OFFICIAL REPORT
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Thursday 30 September 2021

Session 6

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CONSTITUTION, EUROPE, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE
6th Meeting 2021, Session 6

CONVENER

*Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Donald Cameron (Highlands and Islands) (Con)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Dr Alasdair Allan (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
*Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Lab)
*Maurice Golden (North East Scotland) (Con)
*Jenni Minto (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
*Mark Ruskell (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:

Chris Hegarty (Christian Aid Scotland)
Dr Geraldine Hill (Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund)
Professor Tahseen Jafry (Glasgow Caledonian University)
Jamie Livingstone (Oxfam Scotland)
Muthi Nhlema (Baseflow Ltd)
Carolyn Sawers (Corra Foundation)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

James Johnston

LOCATION

The Robert Burns Room (CR1)

Scottish Parliament

Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Thursday 30 September 2021

[The Convener opened the meeting at 09:00]

Interests

The Convener (Clare Adamson): Good morning, and welcome to the sixth meeting of the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee. As a result of membership change, our first agenda item is a declaration of interests. We repeat our thanks to Ms Webber for her contribution to the committee. I welcome Maurice Golden to the committee. We look forward to working with you, Mr Golden. I invite you to make a declaration of interests.

Maurice Golden (North East Scotland) (Con): Thank you, convener. I am delighted to be here. Given today's session, I want to make everyone aware that, in the previous session of Parliament, I attended a trip to Nepal, which was sponsored by Tearfund, with Kate Forbes to look at tackling human trafficking and climate justice.

Decision on Taking Business in Private

09:00

The Convener: Agenda item 2 is a decision on taking business in private. Do members agree that our consideration of evidence should be taken in private at item 5 and at future meetings?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Climate Justice

09:01

The Convener: Under item 3, as part of our international development work, and in the run-up to the 26th United Nations climate change conference of the parties, we are looking at climate justice. In this one-off session, the committee will hear from two panels. First, I welcome Jamie Livingstone, head of Oxfam Scotland; Carolyn Sawers, acting chief executive of the Corra Foundation; and Chris Hegarty, senior adviser for Christian Aid Scotland. Good morning to you all.

We will move straight to questions. I invite Mr Cameron to open the questioning on behalf of the committee.

Donald Cameron (Highlands and Islands) (Con): Good morning. It is great to see you all. I have a general question on the central principles of climate justice, one of which is protecting and respecting human rights. As ever, there is a tension between that important principle and its everyday application in practice. On the practical application and, more important, the enforcement of human rights, how do we overcome the challenges around protecting human rights when different thresholds and standards are applied across the world?

The Convener: Can the witnesses hear us?

Jamie Livingstone (Oxfam Scotland): Yes. Can you hear me okay?

The Convener: We can. Did you hear the question?

Jamie Livingstone: I did. It is a really important question. The solution is, in part, to set the highest possible standards within our own powers. In Scotland, there has been a substantial focus on human rights and trying to integrate them into Scots law. For example, the right to food is obviously being denied to many people around the world, but we also have issues with people being able to access food here in Scotland. That is why activities to try to integrate human rights into Scots law and give life to them in Scotland are so important. If we do that, we can credibly champion human rights internationally.

On climate justice, I have seen the interaction between the climate crisis and the denial of human rights internationally. When we talk about climate justice, it can sometimes seem very theoretical, but it is very far from that. In 2016, I travelled to Malawi and saw the impact of the food crisis there, which was driven by drought. I met families who literally had no clue where the next meal was coming from. When you speak to such people, human rights frameworks and standards seem like a very distant prospect. Scotland can support and, in that case, was supporting individuals to access their right to food, but we need to get the frameworks right in Scotland, too, so that we can do that work credibly.

Carolyn Sawers (Corra Foundation): Good morning. I echo a lot of what Jamie Livingstone has said. The Corra Foundation's role is as a grant manager for the climate justice innovation fund on behalf of the Scottish Government. My contribution is based on what we hear from grant holders and organisations in partner countries on such issues.

I strongly echo what Jamie Livingstone said about setting our own standards and approach here in Scotland. For us, of course, it starts with the responsibilities that we bear as a country that has benefited most from industrialisation and has, therefore, contributed most to climate change. Given that we hold that moral responsibility, our push to act should be extremely strong. We strongly welcome the human rights framework in Scotland. As Jamie Livingstone set out, that is the basis for our actions elsewhere.

Chris Hegarty (Christian Aid Scotland): Good morning. I am afraid that I missed the question and the first part of Jamie Livingstone's answer due to a connectivity issue, so I cannot really contribute to that one.

Donald Cameron: The question was about how we overcome the challenges with protecting human rights when different thresholds and standards are applied around the world. The right to food is a good example. What can we do to make sure that the right to food can be enforced and applied internationally?

The Convener: Mr Hegarty, are you able to hear us?

Chris Hegarty: I am sorry. I have not— [*Inaudible*.]

The Convener: I think that there is an issue. Maybe we could switch Mr Hegarty's screen off and just have the audio to see if that would be any better. Can you hear us, Mr Hegarty? I think that we will have to try to get Mr Hegarty onboarded again.

Donald Cameron has some supplementary questions.

Donald Cameron: I want to drill down by asking the same question that I just asked Mr Hegarty. I fully acknowledge the comments about what Scotland is doing in relation to human rights and frameworks here. How do we make the right to food mean something in developing countries so that it can be relied on by individuals and enforced? Do you have any observations about that?

Jamie Livingstone: Human rights are universal, and Scotland and the United Kingdom have an obligation to hold other countries to account for the delivery of human rights. Alongside that, we need to do what is within our gift to support their delivery. As well as demonstrating our commitment to human rights at home, it is important that we support their implementation and realisation internationally. That is where our international development contribution is so important. The UK and Scotland have a strong track record on development assistance.

We voiced concern recently about the cuts to overseas development assistance at UK level, which we think have come at the wrong time and will result in more people being denied their human right to food. We urge all rich developed countries to fulfil their commitment to spending 0.7 per cent of gross national income on aid. Overseas development assistance is even more important in the context of Covid, which is applying additional financial pressures on many countries on top of the pre-existing development challenges and the additional challenges that have been created by the climate crisis.

We need to get our own house in order. The right to food needs to be realised in the UK, because far too many people face an income crisis and are reliant on food banks. We also need to do what we can internationally to hold other countries to account for the realisation of the right to food and to support the delivery of that important principle through our overseas development assistance.

Carolyn Sawers: I will drill down into that question, as I was asked to do. I reinforce the points about recognising our responsibilities and about Scotland modelling what is needed. It is critical that we, as a country, model the progressive commitments, the policies and the implementation that recognise the drive towards achieving and securing the right to food, and that we bring together our policies in a coherent sense so that our policies at home and our international development policies work together, as Jamie Livingstone has highlighted.

I champion the role of the Scottish Government in encouraging others. It should not only model what is needed; it has a leadership role with the private sector, the third sector and other Governments to facilitate the collective action that is needed to secure rights in the way that Donald Cameron suggests.

Donald Cameron: Thank you for those answers. My final question is about the right to development, which is an important aspect of climate justice. Can you help to define that right for the committee? Where do you see it fitting into existing conventions of rights and existing legislation at home and abroad?

Carolyn Sawers: I will let other witnesses in this session and the next session speak about the legislation. I will not speak about areas in which I am not an expert so that I do not give a false sense of my expertise on the legal points.

As part of an organisation that works alongside partners in Scotland and in other countries, my view is that the right to development is primarily about developing a path to a low-carbon economy in the partner countries that Scotland is working alongside. For example, the work that we have done through the climate justice innovation fund is about embedding and supporting the path towards adoption, adaptation and the development of low-carbon economies. That work recognises climate justice and that the partner countries that we are working with are experiencing the climate crisis at the sharp end.

I will not go into detail—the committee will hear from organisations such as Baseflow Ltd in the next session—but there are practical examples of working with partner countries and organisations in those countries on the development of low-carbon economies. I want to emphasise that transition in the context of the climate crisis that we are facing.

Jamie Livingstone: As Carolyn Sawers said, rich developed countries developed on the back of unsustainable use of fossil fuels, and we need to recognise that. Therefore, we need to move first and fastest to reduce our emissions so that developing countries can continue to develop. We need to support them so that they are able to jump from fossil fuels to more sustainable routes to development.

The Scottish Government has supported the implementation of the sustainable development goals, which are really important, but it is important to bear in mind that the climate crisis is undermining development. The Scottish Government's international development fund is funding some great work to support communities with their development objectives. I remember finding out that Scottish Government-funded solar panels were increasing crop yields in Malawi. The solar-powered pumps pumped up water from the nearby river to increase crop yields, thereby increasing the community's income, but the drought meant that there was simply not enough water. I saw the impact of the climate crisis undermining development.

09:15

We welcome the commitment to a wellbeing and sustainable development bill in Scotland, which offers an opportunity to lock in some of the

welcome commitments that Scotland has made. For example, we have committed to development policy coherence, whereby we do not give international development support while not meeting our climate change targets. As a rich developed country, we have an obligation to develop and deliver our national outcomes as expressed in the national performance framework in ways that do not undermine the opportunities for other countries to develop and improve wellbeing.

The Convener: The Corra Foundation's submission talks about the focus on listening to communities, and Mr Livingstone's submission talks about taking a human-centred approach. Could the witnesses say a little bit about what that means on the ground? I will go to Ms Sawers first.

Carolyn Sawers: I suppose that you will know the phrase, "It ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it." In this case, it is both what you do and the way that you do it. I am delighted that you have picked up on those points about participant voice and partnership.

More broadly in our work—this is as true in relation to working in Scotland as it is working alongside the Scottish Government in partner countries—the funding that we provide starts from and embeds the participation of communities, which shapes the work that is undertaken, and reflects their key priorities. The Climate Challenge Programme Malawi is certainly framed in that way. Similarly, the climate justice innovation fund, as it has grown since 2017, has very much embedded those principles of partnership.

How does that work in practice? We receive proposals and applications. As we are considering whether they are the right idea to develop and fund, it is critical that we understand how the proposals have been developed alongside and led by communities that are directly impacted by climate change, how their voices and their leadership has been centred in the proposals, and how their power and agency in the proposals are demonstrated. We look at criteria that assure us that a proposal is sustainable, it has the voices of communities within it, it understands issues such as gender equity and the role of women and girls, and it is well embedded in its community.

I will pick up a couple of points that are specific to the climate justice innovation fund. The fund supports partnerships between organisations in Scotland and in partner countries. It progressively tips the balance of power between those organisations. We want the committee to have to the front of its mind the potential for funding approaches that intentionally tip the balance of power, and place power, participation and the strength of partnership very much in the global south.

Part of the aim of the climate justice innovation fund is to seek locally led partners. It does not just seek an organisation that is based in a partner country, but seeks a locally led partner that is embedded within a community, and represents, involves, hears and champions the voices of the people who live in them.

Jamie Livingstone: I do not want to go over too much of what Carolyn Sawers said. However, I flag up that, as we speak, a communiqué is being launched under the banner of the Glasgow climate dialogues, which was supported by Stop Climate Chaos and the Scottish Government. In the session that Oxfam hosted on how we boost support to low-income countries to adapt to the climate crisis, the point about locally led adaptation came through really strongly. There was a clear call for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to integrate the locally led adaptation principles into all its systems and processes.

Part of the challenge is that far too little climate finance is being mobilised and that there is a big gap in the volume of climate finance that is being mobilised. We are seeing far too little of that reach the least developed countries and small island developing states, but, further than that, we are seeing far too little of it reaching local communities. However, we know that local communities are best placed to understand their context, and to mobilise additional resources and delivery capacity. We need to get money to those local communities. To do that, we must ensure that our application and accounting processes are proportionate, and that we put in place the capacity support to allow and enable local organisations to lead the delivery of climate justice activities internationally.

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Lab): I thank the witnesses for the submissions that you sent to us in advance, which are incredibly useful. I want to reflect on the fact that it is five years since the Paris agreement. We have a huge opportunity and obligation at COP26 in Glasgow.

I will start off with Jamie Livingstone from Oxfam. In your submission, you highlight that the Paris agreement has three pillars: mitigation; adaptation; and loss and damage. So far, most of our focus in Scotland has been on mitigation and adaptation. However, in relation to the loss and damage issue, you make a strong point about the ability of global south low-income countries to put in the required investment.

You also commented on our being the founders of the industrial revolution in Scotland. Given that COP26 is in Glasgow, and given our role historically, what can we do to redouble our efforts and push that third pillar of the Paris agreement?

Alok Sharma told the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee that we need to spend $100 billion a year over the five-year period from 2020 to 2025. Our contribution has gone up—it is doubling to £6 million—which is great. What more do we need to do if we in Scotland are going to lead?

The Convener: I will start with Mr Livingstone. I let the witnesses know that Mr Hegarty is back on board on audio only.

Jamie Livingstone: Sarah Boyack is right that most of the focus in the Paris agreement delivery is on the mitigation side. With a climate justice approach, we need to drive down emissions quickly. However, we need to recognise, as the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report reinforced, that this is not a distant threat. Communities need to be able to adapt to the climate crisis that they are facing now.

Currently, rich countries are abjectly failing to fulfil their $100 billion climate finance commitment. Some 50 per cent of the financial promise is meant to be go towards adaptation support, but we are at only around 25 per cent. Our analysis shows that, between 2020 and 2025, we are looking at a shortfall of about $75 billion in climate finance support, yet we know that even the $100 billion target was insufficient to meet the need.

On top of that, we need to recognise that there are limits to how communities can adapt to climate change. We are now seeing irreversible climate damage and that then brings you into the conversation about loss and damage.

We have seen incremental progress globally in discussing loss and damage. We have in place an international mechanism to drive forward progress, but there is no financial mechanism that sits behind that to get loss and damage finance to front-line communities.

Alongside increasing climate finance for adaptation—critically, we need to ensure that that is in addition to overseas development assistance and does not displace it—we must see COP26 make progress on the discussion about how we secure the additional finance to deal with irreversible climate impacts.

In relation to Scotland, it is welcome that we have a climate justice fund. We were concerned that it had been frozen at £3 million a year for five years, despite spiralling climate impacts. However, we really welcome the increase to £6 million. Crucially, that is separate and in addition to the international development fund. That allows Scotland as a sub-state actor to call on other rich countries to increase their financial commitments.

On loss and damage specifically, there was a dialogue on loss and damage as part of the Glasgow climate dialogues and participants from the global south called for the Scottish Government to consider creating a solidarity fund to demonstrate leadership on loss and damage ahead of COP26. That is an interesting proposal. I think that that would have to be in addition to and separate from the adaptation support.

To show as much leadership as possible, we need to demonstrate that we can identify innovative new sources of finance for climate finance and loss and damage, and we need to be driven by the data, which clearly shows that emissions are being driven by the richest in society. We need to curb emissions of the richest in society. One way of doing that would be to change incentives, but we also need to raise new finance by progressive taxation on high emitters, high incomes and wealth.

Sarah Boyack: I will move to the Corra Foundation. You are in a position to access a raft of different donations from big organisations. Is there an appetite for addressing the loss and damage agenda from big financiers and people giving support to charities and foundations like yourselves to make that difference in the next five years?

Carolyn Sawers: I would hope so—it is certainly an area that merits exploration.

Our experience is primarily in funds relating to adaptation. To echo some of what Jamie Livingstone spoke about, it is clear that our current action, certainly through the climate justice innovation fund, is more in the space of adaptation and that our actions in Scotland are primarily more in the mitigation space.

On exploring the potential for raising funds more broadly around loss and damage, again, the Scottish Government can potentially play a leadership role in bringing together others and building funds with them.

This is an area in which, as you are well aware, there are many Government players, and large global philanthropists and foundations active in the field more generally. There is a well-connected funding community in Scotland of foundations and trusts. I am sure that you will not be surprised to hear me say that the orientation of most foundations, trusts and givers in Scotland is primarily towards work in Scotland. Part of what is powerful, exciting and interesting about these kinds of sessions and the visibility of COP26 in Glasgow is the way that they bring to the top of the agenda the potential for collective action. That case can increasingly be made—and we certainly expect it to be made—as we drive towards COP26.

Sarah Boyack: Chris Hegarty, do you have a comment? I cannot see whether your hand is up.

Chris Hegarty: I apologise to everybody—my broadband connection is indicating that it is unstable, so I am losing connectivity.

I will build on what Jamie Livingstone and Carolyn Sawers have said. In my experience, the way in which Scotland has the biggest impact on such issue is by setting helpful precedents. I wondered about loss and damage and whether there might be a parallel. The issue of climate justice was, maybe 10 or 11 years ago, something that northern Governments were unwilling to even talk about. The way in which the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government started talking about the issue of climate justice was transformational and revolutionary. Scotland was the first northern country in the world to set up a climate justice fund.

At that time, the feedback that I had from partners and colleagues in places such as Africa in relation to Scotland talking about and using the words "climate justice" was more effusive than I had expected. Simply having a rich northern Government using the term "climate justice" was significant and very helpful in international terms, and was seen as an important breakthrough.

I wonder whether there might be scope for something similar in terms of loss and damage, because that is an issue that northern Governments, for financial reasons, are reluctant to even talk about. Perhaps that might be a means by which Scotland, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament can develop another one of those helpful precedents that can punch through some of the narrative and linguistic barriers to get the issue on the agenda, as Jamie Livingstone said.

09:30

Mark Ruskell (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green): Good morning to you all. I will pick up on thoughts about the human rights framework and on Jamie Livingstone's comments about the wellbeing and sustainable development bill. How do we deliver climate justice effectively in Scotland? Who does the governance on that? The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 refers to climate justice, but I am thinking about how we enshrine it further in legislation. Who champions it? Alongside the important principles, is there a need for a future generations commissioner or some other body or function to ensure that every public body that has a role to play is delivering?

I am interested in your thoughts about how we take this to the next stage. A useful principle is there, but how do we embed it further in public policy?

Jamie Livingstone: You are right that the 2009 act says that we will

"support the people who are most affected by climate change but who have done the least to cause it and are the least equipped to adapt to its effects".

As Chris Hegarty said, it is positive that we have that not just as a rhetorical commitment but as an in-law commitment in Scotland.

One of the proposals in the human rights framework is about introducing a right to a healthy environment for everyone, which is positive. That must apply outwith Scotland's borders as well as inside Scotland's borders, so that our activities here do not undermine the delivery of a healthy environment for people internationally.

Scotland has made a lot of progress through things such as the national performance framework, which is locked in through the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, and we have the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. However, you are right that something that falls below them is necessary to drive implementation.

The wellbeing and sustainable development bill offers an opportunity for us to explore how we can drive progress—for example, by requiring all public bodies, in their decision making, to conduct impact assessments of the international impact of their decisions, including on things such as climate emissions. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been a useful mechanism in Wales, but there is still an implementation and accountability gap. It is all very well having commissions and commissioners but, unless their recommendations are acted on, concern will lie in the realisation of the aspirations.

Lots of people will try to define what the proposed bill in Scotland should look like. Our perspective is that it must include the international dimension. What knock-on implications will activities in Scotland have for low-income countries, including through things such as excessive emissions?

Chris Hegarty: I do not have a huge amount to add to what Jamie Livingstone said. To be honest, in an assessment of such things, there is a hierarchy of preferences. In such bills, it is better to have something in the bill than to have nothing. The next preference is to embed greater teeth in the legislation.

Jamie Livingstone referred to Wales. As Scotland is about to embark on developing a wellbeing and sustainable development bill, we recently had an interesting call with colleagues from Wales to learn from the legislation of some years ago there. They said that some aspects that they embedded with the thought of providing teeth have not given as many teeth as they had hoped. There are pluses and minuses to having commissioners. The people in Wales said that, in

many ways, the wording in the legislation was perhaps the thing that they used most in trying to hold decision makers to account.

As I said, there is a hierarchy of things that we want to get in and, to be honest, we have to balance how politically likely we are to get some things in. We are weighing up such things in our work on the wellbeing and sustainable development bill.

Carolyn Sawers: I echo the comments that Jamie Livingstone and Chris Hegarty made. One of the most important messages that we are trying to get across is about the potential power of joining up things, which is inherent in the question. Scotland has a lot of good legislation and a lot of good, strong narrative and commitment, so the potential is to join that up and make it coherent, integrated and more than the sum of its parts.

The point has been made about having a great narrative and great legislation, so what we are really thinking about is how to make things happen on the ground and make implementation and the realisation of rights as strong as the statement of them. That is about the matrix of getting all the levers working at the same time.

My perspective is strongly as a funder of organisations in the third sector. To ensure the realisation of rights—as well as having strong legislation and a strong narrative and commitment—we need capable and well-funded third sector organisations that can advocate strongly and hold bodies to account. We need vibrant democracy and we need people to be connected to that and to have their voices heard. We need political will and an underpinning effort to ensure that the public dialogue is there.

I am adding to the points about getting the legislation and the mechanisms right. We need to see a rounded picture in which we have vibrant democracy, strong third sector organisations, support for advocacy and engagement with the media and the public, to get the underpinning will and the desire to progress.

Maurice Golden: I will explore two aspects of Scotland's role on the world stage, and I will start with Jamie Livingstone. The first part is about how we get more bang for our buck from the investment that Scotland makes in tackling climate justice. Would a thematic approach help to achieve that? We potentially face water wars between competing states over riparian basins, watercourses and aquifers and, at household level, there may be water scarcity. Equally, the focus could be on human trafficking, access to education, labour standards, renewables or agriculture. There is a whole variety of themes. Is it worth while exploring that?

Jamie Livingstone's submission said:

> "The Scottish Government should demonstrate its commitment to climate justice by making clear its opposition to the approval of new oil and gas licenses".

What impact, if any, is the Scottish Government's failure to meet emissions targets over the past three years having in this sphere?

Jamie Livingstone: I will address those fairly chunky questions in turn. On bang for buck, an evaluation of the climate justice fund is going on. I will join the meeting this afternoon about that, which will start setting out the findings. Carolyn Sawers is perhaps better placed to talk about that.

As for focus, the Scottish Government's international development programme is geographically focused on the partner countries—Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia—for exactly the purpose of deepening the partnerships and increasing the bang for buck, by having predictable and stable funding. There is general support for that approach.

Much of what the Scottish Government has done has focused generally on water and renewables. There are two parts to the support that low-income countries need—one is finance and the other is technology. It is welcome that there are commitments to set up new global platforms to share learning between Scotland and some of our partner countries on renewables and the like. All of that—marrying together the technology transfer with the financial support—comes together to increase Scotland's bang for our buck.

On Cambo, we all agree that we need to have a just transition, but the transition needs to start. The International Energy Agency and the chair of the UK Climate Change Committee have both expressed concern that we should not approve new oil and gas extraction because it is not compatible with our climate aspirations. We very much welcome the fact that the Scottish Government has urged the Prime Minister to review existing licences and we think that the next step is that the First Minister and the Scottish Government should make clear their opposition to the Cambo project.

You referred to missed targets. Scotland has a relatively strong climate action record. As we have discussed, we have strong legal targets, which is great, and we have made progress—we have reduced emissions since 1990 by in excess of 51 per cent or so.

The challenge is that we are falling short of our legal targets. In 2019, emissions fell year on year, but we still missed our legal target, and that was the third missed target in a row. That places Scotland's climate justice credentials in jeopardy. The cabinet secretary has committed to bringing forward a catch-up plan, which is critical, because

distant 2045 net zero targets will count for little unless we get on track to deliver our 2030 emissions targets.

Collectively, we need to remain within 1.5°—the United Nations and the IPCC have been clear on that. We cannot afford to miss more of our legal targets, because that would begin to undermine our championing role, which we want in going into COP26 and beyond. We want the Scottish Government and the First Minister to go into platforms such as the Under2 Coalition and the wellbeing economy Governments initiative with a credible climate justice example to show. We need to get on track, which means faster emissions reductions now to meet the 2030 target.

Chris Hegarty: I am keen to build on Jamie Livingstone's points and will answer both questions as best I can. On how we increase the bang for buck, I make a distinction in the various strands of work that are done in Scotland on climate justice. Holyrood is responsible for emissions cuts in the same way as bodies in many other countries are. Climate finance is not devolved, so we end up innovating and doing things around the edges.

If we are talking about how to make the most of that relatively small-scale contribution, Christian Aid is unabashed about saying that poverty is political. Sometimes, we can get a much bigger bang for buck if we work on underlying structural issues—on advocacy issues. I notice that the Scottish Government has funded the Women's Environment and Development Organization's women delegates fund to provide training and support for women delegates from the least-developed countries at COP26. Focusing on one or two key advocacy issues on which Scotland has a good story to tell and which it has a particular advantage in supporting—perhaps not to the exclusion of the programmatic work that is done but as an additional important feature—could have a much bigger effect through changing things at a structural level rather than through programmes on the ground.

The failure to meet targets really does not help—it undermines the credibility of the work that is going on and it encourages cynicism. However, as Jamie Livingstone said, the legislation is strong and the track record is relatively strong in international terms. Scotland has cut its emissions by 51 per cent or so since 1990. If we look at some big international comparators, the USA's emissions have increased slightly and Canada's emissions have gone up by 21 per cent since 1990.

Scotland has a relatively strong story to tell. I would love Scotland to cut its emissions far and fast and to sell—if I can put it in that way—or share that positive story with other parts of the world. We should not overlook the fact that there is still a strong and positive story to tell, but I agree that missing targets does not help our ability to do that.

09:45

Carolyn Sawers: Looping back to the question, the first thing that came into my mind was to reflect to you that our bang for the buck is quite strong at the moment; I want to ensure that the committee hears that message. We have been managing 15 grants under the climate justice innovation fund, making a difference for more than 30,000 people in our partner countries. What we are funding there is strongly around renewable energy and innovative farming techniques. We are getting real benefits for £1.5 million, which is a relatively small amount of money. There is always potential to increase our bang for the buck, and I understand the reason behind the question, but there is a strong record now to build on. I want to ensure that you hear that.

How can you strengthen that? What we have heard from our grant holders and from organisations in partner countries is a strong desire to strengthen learning and exchange, which links to the question that you are asking. What we are doing in the climate justice innovation fund is trialling, testing and developing new technologies, which clearly have the potential not just to immediately benefit the communities that we are working alongside but to be adapted and trialled more widely. The way to maximise that and get more bang for the buck is to intentionally support learning and exchange in south-south conversations—between partner countries and between communities in partner countries—and in conversations with partners in Scotland. There is a strong appetite to do that and, if you are thinking about how to form and frame climate justice funding in the future, our advice is to strongly embed the potential for learning and exchange in order to make the most of the potential technological developments, adaptations and reach that the spend can have.

The impact of the grants is strong. They are making a difference to people's lives. We have renewable energy projects, access to electricity, clean water and improved farming approaches. It is the kind of work that will make a difference, but we have to intentionally embed learning exchange. It will happen anyway to an extent, but intentionally investing in it and ensuring that it happens as a core part of Scotland's climate justice funding would strengthen and achieve the stronger bang for the buck that you are looking for.

Jamie Livingstone: I have a very brief point that builds on Chris Hegarty's point. The international championing role is important, which

is why we very much welcome the recent release of the indicative nationally determined contribution by the Scottish Government. To be clear, that was an entirely voluntary step, but the fact of putting Scotland's climate action targets and progress into language that is familiar to parties to the Paris agreement is important. It is particularly important because, at the moment, the UN is saying that, if you add up the combined NDC commitments globally, we are on track for emissions to rise by 16 per cent by 2030. The championing and influencing role is absolutely critical, because Scotland can deliver its targets, but we also need faster progress internationally—those two things need to go hand in hand.

Maurice Golden: I have a brief supplementary question for Carolyn Sawers. You mentioned a substantive positive change in the Scottish Government's climate justice innovation fund. Will you outline what metrics are used to assess that?

Carolyn Sawers: Yes, absolutely. We run a fully engaged funding programme, whereby partner organisations in Scotland and our partner countries track a range of metrics that are appropriate to the work that they are doing. Primarily, the one that is always easiest to talk about is how many people are experiencing a positive change, which is about who and how many people our projects are reaching. That is obvious and it is the easiest one to sum up across a range of projects that are doing different work.

We operate a fully engaged monitoring and evaluation process with each partner. We gather regular information on the achievement of outcomes that partners have set for projects, and we pull those together to understand the overall impacts of the projects and the programme. As Jamie Livingstone mentioned, coincidentally and brilliantly timed—although it might be better if the meetings were the other way around—the evaluation of the climate justice fund as a whole will be published this afternoon. I am sure that we will be sharing further information about how the fund has worked as a whole, and we are happy to follow up with committee members on any details that would be helpful.

We have full monitoring and evaluation reports coming through from each project. They are six-monthly reports that are about not just finance but the difference that projects are making on the ground. Critically, the reports are also about the learning that is coming through, such as on technology and its use in situ on the ground, and on different ways to engage people and organisations in the work. It is a whole framework that we would be delighted to share more information on.

Maurice Golden: Thank you—that would be great.

Dr Alasdair Allan (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP): My first question is about the voice that people in the developing world have in all this. You have mentioned and referred to that. I am keen to know what can be done to bring that powerful voice to the fore, specifically at COP26. Is it likely to be heard?

Chris Hegarty: That has been a long-term challenge. I am trying to calibrate this in different contexts. In a Scottish context, those voices have been heard. Thinking back to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, I remember the cabinet secretary who had responsibility for the issue, John Swinney, saying at the end of the process that he had been inspired by the whole concept of climate justice and the voices that he had heard from the global south. It is something that we in Scotland have been doing for a long time with some success. The Scottish Government and Scottish politicians of all political colours have been notably engaged with people from the global south—at COPs, for example—throughout the past 10 or so years that I have been working on these issues. The challenge is how to make that the norm.

I am trying to calibrate this with practical things that people in Scotland can do. Civil society in Scotland has put an enormous amount of effort into planning how civil society can support and amplify voices from the global south during COP26. Through a whole range of processes—Jamie Livingstone has already talked about the dialogues—the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland coalition is supporting people to visit and stay in Glasgow and to have plenty of opportunity to speak. The Scottish Government is supporting training and development for female spokespeople from the least developed countries. That is the kind of thing that we can and should do more of. At Christian Aid, we are working to ensure that our spokespeople at COP26 are as diverse as possible and from the global south where possible.

