

Proposed Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Member's Bill to ensure policy development and implementation by public bodies is in line with principles of sustainable development and wellbeing by introducing a duty for public bodies to promote these principles and establishing a Commissioner for sustainable development and wellbeing.

The consultation runs from 14 December 2022 to 24 March 2023

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation Document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation.

I have an MBA and experience as a strategic consultant (finance). I am also an environmental campaigner with experience driving successful planning campaigns such as <http://savekingsmeadows.org.uk>

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Only give the name of your organisation if you are submitting a response on its behalf).

(Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Michael Marshall

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

[REDACTED]

Aim and approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (Please note, that this question is compulsory.)

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Translating sustainability into effective legislation and policy is crucial, e.g. I have strong views that NPF4s vision of sustainability needs to be translated into LDPs if it is to have effect. I am very supportive of effective definitions of sustainable development to counter greenwashing.

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

Legislation is required. Because of the financial incentives, business will sail as close to the wind as possible on any legislation and will hire experts to argue their very weak cases for them. We need legislation with teeth otherwise we will have another lost decade for nature - but this decade is really our last chance.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether 'sustainable development' should be defined in legislation?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the definition should include.

The definition should include the Brundtland definition and possibly the full UN resolution it derives from: "The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." [Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly]

Q4. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether 'wellbeing' should be defined in legislation?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the definition should include.

Measures of wellbeing - particularly equality and wealth distribution - have been going the wrong way for my lifetime (the past 40/50 years). Scotland is committed to implementing the UN SDGs which include wellbeing. The addition of legislative definitions, targets, offences and so on is necessary to reverse the direction in which our society is otherwise travelling. NB: as our environmental catastrophe worsens, pressures on wellbeing and unequal wealth distribution will otherwise inexorably increase.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether there should be a Commissioner for sustainable development and wellbeing?

Fully supportive

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether there should be a Commissioner for sustainable development and wellbeing?

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the key functions of the proposed Commissioner should be (see pages 19 to 20 of the consultation document), what model of governance could be adopted (see page 22 to 23), and whether the Commissioner could play a role in strengthening existing duties or legislation.

The commissioner needs powers to act, powers to investigate and powers to direct others to act. They should strengthen - and have a duty to enforce - existing legislation. They could have a legislative mandate to report on the strengthening of powers for other departments as needed.

Q6. What, in your view, should the title of the proposed Commissioner be?

Please explain the reasons for your response.

UN SDG Commissioner

Q7. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether there is a need for duties for public bodies to promote sustainable development and wellbeing in policy development and implementation?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response including views on any barriers to implementation of these duties and on how the effectiveness of implementation could be measured.

I thought government was for the many - not the few? Yes, government always has the role of enforcing basic fairness and providing opportunity for all members of the current and future generations. Without this, market forces exploit unpriced resources (eg the environment and biodiversity) for the sake of the few at the cost of the many.

Financial Implications

Q8. Any new law can have a financial impact which would affect individuals, businesses, the public sector, or others. What financial impact do you think this proposal could have if it became law?

a significant reduction in costs

Please explain the reasons for your response, including who you would expect to feel the financial impact of the proposal, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could be delivered more cost-effectively.

The apparent cost of introducing greater fairness and improving environmental/biodiversity legislation is a mirage. This only appears expensive because the enormous true costs of our current actions are currently hidden as they will be paid for in the future. The scientific consensus on this has been clear since the Doomsday project in the 1960s.

Equalities

Q9. Any new law can have an impact on different individuals in society, for example as a result of their age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

What impact could this proposal have on particular people if it became law? If you do not have a view skip to next question.

Please explain the reasons for your response and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts on particular people.

The bill is specifically aimed at improving the wellbeing of all. I expect it will do what it says on the tin.

Sustainability

Q10. Any new law can impact on work to protect and enhance the environment, achieve a sustainable economy, and create a strong, healthy, and just society for future generations.

Do you think the proposal could impact in any of these areas? (If you do not have a view then skip to next question)

Please explain the reasons for your response, including what you think the impact of the proposal could be, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts?

Done properly, this bill could have a powerful effect. Precisely because this is so, it will need to be carefully guarded from the powerful, vested interests who will seek to water it down and neutralise it at every opportunity. This bill must have teeth. We do not have another decade to get this right.

General

Q11. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on such an important bill. Good luck. Please do try to add specific, measurable action items, accountabilities, offences, ...