Scottish Government Energy Strategy – what's wrong with it and what we need to change

The public consultation on the Scottish Government's Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan ends on **Tuesday 9 May 2023**, *writes Iain Bruce*.

That means responding to it will be one of the first big tasks for the new leader of the SNP and Scotland's new First Minister.

The deeply disappointing consultation document was published on 10 January after a year or more's delay. It fails to build on the recent positive steps taken by Nicola Sturgeon towards opposing any more oil and gas extraction from the North Sea – after she came out against Shell's proposed Cambo oilfield following the mass protests in Glasgow at COP26 in November 2021.

The consultation document reiterates, at great length, the SNP Government's obsession with false 'techno-fixes' to the climate crisis, in particular hydrogen and carbon capture and storage. It ignores the pressure from environmental organisations and some offshore oil workers and their unions, for a just transition to renewable energy that is led by the communities and workers most affected. And it is partly at odds with the positive steps taken by Sturgeon herself and the outgoing SNP administration, through their initiatives on 'Loss and Damage', to recognise that a just transition must be just for the global south too.

In the coming weeks we need to build maximum pressure on the government to change the most negative aspects of this draft strategy.

The interview below with Mary Church of Friends of the Earth Scotland, for the Rising Clyde Climate Justice show on Independence Live, gives a lot of important context and background for such a campaign.

However, it is also important, for the climate justice movement in Scotland and for the radical forces in the independence movement, to understand and challenge the deeper contradiction that underpins this energy strategy, as it does almost all the Scottish government's economic policy. This is its attempt to combine progressive, humane and necessary steps on a number of environmental and social issues, with an inability or refusal to question the underlying systemic factors which hinder such action, and makes it necessary in the first place – in other words its unwillingness to challenge the priorities of the free market.

Link to Video:

Also on Facebook:

Rising Clyde Episode 10: Scotland's Energy Strategy- leading the way or sitting on the fence? | We talk to Mary Church of Friends of the Earth Scotland, about the Scottish government's new Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan – where it needs to… | By Independence Live | Facebook

7 March, 2023 (YouTube link added 10 March 2023)