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Just Transition Commission: engagement event

Background

In March 2020, 65 representatives from a range of industries, sectors and community groups joined a virtual meeting hosted by the Just Transition Commission, to learn more about the work of the Commission, to ask questions and to begin to consider tangible actions that could be put in place to ensure a just transition to a net-zero economy in Scotland. This short report captures the outputs of the meeting.

The work of the Commission

The Just Transition Commission was set up by the Scottish Government to provide Scottish Ministers with practical, realistic and affordable advice that would allow action to:

- Maximise the economic and social opportunities that the move to a net-zero economy by 2045 offers
- Build on Scotland's existing strengths and assets
- Understand and mitigate risks that could arise in relation to regional cohesion, equalities, poverty, and a sustainable and inclusive labour market.

The Commission includes representation from business and industry, academia, trades unions, and relevant campaign organisations. A full list of Commissioners and member profiles can be found [online here](#).

They published an [interim report](#) in February 2020, drawing together the work completed in 2019 and looking ahead to the coming year. The interim report highlights the need for: clear transition plans, developed in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders; broad societal engagement around a just transition and its challenges; and ensuring that equity concerns are central to decisions and policies related to climate change. The interim report includes 12 initial recommendations covering a range of policy areas, including fair work, agriculture, oil and gas, heating and energy efficiency. An executive summary of the report is included as appendix one.

The Commission has already started to engage with a wide range of businesses and communities across Scotland, with plans to continue this engagement throughout 2020.

Slides from the event are included as appendix two.

Questions from participants

The bulk of the virtual event was dedicated to questions from participants. These questions covered a wide range of topics. These are summarised below, with the response from the Commission. Recommended next steps are highlighted where relevant.

Question area	Response
The support available for different sectors to prepare plans for a just transition to net-zero.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some sectors are already developing plans – for example, oil and gas – that can serve as examples for collaboration within a sector and resulting sectoral plans.First steps are to ensure that sectors work collaboratively with full range of stakeholders.
Adaptation and mitigation plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Commission agreed with the need for adaptation and mitigation of climate change to be considered together and will be developing recommendations that take into account the needs of different sectors and communities.
Concerns about whether the 2045 target is enough to combat climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Commission has been set up to advise on the manner of the transition, with the emission reduction targets taken as given. Ensuring there is a just transition is their primary focus – and there is a risk that making too many changes too quickly might lead to further injustice.
(Re)Training and skills, and the role of education in the transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifying and then delivering the right training will be essential to ensure a just transition, developed in collaboration with the education sector, government and a range of employers. This includes retraining and upskilling the existing workforce so that they are able to deliver the jobs that are required now and in the future.
Calls to focus on the opportunities as well as the challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Commission is looking at the opportunities that a just transition can create, as well as how to address the challenges.
Consideration of the impacts on wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Biodiversity is not being tackled explicitly but the Commission acknowledge that it is a key concern and linked to climate change action.
How to ensure that the work of the Commission, and the focus on a just transition, is shared widely	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Commission is focusing on engaging more widely during 2020. So, Commissioners called for people in the meeting to get actively involved, helping to share the work of the Commission with colleagues, families and friends.
How the Commission can impact COP26 and the	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There was a need to manage expectations about the work of the Commission, whose role is to raise the issues and

Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan	<p>questions with the Scottish Government and to develop a set of recommended actions. It will not be able to answer everyone’s questions about tackling climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants represented organisations, such as ECCL, that have already been doing research in the area that could be shared. Commissioners were keen to get to know what existing work/ approaches have already been developed. They encouraged the participants to respond to the call for evidence.
The importance of sharing existing knowledge and expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have already been some changes that have opened up competition in tariffs, which has been good for some consumers but not all. There is a recognition across the Commission that the Scottish Government will need to offer assistance and support to help make homes more energy efficient, and to support the transition to cleaner fuel.
Challenges related to fuel poverty in current system, and how this will be managed through the transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission supported the greater use of virtual communications. Actions identified included helping businesses to develop platforms that are easy to use and access; supporting libraries, community centres and job centres to provide skills training and to support to people wanting to get online; and sharing examples of where it already works.
How virtual communications technology is being considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioners agreed that engaging young people in their work was critical to its success, not least because any recommendations made by the Commission – and resulting policies – would have greatest impact on young people.
The involvement of young people in the work of the Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the Commission has been established to report to Scottish Ministers, they are working within a context where not all matters are devolved. There is mutual benefit for Scotland and the Westminster government to work together, so recommendations will flag what the Scottish Government can do and what other groups might need to consider.
The extent of the recommendations beyond the Scottish Government	

Other topics raised included: the challenge of securing sustainable jobs in a globally-competitive market; the need for transport to consider options other than a move to just electric vehicles, including the availability of public transport to different communities; the importance of recognising the differing challenges and opportunities for rural communities; how the move to

decarbonisation would be managed; and how the Commission would ensure that recommendations would be sustainable as new science emerges.