There is a range of things that we can do. I have come up against the limits of what we can do in a Scottish context, but those are some of the things that we can think about in making sure that those voices come to the fore.

Carolyn Sawers: I am reflecting on what Chris Hegarty said in his lovely phrase about amplifying voices from the global south. It was exactly what was in my mind as well.

Amplifying voices from the global south, not just at COP26, although I understand the reason for the focus of your question, but in our thinking about climate justice funding and wider international development funding is absolutely vital—that line should be drawn from COP26 onwards. We are clearly moving to a new phase of climate justice and international funding.

As you know, the Scottish Government took a wider look at its international development funding not so long ago. It very clearly signalled a shift to amplifying and strengthening the voice of countries from the global south in that process—indeed, not just their voices but their power. In Corra, we use the term "voice" a lot, but it is about listening to voices as well as amplifying them. It is about those voices making a difference in real decisions. There is a much wider trend of participatory grant making, which we endorse and follow through, not just in climate justice funding but in any funding.

There is a wider role for a strong voice from the global south in funding as well as at COP26. For us, it is about rebalancing and recalibrating the sense of power. "Relationships" is the word that is in my mind. Relationships and trust are a two-way street, and we need to intentionally build relationships that are respectful, transparent and accountable and that have a sense of parity of power and partnership. That is the approach that, in the long term, will make Scotland's role in climate justice funding as strong as it can be.

Jamie Livingstone: It would be remiss not to say that the concerns around participation in COP26 in Glasgow are a level up from pre-existing concerns that have long been held about global south voices being heard and listened to, as Carolyn Sawers said. Obviously, there is a great focus on the challenges for global south attendees coming to Glasgow. It would be remiss not to point to the underlying vaccination inequality that is fuelling some of that. As we speak, only around 2 per cent of adults in low-income countries are fully vaccinated, which is a critical issue that all rich developed countries need to act on urgently.

In general, there is a mismatch between what goes on inside and outside of COPs. I was fortunate that I went to the COP in Madrid, where there was a real sense of frustration that the upsurge in the global south voice in the chambers or corridors outside the formal negotiations did not filter through to the urgency that was coming through in the chamber. During the Glasgow climate dialogues, which were specifically designed to ensure that, using its soft power, Scotland plays a role at COP26 to amplify the voices of the global south, the ambassador of Belize talked about COP26 being a point of reckoning in the role that is played by rich developed countries.

Alongside the funding that the Scottish Government is giving to support women to participate throughout the UNFCCC processes, it has funded the conference of youth that is coming up, which is positive given intergenerational concerns and the fact that young people are pulling the rest of society along towards the more urgent action that delivery of the Paris agreement requires.

Dr Allan: I want to build on the point that Jamie Livingstone just made about the nature or shape of COP26. We often talk about COP26 in quite abstract terms, without much of an idea of what the agenda and format look like and who is allowed to attend what. Given the concern that we have heard expressed about ensuring that the voices of the global south are heard, will you talk about how your organisations or the organisations that you are affiliated to engage with COP26 and what bits of it?

Jamie Livingstone: As an international organisation, Oxfam attends COP, which we do in order to hold bilateral meetings on the fringes of the formal negotiations. A big part of what we try to do is to be a conduit to amplify the voices of the global south. For example, we will bring a Ugandan farmer—a smallholder—to COP26 in Glasgow and we will try to create platforms for her voice to be heard. To rebalance power dynamics and give opportunities for the global south, that sometimes requires global north participants to step aside, use their power to join the dots and allow global south voices to be heard strongly.

COP26 is a huge operation with multiple streams going on throughout the two weeks, so we have to be quite targeted in regard to which workstreams we try to influence. For Oxfam, the focus will be on climate finance, getting rich developed countries to fulfil the $100 billion promise and to go further by recognising that that is hugely insufficient and that we need a new global target for post-2025 that reflects the scale of the adaptation needs.

10:00

Chris Hegarty: I do not have a huge amount to add to what Jamie Livingstone said. Christian Aid is a UK-based organisation with a substantial presence here and, with the COP presidency being with the UK at the moment, another dimension for us has been the substantial amount of work with and directed at the UK Government in its role in shaping the agenda for this COP.

We have tried to act as something of a conduit for the issues that have been raised and prioritised by the communities that we work with in Africa, Asia and Latin America. We have raised their voices with the UK Government in its role with the COP presidency about things such as women's participation, climate finance, loss and damage and the sheer urgency for cuts in emissions. We operate in a similar way to Oxfam in many respects, but I wanted to add that other dimension to what Jamie Livingstone talked about.

In the Scottish context, it has been quite difficult to work out the role of the Scottish Government in this COP. To the extent that we can, we have worked with the Scottish Government to help to raise its voice where appropriate in this COP.

Carolyn Sawers: As the account managers for the climate justice innovation fund, our main engagement to date has been in ensuring that there are strong and powerful key studies available that we hope that the Scottish Government will use as part of COP26. We want to ensure that stories about the impact of the work of organisations such as those that you will hear from later are heard as part of the process.

Secondly, from a more local point of view, independent funders in Scotland have co-ordinated a little bit in thinking through how to best ensure that support is available to Scottish organisations that are working on environmental climate justice locally in Scotland. We want to ensure that we are a wee bit joined up—it is probably slightly more about organisations who will be on the outside of the formal proceedings of COP26—and that we work together as funders and do so intelligently to identify some of the great work that is happening in Scotland that we hope will have a voice.

Lastly, and slightly more broadly, COP26 itself provides a framework for independent funders, trusts and foundations to reflect on their own practice and what is happening, and I expect some engagement of international funders in the COP26 framework through a global organisation. More broadly, COP26 is prompting a strong discussion about what is happening with funding for the third sector on environmental issues and climate justice locally in Scotland. It is not an area in which there is significant independent funding in Scotland at the moment, so there are some broader knock-on impacts of COP26 in Glasgow for funding.

Dr Allan: I heard it put diplomatically there that it is unclear what role the Scottish Government might have. That question would have to be addressed to the UK hosts of the conference.

I will move on to another theme. What lessons can the Scottish Government learn from not just COP but some of the climate justice issues that your organisations are raising about how to mainstream the things that the Government is doing in international development into all parts of government in Scotland?

Carolyn Sawers: That is a big question, but I will try to chunk it up and answer it succinctly. In our written submission, we set out two or three clear points on the management of climate justice funds that we want the Scottish Government to take on board. I am happy to summarise them. The points will be echoed in the evaluation of the climate justice fund that is being discussed later today. We have talked about the importance of learning and exchange within funding, of having locally led partners and of making the participant voice central to the processes and the way that funding is distributed and shared.

On some of the broader lessons for the Scottish Government, it is clearly an area where an example could be made of the potential for joining up the learning from what we are doing on international development with other policies in Scotland, which are also progressive, on community-led action, community empowerment and diversity, equity and inclusion. A whole range of progressive work is happening in Scotland that is very much informed by and speaks to our international work and that should be reinforced by it.

In my previous answer, I touched briefly on what we are doing in Scotland. I believe that there is room to strengthen the funding for that. As I have the chance, I will mention some of the things that the Corra Foundation is doing. We are working alongside partners to support the development of Scotland's first young people's forest. That development is led by young people. Work is now in train in Scotland that is helpfully and mutually reinforced by our work in our partner countries. We need to focus on the potential for that.

Chris Hegarty: The scale of what is required on climate change is such that a cross-departmental approach is needed. That is perhaps the biggest lesson although, to be fair, the Scottish Government and Parliament recognised it some time ago and several years ago a Cabinet sub-committee on climate change was set up to try to pull together the work in a cross-governmental way. It needs to continue on that basis.

As Carolyn Sawers said, there is a need to join up. We have been working with the Scottish Government for some time on the need to have policy coherence in relation to development, so that we are not making things better on the one hand and perhaps damaging in other respects. We need to continue with that strand of work and weave it together with the work on climate change.

The impact that the Scottish Parliament and Government can have through work on climate change is one of the biggest single ways in which we can have an impact on international development, so we need to try to weave those two things together.

Jamie Livingstone: I do not want to take us in a totally different direction, but one of the key lessons is that, although we have talked a lot about climate justice internationally, we need to deliver climate justice within Scotland, too. That

means trying to find opportunities to drive down our emissions in Scotland in ways that also support social justice in Scotland.

Far too many people in Scotland face fuel poverty. We need to find ways to target our emission reductions at the high emitters, who tend to be those with high incomes and wealth. For example, we need to curb excessive emissions from car travel through investment in public transport, which we know will disproportionately benefit those in poverty. We need to curb excessive emissions from flights and rekindle the work on the circular economy. It is still there in the background, but it seems to have been pushed later into the current session of Parliament, so we need to pick that up.

We also need to act on the increasingly widespread calls for greater conditionality in access to public money, so that we require private sector companies that access Scottish Government funding to support the transition that we need. The advisory group on economic recovery called for that, as did the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee in the previous session of Parliament. We need that to come through in things such as the fair work first approach, so that we harness the collective weight of Scotland and recognise that Government cannot do it alone; we need the private sector's weight behind it as well.

Jenni Minto (Argyll and Bute) (SNP): It has been an informative evidence session. I want to focus on young people. All your written submissions referred to harnessing the transformative power of education for climate stewardship. We have heard about the young people's forest and about the COP youth conference. How are your organisations working with young people in Scotland and perhaps connecting their voices with the voices of young people in the global south?

Chris Hegarty: I will pick up on two strands of that. The first is on the notion of education and climate change. Civil society and climate campaigners in Scotland have a wide open goal via the curriculum for excellence's focus on global citizenship. Not many countries embed issues of sustainability and climate change in the education system and at the heart of the curriculum. Working with schools, we have developed several resources that focus on climate change and try to bring the issue of climate justice to light for young people. Just to plug some of those, in the run-up to COP, you can find on our website resources for schools and young people on the issue of climate justice.

