



A SUSTAINABLE AND RENEWABLE SOCIETY

Policy 1:

The climate emergency is an issue of climate justice and so it is essential that the Scottish Government takes bold and urgent action to meet ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle the climate crisis.

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What's this all about?

Young people told us they are scared of the impact climate change will have on their lives. They worry it will soon be too late to make a difference. Young people want to leave the world a better place for future generations, and they think stopping climate change should be a top priority for decision makers.

"Doing this before we all die would be nice..."

– Young woman aged 14-17, Edinburgh

"We only have one chance at fighting climate change. If we don't take drastic action now, we will all be affected in the near future."

– Young woman aged 18-21, Stirling

What are young people in Scotland calling for?

- Young people call on decision makers to hold large corporations accountable for their role in the climate crisis.

"This needs to be a top priority but it must also be the world's top priority because it only works if everyone does it."

– Young man aged 14-17, Angus

- **The Scottish Government must take meaningful action to achieve its climate targets and to reduce Scotland's harmful impacts on the climate.**

"I was so disappointed when the Scottish Government announced they were scrapping the climate targets. It shows that they aren't dedicated to stopping climate change. I personally believe that if they had kept the target, and worked really hard to reach it, even if the target wasn't reached this would be better because it would show that they are trying. The scrapping of the target just felt like they were losing hope and this makes the public lose hope too. The Government leads our country, they are the ones that make the rules and we look up to them for guidance, so for real change to happen then they need to be committed to making that change."

– Young woman aged 14-17

- **The Scottish Government must take action to ensure young people are meaningfully involved in the effective delivery of the Target 2030 Learning for Sustainability Action Plan.**

"In our lifetime, we are lucky to see specific animals alive but in the next generation, we will only have photos and videos on animals. The sea levels are rising and pollution is getting out of control, we need to make an eco-friendly environment to protect the future generations."

– Young woman aged 14-17, West Lothian

- **Decision makers should take action to guarantee that rural and island communities, and communities furthest from their rights, are not put at further disadvantage by the climate crisis.**

"It feels like it is always people from disadvantaged backgrounds who are disproportionately affected when the government takes action ie with the low emissions in the city centre many people with older cars who couldn't afford new ones were more affected. Therefore bold and urgent action is good but thought should be put into how to mitigate the negative impact this can have on individuals even if it is beneficial for the environment."

– Young woman aged 22-26, Glasgow

- **Young people must be recognised as key stakeholders in any decisions made about tackling the climate crisis, as they will live with the consequences of any action or inaction.**

"Nothing scares me more than climate change – it is my biggest threat as a young person. My future feels scary and uncertain. I need the Scottish Government to do so, so much more to tackle it – and to stop climate deniers having a platform. We need a just transition, net zero, and no new oil and gas for a liveable future."

– Young woman aged 22-26, Glasgow

Evidence and Support

- In [Together Scotland's State of Children's Rights Report 2024](#), children and young people said they are already experiencing the impact of climate change in Scotland, like flooding, air pollution and increased storms. Children and young people are frustrated that those in power aren't doing more to address climate change.
- [Research by Ipsos](#) showed 96% of young people aged 16-24 in Scotland are concerned about climate change.

What has SYP done?

Previous [SYP consultations](#) include [SYP's response to The Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee pre-legislative scrutiny on emissions reduction targets \(2024\)](#) and [SYP's response to the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee's Call for Views on the Circular Economy Bill \(2023\)](#). The [SYP Policy Log](#) includes several policies on sustainability, the climate crisis and greenhouse gas emissions.