

# Climate Change

and the

## NORTH of SCOTLAND



### North of Scotland



Sustainable Development Awareness Campaign

You can get advice on many of the actions suggested through your local authority's Local Agenda 21 or Environmental Officer. Also many non-governmental environmental organisations provide information on climate change.

For free advice on making your home more energy efficient, contact the **Scottish Energy Efficiency Advice Centre** or freephone 0800 512012.

For free advice on making your business more energy efficient, contact the **Scottish Energy Efficiency Office**, 2nd Floor Meridian Court, 5 Cadogan Street, Glasgow G2 6AT  
Tel. 0141 242 5835  
[www.energy-efficiency.org](http://www.energy-efficiency.org)

**Floodline** operated by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, provides information on the possible risks of flooding in your area and gives practical advice on how to reduce the impact of floods when they do strike – phone 0845 988 1188 or [www.sepa.org.uk/flooding](http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding)

Grants and advice on greening your car are available from **TransportEnergy** a division of the Energy Saving Trust – on 0845 602 1425  
[www.transportenergy.org.uk](http://www.transportenergy.org.uk)

For advice on simple steps you can take to tackle climate change, visit the Scottish Executive's 'Do a little, change a lot' website at [www.dochange.net](http://www.dochange.net)

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[www.sustainable.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.sustainable.scotland.gov.uk)

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Short eared owl illustration courtesy of English Nature.

## What should I know?

**In the last few years, climate change has become a term used to explain the 'weather'. We all seem to have noticed that the seasons have changed and that it rains and floods more or that we get unseasonably high temperatures in winter.**

**The effects of climate change will affect everyone. This leaflet explains what is predicted to happen in the north of Scotland over the next 50 to 80 years. It will also show you what you and your family can do to help prevent the effects of climate change becoming worse in the future.**



## What will it mean for you and what can you do about it?

### What is happening to the weather?

Scientists studying our weather pattern have become increasingly convinced that human actions are changing the world's climate. As the demand for power in our homes and work and our reliance on motorised transport has increased, the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere has also increased. Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas contributing to human-induced climate change.



Many people have asked is this change not part of a normal cycle? Scientists believe that even accounting for natural cycles, and events such as erupting volcanoes, they cannot account for the unprecedented rise in global temperatures, without factoring in human activities. For example:

- The 1990's were the warmest decade in the UK since records began in the 1660's.
- The growing season for plants in parts of Britain has lengthened by about one month since 1900.
- Heat-waves have become more frequent in summer, with winters becoming wetter over the last 200 years.
- The sea level at Aberdeen has risen by nearly 70mm since 1900. Across Scotland 93,000 properties are now at risk from coastal flooding, and 77,000 are at risk from inland flooding.

### What will happen in Northern Scotland?

It is difficult to predict fully what will happen or when. For the North of Scotland, scientists have estimated that :

- In the next 50 years average annual temperatures may increase by 1 to 2°C with high summer temperatures becoming more frequent, and very cold winters becoming increasingly rare.\*
- By the 2050's, winter rainfall is likely to increase by up to 20% in the far north, by up to 25% in the north east, and by 10% in the north west.\*
- There could be a 10 - 30% decrease in rainfall during the summer, by the 2050's.\*
- By the 2080's, the Cairngorms could have a 60 - 70% decrease in snowfall, and the northern highlands could have between 70 - 80% decrease in snowfall.\*
- Sea level may rise by up to 60cm around the north of Scotland, by the 2080's.\*
- Flooding in inland areas may increase by 20% by the 2080's. (based on Climate Change : Flooding Occurance Review, Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2002).

\* Based on Climate Change Scenarios for the United Kingdom, UKCIP02 Scientific Report, April 2002 (see [www.ukcip.org.uk/climate\\_change/climate\\_change.html](http://www.ukcip.org.uk/climate_change/climate_change.html)).



### What will it mean?

Again nothing can be certain but if the predictions come true all aspects of the North of Scotland's economy, environment and society could be affected in the following ways:

- Farmers will have to deal with different pests and diseases, extended periods of drought in summer and waterlogged fields in winter.
- Storm surges on the coast may increase in severity leading to flooding, inundation and erosion, and consequent damage to homes, businesses and natural areas.
- With higher temperatures and a longer season, Scotland could benefit from increasing domestic tourism although winter sports will be at risk from reduced snowfall and a shorter season.
- There may be increasing numbers of outdoor fires.
- Flooding and extreme storms may disrupt communications to isolated communities and islands.
- Milder winters are likely to lead to a decline in deaths brought on by cold weather although heat-related deaths and an increased incidence of skin cancer are likely.
- Scotland's coastal and upland landscapes will change as wildlife and plants try to adapt.



*Here are some of the things you can do to tackle*

# CLIMATE CHAOS

*If everyone made a few changes to their lifestyle, particularly reducing the amount of greenhouse gases they emit from everyday actions, the effect could be significant on reducing the worst impacts of climate change.*



## *Be Efficient*

- Choose energy-efficient appliances and light bulbs.
- Turn down your thermostat by just 1°C and save up to 10% on your heating bill.
- Switch off all lights and electrical appliances when not in use - your TV left on standby can still use a quarter of full power.
- Lag your boiler and pipes to prevent heat loss and save up to £20 on your annual heating bill.
- Keep lids on pans when cooking to prevent your cooker having to work extra hard and don't overfill your kettle.

## *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*

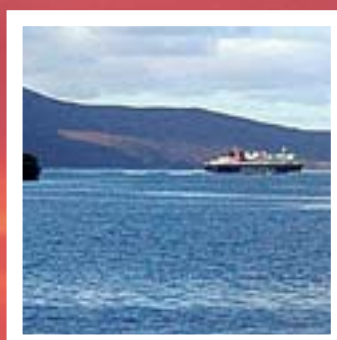


- Reduce your waste and recycle as much as you can.

## *Buy Green Power*



- Switch to green electricity which provides you with clean, renewable power - many power companies provide this option.



## *Curb the Car*

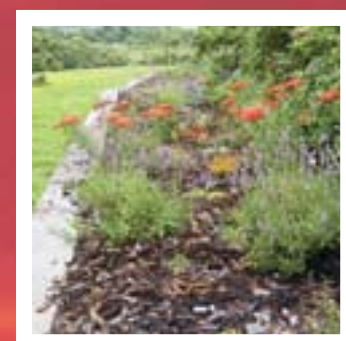
- Walk, cycle, use public transport or car share whenever possible.
- Turn off the engine if you are going to be stationary for more than two minutes.
- Air travel uses up large amounts of fossil fuels, where possible use the train or ferry instead.



## *At the Shops*



- Buy fruit and vegetables that are in season and where possible choose locally produced food to help reduce transport.
- Buy pump-action sprays rather than aerosols - some alternatives to CFCs used in aerosols are powerful greenhouse gases.



## *In the Garden*

- Don't buy peat or plants grown in peat. It is irreplaceable and is a store for greenhouse gases.

## *Pollute Less*



- Don't burn rubbish - this can produce toxic chemicals as well as releasing carbon dioxide which contributes to climate change.