

**On 10 October we asked** Scottish MPs to write to the Government to ask them to make sure that the Climate Change Bill is included in the Queen's Speech in November; the Bill should ensure that a 3% reduction per year in greenhouse gas emissions becomes compulsory. Read more about the national campaign at [www.icount.org.uk](http://www.icount.org.uk) and [www.thebigask.com](http://www.thebigask.com). Here's that email and the replies we've received so far (9 November).

If you are concerned about climate change and want the Government to take effective action on it, you could [write to your MP](#) yourself and sign up online to the [i count](#) campaign. Why not [write to one of your MSPs too?](#)

Replies from Charles Kennedy and Alex Salmond are on page 4 :-)  
Tony Blair and David Cameron can be excused since they don't represent Scottish constituencies. No reply from Gordon Brown yet, though....

**From:** SRC Sustainability Group Convenor <[sustainability@src.gla.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@src.gla.ac.uk)>  
**To:** All Scottish MPs  
**Date:** Tuesday 10 October 2006 6:10pm  
**Subject:** From Glasgow students: Please call for Climate Change Bill!

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From the Sustainability Group Convenor  
Students' Representative Council  
University of Glasgow

Tuesday 10 October 2006

To all Scottish MPs

Dear MPs,

The Sustainability Group, a committee of the Glasgow University Students' Representative Council, has asked me to call on you to put pressure on the Government to ensure that a [Climate Change Bill](#) is included in the [Queen's Speech](#) in November. As you know, many of Glasgow's circa 23,000 students come from each of your constituencies to study here; the Sustainability Group includes representatives of several student societies as well as the SRC's President, Vice-President for Student Support, and other elected officers.

We thank you if you are a signatory of [Early Day Motion 178](#), which calls on the Government to introduce a Climate Change Bill to require annual greenhouse gas emissions reductions of 3% combined with provisions for reporting and accountability, and we call on you to sign this EDM if you have not done so.

We call on you urgently to write to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment to ask that a Climate Change Bill, making such yearly reductions compulsory, be included in the Queen's Speech. Please send a copy of your letter to us.

We look forward to your reply, which will be published on the SRC's website.

Yours faithfully,

Duncan MacKenzie, Convenor  
On behalf of the SRC Sustainability Group

Students' Representative Council  
John McIntyre Building  
University of Glasgow  
University Avenue  
GLASGOW  
G12 8QQ

Email [sustainability@src.gla.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@src.gla.ac.uk)  
Tel 0141 330 5360  
Fax 0141 337 3557  
[www.glasgowstudent.net](http://www.glasgowstudent.net)

**These responses were received by 9 November:**

**From [John Thurso MP \(Liberal Democrat\)](#), Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross (10 October)**

Many thanks for your e mail...I am indeed a signatory of EDM 178 and strongly support inclusion of a bill in the Queen's Speech.

**From [Mark Lazarowicz MP \(Labour/Co-operative\)](#), Edinburgh North & Leith (10 October)**

Thank you. I have signed EDM 178.

**From [Mohammad Sarwar MP \(Labour\)](#), Glasgow Central (11 October)**

Will do, I did support Tom Clarke at each reading last time.

**From [Ann McKechin MP \(Labour\)](#), Glasgow North (11 October) (Underlined text: see below)**

I can confirm that I have already signed Early Day Motion 178 supporting the campaign and strongly support the need for continued efforts to combat the effects of climate change.

The Government is fully committed to its Climate Change goals. We are on course to exceed our commitment under the Kyoto Protocol and to cut UK carbon dioxide emissions by about 16 per cent from the 1990 level by 2010, approaching but falling short of our target to cut emissions by 20 per cent. The Government recognises that we need to do more to make progress towards our long term goal of cutting CO2 emission by 60 per cent by 2050.

The Government has welcomed the recent campaign by Friends of the Earth and the Stop Climate Chaos coalition and agrees that interim targets and milestones have a role to play although they do not of themselves reduce emissions. The Government is currently looking at the role of carbon budgeting as a means of helping to deliver our goals.

However, at the present time the Government believes that the proposals for legally binding annual targets are flawed. Emissions fluctuate from year to year due to factors outside the Government's control, such as the weather and the prices of different fuels, as well as the economic cycle. That is why international climate change policy frameworks such as the Kyoto Protocol and EU Emissions Trading Scheme are currently based on five-year phases. There is much debate also about lengthening rather than shortening these phases. A further weakness of the Bill proposed by Friends of the Earth in the Government's view is that it wills the ends without willing the means, containing no actual measures to reduce emissions.

