



17th April 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of Stop Climate Chaos Cymru I am responding to the Welsh Government's draft goals and 'The Wales We Want' consultation.

Introduction

Stop Climate Chaos Cymru is a coalition of groups from across civil society committed to taking combined action in Wales to combat climate change, and limiting its impact on the environment and the world's poorest communities. Together with our sister organisations in England and Scotland our combined supporter base embraces more than 11 million people spanning over 100 organisations across the UK - from environmental and development charities to unions, community and faith groups and women's organisations.

We believe that climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing the world in the 21st century and we must take immediate action to tackle this, otherwise we face environmental, economic, cultural and social impacts which will affect future generations, and disproportionately impact people in poverty within Wales and across the globe. The recent IPCC reports confirm not only unequivocally the science of climate change "*warming of the climate system is unequivocal*", and "*most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations*"; it tells us what we need to do to keep us within safe temperature rise of 2 degrees Celsius to mitigate against some of the worst impacts of climate change.

The Future Generations Bill offers Wales with an opportunity to shift from a high carbon society, which is causing the damage to our climate and the wider environmental degradation to a low carbon nation, which SCCC believes is essential to offer security and resilience for future generations. Although sustainable development is wider than climate change, climate change is one of the most immediate and biggest environmental challenges to the world and for present and future generations. Any development we achieve will not be sustainable unless we tackle climate change. A key test of the efficacy of the Future Generations Bill will be how it will drive the reduction of our emissions in Wales - both our territorial and consumption emissions.

Goals

Key points

- Climate change is not identified specifically within the current draft goals and it is not obvious where it would sit.

- The goals and principles together do not adequately reflect a key objective of sustainable development i.e. living within environmental (or ecological) limits.
- We propose the inclusion of a goal worded “living within environmental limits”.
- The goals should make it clear that public bodies are also responsible for the impacts of their actions outside Wales.
- We support the goals proposed by the Third Sector Alliance.

The goals currently make no mention of climate change (and neither do the principles). We do not believe the goal of fair share alone will be sufficient to ensure attention to a problem relating to global systems. However, we would accept this concept as a principle, or as part of the definition of SD within the Bill, if not a goal.

Without stable global systems, such as climate, we cannot ensure the flourishing of humans or nature. For example, an unstable climate is increasing the frequency and magnitude of flooding and magnifying the effects of extreme weather, causing negative economic impacts, such as ruined crops and severe property damage. The planetary boundaries theory described by the Stockholm Resilience Centre suggests that there are nine environmental boundaries which, once exceeded, tip the Earth into a different system state, which may not return to current (favourable) conditions on a human timescale. For example, even if the climate stabilises at a global mean surface temperature more than 2°C higher than the pre-industrial level (and this may now no longer be achievable), then this new climate may be incompatible with supporting many species, including the high human population of the planet.

Whilst human understanding of the exact nature of the functioning of global systems develops, it would be prudent for us to consider a goal related to developing our understanding of Wales’ impact on these, monitoring and planning for change.

There is a lack of clarity that public bodies should be concerned about the impacts of their actions outside of Wales and seek to minimise any negative impacts. Climate change is something that needs to be considered territorially and globally.

SCCC therefore believes the draft goals proposed will not tackle global climate change sufficiently.

In addition, the definition of a just society should not stop at Wales’ borders and it is vital that Wales acts as a global citizen to promote justice and drive down extreme inequality throughout the world. It is not just inequalities within Wales that need to be tackled but the inequalities between the people of Wales and people in other countries.

We support the goals below proposed by the Third Sector Alliance of which we are a member.

A Wales...

- (a) that is prosperous and innovative;
- (b) with a strong, healthy and just society;
- (c) using only its fair share of the world's resources;
- (d) living within environmental limits;
- (e) where people participate in our cultures, which belong to us all, namely where the Welsh language thrives in our communities; and
- (f) with a resilient and biodiverse natural environment

Cymru...

- (a) llewyrchus ac arloesol;
- (b) gyda chymdeithas gref, iach a chyfiawn;
- (c) sy'n defnyddio ei chyfran deg o adnoddau'r byd yn unig;
- (ch) sy'n byw o fewn terfynau amgylcheddol;
- (d) lle bo pobl yn cymryd rhan yn ein diwylliannau, sy'n perthyn i ni i gyd, sef lle y mae'r Gymraeg yn ffynnu yn ein cymunedau; a
- (dd) gydag amgylchedd naturiol gwydn a bioamrywiaethol

Effectiveness of the Bill

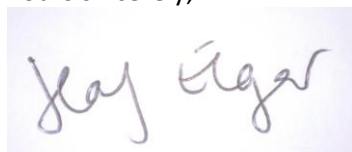
The architecture of the Bill needs to be effective to drive change. The outline of goals in the National Conversation is not sufficient to tell us whether the Bill will be an effective framework. We have seen from other frameworks, such as the Millennium Development Goals, that an effective framework for delivering change requires targets and indicators alongside goals. There is no mention of targets within the National Conversation which suggest a fundamental gap in the provision of an effective architecture. Unless there are targets alongside the goals and indicators it is hard to see how the Bill will drive the change we want.

In addition, it is our belief that a clear definition of sustainable development must be included in the Bill, linked to a strong and substantive duty which sets out sustainable development as the overriding objective of public authority functions.

In January 2013, the UK Committee on Climate Change published a report on 'Progress reducing emissions and preparing for climate change in Wales'^[1] which stated, "*Our conclusions from this analysis are setting a statutory underpinning to Wales' climate change targets could help to provide certainty to policy-makers, businesses, investors, and wider society in Wales and strengthen incentives to reduce emissions*". It saw the forthcoming FG Bill as a key opportunity to achieve this.

SCCC would support this report's conclusion and recommend that the FG Bill includes climate change targets.

Yours sincerely,



Haf Elgar
Cadeirydd Atal Anhrefn Hinsawdd Cymru/
Chair of Stop Climate Chaos Cymru

^[1] http://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/1673_Welsh-Rep-2013FINALWEB.pdf