



Stop Climate Chaos Scotland
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Gillian Martin MSP,
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Rural Affairs,
Scottish Government
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Thursday 28th May, 2026

(sent by email to Gillian.Martin.msp@parliament.scot)

Dear Gillian,

Congratulations on your re-election as an MSP, and subsequent appointment as Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Rural Affairs. It was a pleasure to work with you on many issues in the last Parliament and we look forward to this continuing.

As you are aware, [Stop Climate Chaos Scotland](http://www.stopclimatechaos.scot) (SCCS) is the largest civil society coalition in Scotland, with over 70 organisations campaigning together on climate change. Our members include environment, faith and international development organisations, trade and student unions, and community groups. We believe that the UK and Scottish Governments should take bold action, across all relevant policy areas, to tackle climate change, with Scotland delivering our fair share of action in response to the Paris Agreement and supporting climate justice around the world.

SCCS therefore welcomed your party's pledges, during the election campaign that:

- *"Scotland will play its full part in tackling the climate and nature emergencies";* and
- *"We will end Scotland's contribution to climate change by 2045 in a just and fair way which protects jobs and livelihoods."*

and look forward to these being reflected in your government's early actions and the Programme for Government.

The recommitment to a policy of achieving net zero by 2045 is very welcome. The delivery of the policies and proposals set out in the [Climate Change Plan](http://www.climatechangeplan.scot) (CCP), as adopted in March 2026, must be a priority – but this must also be considered as a first (and minimum) step to keep on track to achieve this ambition. There must also be a recognition that there is a significant risk that the pathways outlined in the CCP will not deliver sufficient emissions reduction – given its significant reliance on NETs, and the lack of sufficient (or delayed) action on agriculture, heating and transport.

Thus, alongside implementation of the CCP, the new Scottish Government will need to:

- Set out the evidence and rationale for its predictions in relation to NETs;
- Finalise and publish an Energy Strategy, including a clear plan for a just transition away from fossil fuels;
- Protect and enhance the carbon storage and sequestration potential of our land, especially peatlands and woodland, and seas, especially the carbon-rich sediments in the key sea-lochs identified in recent research (see [SCCS briefing on blue carbon](http://www.stopclimatechaos.scot)).
- Review and strengthen proposals for emissions reduction in the agriculture sector, and seize opportunities to achieve more while protecting and enhancing sustainable food production.
- Introduce a Heat in Buildings Bill within the first year, along with supportive regulatory action and adequate funding; and
- Set out clearer, firmer and bolder ambitions to deliver modal shifts in transport.



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In particular, I note that your new portfolio will span climate action and rural affairs, and I hope this will provide you an opportunity to ensure that agriculture and other rural, nature and marine policies can work more effectively to deliver emissions reductions, carbon sequestration and adaptation.

In addition to the actions above to reduce emissions, Scotland has also been a leader in international climate justice. We hope your government will continue and enhance this leadership, building on your manifesto commitment to “grow the Climate Justice Fund” and “*to fostering a new global approach to Loss & Damage*”.

Addressing climate change (both reducing emissions and adapting to its impacts) must be a cross-government priority. As such, we hope you will introduce strong governance, led by yourself, to ensure that all parts of government and its agencies are delivering. We welcome the adopted CCP's enhanced focus on delivery, but also commend [the recommendations of CERG](#).

One area where strong cross-government commitment is needed is in relation to funding and revenue raising. In this regard, the proposed Private Jet Tax is a welcome first step, but further action is needed to adapt tax policy to ensure that the largest emitters contribute the most and that sufficient revenue is available to fund a just transition.

We also welcome the SNP's commitment to “*introduce a Human Rights Bill in the next Parliament*”. I would like to assume that this would include provision for a safe climate as a core and substantive feature of the Human Right to a Healthy Environment, as this is clearly such a central component.

In March 2026 SCCS wrote to the Government highlighting our concerns regarding the development of hyperscale AI data centres and the lack of information regarding how such new systems would be powered without generating new private fossil fuel power systems. As an immediate step we would ask that the government give real serious consideration to a pause on these developments until a clear assessment of their impact on our climate targets and electricity supply capacity.

SCCS was pleased to work closely with you in the previous government and hopes that this will continue over the coming years. I would very much welcome a meeting, in the near future, to discuss priorities and your immediate plans – and will ask our Coalition Manager, Fraser Sutherland, to contact your office to identify a mutually convenient date.

I am aware that some of the matters mentioned above will be the ‘lead responsibility’ of others with whom you will work across government, and am therefore copying this letter to the Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Energy, Stephen Gethins; the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport, Stephen Flynn; the Minister for Agriculture, Marine and the Islands, Jim Fairlie; and the Minister for Equalities and International Development, Simita Kumar.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Mike Robinson OBE
Chair, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland