



42% Better and the Report on Proposals and Policies

16 November 2010

The feasibility and added value of meeting 42%

Our recently published report '42% Better'ⁱ looks at the feasibility and added value – in terms of health, economic, and other social benefits - of meeting Scotland's climate change target for 2020. With the Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP) soon to be published, this briefing sets out three recommendations that we believe the RPP needs to deliver in order to meet our challenging targets while ensuring the greatest possible social benefit to Scotland's people.

1. The appropriate ambition

42% Better looks in detail at the feasibility of achieving our 42% emissions reduction target by 2020. Not only does it conclude that this is achievable, what's more, it can be delivered without relying on increased effort from the EU who, through the EU emissions trading scheme, are responsible for a substantial share of Scotland's emissions. ***The RPP must therefore be appropriately ambitious to allow Scotland to meet its targets without relying on increased EU effort.***

42% Better also shows, however, that Scotland is unlikely to deliver a fair and safe cumulative emissions budget without additional effort. If the EU subsequently increases effort, or it becomes clear that additional cost effective reductions can be obtained in other policy areas, such gains should be treated as additional, and not be used as an excuse to reduce effort elsewhere.

There must also be confidence that the measures required to deliver at least 42% without reliance on changes at the EU level will be implemented. This will require funded policies in the short term. ***Proposals to cut emissions must be translated into funded policies.***

2. Maximise the multiple benefits

Through a series of case studies 42% Better looks at the added economic, health and other social benefits that can result from climate measures. The report estimates, for example, that by helping eliminate fuel poverty, home energy improvements could prevent an estimated 180,000 cases of anxiety and depression each year, reduce the number of time people take off work due to asthma and breathing problems by up to 25% and, when coupled with delivery of renewable heating systems, create 100,000 person years of employment between now and 2020.

The report also finds that increasing cycling rates by improving facilities has a particularly positive effect on health. Estimates suggest that a shift from car to cycling to bring about a 40% share of short journeys would save up to 1,672 lives – which translates into annual economic value of up to £2.03 billion. The additional benefits to the economy of higher productivity and less ill health are estimated at £23 million a year, excluding any benefits from reduced traffic congestion.

Moreover, increasing the share of journeys undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport to 50% (the same as in the Netherlands) could cut obesity rates in Scotland in half, saving a significant proportion of the £170million a year the NHS in Scotland spends

tackling obesity or health problems caused as a direct result.

The key tests for the RPP and budget are how they deal with homes and active travel. A national home insulation scheme should be funded with £100 million annually and minimum standards for the private rented sector must be put in place.

A credible route to achieving higher cycling rates must be put in place and at least 10% of the transport budget must go to active travel.

3. Integrate policy, regulation and funding

To fully exploit the benefits of climate mitigation measures, restraints in other areas will also be required. For example, the benefits of active travel are greatly increased when they are placed alongside measures that reduce car-use, such as workplace car park charging, or congestion charging.

The RPP and the Scottish Government Budget should direct money away from measures that increase demand and emissions, including large road-building projects like the second Forth crossing and Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, to those that reduce demand such as energy efficiency and active travel.

Effective and efficient delivery of climate mitigation, and maximisation of the health, social and economic benefits will require integrated action across the public sector. Friends of the Earth Scotland believes there is no case for specific public bodies or types of body to adopt lower aspirations.

The final guidance to public bodies on their climate change duties should require public bodies to report on their action and establish a system of effective scrutiny.

Conclusion

The RPP must build on the findings of 42% Better. It must deliver an appropriate level of ambition to meet our targets and ensure that the focus, and related funding, is directed to those areas that deliver the greatest social and economic benefits. With unanimous support for the 42% target during the passage of the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill, we hope MSPs of all parties will come behind this approach as the RPP is taken through its period of Parliamentary scrutiny.ⁱⁱ

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i Available for download at: <http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk/42percent-report>

ii We will provide further more detailed analysis of the RPP once it is published. This may be through the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland coalition.