There was general consensus – from participants and Commissioners – that the Scottish government would need to provide additional support to help the transition. A focus on generating practical, tangible actions should be at the forefront of consideration over the next period, and the Commission called for participants to share their ideas.

Next steps

The Commission is planning further public engagement opportunities during 2020, with details to follow. The next opportunity to get involved is through the [online consultation](#), which calls for written responses to a number of specific questions. Responses are invited before the closing date of 28 May 2020.

Stay in touch

Participants are invited to keep in touch with the work of the Commission [online](#), on [Twitter](#), or by [emailing the Commission team](#). We hope to use the attendee list from the March event to contact participants with relevant information.

Interim Report - Executive Summary

Scotland stands at a critical point on its journey to a net-zero emissions economy. The next phase of emissions reduction will have a much more visible impact on people's day-to-day lives. This brings significant opportunities, but also challenges that will need to be managed.

The imperative of a just transition is that Governments design policies in a way that ensures the benefits of climate change action are shared widely. The costs must not unfairly burden those least able to pay, or whose livelihoods are directly or indirectly at risk as the economy shifts and changes.

The Commission's interim report is divided into four sections. The first three outline emerging themes from the Commission's work to date and set out plans for the year ahead, with the fourth providing 12 initial recommendations.

The report ends with an open call to evidence: we want our process to be open and to have taken fully on board the views of people and organisations across the country.

1. Planning ahead - the need for clear transition plans to be developed.

- For the opportunities and challenges of decarbonisation to be managed, clear transition plans for individual sectors must be developed.
- These should include a route map of investments in infrastructure and skills and be co-created with industry, trade unions, communities and other relevant stakeholders.
- We suggest that the Scottish Government might consider creation of transition plans as part of developing work on the Green New Deal.
- We will also consider what it believes is an appropriate framework for these plans during 2020. We have already commissioned a report on approaches to just transition internationally.

2. Engagement – society's expectations

- This section outlines the need for on-going, proactive dialogue with those that will be most affected by the transition to net-zero; communities should be partners in transition, rather than passive bystanders. We also recognise the opportunity for Scotland's citizen's assembly on climate change to play an important role.
- We also highlight the importance of engagement with business to highlight opportunities of the net-zero economy.

3. Bringing equity to the heart of climate change policies

- This section highlights that the 'just transition' debate needs to move beyond a narrow focus on jobs to a more holistic definition encompassing health, inequalities and consumer issues.
- Mechanisms are needed across all areas of government to identify equity considerations and ensure they are reflected in policy development.
- Over the next year, the Commission plans to investigate various impact assessment tools that could help the design of policy (this includes building on engagement we have made with NHS Health Scotland).

4. Opportunities and the need for immediate action

- Our work will continue throughout this year, but we don't want the Government to wait for our final report (early 2021). Our report finishes with a call for immediate action, highlighting a number of preliminary conclusions that we hope will assist the development of the Government's approach.
- We have highlighted 12 areas of opportunity for action in the year ahead. These are initial recommendations, and should not be used to prejudge the final conclusions of the Commission.

- I. Ensure Fair Work is promoted across climate change programmes receiving public money**
- II. The development of the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan includes assessment of workforces most likely to be affected by the transition and the most immediate and pressing skills requirements needed to support the net-zero transition.**
- III. Place equity at the heart of the Climate Change Plan update**
- IV. Ensure the future of Agriculture support post-2024 reflects the importance of just transition for the sector**
- V. The establishment of a Citizens Assembly on climate change in Scotland that reflects and supports the Government's desire to apply just transition principles to Scotland.**
- VI. Promoting Scotland's approach to just transition at COP 26 and taking the opportunity to learn from others**
- VII. Building on the success of energy efficiency initiatives and support them to expand**
- VIII. Managing the opportunities and challenges of the transition to low-carbon heating**
- IX. Begin planning for and delivering inclusive low-carbon infrastructure now**
- X. Place the climate emergency at the heart of spending decisions**
- XI. Improved modelling and research to help understand the transition**
- XII. Support and enable the oil and gas industry to transition**



Just Transition Commission

A fair response to climate change



Programme

1. Introduction to the Just Transition Commission:
 - Overview of work to date and interim report
 - Work plan for the year ahead
2. Discussion and questions
3. Introduction to the areas of focus
4. Discussion and questions
5. Next steps and close

Aims

- Increase public awareness of the work of the Just Transition Commission
- Develop a vision for a just transition
- Explore tangible next steps for the work of the Commission

Injustice can impact:

- Working people
- Community cohesion
- Consumers

The Just Transition Commission agreed at very first meeting to consider all three.