There is a serious debate to be had about legislative frameworks and the role of targets and milestones. I welcome this campaign as a powerful reminder to parliamentarians of the strength of feeling of many of our constituents about the need to take effective action. The Government will be formulating policy on this area in the coming weeks and months and accordingly I have written to David Miliband, Secretary of State for the Environment to request an update on what his Department hopes to achieve over the coming year. I will write to you further once I receive his response.

***We received a further reply from Ann McKechin MP dated 23 October, enclosing a copy of a reply to her from Ian Pearson MP, Minister for Climate Change and Environment. Ian Pearson's letter included the phrases underlined above. It also notably said:***

We [the Government] set out significant individual policy measures in the Climate Change Programme and Energy Review which will likely require primary legislation [i.e. an Act of Parliament] and it is our intention to consult on these in due course. ....

The Climate Change Programme sets out the Government's commitments both at international and domestic levels to meet the challenge of climate change. It also sets out our approach to strengthening the role that individuals can play. There is no choice to be made between action at international, national and personal levels – all are essential. The programme also sets out the Government's commitment to report to Parliament annually on the level of greenhouse emissions in the UK and steps taken to reduce these. ....

**From [Jo Swinson MP \(Liberal Democrat\)](#), East Dunbartonshire (13 October)**

Thank you for taking the time to write to me. As you may be aware from my previous correspondence, I share your concerns about climate change, and I appreciate your particular concern at the lack of progress currently being made in the UK to meet emissions reduction targets. As you may already also be aware, along with all of my Liberal Democrat colleagues in Parliament, I have signed Early Day Motion 178 to show my support for a Bill to tackle the problems of climate change. You can view this motion, now signed by 397 MPs, by following this link <http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=28373&SESSION=875> I also raised the issue of the need for a Climate Change Bill in an adjournment debate on Climate Change in Parliament yesterday. You can read my contribution to this debate by following this link

<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2006-10-12a.485.0&s=speaker%3A11971#g529.2>

I also understand your wish to ensure that legislation is passed as swiftly as possible requiring year-on-year cuts in CO2 emissions. I agree that the Government is not delivering on actions necessary to tackle the threat of Climate Change and domestic targets of a 20% cut in greenhouse emissions on 1990 levels by 2010 look certain to be missed if the current trends continue. International targets agreed under Kyoto are more modest still, but even these could be missed if the Government does not take further action.

I have therefore now written on behalf of all of my constituents at Glasgow University to the Rt Hon David Miliband, Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, to bring this issue to his attention. I have passed on our concern that without regular milestones, the Government will fail to meet its CO2 emission reduction targets, and I have requested that he consider the introduction of a Climate Change Bill to address this issue.

**From [Katy Clark MP \(Labour\)](#), North Ayrshire and Arran (16 October)**

I have signed Early Day Motion 178 which, through the work of campaigning organisations like Glasgow University Sustainability Group has been signed by 398 MPs making it the most supported Early Day Motion in the Parliamentary session 2005/06.

Over the course of the past year I have also supported a Private Members Bill through its various Parliamentary stages which has now made it onto the statute book as the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act. This Act puts a duty on the Secretary of the State for the Environment to produce an annual report before Parliament outlining what steps Government departments have taken to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases during the previous year. The Act also requires the Secretary of State to report on the level of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK for the previous calendar year and whether they have increased or decreased.

More needs to be done still to ensure that the threat of climate change is tackled and I support the calls for a new Climate Change Bill which will make yearly reductions in greenhouse gas emissions compulsory. I have been contacted by a number of constituents regarding this issue and I am writing to the Prime Minister and to David Milliband, Secretary of State for the Environment stating that I would like to see such a Bill in this years Queens' Speech.

I will forward copies of these letters to you by post so that you may pass this onto your membership.

**The following letter from [Malcolm Bruce MP \(Liberal Democrat, Gordon\)](#) to the Secretary of State for the Environment was forwarded to us, dated 17 October:**

Dear David [Miliband, Secretary of State],

As Vice-Chair of Globe UK and Vice-President of Globe International which organises the G8+5 Climate Change Dialogue, I am a keen supporter of the growing campaign for the introduction of a Climate Change Bill in the forthcoming Queen's Speech.

Given that both Kyoto and domestic targets for a 20% cut in 1990-level greenhouse emissions by 2010 look certain to be missed judging by current trends, I would like to add my voice to those constituents and campaigners who are asking the Government to commit to introducing legally binding targets on cutting carbon emissions in order to tackle climate change.

As a Liberal Democrat, I recognise that in order to cut UK emissions by at least 60% by 2050 only binding annual targets will allow us to secure and monitor year on year reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. There needs to be a real and firm commitment at both national and international levels if we are to successfully tackle climate change, therefore I would also appreciate your comments on what recent discussions you have had with our European partners in the EU on this important issue.

