Scottish Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting
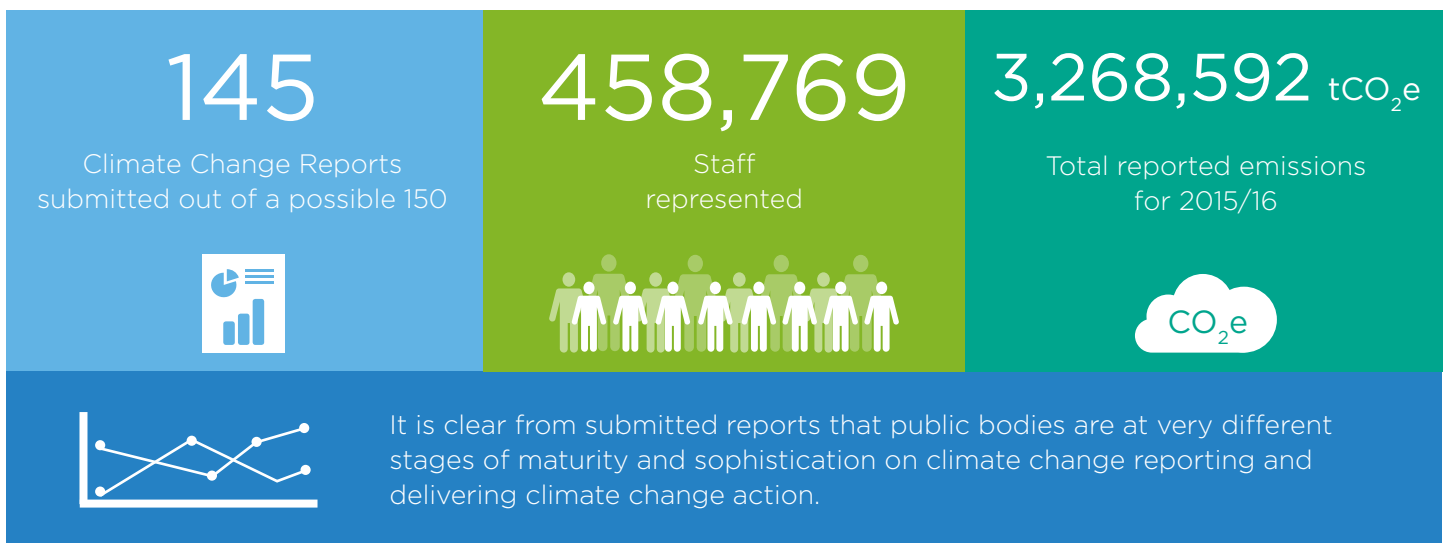
2015/16

Summary briefing

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The way in which the public sector in Scotland reports on their climate change activities has progressed significantly over the last two years.
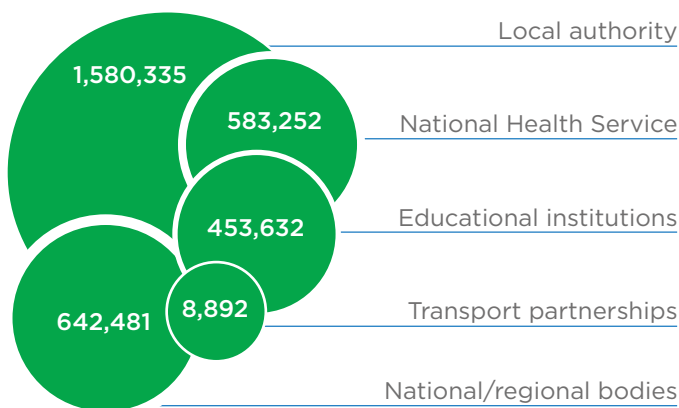
Following a consultation exercise and a national trial, a Statutory Order came into force in November 2015 that made standardised annual climate change reporting mandatory for those public bodies classified by the Scottish Government to be 'major players' from 2016 onwards. In 2016 the major players list comprised 150 public bodies. This briefing contains key findings and recommendations arising from the first mandatory cycle of Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting, covering the period 2015/16. A full analysis report is available online at **www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/ssnclimatechangereport**

Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting is managed on behalf of the Scottish Government by the Sustainable Scotland Network team at the environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful. We are committed to translating findings from the Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting into a programme of support for the public sector.
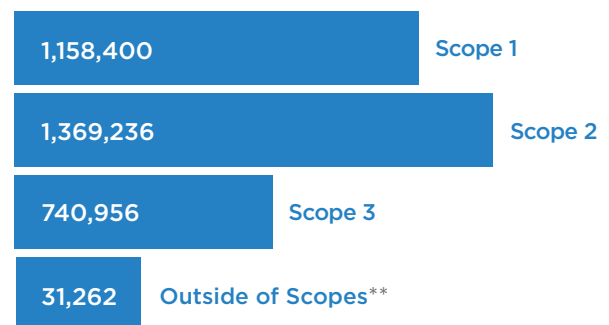
145
Climate Change Reports submitted out of a possible 150

458,769
Staff represented

3,268,592 tCO_2e
Total reported emissions for 2015/16

It is clear from submitted reports that public bodies are at very different stages of maturity and sophistication on climate change reporting and delivering climate change action.

Corporate emissions

Total corporate emissions reported by sector 2015/16 (tCO_2e)

- 1,580,335 — Local authority
- 583,252 — National Health Service
- 453,632 — Educational institutions
- 8,892 — Transport partnerships
- 642,481 — National/regional bodies

Total: 3,268,592 tCO_2e

Total corporate emissions reported by scope* 2015/16 (tCO_2e)

- 1,158,400 — Scope 1
- 1,369,236 — Scope 2
- 740,956 — Scope 3
- 31,262 — Outside of Scopes**

* Scopes as defined by the GHG Protocol

** Outside of scopes emissions not included in final total emissions.

Total: 3,268,592 tCO_2e

105

(72%) reported having some form of renewable installation

The five most common installation projects:

85 Solar PV projects
44 Biomass boiler projects
13 Ground source heat pumps
13 Solar thermal projects
13 Wind projects

Renewable energy generated **82GWh of renewable electricity** and almost **139GWh of renewable heat**. This abated almost **66,000 tCO$_2$e**.

CO_2e

91,000 tCO$_2$e

Estimated emissions savings from reported public sector climate change mitigation projects in 2015/16.

Almost 50% of projected savings come from electricity based projects, with waste and natural gas based projects accounting for a further 40%.

The education sector is saving more emissions via mitigation projects (as a % of total emissions) than any other sector.

Projected savings from the reported business travel projects accounted for just 323 tCO$_2$e from 17 projects.

Governance, management and strategy

Public bodies are recognising the importance of embedding climate change into their governance and management structures, and are working to review and strengthen their mechanisms. Many have well established structures, policies and processes in place to address climate change.

111

(77%) provided information on how climate change action is being embedded throughout their own organisation.

88

(61%) have specific climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives in their corporate plan or similar.

79

(54%) have a specific climate change plan or strategy in place.

21

(14%) have a specific climate change plan or strategy under review.

283 individual policy documents in operation within reporting organisations that include climate change considerations (e.g. information and communication technology strategies and business travel plans).

782 climate change considerations embedded into an overarching document such as a carbon strategy or similar rather than in an individual policy document.

7 (5%) public bodies reference behaviour change as part of either their corporate plan or strategy to address sustainability and climate change.

Top five priorities for climate change governance, management and strategy for the year ahead are:

75 Energy
65 Awareness raising/behaviour change
63 Transport
48 Adaptation
47 Governance

Adaptation

49% of public bodies reported taking action and / or raising awareness on adapting to climate change.

It is likely that this area of work is under-reported as there is still confusion between what constitutes climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation action. Consequently, some activities that help build climate resilience may not be identified and reported effectively.

Assessing		Managing	Monitoring	
63% have undertaken work to assess current climate risk.	**57%** have started to assess future climate risk.	**77%** are making some progress in putting arrangements in place to manage climate-related risks.	**28%** showed evidence of monitoring and evaluation progress.	**27%** demonstrated details of monitoring and evaluation.

Procurement

104 public bodies reported having a procurement policy or strategy in operation.

25 of these bodies provided information on how the policy has directly contributed to compliance with the Climate Change Duties.

Validation

Bodies reported a range of validation approaches for reviewing Climate Change Reports to assess the accuracy and completeness of some of the information contained within them.

No validation	**6**
External validation	**68**
Peer validation	**72**
Internal validation	**134**

Wider influence

The public sector has a critical wider-influence role to play beyond their own corporate boundaries, both in demonstrating leadership and commitment on climate change action, and enabling and influencing Scotland's people and communities to reduce their impact on the environment.

65 Bodies reported on this non-mandatory section, an increase from 34 last year.

Reported policies and actions

37 **Energy policy and actions** (e.g. district heating networks, renewable energy storage, tidal energy)

26 **Residential projects** (e.g. energy efficiency promotion, housing insulation and heating programmes)

8 **Rural land use** (e.g. forestry and peat management)

18 **Waste projects** (e.g. diverting resident waste from landfill, improving domestic recycling)

Recommendations

Based on our analysis of the 2015/16 climate change reports, the Sustainable Scotland Network team at Keep Scotland Beautiful has identified the following recommendations for improving reporting and public sector climate action:

Improving reported data

It is recognised that reporting needs to be improved in line with Greenhouse Gas Protocol[1] key principles of: relevance, completeness, consistency, transparency, and accuracy. It is recommended that the following areas of reporting could be improved:

- The reporting of emissions by scope and the reporting of biomass, biofuels and renewables.
- Capacity to assess and report climate change targets, objectives and projects.
- The reporting of the specific climate change impacts of procurement.
- The reporting of public bodies' wider influence activities, aligned to national climate change policy.

Focussed support to address gaps in performance

It is recommended that action is required to address some important gaps in performance to:

- Provide support to the minority of organisations that don't yet have climate change embedded in their governance and management structures.
- Provide support to improve the reporting of corporate waste, transport and Scope 3 emissions, including procurement impacts.
- Provide support to those who have yet to start work on assessing climate change risks.
- Build capacity to improve the assessment and reporting of projects and targets/objectives.
- Explore the potential to extend the efficient use of external and peer-to-peer validation of reported data.

Sharing good practice to build capacity

The climate change reports provide a mass of information which should be used to inform the sharing of good practice to build capacity in the public sector to report and act on climate change. It is recommended that SSN and its partners and members continue to invest in using the reports' data to identify and share examples of good practice via events, resources, training and advisory services.

Making better use of existing tools

It is recommended that public bodies make more use of the suite of support tools available to inform public sector climate action and climate change reporting. Access to these tools is available via the climate change reporting section of the SSN website.

Clearly linking governance and management to projects and targets

Improvements are needed on reporting emissions targets and adaptation objectives, and the projects and policies designed to meet these targets and objectives. How these link to governance, management and decision-making within public bodies should be made clearer. It is recommended that:

- SSN should provide guidance and advice on setting and reporting climate change targets and objectives.
- Public bodies should report more clearly as to whether they are on track to meet their targets and objectives, and how they plan to respond as an organisation if progress is not on track.
- SSN should provide guidance and advice on project-level carbon assessment and reporting linked to governance and management.

[1] www.ghgprotocol.org

Keep Scotland Beautiful is the charity that works with organisations and communities to help people to reduce carbon emissions, improve local areas and adapt to the impacts of climate change. It's part of our work to make Scotland clean, green and more sustainable.

Keep Scotland Beautiful

The Scottish Government

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