

Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

**A consultation document for the Scottish
National Adaptation Plan 2024 - 2029**

January 2024

Disclaimer:

This draft document is an initial assessment of the impact of the Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 and Scottish Government will continue to review and update this document where required during the parliamentary process. Any future iterations will reflect an increased understanding of these impacts as the amount of data and research available continues to grow.

This impact assessment should be read in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment and the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

Brief Summary

Start date of CRWIA process: **August 2023**

Start date of relevant proposal: Expected publication **Autumn 2024**

Scottish Ministers are required to set out an Adaptation Plan responding to each UK wide 'Climate Change Risk Assessment' (CCRA). A new CCRA is published every five years. The CCRA acts as a common evidence base underpinning adaptation plans for all four UK Government and devolved administrations. The third CCRA, or CCRA3 – to which this draft Adaptation Plan will respond – sets out the evidence for 61 risks and opportunities from a changing climate.

Climate adaptation is a complex picture of risks, opportunities and dependencies between policies. To break down this complexity, the draft Adaptation Plan is structured around five big outcomes for Nature Connects, Communities, Public Services and Critical Infrastructure, Economy, Business and Industry and International Action. Each outcome is grounded in a 'big idea' for how we want to deliver adaptation action differently in Scotland and are broken down into 22 objectives defining how we will measure delivery of adaptation action (see appendix 1). They provide the structure around which policies and interventions and a new Adaptation Monitoring Framework are being built. To achieve each objective, we are presenting a series of proposed policies which will have their own specific CRWIAs where applicable.

Which aspects of the relevant proposal currently affects or will affect children and young people up to the age of 18?

Globally, it is recognised that children bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by climate change. As referenced in the Net Zero Public Engagement Strategy, the Scottish Government is committed to ensuring engagement and participation of children and young people in our efforts to tackle climate change which extends to our efforts to adapt to the changes already being felt. This includes working towards the incorporation of the UNCRC to the maximum extent possible, as soon as is practicable. As part of this, we need to ensure the policies within our strategies adequately address the increased risks posed on children and young people by climate change. SNAP3 sets out a vision for a Scotland resilient to the impacts of climate change that will benefit the people of Scotland as a whole and uphold the rights of children and young people now and for future generations.

Risk and relevant objectives	UNCRC (see Appendix 2)
Children require more food and water per unit of bodyweight than adults which makes them more vulnerable to food and water scarcity ¹). Interruptions to water supplies in particular are likely to have significant health and wellbeing impacts on the very young ² . The relevant objectives (PS2, PS5, B2) will aim to maintain or increase food productivity, protect	Article 24 (health and health services)

¹ [UNICEF \(2017\), Thirsting for a Future](#)

² [Bryan et al., \(2020\), The health and well-being effects of drought: assessing multi-stakeholder perspectives from narratives from the UK](#)

from food supply chain vulnerabilities and safeguard water quality and quantity.	
There is a growing evidence base of short- and long-term impacts of processing repeated climate disasters on children’s mental health, life expectancy and cancer rates ³ . The relevant objective (PS2) will aim to ensure children are able to access the health care services they require.	Article 24 (health and health services)
Extreme weather can cause disruption to education as well as extreme heat affecting a child’s ability to learn ⁴ . The relevant objective (PS2) will aim to ensure children are able to access the education services they require.	Article 28 (right to education)
Children are more vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution as exacerbated by climate change ⁵ . The relevant objectives (NC1, NC2, NC3 and NC5) will contribute to improved air quality for children by increased planting of trees to recapture airborne nitrogen.	Article 24 (health and health services)
The private sector has a responsibility to respect children’s rights, including the right to a healthy environment, within their corporate governance. The relevant objectives (B1, B4) include support for business/industry to identify and build resilience to risks, and opportunities posed by changes to Scotland’s climate while respecting the rights of the child.	Article 42 (knowledge of rights)
Around a fifth of children use a bus to travel to school ⁶ which in practice is often a bus pass for travel to and from school using public transport. Many children use public transport to access leisure, play and culture facilities, to meet with friends and to join groups. Access to these rights is likely to be adversely affected by disruptions to public transport in light of extreme weather events. The relevant objective (PS4) aims to ensure the transport system is reliable and resilient to the impacts of climate change.	Access to public transport interlinks with access to several articles in the UNCRC including but not limited to Article 15 (freedom of association), Article 28 (right to education), and Article 31 (leisure, play and culture).

³ [Sheffield & Landrigan \(2011\), Global Climate Change and Children’s Health: Threats and Strategies for Prevention](#)

⁴ [UNICEF \(2020\), Are climate change policies child-sensitive?](#)

⁵ [UNICEF \(2016\), Clear the Air for Children](#)

⁶ [Transport Scotland \(2021\), Transport and Travel in Scotland Results from the Scottish Household Survey 2021 Telephone Survey Experimental Statistics](#)

Which groups of children and young people are currently or will be affected by the relevant proposal?

This will be a national level action programme not aimed at any specific group of people. Given climate change is a global issue, all children and young people in Scotland have potential to be impacted, however different areas and localities of Scotland will experience the impacts of climate change in distinctive ways to various degrees. Therefore, the objectives meant to address these adverse outcomes will also have differing impacts on individual children and young people. For example, children living in island communities feel the impacts of coastal erosion and flooding more⁷. As a result, the policies within this programme addressing coastal flooding will likely impact the children residing in these localities more than children living inland.

Child health and wellbeing is also impacted uniquely by the increasing extreme weather events which is particularly evident in those under the age of 5, when they go through a stage of rapid physiological and emotional development⁸. High temperatures can also, for example, increase the risk of preterm birth and the risk of injury, particularly among children⁹. Low-income households (including the children living within them) are amongst the most at risk to the detrimental financial consequences of flooding as well as higher levels of stress and anxiety and more adverse health impacts¹⁰.

It is likely that the policies contained with SNAP3 will affect specific groups of children and young people more acutely and therefore, further consultation and assessment specific to each individual policy should be considered.

Declaration

Is a Stage 2 Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment required?

CRWIA required

CRWIA not required

Explanation why CRWIA is not required: N/A

Sign & Date

Policy Lead Signature & Date of Sign Off: Ian Freeman, Adaptation Team Lead, 22/11/2023

CRWIA author, if different from policy lead, Signature & Date of Sign Off: Rannoch Graham, 13/11/2023

Deputy Director Signature & Date of Sign Off: Catriona Laing, 21/12/2023

⁷ [Climate Assembly \(2021\), Children's report](#)

⁸ [UNICEF \(2015\), Unless We Act Now: The impact of climate change on children](#)

⁹ [Public Health Scotland \(2023\), Working together to build climate-resilient, healthy and equitable places: A briefing for local government and partners](#)

¹⁰ [Werritty et al., Exploring the Social Impacts of Flood Risk and Flooding in Scotland](#)

Preparation Phase

If CRWIA is required, please engage in the preparation phase as early as possible. This phase consists of a research and consultation plan.

Evidence: Please list any research you are currently aware of that is relevant to this relevant proposal?

Data	Source
<p>Only 53% of young people felt that their perspectives were taken into account by adults. Fewer disabled young adults felt their perspectives were considered (47%) as compared to non-disabled young adults (58%)</p>	<p><u>Scotland's wellbeing: national outcomes for disabled people</u></p>
<p>Children recognise that the impact of climate change is, and will continue to be, most felt by children and adults in other parts of the world.</p>	<p><u>Childrens-Parliament Climate Assembly 2021.pdf (childrensparliament.org.uk)</u></p>
<p>The research identified those most vulnerable to experiencing negative, long-term impacts of flooding as being children amongst others. Participants felt there should be more formal and informal support available during and following a flood event, particularly for those with young children.</p>	<p><u>Impacts of Flooding in North-east Scotland CREW Scotland's Centre of Expertise for Waters</u></p>
<p>In terms of taking action on receiving a warning, those most at risk included single people (compared to households with two or more adults), those new to an area, and families with young and/or dependent children. The trauma of being flooded and its immediate aftermath was by far the most significant intangible impact reported in the focus groups, disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable - some participants reported how difficult it was to maintain family cohesion when children live in hotels or stay with grandparents and schooling suffers. Children may also be affected psychologically, although the severity is mediated by the degree of support from their family structure. Green et al. (1985a) document psychological effects</p>	<p><u>Exploring the Social Impacts of Flood Risk and Flooding in Scotland (dundee.ac.uk)</u></p>

<p>specific to this group, including symptoms of PTSD and behavioural difficulties several months after the flood (an effect also found in Scotland by Fordham and Ketteridge, 1995).</p>	
<p>Flooding has been associated with increased mental health and behavioural problems in children, as well as increases in the incidence of a range of diseases (Ahern et al., 2005; Norris et al., 2002). Cold or damp housing is known to increase the incidence of some minor illnesses and exacerbate the severity of others in children (Marmot Review, 2011). Both older people and children have been found to suffer considerable psychological trauma following flood events (Fernandez et al., 2002; Rygel et al., 2006; Tapsell et al., 2002).</p>	<p><u>Mapping Flood Disadvantage in Scotland 2015: Main Report (www.gov.scot)</u></p>
<p>There is review-level evidence that found that play and other activities are important to the mental, cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of children and young people especially if undertaken in natural spaces.</p>	<p><u>Evidence behind the Place Standard Tool and the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes (publichealthscotland.scot)</u></p>

Stakeholder engagement: Please describe your initial plans for stakeholder engagement, including which organisations you would like to engage directly with.