On how we bring young voices to COP26, one of our major mobilisations is with an organisation called the Young Christian Climate Network, which is undertaking a walking relay all the way from the G7 in Cornwall and that will culminate at COP in Glasgow. The relay goes throughout much of the UK and will arrive in Scotland on, I think, 15 October. That is one of our major mobilisations to try to get young people throughout Scotland involved. The march will come to the border just north of Berwick-upon-Tweed on 15 October and will then go through East Lothian and Edinburgh to Glasgow. That is one of our major focuses in inspiring young people to get involved in COP.

Carolyn Sawers: Young people have been inspiring our organisation to do things. Your question makes complete sense but, actually, we have found young people to be well ahead of us on the issue. We are following their leadership as an organisation. They have inspired our organisation, our staff team and our partners to take more action and to look at our carbon footprint, and to think about the role that funders, foundations and trusts play in Scotland and internationally on the climate crisis. I acknowledge young people's leadership on that. If we can be alongside them and support their voice and journey, we are happy to do so.

The Corra Foundation is involved in a wider movement called #iwill, which supports young people's social action. I want to put that on your radar and to say, not surprisingly, how strongly that work, which happens in local communities across Scotland and the UK, is informed by young people's social action on the climate and the climate crisis. The climate is a clear focus of that movement's work and we as funders and others that are involved in the advisory group are supporting that.

10:15

I mentioned the young people's forest in Scotland, which is in development. There is a highly engaged young people's panel who are thinking about how to plant it, how to design it, how they will find a site and how the ownership will work. That is an exciting example. I would love for them, in a few weeks' time at COP26, to be able to tell the story of where they have got to and perhaps even use it as a fundraising opportunity to get the forest planted in future.

To loop back to the climate justice innovation fund, a number of the projects that have been funded have a strong youth element. The potential is certainly there to connect up young people who are involved in projects in partner countries internationally with communities and young people in Scotland.

Jamie Livingstone: One demand that young people are making is for the teaching of climate issues to be core in the education system. One of

the four key pillars in the curriculum for excellence is about responsible citizens, and we have the entitlement to learning for sustainability. However, teachers need to be supported to deliver on that entitlement. It has been positive that, in recent years, the Scottish Government has funded the network of development education centres across Scotland to provide continuing professional development support to teachers and produce resources that they can use in the classroom. We have funded the West of Scotland Development Education Centre to produce a specific teaching resource for COP26, which I commend to the committee.

To go back to something that Carolyn Sawers said, those centres are embedded in local communities, and their funding is not particularly secure. I commend their work and urge the Scottish Government to continue to invest in it so that teachers have the support that they need to realise the welcome legislative commitments to give young people the skills to critically interrogate the world around them. It is not about telling them what to think; it is about giving them the tools through which they can make up their minds and raise their voice.

The Convener: We have run right up against the time for the panel, but do you want to come back in, Ms Minto? Please try to be brief.

Jenni Minto: It is not so much a question; it is more of a comment. I was pleased to see Carolyn Sawers's face light up when she talked about the young people's forest. I have a connection, in that I am the champion for Celtic rainforests, so if possible I would like you to put that on your list of suggestions for the woodland.

The Convener: I will not go back to the panel on that. I thank everyone for their attendance and for their submissions, which were helpful to the committee.

I suspend the meeting briefly while we change panels.

10:17

Meeting suspended.

10:20

On resuming—

The Convener: Item 4 is our second panel on climate justice. We have with us Professor Tahseen Jafry, director at Glasgow Caledonian University's centre for climate justice; Muthi Nhlema, director of Baseflow Ltd; and Dr Geraldine Hill, advocacy manager for the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund. We are tight for time, so it would be helpful if contributions and questions were succinct.

I have an introductory question for each of you. I will start by asking Professor Jafry to summarise the summit on climate justice, which she hosted last week, to give us a flavour of the discussion and outcomes. How do you see that feeding into COP26?

Professor Tahseen Jafry (Glasgow Caledonian University): It was a fantastic conversation. We were overwhelmed and delighted with the content and quality of the contributions to the second world forum on climate justice. I was really struck by how fast the conversation on climate justice is moving. We were connected live with people from Vanuatu right through to Inuit communities in Canada—that was how far-reaching the event was. We heard about insights and about new research, approaches and developments that have been taking place right across the globe.

One point that stuck out was about the need to work not only as individuals, and about how connected the conversation needs to be, across disciplines, landscapes and social actors. The direction of travel on climate justice has changed considerably over the past five to six years since I started working on it. We are now in the realms of looking at not just technological solutions that relate to mitigation and adaptation approaches to tackle the impacts of climate change; the conversation has moved towards the urgent need to look at social and human values and approaches to building resilience and helping communities to cope with the impacts of climate change.

On how it relates to COP26, the insights from the world forum will shape the conversations and platforms that the centre is involved in across the full two weeks of the COP26 programme, whether that is in the blue or green zones or out of those zones and on campus. We are influencing the agenda, not just on what climate justice is but how we do it. What is the methodology and the approach? How do we take it forward and implement it to see structural change further down the line? From a practical point of view, it is really important that, at this point in time, we shift the conversation from being conceptual and about the niceties behind the idea towards something that is tangible, meaningful and measurable. That is the direction of travel.

We were honoured to have the director-general of the World Health Organization along with Mary Robinson and Nigel Topping. Everyone across the whole platform, including people from indigenous communities, talked about the need to highlight and bring to the fore the justice issues of climate change.

The Convener: Mr Nhlema, thank you for joining us from Malawi this morning. Could you tell us a little bit about your work and your relationship with the Scotland Malawi Partnership?

Muthi Nhlema (Baseflow Ltd): Thank you for welcoming me. First, I hope that you do not assume that I speak for all Malawians—I am just one voice among many. My work as part of the relationship between Malawi and Scotland has mostly been in the water sector, so I will broadly speak from that perspective.

My organisation has worked closely with the University of Strathclyde as part of the climate justice: water futures programme for the past four, going on five, years. There were several components to the programme, but the crown jewel was a national water point mapping exercise that tried to map all water assets in rural Malawi. That was significant because, the last time that the Malawi Government did such an exercise, it assumed that it had 77,000 water assets. In our exercise, we were able to find more than 100,000 assets, which was 25 per cent more. That was made possible because of the climate justice: water futures programme in partnership with not just the University of Strathclyde but several organisations, including mine, working together with the Malawi Government.

As Mrs Sawers from the Corra Foundation mentioned earlier, my organisation has also been a beneficiary of the climate justice innovation fund. One particular grant is very technical so I will not spend a lot of time on that. However, another grant links closely to climate justice. I liked it when one of the previous speakers said that it is time to focus on the justice in climate justice. One piece of work for which we have received support is looking at how we can hold non-state actors accountable for failed water assets.

The mapping exercise that we did proved that there are a lot of assets being installed in rural Malawi with resources from various development partners. Most of those are not installed properly or according to standard, which means that they break down sooner than they are supposed to. The blame for the failure of those systems is then put on the poor, which in itself is an injustice. The systems are meant to build community resilience to the impacts of climate change. If they are installed properly, people will have water during times of drought and other natural disasters.

To be honest, I did not expect to get funding for that work, because it is risky. In essence, most accountability work looks at holding Governments accountable. Of course, Governments must be held accountable, but non-governmental organisations and private drilling companies are not held accountable. In partnership with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency as my Scottish partner, I am trying to develop a framework for making that happen, to see how we can hold those organisations accountable. We are raising the community voices so that they can hold the stakeholders accountable. My organisation provides the data and the space to enable that to happen.

That is how my organisation has benefited from the Scotland Malawi Partnership and how that is impacting on work in the water sector in Malawi.

The Convener: Dr Hill, your written submission says that we

"should be a champion of the principle of additionality"

and that you believe that there is potential for us to be a global leader in the area. Will you briefly give us some more context for that?

Dr Geraldine Hill (Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund): I am sorry, but you will need to point me to where the submission talks about that, because someone else wrote it. If you point me to the section, I will elaborate if I can.

The Convener: I do not have it in front of me. Will you just say a little about what you think the priorities are?

Dr Hill: Sure—that would maybe be better. The earlier discussion on what climate justice means and what the approach means for the Scottish Government was interesting. For us, there are two key aspects to that. One is the Scottish Government's approach, in its international development work, to supporting work on the ground. The other element is the policy coherence stuff, which you talked about in the earlier evidence session.

On support on the ground, SCIAF implemented the climate challenge programme in Malawi, which from our point of view was a fantastic success. We did a virtual visit with the minister a couple of weeks ago so that she could see in person the approach that is used. The programme has helped more than 40,000 people in southern Malawi—the majority of them are women and girls—to improve their access to food, water and energy so that they are better equipped to cope with climate change and climate disasters.

10:30

We think that it has been a fantastic success that has resulted in female empowerment, an increase in household income and the protection of volatile livelihoods during extreme weather events. In the previous evidence session, you talked a lot about locally led adaptation. That is key—it is important to go from the bottom up. The CCPM was implemented through seven local partners, and it very much involved listening to

what they said that they needed as a starting point.

The programme was also based on the leave-no-one-behind approach, which you touched on a little in the previous session. That ensured that participants from vulnerable groups in communities—disadvantaged women and men as well as young, elderly and disabled people—were included in the consultation, design and implementation phases of the programme. There was a strong emphasis on gender—[*Inaudible*.]—to ensure meaningful participation through female-only forums in design and implementation. As a result, there are now more than 505 women in leadership positions, which has changed the dynamics in communities and provided good examples to young girls.

Another aspect is increasing climate literacy, to ensure that participants understand their human rights in relation to climate change and to encourage them to speak up about those rights. The programme also raised awareness among district government officials of their rights and responsibilities in relation to climate change. It is important that, when we try to support communities, we think about supporting their capacity to do their own advocacy. That was mentioned earlier. It is important that that element is maintained in the work, because that will have a long-term impact.

