

Scotland's climate change plan can't just be for Scots: what we want to see from the updated Climate Change Plan

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The climate emergency has not gone away. Global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions have not been sufficient to prevent global warming. For many people around the world, the effects of climate change are already here. Every day, communities in the global south face droughts, floods, cyclones and heatwaves.

When the Scottish Parliament passed the new Climate Change Act in 2019, it recognised that in order to meet Scotland's ambitious climate change targets it would need to embrace policies not just to shape what we do in Scotland but internationally too.

In order to meet this commitment, Scotland's updated Climate Change Plan must do three things. Firstly, it must show how it will support developing countries to reduce emissions and, more crucially, how it will support them to adapt to the effects of climate change that are already happening. Secondly, it must be aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thirdly, it must embrace climate justice; those most affected by climate change are also those who have done the least to cause it.

By increasing Scotland's Climate Justice Fund, we can achieve all three. Projects like the [Climate Challenge Programme Malawi](#) help communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change, such as drought and flooding. It supports farmers to develop new techniques that will protect their crops against climate change for decades to come. It works with communities to diversify their incomes through solar projects and achieve truly sustainable development.

Despite the impact the Climate Justice Fund has, it has been stuck at £3million per year since it was first launched in 2014. Back then, we celebrated Scotland's ambition for climate justice. But that was before the IPCC's stark warning in 2018, calling for urgent action to limit global warming to 1.5°C. It was before Cyclone Idai hit Malawi and southern Africa in 2019. It was before coronavirus pushed millions of people further into poverty. £3million is no longer enough.

For the Climate Justice Fund to match Scotland's ambition, and for it to achieve real change in the fight against climate change, it must be increased. It is vital this increase does not come from existing sources of international development funding. The challenges of global poverty did not go away because climate change happened. Climate is yet another battle that communities must fight on top of other poverty issues.

Scotland's update to the Climate Change Plan takes place in the midst of two massive events: the global coronavirus pandemic and next year's COP26, when all eyes will be on Scotland and the UK. COVID-19 and climate have worsened global inequalities. They have hit the poorest and the most marginalised the hardest. Now, more than ever, is the time for Scotland to show global

leadership. Now is the time to transform our world for the better and to tackle climate change head on.