

# **First Minister at Climate Week NYC - Overview, Outcomes and Costs**

**December 2023**

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### **1. Overview**

The First Minister travelled to New York City for Climate Week NYC from 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> September. Climate Week NYC takes place at the same time as the United Nations General Assembly High Level Week which included, for the first time, the Climate Ambition Summit, hosted by the UN Secretary General. Climate Week NYC is hosted by The Climate Group, an NGO that also acts as the secretariat for the Under2 Coalition, of which Scotland is European co-chair. The week is aimed at: driving the global transition, speeding up progress and championing change already taking place.

The First Minister undertook a significant programme of engagement that included meetings with: national and regional governments, UN climate leadership, and potential investors in Scotland's net zero industries.

Climate Week NYC takes place several months prior to COP28 and provides an opportunity to build relationships with key COP stakeholders and discuss alignment on preparations for the conference.

### **2. Outcomes**

The Scottish Government had four key objectives for attendance at Climate Week NYC, aligning with our approach to international climate change. See the objectives and how these were delivered below.

2.1 Playing a leading role on loss and damage and climate justice, demonstrating expertise and building momentum towards increased global action and funding to support the most vulnerable communities.

The First Minister's engagements on loss and damage sought to both demonstrate our continued commitment to funding to address loss and damage and to champion the cause by pushing for operationalisation of the UN Loss and Damage fund. On funding, the First Minister made a speech on 'Financing the Green Economy, Financing Climate Justice' at the Climate Week NYC Hub Live. This announced the following:

- Launched the £5 million programme pledged at COP27 that will support vulnerable global south communities to address non-economic loss and damage. Non-economic loss and damage covers nature loss, cultural loss and damage to health. This programme recognises the differentiated impact of climate change by focusing its support on marginalised groups, including

women and young people being impacted more severely and meets our COP27 commitment.

- New £300,000 programme to support Storm Freddy loss and damage work in Malawi – one of Scotland’s partner countries - completing SG spend of the £2 million on loss and damage announced at COP26.
- Additional £1 million for the Humanitarian Emergency Fund. This is in addition to our previous loss and damage commitments.

In seeking to champion the cause, the First Minister joined a fireside chat with Ministers from Global South communities to hear more about first hand experiences of the effects of climate change on their communities. Similarly, the First Minister spoke at an event hosted by the President of Malawi that focused on the losses and damages experienced by Malawi as a result of Storm Freddy and drew attention to the urgent need for further support.

The First Minister attended an engagement hosted by the Bangladeshi non-government organisation BRAC alongside the Bangladeshi Climate Envoy Saber Hossain Chowdhury and the German Climate Envoy Jennifer Morgan. This engagement aimed at increasing global funding for loss and damage.

## **2.2 Use Scotland’s Co-Chairmanship of the Under2 Coalition to increase ambition and action towards net zero and a just transition, resilience by both party and Non-Party States and Governments (NPSG) and progress on realising the potential of non-party climate leadership for inclusion in UNFCCC processes.**

The First Minister attended two roundtables on realising the potential of non-party governments in UN processes. The first was hosted by Bloomberg Philanthropies, and the second by Laurence Tubiana, CEO of the European Climate Foundation. These roundtables reflected on the work on this agenda to date, and how states, regions and devolved governments will work together to realise their potential and demonstrate ambitious action. These formed a key part of COP28 preparations, paving the way for a greater role for states, regions and devolved governments, as seen by the first Local Climate Action Summit at COP28 in Dubai.

The First Minister also met with Ambassador Nina Hachigian, United States Special Representative for City and State Diplomacy. This meeting had a focus on furthering non-party government leadership on climate change.

**2.3** Demonstrate commitment to a just transition to net zero, thereby influencing others to do more to achieve Net Zero.

The First Minister attended the UN Secretary General's Climate Ambition Summit, an exclusive summit that was the first of its kind in including only 'first movers and doers' on climate policy. The First Minister took this opportunity to meet with similarly ambitious governments, to hear about climate successes from around the world, and to highlight Scotland's world-leading ambition and action, influencing counterparts to take similarly urgent action to reduce emissions.

**2.4** Advance diplomatic and economic international relations based on SG's focus on being a good global citizen, attracting investment in strategic sectors in Scotland that are key to meeting net zero and enhancing Scotland's global reputation.

The First Minister met with the Prime Minister of Iceland, identifying further areas for collaboration, specifically around gender-based violence.

The First Minister met with Director General of the World Health Organisation, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and as part of our commitment to being a good global citizen, announced an investment of up to £2.5million over the next five years into the 'health4Life' multi-partner trust fund (MPTF), led by the World Health Organisation, United Nations Children's Fund and United Nations Development Programme, supporting country-led and equity driven cross-sectoral action on non-communicable diseases.

The First Minister also met with a number of existing and potential investors in Scotland's net zero industries (in particular: renewables and hydrogen), identifying future areas for investment.

Detailed information on the First Minister's engagements during his visit will be available at [Ministerial engagements, travel and gifts - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/ministerial-engagements-travel-and-gifts) where such information is routinely published three months in arrears as per the ministerial code commitment.

In addition to supporting ministerial and senior official engagement, Scottish Government officials took part in events and discussions to promote Scotland's influence on international climate change and learn from others to inform Scottish Government work with international best practice.

### **3. Costs**

The First Minister and his team participated in Climate Week NYC from 17-21 September. Please see the officials that joined below:

- Three from the First Minister's team (1x C2, 1x B3, 1x B2)
- Three from International Climate Change (1x SCS, 1x C2, 1x C1)
- One from the US Hub (1x C3)
- One from the First Minister's Communications Team (1x B3)
- Two special advisors also took part in New York Climate Week.

Hotel details are not provided due to security. SG procured a car service for the trip, with costings listed below. Please see costs provided below:

Accommodation: £32,948.95

Travel to NYC (flights and trains): £26,013.91

Subsistence & Expenses: £4707.86

First Minister car service: £6263.98



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The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-83521-737-5 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, December 2023

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS1393214 (12/23)

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