

# Response ID ANON-D55J-UCXJ-J

Submitted to **Just Transition Commission - call for evidence**

Submitted on **2020-04-27 08:20:40**

## Questions

### 1 What do you see as the main economic opportunities and challenges associated with meeting Scotland's climate change targets?

#### Please explain your view.:

We believe there are opportunities associated with meeting the climate change targets and believe that the Caithness and North Sutherland area could act and roll out pilot projects that could underpin concepts which in turn would provide good lessons for other others to either avoid or adopt.

Our area would be well suited to delivering some of these pilot projects to ensure that concepts are maximised prior to rolling out a further set of initiatives/schemes across the country.

On low carbon transportation – the policy already announced sets out the net zero carbon air travel region will be in 2040. As our airport at Wick/John O'Groats is under threat and a business plan to bring in a PSO has been provided to Scottish Government Minister and Transport Scotland we believe that this area would be well suited to become the first airport to lead in developing hybrid and fully electric aircraft technology and build on the trials underway in Orkney.

There is a proposal for an electric shuttle train between Thurso and Wick. This could greatly improve economic performance of our area by allowing work/ study/ shopping trips and could be carbon neutral with only a very few transfers from road to rail.

We have huge tidal power resource which is held back by lack of contracts for difference from UK Government. Whilst we are aware of the research money put in by Scottish Government, we believe more could be done by joint working. Meygen is proposing to power a data centre from its tidal source and this would reduce carbon whilst providing much-needed jobs in our area.

There is a raft of initiatives that could be supported in our area that is covered in the ROSE business plan and has been discussed within CNSRP. These include:

- Local food production
- Local university low C research centre
- Circular economy
- Satellite launch

To name but a few.

We strongly believe that these need to be co-ordinated in a sensible way and publicly supported to allow these initiatives to be carried out at pace.

### 2 What do you think are the wider social (health, community, etc.) opportunities and challenges associated with meeting Scotland's climate change targets?

#### Please explain your view.:

We believe there could be many advantages if done in the correct way. While we appreciate the business and public sector working on this together we believe this can also provide the opportunity for a society to benefit as well and would integrate the societal aspects into this piece of work. Opportunities include unemployment, community projects, crime, sports, education and a number of other topics.

Challenges are really about how this can be done in a co-ordinated and joined up approach with relatively short timescales this would need to be done at pace but in a co-ordinated way – there are too many examples of funding simply being provided and organisations picking up funding but with little sustainability past the funding provided.

### 3 What would a successful transition to net-zero emissions look like for your sector/community?

#### Please explain your view.:

The benefits would be cross organisation participation so that everyone is working under one banner. Benefits can be spread out across the 4 pillars and have a range of possibilities. These are set out further in the CNSRP response to this consultation and DSG agrees with these.

### 4 What actions do you think the Scottish Government should take to manage the opportunities and challenges referenced above?

#### Please explain your view.:

We think this could be a huge opportunity for Scotland, the region and our local community IF this is done in the right way and needs the people and funding available to get on with the job.

Through CNSRP we are aware of some of the things they are already considering at a regional level and we believe this could be rolled out as exemplar to others ensuring there is one person who has the accountability to lead the changes.

**5 Are there specific groups or communities that may be, or feel that they may be, adversely affected by a transition to a net-zero carbon economy? What steps can be taken to address their concerns?**

**Please explain your view.:**

We are sure there will be benefits/disbenefits to different sets of groups or communities however we believe if this is done correctly it should begin to roll out benefits for everyone. As this is being written we are already adapting to a new way of working because of the COVID-19 crisis and therefore shows that people can adapt to change if this change ensures a real positive in the longer term.

Although the Downreay Stakeholder Group's primary focus is the impact of nuclear decommissioning in the Caithness and North Sutherland area, it must be acknowledged that the oil and gas sector is a sizable local employer. For decades, North Sea oil and gas has provided well paid jobs both offshore and in the well-established and highly regarded regional supply chain. Moving towards a carbon neutral economy, any 'just transition' must ensure that these highly skilled vocations are successfully replaced and that rural communities see their fair share of new job creation.

**6 Please provide here any other information, evidence, or research you consider relevant to the work of the Commission.**

**Please explain your view.:**

Through CNSRP, we believe there is a piece of work already well developed that you could consider and at the very least use as a pilot scheme. If it can work in Caithness and Sutherland it could be rolled out across the rest of the country. The business plan – ROSE – is something that we could urge you to consider as a potential pilot led project at this time however this would need funding resource to get it up and running and partners within the CNSRP are considering how best to approach the funding requirements. Scottish Government is a member of CNSRP and therefore it would make sense to pump prime some funding to allow this project to start in earnest.

**About you**

**What is your name?**

**Name:**

June Love (DSG Secretariat)

**What is your email address?**

**Email:**

info@dounreaystakeholdergroup.org

**Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?**

Organisation

**What is your organisation?**

**Organisation:**

Downreay Stakeholder Group

**Does your response relate to a specific sector?**

**Please explain your view.:**

The Downreay Stakeholder Group (DSG) is represented by over 20 organisations and therefore this response is one that is generally agreed by most organisations. However, there are some organisations, who may not agree entirely with this submission and therefore have been encouraged to provide their own response. The DSG is related primarily nuclear decommissioning at the Downreay (and MOD Vulcan) sites. However this response is not directly related to nuclear but rather the wider socio economic agenda that the Caithness & North Sutherland area requires to offset the loss of 1000s of jobs when the decommissioning work is complete. Our response is based on discussion and conversations with the Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership (CNSRP) an informal body set up to ensure an economic future for our area. The basis of these discussions are around the introduction of sustainable employment and hence adopts the ROSE business plan (via CNSRP) as the catalyst for our response.

**The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:**

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I consent

**Evaluation**

**Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)**

**Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:**

Slightly satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**

Consultation document was well set out - this now needs to translate to an action plan - action is required now.

**Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:**

Very satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**