



Edward Mountain MSP  
Convener  
Net Zero, Energy, and Transport  
Committee  
c/o Clerk to the Committee

Monica Lennon MSP  
15 September 2025

Dear Mr Mountain

**Ecocide (Scotland) Bill**

I understand that the Ecocide (Scotland) Bill, for which I am member-in-charge, has been referred to your Committee for Stage 1 scrutiny.

The Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU) has provided support to me in the preparation and drafting of the Bill. As part of that role, NGBU has carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) for the Bill in order to ensure that best practice has been followed and that the Bill's impact has been appropriately identified and considered.

The EQIA is attached at the Annex for the Committee's information.

Yours sincerely,

Monica Lennon MSP

# Ecocide (Scotland) Bill

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Ecocide (Scotland) Bill</b>	
<b>(1) Aims of the Policy</b>	
What is the purpose of the proposed policy?	This Bill seeks to prevent mass environmental damage and destruction taking place in Scotland due to crimes of ecocide by putting in place strong punishments associated with this crime. It aims to protect the environment in Scotland covering all natural resources: air, water, soil, wild fauna and flora (including habitats).
What are the anticipated outcomes of the policy?	<p>Environmental crimes can cause serious harm to communities, fauna and flora and contribute to climate change. The intended outcome of this Bill is to reduce the likelihood of serious environmental crimes being committed by individuals and companies, by enhancing the punishments that will result when anyone is convicted of these crimes.</p> <p>The Bill will achieve this outcome by ensuring serious environmental offences are treated as criminal offences (rather than as “regulatory” matters, as is the case under the existing legislative framework.) The establishment of a specific, stand-alone offence for the crime of ecocide, with penalties including a custodial sentence of a significant length or significant fines (or both), will act as a deterrent to companies and individuals working within those companies from acting in ways that risk causing significant environmental harm. The intended outcome is to reduce the risk of crimes causing serious environmental harm taking place.</p>
Who will be affected by the policy?	Everyone in Scotland may potentially benefit from the provisions of the Bill, as everyone in Scotland could potentially be impacted by serious environmental crimes.
<b>(2) What is known about the diverse needs of those who will be affected by the policy</b>	

Gender* reassignment	<b>NA</b>
Religion or Belief	<b>NA</b>
Age*	<p>As the impact of degradation of the environment and consequent climate change increases over time it could be argued that young people and children will be indirectly disproportionately affected by significant environmental crime in the future.</p> <p>Children and young people may also be more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as air pollution, due to their physiology<sup>1</sup>, which may be the result of serious environmental crime.</p> <p>As well as the impact of climate change on their physical health, there is also evidence that suggests that children and young people's wellbeing may be negatively impacted by anxiety about climate change<sup>2</sup>, including concerns that Governments are not taking appropriate action at a policy level. It is possible that the provisions of this Bill could have a positive impact on children and young people's wellbeing, by demonstrating that politicians are acting on an issue many of them are worried about.</p>
Disability*	<p>Individuals suffering from a disability may be disproportionately impacted by environmental damage and consequent climate change for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the event of a severe environmental incident with devastating impact on the environment those with a disability may experience disproportionate difficulties in evacuation.</li> <li>• People living in socio-economic deprivation may be more likely to experience harmful impacts of climate change than other people<sup>3</sup>. Those with a disability are</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> [Opportunity/Challenge 8: Ensure that policies, action and spend necessary to mitigate and adapt to the global impacts of climate change deliver a just transition for people in Scotland - Resource Spending Review: Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey](#)

<sup>3</sup> [What will climate change cost the UK? Risks, impacts and mitigation for the net-zero transition - Grantham Research Institute on climate change and the environment](#)

