

**Jim Martin**  
**Chair**  
**Environmental Standards Scotland**  
**Ìrean Àrainneachdail na h-Alba**

**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
**Standards Scotland**  
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ESSChair@environmentalstandards.scot

Scottish Ministers  
By email

6 December 2023

Dear Scottish Ministers,

In March 2023, Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS) completed an investigation into the support for Scottish local authorities in the delivery of their climate change duties. The main finding of the investigation is that measures should be taken by Scottish Ministers to strengthen the effectiveness of duties contained within sections 44 to 52 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

The body under investigation was the Scottish Government. ESS made five recommendations to the Scottish Government, and were able to achieve informal resolution of four of these. ESS did not achieve informal resolution of one recommendation to the Scottish Government.

Given the importance of complying with climate legislation, ESS has issued its findings in the form of an improvement report, which I have attached. In accordance with the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 ('the Continuity Act'), a copy of the improvement report has been laid in the Scottish Parliament and published on ESS' website.

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Under section 30 of the Continuity Act, the Scottish Ministers must now prepare an improvement plan and lay it before the Parliament setting out what they propose to do in response to the recommendations within the improvement report.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Martin  
Chair, Environmental Standards Scotland