



# Climate Change Act Annual Targets: Input to Working Group

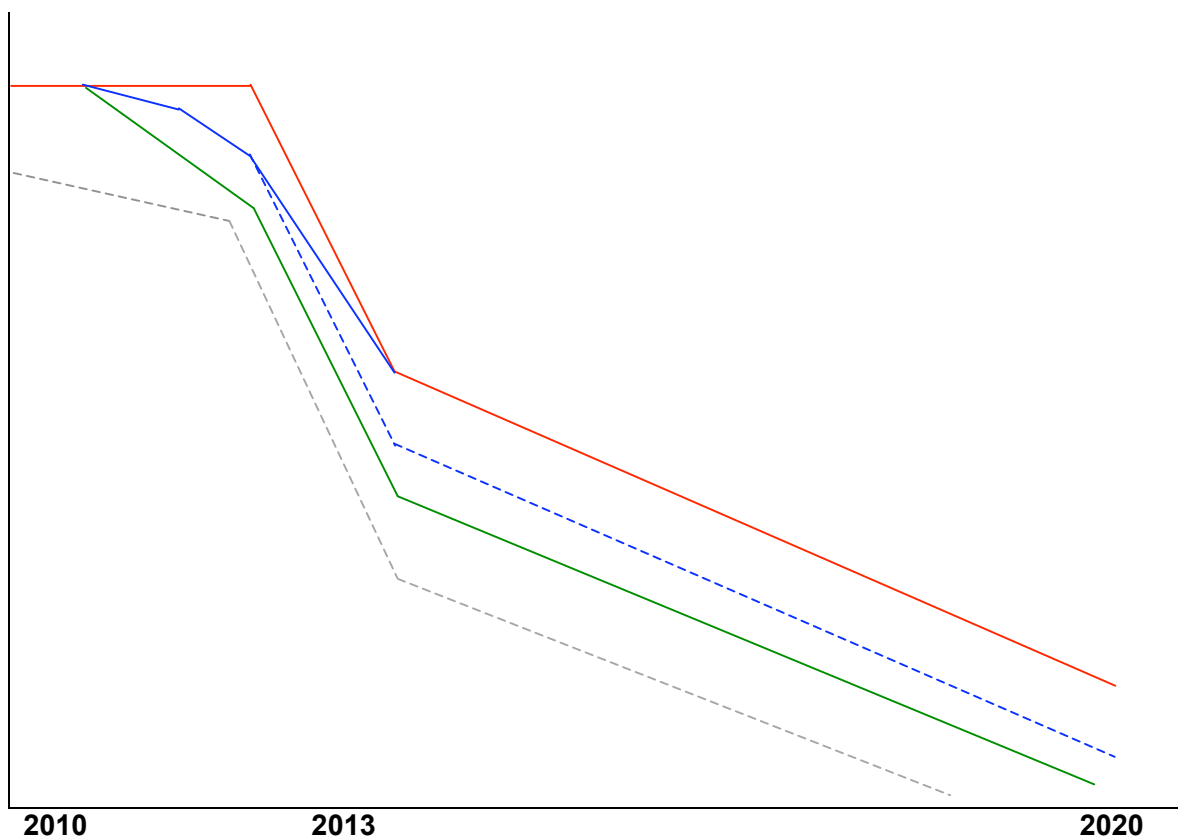
1 June 2010

## Introduction

Friends of the Earth Scotland welcomes the establishment of the new working group to look at the level of emissions reduction targets that Scotland should set over the coming years and the policies required to deliver them. This briefing sets out: why it is the cumulative emissions that are all important; why emissions reductions in the next couple of years should carry through beyond 2013; why the recession means our current emissions could be lower than expected; and finally, what additional policies should be implemented in order to help us deliver higher targets.

### 1. The importance of cumulative emissions

We know the important thing in terms of climate change is the cumulative emissions emitted - the area under the curve. The trajectories outlined below highlight the impact various trajectories would have on cumulative emissions. As can be seen, additional early action makes a big difference to cumulative emissions, but only if this is sustained and not simply offset against expected emission reductions later in the period. Please note that chart is schematic rather than to scale.



