

7. Combined advocacy package (e.g. 'Make it Easy') aimed at government and business
Yes. A Menu of related measures covering the whole Link agenda, contributing to the 'enabling framework'. Should include proposal for a bank of information on what you need to know, what to do, advice on consumer choices; also use of iconic figures to show it is easy.

8. Link Communications Task Force
Yes but clarity required on remit, i.e. responsible for driving LINK programme forward? Or part of such a package and assisting, advising and bringing advocacy support to our policy conversations? NB not taking over climate change communications from member bodies, but adding strategy and co-ordination value. Could have a useful training role especially on integrating existing advocacy with new messages. A simple guide on climate change communications would be most useful for member bodies.

9. In addition ,the following proposals were added to the list:
- Development of **a 'pledge'** to assist members in signing up (we accept the case; here's what we will do) promoted to members by LINK Board/President
- A clear process for deciding the **content of the behaviour change menu** for the supporters of member bodies;
- Clarity about the **action for members** to pursue and the **actions for LINK**
- Pursuing wider **cooperation with other networks**
- **Securing resources** to support the network in taking this all forward (perhaps best sought in partnership with other sectors)
- More thinking on **solutions to unblock government and business**

In summarising John Mayhew noted that the meeting had shown strong to full-scale endorsement for all the proposals.

4. 2. NEXT STEPS: SUMMARY OF THE ACTION POINTS AGREED

Workshop hosted by Scottish Government
Simon Pepper reported that the SG was keen to fix a date for a workshop hosted independently, and pulling together representatives of various sectors (NGO, government, business and more). To acknowledge the need for an enabling framework and discuss how each sector can help to address this. LINK delegates would be needed and the 2020 group would invite volunteers including Simon Pepper. Simon reported positive interest from other NGO networks he had consulted, in being involved in this, and wider discussions. Given the level of endorsement indicated by the day's discussions the feeling of the meeting was that LINK must be involved in this important workshop, fielding delegates on the back of this gathering to represent the LINK agenda proposed above. Caution needed to maintain emphasis on climate change. Link sign up would be needed for any proposed commitments emerging from this process. Both SNH and SEPA would be involved in the proposed joint workshop.

Other points agreed
Endorsement of these proposals and the additional ideas would help the next stage with Ministers. The key was in shifting people from passive support to active engagement, at first around the powerful issue of climate change, but leading on to other issues that need their engagement.

The challenge is getting as soon as possible onto a trajectory which will achieve 80% emissions reduction by 2050 - and for that we must engage as NGOs.

The meeting noted that whilst task forces need to be kept informed of the plans and discussions, and many of them will be involved in revising our common climate position (including energy, transport, land use) the burden of a programme of behaviour change should not fall to them necessarily; other departments of member bodies and their operations will be important including membership, development, media and communications.

The meeting agreed to build in effective evaluation to the programme of work, and assess the value of outcome in relation to effort. This would need to relate to levels of commitment made at the outset by member bodies and LINK.

The need for a strategic lead group for what would be a 'mega-project' was agreed. Perhaps along lines of the erstwhile campaign strategy group, but needing to be more cohesive, more effective, with chair-level involvement and a mix of skills including communications and marketing, sensitive to the challenge and the agenda.

The meeting agreed that the 2020 steering group (currently involving four honorary fellows, two board members and two to three staff) should propose appropriate make-up of the lead group.