



News Release from Scottish Environment LINK

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Green challenges to a new government

Scotland's environmental groups challenge the government to do more

As ministers and MSPs return to the parliament this week, a coalition of all Scotland's major environmental organisations have set them a challenge: Take a lead on the environment now, or soon Scotland will not be able to cope with climate change, or reverse the trends of loss of wildlife and the exhaustion of Scotland's resources.

In their report 'Scotland 2011: Scottish Environment LINK's Challenge to the New Scottish Government', which was delivered to ministers and MSPs today, the 34 organisations behind the challenge set out their vision for a sustainable future for Scotland and provide solutions for how to get there.

John Mayhew, Chair of Scottish Environment LINK said:

'A new government brings new opportunities for action. Our challenge to this government is to show leadership in tackling climate change, resource depletion and the loss of species and habitats that threaten to unravel the ecosystems on which this planet and all our futures depend'.

The report calls attention to the urgent action needed in thirteen different environmental areas, from issues of biodiversity to woodlands.

Dr Deborah Long, Conservation Officer at Plantlife Scotland and Vice-chair of LINK said:

'Scotland has an international commitment to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010, and the continuing loss and deterioration, coupled with climate change is making this commitment harder and more urgent. Even species we think of as common, like skylarks, cuckoos and juniper are in decline. We all need to work hard to halt the decline in these species. The Scottish government needs to ensure that funding is there to let farmers and land managers maintain high quality habitat.'

The report also highlights the need for more consistent environmental policies, in particular if Scotland is to be able to deal with the pressures of climate change.

Dr Dan Barlow, Head of Policy at WWF Scotland said:

'Climate change is the most pressing issue we face and the proposed Climate Bill gives parliament a huge opportunity to set Scotland on a path towards a low carbon future. Scotland's environmental credibility rests on the parliament rising to the challenge and ensuring this Bill requires cuts in climate pollution year-on-year. However, the government will have to resolve current policy contradictions where support for greater car use and more flying undermine meaningful progress to tackle climate change.'

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS:

(1) 'Scotland 2011: Scottish Environment LINK's Challenge to the New Scottish Government', is available at www.scotlink.org

(2) John Mayhew, Chair of Scottish Environment LINK, is available for comment.

(3) Scottish Environment LINK (LINK) is the network for Scotland's voluntary sector environmental organisations. LINK has 34 member organisations spanning interests across the natural environment and associated cultural heritage, representing around 500.000 members. Further information on LINK is available at www.scotlink.org

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