It is also important that, in supporting communities on the ground at the local level and with what they can do at the local, district and national levels, we build up links so that they can feed into the international climate architecture. That brings me on to how we enable partners on the ground at the local level to engage at COP26. You talked about that earlier. SCIAF is bringing partners from Malawi, Zambia and Colombia to COP. One of our top priorities and objectives is to ensure that those partner voices are heard. That is why we have been working closely with the Scottish Government. We led on Stop Climate Chaos Scotland's co-hosting of the Glasgow climate dialogues, which Jamie Livingstone mentioned. A communiqué on the dialogues was launched this morning, so it would be great if the committee looked at that.

The four key issues that were discussed in the dialogues were mentioned earlier. One of them is loss and damage, which you talked about, and another is global participation, which you also talked about. There is also access to vaccines and those issues—[*Inaudible*.]—which is another hugely important issue and part of the question of policy coherence. Then there is adaptation.

There is the approach to what is happening on the ground and how we go about doing that, with locally led adaptation and all that. Then there is all the policy coherence stuff, which we basically agree with. We agree with everything that was said about that earlier by Oxfam and Christian Aid.

The Convener: My earlier question referred to section 3 of your submission, which is about financial additionalities. I probably did not make that clear. However, we can come back to that later. We will move on to questions from Mr Cameron. I remind everyone that we are tight for time, so it would be helpful if we could have succinct answers.

Donald Cameron: I will ask the same question that I asked the previous panel. It is about human rights, which is a central principle of climate justice. There is a difficulty in converting theory into practice. I greatly enjoyed listening to what you just said about what you are doing on the ground. However, how do we overcome the challenges of protecting human rights and enforcing them as a matter of practical application when different thresholds and standards are applied across the world?

Professor Jafry: There is no doubt that that is hugely complicated. On the part about protecting and enforcing rights, that is about working closely with different bodies and frameworks such as the UN Security Council and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. It is about our position and values, and what we stand for. We are trying to instil our approach, thinking and direction and our vision for all this, and we are working closely with the big frameworks and big actors globally that will be able to put in place practical approaches that can trickle down to local level to embed some of those values.

I completely agree that there seems to be a gap. The direction of travel so far in the work that has been done through the climate justice fund has been more to do with technology—it has been about water access, solar panels and those sorts of things. We need a step change towards building alliances and relationships and showing how influential we can be in changing the landscape as we move forward. That is an important contribution that Scotland can make, because it is a hugely complex area to break into.

Muthi Nhlema: I will speak directly from the Malawian perspective, because the issue that I am dealing with concerns the right to water, which, by the way, is not in Malawi's constitution. It is assumed that the right to water is built into the right to life, which was a surprise to me as we were doing work on the climate justice innovation fund.

The question is one that I have reflected on quite a lot as a practitioner here. One thing that makes it difficult to enforce human rights is when you have institutions that are not functioning, and

that is the fundamental problem that Malawi has. If you take a step back from all the problems that Malawi has, you see that there are two problems. The first is the inability of institutions to do their job, and the second is a lack of accountability mechanisms to ensure that institutions do what they are supposed to.

In the work that I have been doing, which involves going into communities and talking to chiefs and to women, when we share data with them and say that the water point that was given to them was not installed properly, they understand that there has been an injustice. The problem is about how they claim their rights.

As that problem has continued, I have discovered that with a community development approach—where you bring people together and they talk, they have scorecards and things like that—although those engagements are welcome, they are not enough. My organisation is now looking at how we can use the legal framework to enforce the right to water. We are trying to work with legal practitioners. I am not a lawyer, but my organisation works with legal practitioners and institutions such as the Malawi Human Rights Commission that are mandated to ensure the protection of human rights, so that they can track the right to water and ensure that it is being enforced.

Grants through the climate justice innovation fund or the climate justice fund could be used to support such institutions. Supporting organisations such as mine is fine but, as I said, the fundamental problem is a failure of institutions to do what they are supposed to do, so that is where the investment must go.

One thing that I am doing now, which is outside the funding from Scotland, is trying to see whether we can work with women who have been impacted by the failed water assets to take drilling companies, NGOs or local regulators to task within the country's legal frameworks. That is a long-winded response. Malawi has the legal frameworks; the issue is making it happen and catalysing it.

Dr Hill: To perhaps echo what Muthi Nhlema said, it is about voluntary versus mandatory approaches. For a number of years, I worked on the human rights of environmental defenders in Latin America. There is a hugely increasing problem with environmental defenders being criminalised for the work that they do. We work in Colombia, which is one of the countries where environmental defenders are most at threat.

At the UK level, work is being done to bring about a new law to hold companies to account when they fail to prevent human rights abuses and environmental harms. That is about a mandatory approach and trying to get companies to undertake human rights and environmental due diligence. That is at UK level. At UN level, there have been voluntary approaches for a long time, such as the voluntary principles on business and human rights. The issue is about how we enshrine things in law, given that voluntary approaches are often severely lacking when it comes to implementation.

Mark Ruskell: I have a question for Professor Jafry on the principles in the Paris agreement and the UNFCCC that deal with the respective capabilities of states. What do the principles mean in practice? Should states that have more capability and more wealth be making a just transition faster than others? How are the principles being interpreted?

Professor Jafry: There is no doubt about it: the biggest global emitters—the G7—have the biggest responsibility in cutting carbon emissions. The challenge is the how question—the methodology in the process of transition. A lot of organisations and stakeholders are grappling with the just aspect—not just what "just" means but how we do it, what the approach and the methodology are, and how we measure any change that comes about.

The just aspect relates to the sustainable development goals and is about ensuring that no one is left behind on this journey. For us, "just" means ensuring that there is diversity, inclusivity and representation and that everyone has a part to play, and at the same time ring-fencing and providing social protection for those who would otherwise be at the bottom or receiving end of the process of change, which we must all ensure does not happen. We are already seeing that play out in the United States with Joe Biden's declarations. It is about ensuring that there is diversity in jobs and in upskilling, and that the process takes place equitably and fairly.

A significant part of this is that, as we go through the process, we need to be mindful of what we want to achieve as a result. How will we measure the just aspect over the short, medium and long term so that we can look back and say with confidence that we achieved not only a transition but one that was fair, equitable and just? We need to say how we are measuring it. That will be complex and challenging, and my sense from different organisations is that, on this journey, the difficulty relates to how we do it.

10:45

The Convener: Mr Nhlema, would you like to come in?

Muthi Nhlema: Could Mark Ruskell repeat the question? My line was breaking up and I did not catch the last bit.

Mark Ruskell: It was primarily about whether countries that have more capability and more wealth should be accelerating their just transition.

Muthi Nhlema: There is not much that I can add from the Malawian perspective. One of Scotland's commitments is that it is doubling its contribution to the climate justice fund, which I have already said is laudable. There is a lot of discussion. It is very easy for people in the south, such as me, to ask what northern countries should do more of, for the obvious reason that your contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is bigger than that of the south.

That said, there is still the question of what the south has to do. I am speaking specifically about Malawi, which also has to go through a transition. You are looking at what justice means globally, but I have spoken about justice in relation to the proportion of assets that fall apart shortly after being installed. That is one aspect of justice.

From an environmental perspective, there is a lot that Malawi needs to do that it is not doing when it comes to protecting and having better stewardship of its environment. It is no news to anyone that environmental degradation is quite severe in my country, which has knock-on effects on water resources as well as putting people at greater risk of natural disasters.

People ask what Scotland should do, and I think that, using soft power, its access to Malawi and its friendship with the country, Scotland should challenge Malawi and ask, "What are you doing and what can you do about better stewardship of your natural resources?" Malawi has a part to play in this. We are not merely recipients of funding; we also contribute to the degradation, and that needs to come out clearly. Developed nations need to play their part, but developing countries such as mine need to do the same.

Dr Hill: One of the things that has come out clearly from the Glasgow climate dialogues is that the just transition needs to be based on the UNFCCC principles of common but differing shades of responsibilities, respective capabilities and the right to development. That requires all countries to do their fair share of emissions reduction. Given everything that we know, and given what you heard in the earlier session, Scotland has to do its fair share. Scotland, as an early industrial country, has a huge responsibility as well as a moral and a legal duty to act.

On what that looks like for climate justice credentials, we put at the end of our submission a series of things that we think need to be considered if Scotland is to do its fair share.

Mark Ruskell: Scotland has some difficult questions to answer in relation to a just transition. One relates to the transition away from oil and gas. The just transition commissioners were at the Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee recently, and they put a very difficult question to us.

As we are transitioning away from oil and gas, we will still have some residual demand, even if we are keeping to the terms of the Paris agreement. The question was where that oil and gas should come from. As commissioners put it, there are three options. It could come from countries where it is cheapest, such as the middle east; it could come from new sources such as Ghana, which would have the most economic development impact; or it could come from domestic sources.

From a climate justice perspective, where should our residual oil and gas demand be met from in future? I know that that is a hard one.

Dr Hill: It is a hard one, and I do not have the answer to it. You know better than I do that this is not about switching off the tap. It is clear that we need to get out of oil and gas, but how do we transition to that? Moving out of oil and gas and building renewables and all the rest of it is difficult. I do not have the answer.

Muthi Nhlema's input was interesting. Our partners in the global south are telling us, "Wait a wee minute—we have not developed yet. We still need this oil and gas to develop. We do not have the resources yet in renewables." How quickly can they build that up so that they do not have to go down the route of being overreliant on oil and gas? In the global south, that is a big topic of discussion. They know that they need to move out of it, and they do not want the same development path that we had, but how quickly can they do it? Right now, if they have the reserves, they are saying that they need to use them. It is difficult.

Mark Ruskell: I ask Professor Jafry the same question. There is a right to development, which is also important. The question is, what type of development?

Professor Jafry: On where the residual demand should be met from, you mentioned that it could come from the cheapest source, it could come from Ghana or it could come from domestic sources. We must be mindful of not transferring our position, our responsibility and our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and offsetting it by getting it from other parts of the world. This is our issue—it is our problem—and we need to work very hard to address that challenge.

The onus—the responsibility—lies with us in Scotland. It should come from domestic sources, and we need to acknowledge and have a very

clear vision of how that will filter through. As everyone knows, that will not happen overnight but it is important from a climate justice perspective that we do not continue to place that burden and onus—that responsibility—on other nation states. We need to work on that, hard as it might be. It is our job and our responsibility to do that.