Just Transition Commission

Interim Report

Professor Jim Skea (Chair)



The Commission is to....



... provide practical, realistic, affordable recommendations that will support Scottish Ministers take action that will:

1. Maximise the economic and social opportunities that the move to a net-zero economy by 2045 offers
2. Build on Scotland's existing strengths and assets
3. Understand and mitigate risks that could arise in relation to regional cohesion, equalities, poverty (including fuel poverty), and a sustainable and inclusive labour market

Commissioners



Prof. Jim Skea (Chair)

Lang Banks - representing WWF Scotland

Colette Cohen - CEO, Oil & Gas Technology Centre

Prof. Mike Danson - Professor Emeritus in Enterprise Policy, Heriot-Watt University

Richard Hardy - representing Prospect Union

Charlotte Hartley - representing 2050 Climate Group

Norrie Kerr - Director, Energy Action Scotland

Rachel McEwen - Chief Sustainability Officer, SSE

Dave Moxham - representing STUC

Kate Rowell - Chair, Quality Meat Scotland

Tom Shields - CEO, Spring Rise

Prof. Karen Turner - University of Strathclyde, Centre for Energy Policy

Interim report - context



Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019

2019 asp 15

The Bill for this Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed by the Parliament on 25th September 2019 and received Royal Assent on 31st October 2019

An Act of the Scottish Parliament to amend the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to make provision setting targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases emissions and to make provision about advice, plans and reports in relation to those targets, with the objective of Scotland contributing appropriately to the world's efforts to deliver on the Paris Agreement reached at the 21st Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

COP 26 GLASGOW



UNITED NATIONS
CLIMATE CHANGE
CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 2020

BiFab 'loses out' on 'vital' wind farm contract

By Douglas Fraser
Business and economy editor, Scotland

© 7 March 2019

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Just Transition Commission Background



Interim report Summary

- The need for clear transition plans to be developed – in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders.
- The need for broad societal engagement around the transition
- Ensuring equity concerns are front and centre in climate change policies
- 12 initial recommendations covering a range of policy areas, including fair work, agriculture, oil and gas, heating and energy efficiency

Interim report

Initial recommendations

- **Example 1:** Ensure Fair Work is promoted across all climate change programmes receiving public money
- **Example 2:** Building on the success of energy efficiency initiatives and support them to expand
- **Example 3:** Ensure the future of Agriculture support post-2024 reflects the importance of just transition for the sector

Plans for the year ahead

Just Transition Commission - call for evidence

Overview

The [Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\)\(Scotland\) Act 2019](#) recently passed by the Scottish Parliament contains some of the most ambitious statutory emission reduction targets in the world. The transition required to meet these targets will be one of a number of long-term structural changes to the economy that will require a response and active management from the Scottish Government.

Against this backdrop of increasingly ambitious emission reduction targets, calls for fairness in climate change action and securing a 'just transition' have grown. Originating from the trade union movement, the concept of just transition refers to the need for Governments to take action to reduce emissions in a way which is fair and leaves no-one behind.



Final thoughts

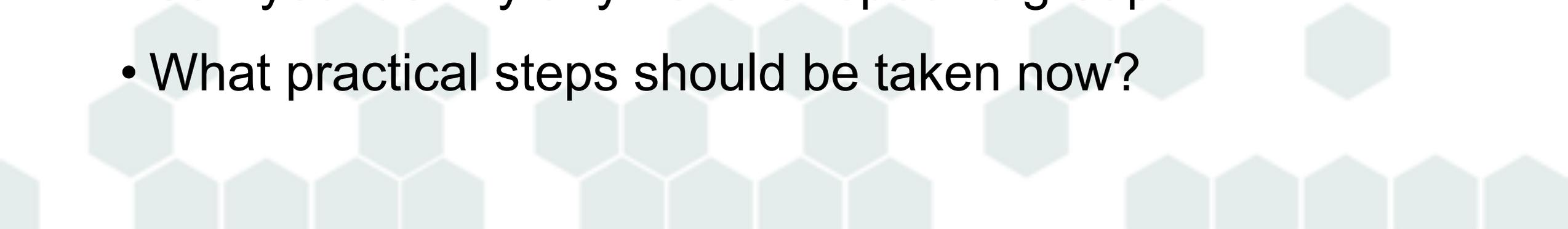
“The imperative of a just transition is that Governments design policies in a way that ensures the benefits of climate change action are shared widely, while the costs do not unfairly burden those least able to pay, or whose livelihoods are directly or indirectly at risk as the economy shifts and changes.”

