

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net Zero and Just
Transition
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Edward Mountain MSP
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

21 November 2023,

Dear Edward,

I wish to inform you that the Scottish Government has issued a consultation which seeks views on how our water industry needs to adapt to the impacts of the climate emergency. I have attached a copy of the consultation which is also available on this link: [Water, wastewater and drainage policy consultation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/water-wastewater-and-drainage-policy-consultation)

The policy proposals are designed to protect our water, sewerage and drainage services; better understand the impacts of climate change on these services; and, maximise the benefits that can be delivered for the people of Scotland.

In March 2022, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) set out a series of recommendations in its independent assessment “Is Scotland climate ready? 2022 Report to Scottish Parliament Recommendations (theccc.org.uk)”. In this report the CCC identified key areas where Scotland could make improvements to better adapt to the impacts of climate change. The CCC also provided the evidence for the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022), which details the key climate risks facing Scotland now and in the future. This includes risks to businesses from water scarcity and flooding, risks to health from poorer water quality and availability and risks to water infrastructure and public water supplies. The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 stipulates that Scottish Ministers must set out a programme to respond to these risks through a Climate Adaptation Plan which is currently in its second iteration [Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/climate-change-adaptation-programme-2019-2024)

In this consultation document we have considered how we address the risks highlighted and the recommendations made by the CCC. These are set out as choices that Scotland needs to consider in adapting and evolving to the impacts of climate change. In addition to this consultation, we will be consulting on a new Scottish National Adaptation Plan early next year. This will set out a wider response to the risks set out in the UKCCRA across the natural, coastal and marine environments, communities, public services and businesses.

We confirmed in Programme for Government 2023 that there would be a review of water and sewerage services and water industry policy. The outcome of this consultation could inform potential changes to legislation. This would reflect the views collected from the public about how water, sewerage and drainage services need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, including increased temperatures, drought and more intense rainfall. It would also seek to

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modernise existing legislation and align with requirements set out in EU directives on drinking water and wastewater.

We understand that the Net Zero Energy and Transport committee will be interested in this consultation and therefore wish to write to bring it to your attention.

Yours sincerely,

MÀIRI MCALLAN

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