- Consultation with Climate Policy Engagement Network including organisations with a focus on Children’s Rights and Wellbeing.
- Proposed child and youth focused question for public consultation: Do you have any information you wish to share on the impact of SNAP3 on children's rights and wellbeing? Please provide details, making reference to the specific outcome(s), objective(s) or policy proposal(s) to which your comments relate.

Involvement of children and young people: Please describe your initial plans for involving children and young people in the development of this relevant proposal, including any specific groups of children you would like to engage directly with.

We would like to target engagement at children over a large geographical and household income spread with focus to following groups:

- *Island community*
- *Urban area*
- *Low income households*

Appendix 1: Proposed SNAP3 Outcomes and Objectives

Nature connects across our land, settlements, coasts and seas.

NC1: Nature-based solutions at all scales are protected, enhanced and connected to enable healthier, cooler, water resilient and nature-rich places.

NC2: Development planning (including Local Development Plans and associated delivery programmes) takes current and future climate risks into account and is a key lever in enabling places to adapt.

NC3: Nature networks across every local authority area are improving ecological connectivity and climate resilience, alongside other transformative national actions to halt biodiversity loss by 2030.

NC4: Evidence informed planning and management is increasing the climate resilience of Scotland's marine ecosystems and Blue Economy, with coastal change adaptation plans safeguarding coastal communities and assets.

NC5: Resilient natural carbon stores and sinks (such as peatland, forests and blue carbon) are supporting Scotland's net zero pathway, alongside timber production, biodiversity gains, flood resilience and the priorities of local communities.

Communities are creating climate-resilient, healthy and equitable places.

C1: Place-based collaborations across Scotland have delivered effective, inclusive adaptation action across cities, regions and localities engaging a broader range of delivery partners.

C2: Communities and individuals are supported, informed and able to take locally-led adaptation action, supporting local priorities and resilient, healthy, equitable places.

C3: Communities and individuals are able and supported to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies in a way that builds future climate resilience, complements the work of emergency responders and protects those with societal vulnerabilities to multiple risks.

C4: New buildings are designed for a future climate, and opportunities for adaptation in existing buildings are taken during maintenance or retrofit.

C5: Scotland's historic environment is preparing for a future climate, and the transformational power of culture, heritage and creativity supports Scotland's adaptation journey.

Public services are collaborating in effective, inclusive adaptation action.

PS1: Providers of public services have the governance, culture, skills and resources and are collaborating in effective, inclusive adaptation action.

PS2: People are able to access the public services they need - including health, education, social care and infrastructure - by the designing, managing and maintaining services, estates and assets to be resilient and equitable in the changing climate.

PS3: Power assets and the energy system have reduced vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, and the most vulnerable people are identified and supported during and after instances of power failure.

PS4: The transport system is prepared for current and future impacts of climate change and is safe for all users, reliable for everyday journeys and resilient to weather-related disruption.

PS5: The management of water, sewerage and drainage services builds resilience to drought and flooding and protects water quality and quantity.

Economies and industries are adapting and realising opportunities in Scotland's Just Transition.

B1: Businesses are supported to embed the risks of climate change into governance, investment and operations, and are collaborating in effective, inclusive adaptation action.

B2: Farming, fishing and forestry businesses are supported to adapt production and operations in a way that benefits livelihoods, resilience and the economy in a changing climate.

B3: Scotland is an innovation hub for adaptation solutions.

B4: Economic development is informed by climate risks and opportunities to support resilient, healthy and equitable places.

Scotland's international role supports climate justice and enhanced global action on climate adaptation

IA1: Scotland's international programmes support communities vulnerable to the impacts of climate change to adapt and thrive

IA2: Scotland is an advocate in international fora for those most affected by climate change and least able to adapt. Through membership of international organisations it pushes states and international bodies to increase ambition on adaptation and biodiversity loss

IA3: Scotland is a global knowledge hub for research and innovation on climate adaptation, loss and damage and climate justice and facilitates knowledge sharing between Global South/Global North.

Appendix 2: Summary of UNCRC Articles

Article 15 (freedom of association) Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 24 (health and health services) - Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 28 (right to education) - Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 31 (leisure, play and culture) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Article 42 (knowledge of rights) Governments must actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention.