News Release
Immediate Release
5 November 2026

ESS seeks evidence on how Scotland's waste and resources laws are working

Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS) has today (5 November 2026) launched a call for evidence on how effectively Scotland's environmental laws regarding sustainable resource use, waste reduction and the circular economy are working in Scotland.

The evidence gathered will help ESS assess whether environmental law relating to resources and waste is delivering the outcomes it is intended to achieve, how effectively public authorities are implementing and complying with legal requirements, and where further scrutiny may be needed.

The call for evidence forms part of ESS' Strategy 2026-2031, which identifies resources as one of its four analytical priorities. ESS is seeking contributions from organisations, researchers, regulators, practitioners and others with relevant knowledge or experience to help inform its future work on this priority area.

ESS is particularly interested in evidence relating to:

- **waste prevention and reuse**, including product lifecycle and design, sustainable consumption and waste prevention
- **recycling and collection**, including collection and recycling systems, waste streams and deposit return and producer responsibility schemes
- **recovery**, including energy recovery and recovering value from residual waste

- **disposal and waste management**, including landfill, waste transport and waste crime
- **circular economy,** including legislative intent, delivery and measures of progress

Scotland is currently undergoing significant change in this area, with major policy and legislative reforms being developed and implemented, through initiatives such as Scotland's Circular Economy and Waste Route Map, and Scotland's Circular Economy Strategy.

Scotland has not met earlier targets for food waste reduction and household waste recycling and is at risk of missing targets for overall waste recycling and landfill reduction. New statutory targets are currently being developed following the passing of the Circular Economy (Scotland) Act 2024.

The evidence gathered through this call will help ESS identify areas where further scrutiny could add value and inform the scope of its future analytical work on resources.

Mark Roberts, Chief Executive of ESS, said: "Our role is to examine whether environmental law is being followed and whether it is working as intended.

"This call for evidence will help us better understand the opportunities and challenges in how Scotland uses resources and manages waste. We will use the responses to identify evidence gaps and possible concerns and to inform decisions about which issues to prioritise for further work.

“We welcome evidence from anyone with relevant research, professional expertise or practical experience. You do not need specialist knowledge of environmental law to take part.”

Evidence can be submitted to ESS in a variety of forms, including links to reports or academic research, data from organisations, or personal and professional

experience. ESS asks that where possible, respondents point to the evidence behind their views, so that ESS' final assessment is clear and credible.

Useful evidence could include:

- published research and evaluations
- administrative or monitoring data
- organisational analysis, including unpublished work
- audit, inspection or compliance findings
- case studies and lessons from delivering services or putting policy into practice
- evidence of environmental outcomes
- legal or regulatory analysis
- practitioner or expert knowledge
- evidence from other countries or regions
- clearly identified gaps in the evidence

All evidence should be **submitted by 17 January 2027** through our response form or by email to callforevidence@environmentalstandards.scot. Where possible, emailed submissions should be no longer than 30 pages.

Further information, including the full call for evidence and online response form, is available at environmentalstandards.scot

ENDS

Notes to editors:

i) For more information, please contact press@environmentalstandards.scot