



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Màiri McAllan MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net
Zero and Just Transition
Scottish Government

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee**

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

By email only

netzero.committee@parliament.scot

2 November 2023

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Guiding Principles on the Environment

Guiding Principles on the Environment

As you will be aware, the Committee recently considered *Scotland's Guiding Principles on the Environment: Statutory Guidance*.¹ No motion to not publish the guidance had been laid and we agreed to make no recommendations on it. As you know, this means the document can now be published and become operable. This reflects stakeholder views (in written evidence to the Committee) that it is time to get the principles, guidance, and related obligations on the Scottish Ministers and public authorities into operation.

However, the responses we received from stakeholders when we sought views on the guidance did indicate that implementation, monitoring and development of the guidance will be key to the success of the environmental principles. The Committee intends to review progress in these areas over the remainder of this Parliamentary session. To this end, we have some initial questions for you relating to how implementation will be monitored and encouraged.

1. What mechanism have you created to capture and record whether and how bodies have due regard to the principles, so that this can be monitored and scrutinised?
2. How will you ensure that public bodies are supported in carrying out these new duties, in order to ensure that the guidance will make a practical difference?
3. Could you provide some examples of how you would like to see the principles applied in areas that are less obviously environmental?

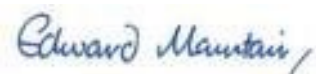
¹ [Scotland's guiding principles on the environment: statutory guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-s-guiding-principles-on-the-environment-statutory-guidance/pages/1-introduction.aspx)

4. Do you consider that the Scottish Government and UK Government approach to environmental principles to be complementary? If not, how will any practical difficulties arising from differences be addressed?
5. How will the guidance be updated in future? What timescales have you set for a future review of the guidance?
6. How do you plan to gather information about real examples of the principles in operation to enable that to feed into any review of the guidance?

I would be grateful for a response to these points by 28 November 2023.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward Mountain".

Edward Mountain MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee