

Benny Higgins
Chair
Advisory Group on Economic Recovery,
Scottish Government
St Andrews House
Edinburgh,
EH1 3DG



28 May 2020

Dear Benny,

Priorities for a green recovery

The Scottish Forum on Natural Capital exists to bring together interests from all aspects of Scottish economic life – private, public and third sector – to advocate jointly the importance of protecting and enhancing our natural assets for our environmental, social and economic prosperity.

There has arguably never been a more prescient time for the connectivity, co-operation, and catalysing ability of the group to be called into action. As such, we are keen to work with Scottish Government and other key players, to ensure that our economic recovery is truly a green recovery, founded on both the need to meet the challenges of climate change, as well as linked biodiversity challenges.

As a group we would highlight three priorities which we feel should helpfully guide future government action as we move forward in recovery. These priorities have been discussed in the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital Steering Group, but should not be taken as representing the views of, or any endorsement by, individual members. Individual members may also submit additional specific measures they would suggest.

- All government support for the economy and business post-Covid should be coherent with regard to: a) Scotland's commitment to reach Net Zero by 2045; b) the First Minister's statement that protecting and enhancing our stock of natural capital is fundamental to a healthy and resilient economy; and c) Scotland's ambitions for a wellbeing economy that promotes the wellbeing of people and planet.
- Decisions on financial or other support should be contingent on how applicant businesses are reducing emissions, managing land (where relevant), selecting suppliers, managing waste, and raising awareness of nature and climate change among employees and customers. Applicants from all sectors should be provided with information about the business benefits of managing environmental impacts proactively.
- Scotland should take the opportunity to become a leader in conservation finance, as outlined in the 'Route Map to £1 Billion', which was produced with input from the Scottish Forum's Innovative Finance Sub-Group.

We are clear in our recommendations that a future economy for our country must invest in our natural capital. This allows for development of "green collar" industries exploring and developing new skills in a hugely diverse range of sectors. By linking economic recovery support to conditions that require investment in our natural capital, as well as measures to address climate change, we can ensure that our economic recovery is truly a "green" one.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David C Watt".

David C Watt
Chair, Scottish Forum on Natural Capital

Scottish Forum on Natural Capital

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