- UKCCC trajectory
- Current Scottish Government proposed trajectory
- ▨ Government action in 2012 carries through 2013 trajectory
- Friends of the Earth Scotland proposed trajectory
- ▨ Potential recession scenario

## 2. The need for early cuts to 'carry through' 2013

The Government's SSI proposed emissions reductions of 0.5% for 2011 and 1% for 2012. Given the ETS sector has a flatline trajectory during this time, this effort must come from the non-traded sector and is expected to come from action to restore Scotland's peatlands. From 2013, there will be a big drop in emissions that the UKCCC has said come from the traded sector (in particular through a decrease in the level of carbon permits associated with phase 3 of the EU's emissions trading scheme). Given these two reductions come from separate sectors and distinct policies, any reductions in the early years should be reflected in a continued decrease in the later years. This is not currently the case.

Allowing savings in 2011 and 2012 to 'carry through' would better allow us to lock in action taken in the early years and continue with ambitious action in 2013 – thereby following a lower cumulative pathway. It could be argued that in doing so the Government would be taking better account of a 'fair and safe emissions budget' as required in the Act.

- Recommendation: any savings made in 2011 and 2012 need to feed through the 2013 trajectory and beyond

## 3. Potential effects of the recession

With Scotland and the UK recently going through, and now recovering from a recession, there is the potential that the UKCCC have overestimated Scotland's current emissions for 2010. Given annual targets are set in terms of absolute tonnes of carbon (ie we can emit 55mtc in 2012) we could be in the potentially perverse scenario where our targets are actually higher than our current emissions. If this proves to be the case, we would want a commitment from the Minister that these targets were revised to ensure we continue to head in a downward trajectory in accordance with the spirit of the Act.

- Recommendation: the Minister must give a commitment to revise targets if it turns out that emissions are actually lower than we first thought

## 4. Additional policies required

The debate on the Government's SSI showed there is an appetite across Parliament to give greater priority to policies that tackle climate change. We believe the working group set up to could play a potentially significant role in delivering these policies but only if it is prepared to be strong, ambitious and visionary. The 2011 Budget offers a first opportunity to increase the priority given to tackling climate change. The Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee has endorsed spending "in the order of £100-170 million per year over the next decade" on home insulation schemes. Currently only £25 million pa is spent in this area. Similarly active travel is an area which requires far more investment and could reap significant carbon savings alongside health and wellbeing benefits.

We recognise however that there are likely to be budgetary constraints due to cuts proposed by the UK Government. There are however several expensive projects planned that will significantly increase carbon. For example, despite the fact that the existing Bridge can be repaired,<sup>i</sup> the Government is likely to spend £583 million over the next two financial years on a second Forth Crossing.<sup>ii</sup> If this was spent on carbon saving measures we believe we could achieve far more ambitious targets.

There are also things that can be done, through regulation for example, that do not require increased expenditure. With the Calman recommendations set to be put in place by the 2011 elections, parties should commit now to using some of these powers in a green manner. This could involve lowering the speed limit from 60mph to 50mph on rural roads or implementing a taxation system that offers incentives and sanctions around waste collections.

Finally, with the UK Government committing to the 10:10 campaign, we believe that the Scottish Government and perhaps more importantly, local Government, should send a clear sign about its commitment on this issue and pledge to reduce operational emissions by 10% over 12 months.

- Priority must be given to spending on measures that decrease carbon, such as in energy efficiency, with consideration also given to appropriate regulatory or taxation measures such as speed limits and waste collection

## Conclusion

Parliament has given a clear signal that it wants greater priority given to tackling climate change in the next couple of years. This cross party group could help push more ambitious action but only if locks in early savings; accounts for the potential impacts of the recession; and looks seriously at financial, regulatory and operational measures that will help Scotland reduce its emissions in the coming years.

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i Friends of the Earth Scotland supports the maintenance of a road bridge across the Forth. A study undertaken by W A Fairhurst and Partners found that replacement of the main cables is technically possible at a cost of £122m.

ii Rehfisch, A (2010) SPICe briefing on the Forth Crossing Bill, online at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/research/briefings-10/SB10-05.pdf>