

Edward Mountain MSP
Convenor
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee
c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Wednesday, 20th December 2023

Dear Convenor,

TARGETS FOR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY BILL

We, a group of organisations with environmental and social concerns, are writing to you to follow up on evidence heard during Committee evidence sessions on the Circular Economy Bill.

During our own evidence sessions some of the organisations listed here discussed the need for targets in the Circular Economy Bill but were unable to expand on what they wanted those targets to be.

We welcome the Minister's letter of 15th December 2023 which sets out how we have shared detailed suggestions on targets with the Scottish Government and we include examples of these below.

Letter on carbon based consumption targets

On 1st September 2023, a group of 24 organisations wrote to both the Minister and the Committee setting out the key argument for carbon based consumption targets. This included the following recommended amendment to the Bill:

“Scotland should adopt a target to reduce its global carbon footprint to net zero by 2045, with an interim target by 2030, based on 1998 levels, with annual targets towards these goals.”

The letter also set out why carbon based consumption targets should be adopted, other details of what should be included and examples of similar targets adopted internationally.

Circular Economy Bill consultation responses

Many NGOs included suggestions for targets in their consultation responses on the Bill in August 2022. Some examples are set out below.

Friends of the Earth Scotland

“Carbon-based consumption targets

Scotland should adopt a greenhouse gas emissions based target to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint to zero by 2045, with an interim target to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint by 75% by 2030 based on 1998 levels. Without targets to guide our actions, Scotland will not achieve our climate goals, on which our future depends. This target is the minimum which the science tells us must be achieved by Scotland if we are to stay within the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement.

Material-based consumption targets

Scotland should adopt a materials-based target to reduce Scotland's material consumption by 57% (8 tonnes per person) by 2045, with an interim target to reduce material consumption by 30% (13 tonnes per person) by 2030 based on 2017 levels."

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

"The setting of a clear (and statutory) greenhouse gas emissions-based target to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint to zero by 2045 (with an interim target to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint by 75% by 2030) would be an ideal policy to be able to report in the next Climate Change Plan."

Scottish Environment LINK

"Scotland should adopt a target to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint to zero by 2045, with an interim target to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint by 75% by 2030 based on 1998 levels.

Scotland should adopt a materials-based target to reduce Scotland's material consumption by 57% (to 8 tonnes per person, considered sustainable levels and already achieved by the Netherlands) by 2045, with an interim target to reduce material consumption by 30% (13 tonnes per person) by 2030 based on 2017 levels, using Scotland's annual publication of its Material Flow Accounts.

LINK members would also like to see a reuse target and a more ambitious food waste target of 50% by 2030."

These examples illustrate some of the recommendations on what the targets should be in the Bill. We want to ensure that, when the committee is considering recommendations for amendments, that it has a full understanding of the specific requests of eNGOs.

The opportunity to include appropriate circular economy targets in the Bill is critical to its effectiveness. They are the key first step in creating a truly sustainable and fair circular economy in Scotland, which must be done as soon as possible to combat the devastating impacts of climate change. We urge the Committee to support amendments to the Bill that would include mandatory consumption based targets.

We would be happy to discuss this issue with the Committee or provide any other information you may require.

Yours sincerely,

Kim Pratt, Circular Economy Campaigner, Friends of the Earth Scotland
Franciele Sobierai, Communities' Reduce Reuse & Recycle Project Coordinator, ELREC
Matt Lewis, Policy Manager, Circular Communities Scotland
Liz Murray, Head of Scottish Campaigns, Global Justice Now
Joaquin Blasco, Plastic-Free Scotland Communities
Simon Kenton-Lake, Senior Officer, Nourish Scotland
Catherine Gunby - Executive Director, Fidra
Calum Duncan, Head of Conservation Scotland, Marine Conservation Society
Peter Hearn, Head of Planning and Development, RSPB Scotland
Line K. Christensen, Partner Advocacy Officer, SCIAF
Becky Kenton-Lake, Coalition Manager, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland