

# Agriculture report card

Name: *Scottish Government*



**Progress towards:** Transformation of support for farming and food production in Scotland



**Progress towards:** Halting biodiversity loss by 2030 and restoring Scotland's biodiversity by 2045



**Progress towards:** Net zero emissions by 2045 including 31% reduction in agricultural emissions by 2032



Scottish  
Wildlife  
Trust



## The Scottish Government has **promised** to deliver for agriculture and nature

### PROMISE 1

Transform how we support farming and food production in Scotland to become a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture.

➔ REF: Scottish Government's Vision for Agriculture



But the **reality** in 2025 has been hampered by glacial progress, missed opportunities and broken promises

### PROGRESS: INSUFFICIENT

The reality is that the status quo of the Common Agricultural Policy continues...

- Direct Payments will continue with 70% of the farming budget allocation for Tiers 1 & 2
- Greening (part of Direct Payments) in Tier 2 will continue with only minor modifications, clearly not *transformat ve* policy change
- Agri-Environment and Climate Scheme (AECS) is set to continue unreformed and with only a minuscule 5% of the farming budget allocated to it

### PROMISE 2

By 2045, Scotland will have restored and regenerated biodiversity across our land, freshwater and seas, halting biodiversity loss by 2030.

➔ REF: Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045



### PROGRESS: INSUFFICIENT

Changes to farmland practices are not happening at the pace or scale needed to restore nature...

- Nature is still in freefall with one in nine species in Scotland at risk of extinction
- £1.8bn is needed per year to deliver nature and climate commitments through the management of farmland. For comparison: the AECS budget was £29.6m in 2024-25. To be equivalent with even 2017 levels, it should be £55m

### PROMISE 3

Scotland will reach net zero emissions by 2045 including a 31% reduction in agricultural emissions by 2032.

➔ REF: Scottish Government Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018-2032



### PROGRESS: INSUFFICIENT

There is no credible strategy with sufficient delivery mechanisms for reducing emissions...

- Scotland's 2024-25 woodland creation target was revised down by Scottish Government from 18,000ha to 10,000ha
- 90,000ha peatland restored since 1990 – far off the 250,000ha promised by 2030
- Around 75% of Scottish agricultural greenhouse gas emissions are from livestock with 50% of these from methane - but methane suppression pilot schemes have not happened



## Which **limits** delivery of Scottish Government priorities...



### Economy

#### BROKEN PROMISE 1

Direct Payments are an outdated mode of support which do not go to the farmers and crofters most in economic need.

Direct Payments made under the Common Agricultural Policy over 2014-2020 reduced innovation, development and growth.

#### BROKEN PROMISE 2

Scotland's natural capital is estimated to have an overall asset value of £196bn, supporting nearly 200,000 jobs.

Biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are linked to worsening economic prosperity and pose significant risks to the UK economy potentially reducing GDP by an estimated 12%.

#### BROKEN PROMISE 3

By 2050, the economic costs of climate change could be 1.2-1.6% of GDP per year and cost the public sector £1.1bn annually.

More extreme and severe weather threatens livelihoods. Extreme weather in Scotland contributed to losses of up to £161m for Scotland's farmers in just one year.

### Climate

#### BROKEN PROMISE 1

Direct Payments support farming practices which contribute to climate change.

Scottish Government evidence shows Direct Payments had little environmental benefit and, in some cases, a negative impact.

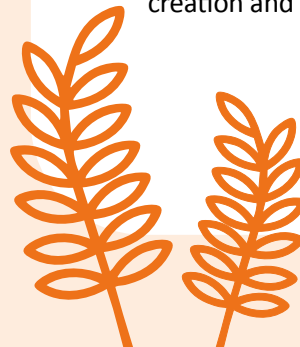
Scottish Government statistics show that between 2022 and 2023 agricultural emissions essentially remained constant at a level of 7.5 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e, falling marginally by 0.1%.

#### BROKEN PROMISE 2

Declining biodiversity makes tackling the climate crisis even harder. Habitat degradation increases the intensity and likelihood of wildfires, floods and droughts and susceptibility of crops and cattle to disease.

#### BROKEN PROMISE 3

Scotland will miss climate budgets without support for farmers to diversify their incomes towards agroforestry, woodland creation and peatland restoration.



### Public services and child poverty

#### BROKEN PROMISE 1

Rural poverty makes up 16% of all poverty in Scotland, yet it often goes unseen. In rural areas, the struggles of young people are hidden behind the image of a peaceful countryside, leaving their needs overlooked and their risks greater.

#### BROKEN PROMISE 2

Flooding, drought and wildfires affect the whole of Scotland's population, as does the decline of cherished species such as the Atlantic salmon.

#### BROKEN PROMISE 3

The economic impact of climate change places strain on public finance – with potential cuts to public spending disproportionately impacting those most in need.

# Scotland's vision for agriculture— and its commitments to climate and nature— **are at risk**

At the current pace, agricultural reform will fall far short of the Government's own ambitions.

Without urgent action, farmers will be left without the tools, support or clarity they need to farm in harmony with nature and the climate.

## We call on the Scottish Government to **act now**

The reform process must be accelerated and expanded; nature and climate must be properly funded; and it must be made fully transparent. Only then can it deliver on Scotland's priorities of thriving rural communities, a resilient food system and a restored natural environment.



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