The Liberal Democrats together with other opposition parties in Parliament as well as many Labour Members support the idea of a Climate Change Bill in the forthcoming session, and it is my hope that recent media reports which suggest the Government is considering such a move will bear fruit in the Queen's Speech next month.

I look forward to hearing your comments.

**From [Gavin Strang MP \(Labour\)](#), Edinburgh East (18 October)**

I am pleased to be able to confirm that I support EDM 178 and have signed it.

I will also be writing to David Miliband, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to add my voice to the call for a Climate Change Bill to be included in the next Queen's Speech.

**From [Alex Salmond MP \(Scottish National Party\)](#), Banff & Buchan (23 October)**

You will be pleased to note that I have already signed EDM 178... I have also forwarded a request to the Prime Minister that a Climate Change Bill is included in his Queen's speech next month, although I have grave concerns that he will use any such opportunity to try and further impose support of nuclear power.

As you will be aware, the Scottish National Party and I share your concerns over climate change, and is in full support of alternative energy as a means of drastically reducing carbon emissions. Scotland harbours some 25% of the renewable energy resources in Europe and the SNP would support the exploitation of these in favour of carbon-based technology. I can understand that huge onshore windfarms will continue to meet with a high level of objection on aesthetic grounds, however, the energy-producing potential for offshore windfarms is greater by far, and I see that as being the optimum choice.

I have also actively promoted the introduction of 'carbon capture' technology being implemented in offshore oil fields. The Scottish National Party is also committed to a nuclear-free Scotland, to avoid the hazards of even more nuclear waste being left as a legacy to future generations.

**Mr Salmond enclosed a copy of his letter to the Prime Minister dated 9 October:**

Dear Prime Minister,

I have been approached by a number of constituents and other interested parties, who have expressed their serious concerns over climate change, and have requested that a Climate Change Bill is included in your Queen's speech next month.

I would be very much obliged if you would address these concerns, and give me a response that I might share with my constituents.

**Mr Salmond also enclosed a copy of an SNP policy document on the environment, which can be accessed at [www.snp.org/policies/environment/Environment](http://www.snp.org/policies/environment/Environment)**

**From [Charles Kennedy MP \(Liberal Democrat\)](#), Ross, Skye & Lochaber (7 November)**

Thank you for contacting me regarding the need to adopt legally binding targets on cutting carbon emissions in order to tackle climate change. I have myself signed EDM 178.

The last century has seen the Earth experience the greatest period of warming in the last thousand years. The force behind this is the release of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, which are at their highest ever recorded levels. We are already witnessing the impact of a changing climate across the globe, the destructive hurricanes in the US, and extensive flooding closer to home. Yet these are only a precursor to far worse possible events, which could happen as a result of climate change induced by human activities.

The government is not delivering on actions necessary to tackle this threat. Domestic targets of a 20% cut in greenhouse emissions on 1990 levels by 2010 look certain to be missed if the current trends continue. International targets agreed under Kyoto are more modest still, but even these could be missed if the Government does not take further action. Carbon emissions are up by 3 per cent since 1997.

The Liberal Democrats therefore recognise that in order to cut UK emissions by at least 60% by 2050, the UK must have binding annual targets, to secure and monitor year on year reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. There needs to be a real and firm commitment at national and international levels if we are to successfully tackle climate change.

The Liberal Democrats are trying to build a cross-party consensus on the issue of climate change in order to ensure that this issue remains at the top of the political agenda. In our view, targets are a key first step to change providing that there is also the political will to adopt measures such as our proposed green tax switch – taxing pollution, with lower taxes on income – to change our behaviour.

**[Pete Wishart MP \(Scottish National Party\)](#), Perth & North Perthshire sent us a reply dated 30 October, enclosing a copy of a letter from Ian Pearson MP, Minister for Climate Change, similar to the one which Ann McKeichin MP sent us (see above) representing the Government's position. He also enclosed a copy of an SNP press release entitled [It's Time for Real Action on Climate Change](#).**

**From [Rosemary McKenna MP \(Labour\)](#), Cumbernauld, Kilsyth & Kirkintilloch East (1 November)**

I am in no doubt as to the catastrophic consequences of not dealing with climate change now, and the fact that the Government has taken the unusual step of announcing the inclusion of a Climate Change Bill in this year's Queen's Speech is indicative of the importance this Government puts on tackling this vital international issue.

I await the publication of the Bill with great interest and the inception of a domestic legal framework for carbon emissions reductions.

Thank you for contacting me on this issue, and please be assured of my support in fighting climate change and I look forward to giving the Climate Change Bill my full support in the House of Commons.