Mark Ruskell: Muthi Nhlema, do you have any perspectives on this?

Muthi Nhlema: No. I think—

Mark Ruskell: Sorry, I realise that I am asking you to solve our legacy problems. Do you have any perspective? I want to ask you about the right to water as well, and about how states—particularly those from the global south—will mobilise around these issues at COP26.

Muthi Nhlema: There is not much that I can add to the discussion about your transition from oil and gas to renewable energy. That is a conversation that Scotland needs to have. From my vantage point as someone who is sitting outside that conversation, the issue is always one of trade-offs. You have so many different options when it comes to technologies, and the question is what trade-offs you are willing to make as a country. You have the options of nuclear energy, wind and solar, but they have their trade-offs and you have to look at the impacts of some of those options. Wind and solar have an impact on endangered species, such as birds—owls and so on. Despite the bad rap that nuclear energy gets in the media, there is some evidence that, comparatively speaking, the number of deaths is very low.

The only thing that I can add as a layperson looking at this from the outside is to ask what trade-offs you are willing to take on board as a country. There is no perfect solution. All you have are trade-offs, and you need to decide which one you want, or can handle. The hard part is selling that to your people. It is always hard to tell people, "This is the route that we are going down and there are no better options." I have given up on the idea that there is a best option. There is no such thing; there are only trade-offs, and you need to decide what trade-offs you are willing to work with as a country.

Somebody asked how the Scottish Government is engaging with the voices of the south on the right to water. I will be at COP26, although not physically. My organisation has contributed some inputs to COP26, looking at the issue of the right to water in Malawi and what some of the issues are. We did a mapping exercise and looked at the value that that data is having on Government decision making so that it can improve and co-ordinate the implementation of its water and sanitation interventions.

In the content that we provided, I emphasised the point that I have made already, which is that southern countries such as Malawi need to do their part. Scotland has supported the generation of these assets, and it is up to Malawi to build and use them, and to leverage resources to increase their impact. Scotland has done its part and Malawi needs to take that forward. That is the messaging that my organisation and other partners that we collaborate with are making at COP26. We are saying, "Thank you, Scotland. We should take it from here and this is how we want to do that." That is my response to your question.

Sarah Boyack: In the previous session, I asked about where we are with the loss and damage pillar of the Paris agreement. The question was prompted, in part, by a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association presentation that I attended, in which Caribbean states talked about the massive impact of regular extreme weather incidents and said that they have no funding to rebuild, which leads to climate refugees and horrendous impacts. The final point in SCIAF's submission says:

> "How much Scotland pays for adaptation & loss & damage overseas, and how this compared to its fair share of global action based on historical responsibility."

Do you want to come in on that, Dr Hill? We have our climate fund, but what more should we be doing in Scotland?

Dr Hill: I am sorry—my feed cut out. Is that question for me?

Sarah Boyack: Yes. Your submission mentions loss and damage.

Dr Hill: I missed most of the question, but I think that I know where you are coming from. Can you hear me okay?

The Convener: Can we turn off Dr Hill's camera? I understand that there is a bit of a problem with her broadband, so can we go to audio only?

I ask Sarah Boyack to repeat her question.

Sarah Boyack: In the previous session, I asked about where we are with the loss and damage pillar that was agreed as part of the Paris agreement five years ago. At a recent Commonwealth Parliamentary Association event, representatives from the Caribbean gave us graphic evidence about the impact of regular extreme weather in destroying communities. That will lead to climate refugees in the future. The final point of Dr Hill's submission, under the heading "Assessing Scotland's climate justice credentials", says:

> "How much Scotland pays for adaptation & loss & damage overseas, and how this compared to its fair share of global action based on historical responsibility."

As we approach COP26, what should we be saying about that in the discussions on the third pillar of the Paris agreement?

Dr Hill: As I have said, loss and damage has had much less attention in the whole process than it needs. It is a key issue for the global south. It was one of the key issues that was discussed in the Glasgow climate dialogues, during which, as Jamie Livingstone mentioned, an MP from Bangladesh said that the Scottish Government should work with developing countries to establish a solidarity fund to address loss and damage.

11:00

The point about additionality that was made earlier is relevant in that regard, because the support for loss and damage needs to be over and above the support for adaptation. Scotland should play a symbolic role and champion the need for the issue to be on the agenda and taken seriously at COP26, because it has not had the attention that it deserves in the past. The climate justice fund is a bit of a drop in the ocean, given the funding needs for adaptations and to address loss and damage. We are well aware of that, but Scotland can use its soft power to champion such issues. That is what we are calling for.

We would also like Scotland to tax high emitters and polluters and to provide additional finances to fund adaptations and measures relating to loss and damage. However, it is more about Scotland using its soft power and its symbolic role to push for the issue to be taken seriously.

The Convener: I think that Mr Nhlema wants to come in on that point.

Sarah Boyack: Excellent, because I am sure that he would be able to spend that money.

Muthi Nhlema: It might be the case that the climate justice fund is a drop in the ocean, but I want to give a practical example of how that drop in the ocean can start a tidal wave, particularly here in my country. During the flooding in 2019, one of the problems that we identified—when using the database that the Scottish Government had supported the development of, in partnership with the Malawi Government—was that there were water points that were heavily impacted by the flood, so there was a high risk of contamination to the population. About 150,000 people were at risk of contracting waterborne diseases.

With a small amount of investment from the Scottish Government, we were able to leverage more resources from the United States Agency for International Development. We had not just the support but the financing from the Scottish Government to be able to walk in the door and say, "We need this additional financing to deal with this problem." As a result, we were able to repair close to 370 water points through shock chlorination, so 150,000 people now have water because of that investment. It was a small investment—a drop in the ocean—but it meant that we could leverage the rest of the ocean, and we were able to bring in other partners to do that. That is where Scotland can play a role.

I think that I heard the figure of £100 billion a year for the next five years. I hope that you do not intend to raise all of that money, but I see Scotland as being an active broker in leveraging other resources. Scotland should share experiences and the ethos of the partnerships that it has through the climate justice fund and the climate justice innovation fund. That ethos is about respecting and listening to local voices. There is a lot that can be shared. You can walk into rooms that I cannot and influence change.

A practical example relates to the green climate fund, which is the largest climate fund here. It is extremely difficult to access money from that fund. However, given Scotland's experience of working with people from Malawi, Zambia and Rwanda, you can walk through the doors to where decisions are made and have an influence. You can ask for not flimsy but more flexible requirements for people to access money, especially following natural disasters such as the flooding in 2019. Scotland has already demonstrated that by using the little money that it brings in to leverage more money.

In the case of the flooding, the support was not planned—it was more impromptu and in the moment. It would be good to have a more structured and co-ordinated system, as Professor Jafry said, so that a pool of money is available. The 2019 flooding proved that resources are available, so it is now just a matter of bringing people together. Scotland can play the role of a broker for other development partners in my country.

Sarah Boyack: Those points are incredibly well made, so I hope that you make them when you attend COP26 virtually.

I will pick up those points with Tahseen Jafry. If Scotland uses that soft power of examples, will other countries have the appetite to address those issues and to provide pump-prime investment and education, as you talked about very powerfully? Is there a chance of getting action on that third pillar at COP26?

Professor Jafry: The issue of loss and damage is coming more to the fore. It is recognised across the landscape that a lot of attention was paid to mitigation at previous COPs and that much more attention needs to be paid to adaptation and building resilience. That is coming through clearly.

There are lots of opportunities to capitalise on that change in direction of travel and focus at COP26. In relation to where we are positioned with our climate justice fund and what we have managed to deliver thus far, it is like building blocks in a pillar in order to influence those responsible for the green climate fund, the development banks and others, and to build alliances and bridges across the landscape of climate justice.

There is a point about how the language of loss and damage comes across. In itself, loss and damage is about resources coming in and money being spent to build infrastructure to help people to rebuild their lives, but I am hearing that the conversation needs to move on and embrace and embed how we support individuals as human beings. Social and human wellbeing is really important.

Sarah Boyack mentioned the climate refugee crisis, the projections for which are incredible. Up to 1.2 billion people are at risk of displacement by 2050. It is not just about loss and damage; it is about helping people to rebuild their lives and build resilience, because they are losing their value, their worth and their ancestral homes—things that will not be able to be recovered through spending on loss and damage, because they are lost, if you see what I mean.

The need for fresh thinking around meaningful dialogues is coming through from the world forum. The conversation has moved at pace, and the challenge before us is to be acutely abreast of the conversations about climate justice across the world and what everyone is asking for. It is not just about the funding but about what that funding will be used for and who will get access to support. If the funding is in the bucket of loss and damage, that is fine, but there needs to be much more robust thinking about where funding is being directed to, how it is being directed, who is going to benefit, how they are going to benefit and what we want to achieve.

I have some big-ticket questions. What do we want to get out of the funding? How will that be different from the existing international development funding landscape? How can we position that? We can then influence others by saying, “This is where we are heading. Would you like to join us?”

Jenni Minto: That was a powerful point about what we want to achieve with the funding.

I would like to return to the education side. I asked the previous panel about the transformative power of education and young people being involved in climate change and climate justice. What have you learned about that from the work that you have done, perhaps in Malawi, and through your connections with young people in Scotland? I would be interested to hear your thoughts on that.

Muthi Nhlema: The issue of young people is becoming more and more important in my country. If you have read the Malawi 2063 vision, you will know that it places a strong emphasis on young people, and for good reason.

I can share some data from work that we are doing in the water sector specifically, which is looking at whether women and young people benefit from water entrepreneurship. Interestingly, the data shows that women and young people are disadvantaged in Malawi, but that young people are seven times more disadvantaged. Although women and young people are disadvantaged, young people are extremely disadvantaged. That is because of their place in rural as well as urban society. In rural communities here, someone is considered an adult only if they have their own house. Someone who is 20 years old is not likely to have a house.

Young people are stuck in a catch-22 situation. For them to have money, they need to participate in development activities but, in rural communities, most of those development activities are monopolised by the elderly, those who are much older than they are or those who are married. They are trapped, because although they want to get involved, they are told, “You can’t be involved because you don’t have a house,” but how can they build a house if they do not get involved? Therefore, young people are stuck in a catch-22 situation.

