



Summary

The impacts of COVID-19 have plunged us into multiple crises. On top of the catastrophic health impacts, Scotland is entering a recession, with thousands of jobs lost or at risk. All of this comes against a backdrop of climate breakdown. Friends of the Earth Scotland believes this makes it imperative that our economic rebuild is driven by a **Green Jobs Recovery** - building a resilient economy and tackling the climate emergency whilst creating decent, green jobs.

Friends of the Earth Scotland has identified steps that should be taken to deliver a Green Jobs Recovery. The Programme for Government must mark the start of this process, introducing policies that will create these green jobs, such as:

- **Delivering a programme of public green job creation** in areas like energy efficiency, and sustainable transport.
- **Committing to give no public money for new fossil fuel developments**, making any bailouts conditional on supporting a Just Transition.
- **Mapping the skills needed for the zero-carbon economy** and begin funded, targeted training programmes to address the gaps.
- **Shifting government spending away from polluting projects**, such as road expansion towards creating green jobs.

The need for a Green Jobs Recovery

Tens of thousands of people have already lost their jobs in Scotland as a consequence of COVID-19, with the unemployment rate here higher than other UK nations and expected to continue to rise.¹

Meanwhile, 2020 marks the start of a crucial decade in the fight against the climate emergency, with a target of reducing our emissions by 75% by 2030. Our recovery must align with our climate change objectives, seizing the opportunities that exist in green jobs.

Why green jobs?

Research, such as the recent report from Transition Economics and the STUC², has shown that the green infrastructure projects can create over 100,000 good jobs in green industries and supply chains. Zero-carbon interventions can create more jobs, deliver

higher short-term returns per pound spent, and lead to increased long-term saving than high carbon alternatives.

However, achieving this will require greater Government intervention, to stimulate job creation in the right places, while planning a Just Transition for workers in sectors linked to high emissions.

Kickstart public green job creation

Creating the right jobs requires the right interventions. To kickstart a Green Jobs Recovery, Friends of the Earth Scotland believes the Scottish Government should:

- a. **Double the scale of Scotland's energy efficiency programme** - tackling fuel poverty, reducing emissions from heat, which represent 55% of Scotland's energy use³, and creating new skilled jobs nationwide

¹https://www.holyrood.com/news/view_unemployment-in-scotland-highest-in-the-uk-at-43-per-cent

²http://www.stuc.org.uk/files/Scotland_Report.pdf

³ [Scotland's Heat Policy Statement, 2015](#)

- b. **Invest in sustainable transport** - target building walking and cycling infrastructure, new electric buses, developing battery technology, and the electric vehicle charging network. Improved transport can create jobs and support more people travelling to work and education.
- c. **Begin a timetable of works to install renewable heating across Scotland**, mapping the skills needed to expand genuine renewable heat technologies like heat pumps and heat networks.

No public money for fossil fuel infrastructure

Scotland is not yet on track to meet the new climate targets set last year, and investment in a green recovery with one hand cannot be undermined by continuing to spend public money on fossil fuel developments with the other.

Any support for business during the recovery process must come with strict conditions to support a Just Transition to a zero-carbon economy. This means funding being targeted at supporting workers, while setting binding conditions for cutting source emissions and phasing out fossil fuel extraction for those businesses which have a role to play in decarbonisation, such as transport and energy.

The French Government has set a precedent for conditionality, making decarbonisation demands in exchange for their bailout of Air France.⁴

Map the skills needed for the zero-carbon economy

While some areas of the zero-carbon economy have 'shovel ready' projects, other industries and sectors will require a more long term analysis of the jobs and skills needed for a Just Transition, to ensure sufficient time to build skills in the workforce to meet this demand domestically.

The Scottish Government must take steps to identify the long term skills and jobs demand we require in a zero-carbon economy across all sectors, and a commitment to delivering funded training schemes to close any gaps. The skills mapping carried out should inform a Just Transition Action Plan and broader national strategy.

Crucially, any immediate jobs or young persons guarantees should be aligned with a Just Transition - providing decent job opportunities consistent with our future zero-carbon economy, to ensure long term stability for those workers.

Shift Government spending away from polluting projects

While the Scottish Government is constrained by limited borrowing powers, there are still actions that the Scottish Government can take that do not require additional money.

The Scottish Government should commit to assessing the climate impacts across the lifetime of all projects, removing funding where a project, or entire budget line, worsens the climate emergency. This funding should then be used to support development of projects that will create jobs in the zero-carbon economy and cut emissions.

For example, high carbon projects such as planned trunk road expansions should be halted, with funding diverted into sustainable transport and connectivity. Not only are trunk road expansions poor transport policy, inducing traffic demand, but they score poorly against World Bank recovery criteria.⁵ These funds should instead support sustainable transport and help remote working through better broadband infrastructure.

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⁴<https://www.flightglobal.com/strategy/french-government-sets-green-conditions-for-air-france-bailout/138160.article>

⁵<https://blogs.worldbank.org/climatechange/planning-economic-recovery-covid-19-coronavirus-sustainability-checklist-policymakers>