

Scotland The Hydro Nation: Prospectus and Proposals for Legislation



RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

The James Hutton Institute

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr Please tick as appropriate

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual

/ Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes

No

THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation is an essential and important aspect of Scottish Government working methods. Given the wide-ranging areas of work of the Scottish Government, there are many varied types of consultation. However, in general, Scottish Government consultation exercises aim to provide opportunities for all those who wish to express their opinions on a proposed area of work to do so in ways which will inform and enhance that work.

The Scottish Government encourages consultation that is thorough, effective and appropriate to the issue under consideration and the nature of the target audience. Consultation exercises take account of a wide range of factors, and no two exercises are likely to be the same.

Typically Scottish Government consultations involve a written paper inviting answers to specific questions or more general views about the material presented. Written papers are distributed to organisations and individuals with an interest in the issue, and they are also placed on the Scottish Government web site enabling a wider audience to access the paper and submit their responses. Consultation exercises may also involve seeking views in a number of different ways, such as through public meetings, focus groups or questionnaire exercises. Copies of all the written responses received to a consultation exercise (except those where the individual or organisation requested confidentiality) are placed in the Scottish Government library at Saughton House, Edinburgh (K Spur, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD, telephone 0131 244 4565).

All Scottish Government consultation papers and related publications (eg, analysis of response reports) can be accessed at: [Scottish Government consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations) (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>)

The views and suggestions detailed in consultation responses are analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

Final decisions on the issues under consideration will also take account of a range of other factors, including other available information and research evidence.

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.

CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Please provide comments on Scotland The Hydro Nation: Prospectus and Proposals for Legislation

Comments

Thank you for the invitation to respond to Scotland: The Hydro Nation - Prospectus and Proposals for Legislation.

By way of background, the James Hutton Institute was formed in April 2011 when Macaulay Land Use Research Institute and SCRI (Scottish Crop Research Institute) joined forces. The James Hutton Institute is a world leader in research into the sustainable use of land, water and all the natural resources we need to preserve human life, the environment and the health and wealth of all nations. This is being achieved by delivering high quality, innovative research in support of knowledge, products and services supporting policy makers and the communities they serve with the aim of meeting global demands on our finite natural resources of land and water. The James Hutton Institute is making major, new contributions to the understanding of key global issues, such as food, water, energy and environmental security, and developing and promoting effective technological and management solutions to these.

The James Hutton Institute welcomes the vision and aspiration of building Scotland's reputation as a Hydro Nation. The water cycle is the most important earth system process governing life on this planet. In a changing world its importance to human wellbeing and environmental sustainability has never been so critical. An holistic approach that builds environmentally sustainable economies both here and overseas is imperative at this time when we are fast approaching the limits of non-renewable resources and climate change impacts. Against that challenge we acknowledge the Scottish Government foresight in proposing legislation which will place a duty on Ministers to develop the value and quality of Scotland's water resources.

It is important however, that the Hydro Nation agenda builds on the unique strength of Scotland's expertise, innovation and know-how if it is to realise its true international potential. We support the development of a Hydro Nation concept built around the ongoing consolidation of a low-carbon water economy which will provide a unique signature and around which other aspects of water governance can cluster. This is a truly global issue and Scotland has an opportunity to deliver upon the challenges of the water-energy nexus, stimulating innovation in industry, policy and research. Building on its leadership on climate change Scotland can, through Hydro Nation, establish a vision for the future, stimulating the cyclic economy and attracting inward investment. We support actions to further this aspiration.

The challenge of focussing on the water-energy nexus is a shared vision between the James Hutton Institute, SEPA and Scottish Water who collectively believe that this should be at the core of Hydro Nation. We would welcome the opportunity to work with our partners, policy teams and enterprise agencies to assist in the

development of strategic and operational plans to deliver the aims of Hydro Nation, building a strong green economy linking water, energy, land and communities, enhancing hydroliteracy and public understanding. In realising this vision, we also welcome the strategic aim that Scotland's research community participate in research programmes of international significance contributing solutions to key issues, and agree that the Hydro Nation strategy will support the aims, and the actions identified.

The James Hutton Institute is Scotland's largest Main Research Provider for the Scottish Government (600 staff) and provides the necessary national capacity through which to consolidate key aspects of the Hydro Nation agenda. Understanding should build on existing investments such as the RESAS Strategic Research programme (2011-2016), in particular Themes focused on Water and Energy, Ecosystem Services, Land Use, Economic Adaptation, Sustainable Rural Communities, and Food, Diet and Health all of which cover aspects of water resources and their management, resource use efficiency, food quality, human and environmental health. In addition, the Scottish Government's Centre of Expertise for Waters (CREW) led by the James Hutton Institute provides the best available scientific advice to inform Government policy in an efficient, accessible and streamlined way. The Centre's work is closely linked to the wider policy agenda from Government, and draws on the resources of the Main Research Providers and all Scotland's Universities. The James Hutton Institute's lead role in coordinating the water based research community in Scotland also integrates CAMERAS (Coordinated Agenda for Marine, Environment and Rural Affairs Science) stakeholders, and industry. The added value of CREW's strategic links to the Scottish Government's Centre of Expertise in Climate Change (CXC) provides Scotland with leading edge collaborative centres on which to build. This provides an existing operational vision and proven structure to expand engagement and deliver the wider objectives of Hydro Nation. CREW and CXC are already integrating policy, research, technology, innovation, capacity building and governance in the move to a low carbon water economy and one with true international resonance. The building blocks are in place to deliver this strand of the Hydro Nation vision.

We welcome the realignment of the legislation as proposed in the consultation. The catchment based principle of source protection and prevention of pollution is appropriate and consistent with the EU Water Framework Directive principles. Similarly, emphasis on prevention rather than remediation for septic tanks management also seems pragmatic. It is also important that consideration be given to options for developing resilience in our renewable energy mix from multiple sources.

We support the intention to develop the international profile of Scotland water sector and research and through capacity building and consider that our international water related aid should build on Scotland's existing successes, consolidating on activities already supported by the Scottish Government, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa countries. Additionally, an international fellows and exchange programme would help support and equip the global community with the knowledge, tools and understanding to develop their own structures to deliver green economy benefits in developing countries.

It will be important to ensure that the proposed Hydro Nation Forum complements the on-going activities of other established international initiatives such as the World Water Council's World Water Forum, and Stockholm International Water Institute's Water week. Similarly, Hydro Nation must take cognisance of major globally established initiatives driven by organisations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the World Health Organisation, addressing water provision, scarcity, access, gender and social issues.

Scotland has a global reputation for water science and technology, resource management and governance. The James Hutton Institute supports the Hydro Nation agenda and building on our established capacity, would welcome a role in developing the strategy and its subsequent implementation.