Dear Matthew,

I am writing to thank the Committee on Climate Change for the advice provided to the Scottish Ministers in your March 2016 publication “Scottish emissions targets 2028 – 2032: The high ambition pathway towards a low-carbon economy”.

I note that this advice, especially in terms of the modification of existing annual targets, is contingent on the cumulative effect of past technical improvements to the Scottish greenhouse gas inventory. The subsequent Official Statistics publication on 14 June has made clear that there has also been further, substantial, revisions to the 2014 Scottish greenhouse gas inventory1.

As you will be aware, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 (“the Act”) requires that annual emission targets for the years 2028 – 2032 are set by 31 October 2016 or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter. In order to ensure that the best available evidence is used in this process, the Scottish Ministers request that the Committee on Climate Change provides updated advice, pursuant to the sections of the Act outlined below, in relation to the 2014 inventory. If it is the case that your advice on these matters remains unchanged from that in your March 2016 publication, the Scottish Ministers request that you confirm that this is the case.

Recognising the tight legislative time-scale, it would be helpful if the Committee could provide the advice requested by 4 July 2016, so that drafts of the relevant statutory orders can then be laid before the Scottish Parliament in early September 2016. If the Committee considers that it would be unable to provide all of the advice by this date, I would be grateful if you could confirm the elements of the request which will require more time and the earliest date by which these could be provided.

1. The “fair and safe Scottish emissions budget”
Pursuant to section 4(6) of the Act, the Scottish Ministers request advice from the Committee as to the “fair and safe Scottish emissions budget” for the period 2010-2050.

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1 Baseline emissions have been revised downwards by 4.3% between the 2013 and 2014 inventories.
2. Setting annual targets for years 2028–2032
Pursuant to section 5(1) of the Act, the Scottish Ministers request advice from the Committee in relation to the setting of annual targets for the years 2028 – 2032, including its views on the matters set out in section 5(2) of the Act.

3. Modification of the existing annual targets set for the years 2017–2027
Pursuant to section 7(1) of the Act, the Scottish Ministers request advice from the Committee in relation to the modification of the existing annual targets set for the years 2017 - 2027.

4. Setting a limit on the use of carbon units for the period 2018–2022
Pursuant to section 23(1) of the Act, the Scottish Ministers request advice from the Committee in relation to setting a limit on the net amount of carbon units that may be credited to net Scottish emissions account for the period 2018–2022.

I would like to conclude by saying that I will look forwards to the Committee’s continuing contribution to the climate change policy process in Scotland. On 14 June, I wrote separately to Lord Deben in relation to our manifesto commitment to establishing new and even more testing targets in response to the Paris Agreement.

Best regards,

ROSEANNA CUNNINGHAM