That is why we have young people who are very disenfranchised. In districts such as Mangochi, for example, it is very common for young people to trek to South Africa to look for work. Young people from many other parts of Malawi leave the country to look for employment elsewhere because, whether in an urban or a rural setting, young people do not feel that there is a space for them in community development.

The current Malawi Administration is pushing this agenda very strongly, as I am I. I am the second-oldest person in my office, and I am 41 years old. I think that the average age of people in my office is now 33, because we just hired a 22-year-old. I am trying to get young people to get more involved in the work that we are doing.

I did not mention at the beginning that I am a board member of the Malawi Scotland Partnership here. I will speak generally about what the Malawi Scotland Partnership is doing. It is doing a lot of work to engage young people in issues to do with climate change. It has a young climate champions programme, which is partly supported by the Scottish Government. Young people are doing

exceptional work in environmental protection, for example by working with cookstoves to deal with issues of climate change at the local level. The Malawi Scotland Partnership is trying to promote those voices in other forums, together with its sister organisation, the Scotland Malawi Partnership.

That is already going on outside of COP26. It is a recognition of the fact that young people are the future. It is a cliché to say that, but such an approach is already being put into practice in the Malawi Scotland Partnership and the Scotland Malawi Partnership. Young people are driving that work; they are at the forefront. Dinosaurs such as ourselves are taking a back seat; young people are the ones driving the agenda. That is happening in Malawi, not just in the work that I am doing but generally and through the Scotland Malawi Partnership.

The Convener: Dr Hill and Professor Jafry, do you want to comment briefly on that? We are now very tight for time.

Dr Hill: Young people were involved in the climate challenge programme in Malawi, which we implemented with the Scottish Government. A couple of them are coming to COP. If anyone is interested in meeting them, please let us know.

I reiterate that we have been doing the climate literacy stuff and the climate education stuff in our work overseas and in our work in schools here. We have developed materials, including on climate literacy, for schools here.

Professor Jafry: I would like to comment briefly on the transformative power of education. When it comes to educating our young people, we are talking about not only primary school children but adolescents and older children as well, whether in Scotland or overseas. What I am seeing and hearing now is that although we are making strides in supporting primary school-aged children, when we get to the 12-plus age group—those young people can be powerful agents of change in the education landscape in Scotland—education on climate change and climate justice is not embedded in the curriculum. If young people are not taking the relevant subjects at high school, the climate issue will not be taught. It is not presented at assemblies, nor are children given half an hour out to learn about it. There is a lot of work that still needs to be done in education if we want Scotland to capitalise on the transformative power of our Scottish young people. There are similar issues across the globe.

On a positive note, from an education perspective, when I started on the journey of developing the centre, it was academically challenging, but now people from other parts of the world are developing other centres and other groups to look at climate change and climate justice, and are modelling those on the work that we have been doing at the centre. It is a huge privilege that that has been happening, and it shows how much commitment there is in the global landscape to getting traction in educating people on this subject matter.

11:15

The Convener: We are very tight for time and two members still wish to ask questions. I will bring in Mr Golden first.

Maurice Golden: In the interests of time, I have a question for Muthi Nhlema and then I will put a separate question to the other panellists.

It is great to hear about everything that you are doing. On the issue of Malawi showing climate leadership, might it become a signatory to the UN watercourses convention? I realise that Malawi shares a lake with Mozambique, as well as rivers with other downstream states. That would be brilliant to see. I note that Chad is the most recent signatory to that convention. Any thoughts on that would be welcome. Given that you have finite resources, how do you prioritise infrastructure for specific water uses, whether for drinking, sanitation, agriculture or industry, relative to the flood prevention mechanisms that you touched on earlier?

Muthi Nhlema: I want to check whether I understood your later question. Are you asking how my organisation does the work that it does within the resources that it has? Is that your question?

Maurice Golden: Yes. There could be competing priorities. If that is the case, do you put in flood prevention mechanisms or do you prioritise putting in a water point? How do you make those decisions on the ground?

Muthi Nhlema: As an organisation, we are trying to promote what we call water demand balance, which is a methodology that involves going into an area, trying to understand how much water is being taken out and how much water is coming in and working out whether there is a deficit or a surplus. If there is a deficit, that will tell us that we need to invest in a managed aquifer recharge or some way of recharging the groundwater. If there is a surplus, it is a question of working out how that water can be maximised for sustainable agriculture or other things. The climate justice innovation fund has helped with that. Using data is extremely important. Working with experts who know how to do that would help with that issue. Using data to understand what the water situation is would inform how we invest the money.

Returning to the first question, I cannot speak for the Malawi Government, but I know that some of the work that we have been doing with the University of Strathclyde is contributing to a better understanding of the trans-boundary relationships that Malawi has with its neighbours. You all know about the complicated relationship that we have with our neighbours when it comes to the lake. On top of that, our intention to tap water from the lake to Lilongwe also has impacts for our trans-boundary relationships. I am not privy to the discussions that have taken place around that, but I have been in discussions or forums in which I have echoed my sentiment, which is that the Malawi Government needs to be very careful and talk to its neighbours to understand the trans-boundary issues from a technical, political and geopolitical perspective before it makes any decisions.

Maurice Golden: Thank you—that was incredibly insightful.

Dr Hill, with regard to Scotland's role on the world stage, I note that you said in your submission, with reference to the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, that

"the credibility of this Act appears to be wearing thin. For Scotland to be meaningfully regarded as a climate leader, it is essential that there is a step-change in action".

What are your general thoughts on that area?

Dr Hill: I think that I made that comment with specific reference to the mitigation efforts and the fact that the targets have been missed in the last three years.

I am sorry—what was the second part of your question?

Maurice Golden: That was all.

The Convener: That was it—Mr Golden just wanted to hear your thoughts on that.

Dr Hill: The point about additionality that was mentioned earlier was to do with climate finance—it was about the need for climate finance to be additional to the aid budget.

Maurice Golden: Professor Jafry, do you have any specific thoughts on Scotland as a climate leader, given its failure to meet the targets?

The Convener: Very briefly, Professor Jafry, if you do not mind.

Professor Jafry: We have a valuable contribution to make. Despite the fact that we have not met our targets, we are making good strides, collectively, in other areas and have a strong role to play. My only suggestion is that, when we place ourselves on the world stage, we need to be crystal clear about what we are contributing with reference to our climate justice approach. Rather than just talking about the stage of development, we need to be clear about the added value that we are bringing to the global platform, because that is what will give Scotland a lot of traction and get others to follow suit.

Dr Allan: In the interests of time, I will address my question purely to Mr Nhlema. For the benefit of people who are watching, can you give an indication of how dramatically the landscape in Malawi has changed over the past 40 years? Deforestation was mentioned. The problems are all connected. When I was in Malawi, two ladies came up to me and very politely but very forcefully pointed out that I had come in a car, that they had to walk an extra 2 miles every day to get water and that there was a connection between those two things. All these things are connected, but can you give an indication of how the landscape has changed?

Muthi Nhlema: I probably cannot speak to the land question, as I am not a land specialist. However, I will speak from the water perspective, so that people understand it. There is a piece of data called renewable water. Very simply, that is the amount of water per person per year. The World Bank website has a graph that shows how much renewable water comes to Malawi per person per year. The line on the graph is steep, but what people do not know is that the amount of water per person per year is now about 900 cubic metres. It is almost the same as it is in Morocco, which is a country in the middle of a desert.

That is partly because of population growth—we have grown substantially—but the degradation of the environment is exacerbating that. That means that we do not have any vegetative cover, so water erodes the surface of the land, which leads to siltation in rivers—rivers go dry. As someone who works in the groundwater sector, I have seen some data from one water monitoring well—I emphasise that there are several monitoring wells across Malawi—where the water table was dropping by an average of 1m per year. That is the impact in one particular area of Malawi. That is the impact that mismanagement of the environment is having on the water resources. They are dwindling.

It is not just me who is saying that. Even the line ministry responsible for water affairs has publicly come out and said that Malawi is drying up. Therefore, we need to invest in approaches that make sure that the water that we have is conserved and protected. Part of that will involve providing more investment in improving and increasing vegetative cover.

I can speak from the water perspective. I wish that I had at my fingertips the data for the cover, but I encourage people to go on Google Earth and

look at how the greenery has disappeared over time. That way, they will be able to appreciate the impact. It is quite substantial, and it has had a knock-on effect. That is why I said that I can ask Scotland what it is doing about climate justice, but I also emphasise the issue of what Malawi is doing about environmental degradation. We have a part to play as well.

Dr Allan: Mr Nhlema, you mentioned that the average age of the population in Malawi is young, and you mentioned accountability and the need to promote accountability. I know that the Scotland Malawi Partnership and the Malawi Scotland Partnership work together on such issues in Scotland and Malawi. Can you offer some perspective or predictions on how you feel that accountability will develop in the future as that generation comes to the fore? Will it have new ideas or new expectations about accountability? What can we do together to work through those issues?

Muthi Nhlema: I do not want to be a prophet. Last year, nobody would have predicted that Malawi would have had a rerun of the election. Malawi is a small giant. It is capable of doing big things when it puts its mind to it. If I can go by the quality of the young people I have in my office, the things they talk and think about, and the way they challenge me as a leader, my prediction is that the future is bright. However, deliberate efforts have to be made to involve young people.

The real crisis with young people is that they are underutilised. There is all this knowledge and energy that is not being maximised to develop the country. It is saddening that we have students who have graduated who can wait for five years without being employed. If I could share my screen, I could show you emails that I get from young people, in which they ask for internships. They do not want to be paid, but I cannot hire them for nothing. There is a hunger to contribute and there are no outlets for them to do that.

With the new Administration, I have seen more willingness to engage young people. It is in the strategy, and I hope that it will live up to it. If it does and that willingness to engage young people meets the enthusiasm of young people, I will have hope for a better future. As I said, we did not think that we were going to have a rerun of the elections last year. Malawi will do better if we utilise the resource of the young people that we have.

The Convener: I thank Mr Nhlema, Professor Jafry and Dr Hill very much for their contributions this morning. We will now move into private session. I thank everyone for their attendance.

11:27

Meeting continued in private until 11:29.

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