	<p>more likely to be socio-economically disadvantaged than those without a disability. Those living in areas of high deprivation may be more impacted by pollution and poor air quality whereas groups living in areas with low deprivation are better placed to advocate for a clean environment in their community.<sup>4</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled people may be more likely to be accommodated in insecure or low-quality housing and less likely to have insurance that protects their assets, which could place them at greater risk than other people, when environmental harm occurs.<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>
Race	<p>Minority ethnic groups are more likely to be socio-economically disadvantaged than other people.<sup>6</sup></p> <p>This may lead to them being indirectly disproportionately impacted by damage to the environment. Those living in high areas of deprivation may be more impacted by high levels of pollution and poor air quality whereas groups living in areas with low deprivation are better placed to advocate for a clean environment in their community.</p> <p>Socio-economic disadvantage may lead to insecure and poor-quality housing which is more impacted by environmental factors.<sup>7</sup> Socio-economic disadvantage may exacerbate health conditions which are negatively impacted by environmental pollution.</p>
Sex	<p>Women may be disproportionately affected by environmental crime and climate change than men. One of the reasons for this is because they experience greater impacts from socio-economic disadvantage than men, and often have responsibility for caring for other groups, including children, which may make women more vulnerable to climate change impacts.</p> <p>It has been reported that, globally, women are 14 times more likely than men to die in a climate change related disaster<sup>8</sup></p>

<sup>4</sup> [Disability - Office for National Statistics](#)

<sup>5</sup> Julia Watts Belser (2019) 'Disabled People Cannot Be "Expected Losses" in the Climate Crisis.

<sup>6</sup> [Scotland's Ethnic Minorities face overcrowding, poverty and unemployment, says equality and human rights body | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Opportunity/Challenge 8: Ensure that policies, action and spend necessary to mitigate and adapt to the global impacts of climate change deliver a just transition for people in Scotland - Resource Spending Review: Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Women are hit hardest in disasters, so why are responses too often gender-blind? | United Nations Development Programme](#)

	and a meta-analysis of evidence from 2020 suggested that women are more likely to be experience negative health impacts as a result of climate change <sup>9</sup> .
Maternity and Pregnancy	<b>NA</b>
Sexual Orientation	<b>NA</b>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<b>NA</b>
<b>(3) Is there enough information to help understand the needs and/or experiences of those affected by the policy</b>	
Gender* reassignment	Yes
Religion or Belief	Yes
Age*	<b>Yes</b>
Disability*	<b>Yes</b>
Race	<b>Yes</b>
Sexual Orientation	<b>Yes</b>
Sex	<b>Yes</b>
Maternity and Pregnancy	<b>Yes</b>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<b>Yes</b>
If not, what other information is required	<b>NA</b>
<b>(4) What does the information given say about how the policy might impact positively and negatively on different groups</b>	
Gender* reassignment	<b>NA</b>
Religion or Belief	<b>NA</b>

<sup>9</sup> [Mapped: How climate change disproportionately affects women's health](#)

Age*	<p>As children and young people are likely to live longer than other groups, any reduction in the impact of climate change could benefit them disproportionately. It is therefore possible that children and young people will benefit from the intended outcomes of the Bill to reduce the likelihood of serious environmental crime (and likely impact on climate change).</p> <p>As noted above, there is evidence that some children and young people feel anxious that governments are not taking robust enough action to tackle climate change. It is possible that the introduction of this legislation could reduce that anxiety, which could result in improvements to wellbeing.</p>
Disability*	As people with disabilities are more likely to suffer socio-economic deprivation, and people in socio-economic deprivation are more likely to suffer the negative impacts of climate change, this Bill might have a disproportionately positive impact on people with disabilities.
Race	As people from minority ethnic groups are more likely to suffer socio-economic deprivation, and people in socio-economic deprivation are more likely to suffer the negative impacts of climate change, this Bill might have a disproportionately positive impact on people from minority ethnic groups.
Sex	As women are more likely to experience the negative impacts of climate change than men, this Bill might have a disproportionately positive impact on women.
Maternity and Pregnancy	<b>NA</b>
Sexual Orientation	<b>NA</b>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<b>NA</b>
<b>Completed by the Non-Government Bills Unit: 8 September 2025</b>	

\*Although not a protected characteristic, carers should be given specific consideration in this category (e.g. the potential impact on those who care for older people).

<b>Member's Comment on NGBU's Equalities Impact Assessment</b>	
Evidence gaps identified	<b>None</b>
<b>Member's comment: No comment</b>	
Adverse impacts identified	<b>None</b>
<b>Member's comment: No comment</b>	
<b>Completed by Monica Lennon MSP, 11 September 2025</b>	