Just Transition Commission

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Discussion and questions

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- 
- What is your vision for 2045
 - What is needed to achieve that vision?
 - What role(s) should government (local and national), business and individuals play?
 - Can you identify any risks for specific groups?
 - What practical steps should be taken now?
- 



A Just Transition for workers

Richard Hardy (Commissioner)





A Just Transition for **consumers**

Charlotte Hartley (Commissioner)



Learning from the past



- Examples from the 2010's where the benefits and costs have been 'unfairly' apportioned
 - For example, the benefits of feed-in-tariffs on solar versus the costs across all electricity consumers
- 

If transition planning is the answer....

- How can we anticipate the injustices before they arise?
- Better impact evaluation?
- Greater openness of impacts?
- More collaboration between governments, agencies, regulators, utilities and employer?
- Plan for the last adopter, not the early adopter?



A Just Transition for **communities**

Norrie Kerr (Commissioner)



Differing impact of net-zero transition on communities

- **Transport** – connectiveness of rural communities, but also opportunities for inclusive low-carbon interventions
- **Agriculture** – impact of reducing emissions on communities where agriculture makes an important contribution to the local economy
- **Housing** – how emissions are reduced in a way which doesn't lead to increase the numbers of people experiencing fuel poverty – especially important for vulnerable 'left behind' communities

Example in detail: Fuel Poverty

- By 2040 all Scottish homes achieve an EPC C (where technically feasible and cost effective).
- Maximise the number of social rented homes achieving EPC B by 2032.
- Private rented homes to EPC E by 2022, to EPC D by 2025, and to EPC C by 2030 (where technically feasible and cost effective)
- All owner occupied homes to reach EPC C by 2040 (where technically feasible and cost effective).
- All homes with households in fuel poverty to reach EPC C by 2030 and EPC B by 2040 (where technically feasible and cost effective).

Example in detail

Fuel Poverty



Household and Property characteristics

The majority of households in fuel poverty (79%) are on a low income (under £300 per week)

The majority of households in fuel poverty (83%) are older households and those where all adults are under 65 with no children

Nine out of ten households in extreme fuel poverty (89%) are on a low income (under £300 per week)

Nine out of ten households in extreme fuel poverty (88%) are older households and those where all adults are under 65 with no children

Household characteristics

Property characteristics

The majority of households in fuel poverty (58%) are in private properties

Eight out of ten households in fuel poverty live in flats/terraced/semi's

23% of households in fuel poverty live in a property with an EPC of E, F or G

Eight out of ten households in fuel poverty live in properties built pre-1982

Two thirds of households in extreme fuel poverty (67%) are in private properties

Eight out of ten households in extreme fuel poverty live in flats/terraced/semi's

35% of households in extreme fuel poverty live in a property with an EPC of E, F or G

Eight out of ten households in extreme fuel poverty live in properties built pre-1982

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Discussion and questions

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Workers

- How can we ensure **workers have a voice** (alongside business and Government) in discussions about how decarbonisation is managed?
- What needs to change to make sure this can happen?
- How should **businesses support their workers** during a transition? You might think about areas like upskilling, flexible working, or business responsibility to help with parking levy, etc.

Consumers

- How do you think **consumers could be affected** by a transition to a net-zero carbon economy (positively and negatively)?
- Is there enough **visibility of consumer issues** in relation to the transition? In what sectors is greater awareness of consumer issues needed? You might think about sectors like energy/electricity; agriculture; housing; or transport, etc.

Communities

- How are the opportunities and challenges of decarbonisation **different for communities across the country?**
- What are the **main divides?** Rural/urban? Wealth/deprivation?
- How do you think the rural economy will be affected? How can the **Scottish Government best support the rural economy** though the transition to net-zero?

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Next steps

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Consultation

Why We Are Consulting

The Commission's remit tasks it with working openly and transparently and engaging meaningfully with workers, communities, NGOs, businesses and other relevant bodies across Scotland.

To support this, we are inviting written submissions to inform the development of our final recommendations. We hope this will provide as wide a range of individuals, representative bodies, public bodies and businesses as possible the opportunity to feed into our work.

[Read the consultation paper](#). More information can be found on [gov.scot](#).

Give us your views

[Begin consultation](#) >

<https://consult.gov.scot/just-transition-commission/just-transition-commission-call-for-evidence/>

**Consultation closes:
28 May 2020**



<https://www.gov.scot/groups/just-transition-commission/>

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