

Dear Islanders,

As part of your deliberations and debate on what recommendations to submit to the States Assembly with regard to the Island's response to climate change, we invite you to take the following points into consideration when formulating your proposals:

1. Think 'Global' and not just 'Local'.

Actions and policies implemented in Jersey will have no beneficial impact on climate change if the consequences of these have a negative impact elsewhere.

For example, a fully electric future for transport and heating in Jersey may appear to be a solution but if the additional imported electricity required for this is produced from fossil fuels or coal in Europe then, the outcome would be unfavourable in terms of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The goal is not to reduce Jersey GHG emissions but to implement policies locally which will have a favourable impact globally.

2. Extra costs are inevitable

Fossil fuels are a source of GHG emissions but they are also, in most locations, the cheapest and easiest access to energy for many. Alternatives to fossil fuels for transport and heating exist but they are currently more expensive due to the supply/demand balance. The demand for cleaner fuels is growing fast; the supply is following but the lag creates a price premium. Whilst governments subsidise new fuels or electricity self-generation (solar, wind, hydrogen fuel cells) the cost of doing so needs to be financed from somewhere.

In addition, the decrease of fossil fuel consumption is also significantly reducing tax and duty revenues to the States and, again, measures will need to be taken to compensate for this.

3. Electricity is only one of several solutions – there are alternatives available.

Transport: electric cars are often described as “zero emission”. Whilst this is correct when vehicles are driven, it is not correct overall. There is a significant carbon footprint associated with the manufacturing and batteries production.

A new generation of non-fossil liquid fuels, made of 100% of recycled materials and sustainably grown vegetable oil, can be used pure, as a direct alternative to diesel. No changes are required to your car. Instead of banning diesel cars, did you know that simply switching to Renewable Diesel will reduce your global carbon footprint by up to 90%?

Heating: some high quality new generation biofuels can be used as heating fuel with only minor changes to your oil fired boilers' burner. Whilst these biofuels are more expensive than traditional heating oil, they are still cheaper than the cost of electricity. There is no need to spend a significant amount to change your heating system. Upgrading to a modern efficient oil boiler will also improve your carbon footprint.

Electricity and Power generation companies often describe Oil companies as "dinosaurs" but some oil companies have already made the transition to more environmentally friendly and sustainable energy solutions and will continue to invest, lead and be innovative in this field.

4. Healthy competition and choice for customers must be maintained.

There are a number of independent and competing fossil fuels distributors in Jersey. Competition Regulations also oblige the existing fuel storage infrastructure to offer its facilities, on an equitable basis, to all fuel importers and distributors operating in Jersey. Customers therefore benefit from the choice that healthy competition provides.

We should perhaps ask whether customers will enjoy a similar level of choice with their electricity supply. On a fully electric Island, will energy users have options regarding where to buy electricity? Will they be able to choose to produce their own electricity (with solar panels, wind mills or hydrogen fuel cells) and still be able to rely on the existing distribution infrastructure? Will the main electricity supplier to Jersey (EDF) be able to supply electricity from renewable or carbon free nuclear sources, and at what cost? Can Jersey cope with the increasing electricity demand without diversifying its electricity sources and enabling healthy competition on the market?

Competition is critical to an innovative and evolving market, where the consumers' requirements need to be at the centre.

5. Whatever the decarbonised future may look like, there needs to be a transition.

We all need to take action to tackle climate change. This is not an overnight process. The technology is still evolving and over time, the associated costs will decrease.

New generation pure biofuels have been used for many years and the technology is well established and successful. Nevertheless, they are still relatively unknown and businesses and governments need to be more proactive in raising their profile and offering them as an alternative. Did you know that biofuels are now available for use as marine fuels and aviation fuels? Battery powered electric vehicles have been heavily promoted as the transport of the future but, arguably, the technology has already been overtaken by electric vehicles powered by fuel cells (hydrogen). Have we thought enough about where and how to recycle the batteries?

Instead of rushing to take actions which may subsequently prove to have not been beneficial, it would be better to accept the need for a reasonable period of transition and thereby ensure that the choices and decisions which are made today are also right for tomorrow.

6. New solutions should not be greener at the expense of performance.

When considering replacing a fuel or energy product with a greener alternative, it is essential to ensure that the alternative has equivalent or better performance and quality.

This is why we believe Renewable Diesel to be a real innovation, as not only is the product better for the environment than fossil diesel but it is also better quality and more efficient. It also tackles the worst polluting transport sector – that of trucks, buses, utility vehicles and large SUVs.

An alternative to gasoline (more widely used than diesel for small private vehicles) is also available in the form of a blend of gasoline and ethanol. E85 (a blend of 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline) is increasingly sold in Europe and the UK where it is attractive to consumers due to it benefitting from lower tax. However, not all engines are compatible with E85 (especially those of older vehicles). Importantly, although GHG emissions are reduced due to the ethanol content, the calorific value of ethanol is lower than gasoline. Meaning it is necessary to consume more litres of fuel for the same number of miles travelled. This greatly limits the value of the product in terms of emissions reduction.

We believe in a pragmatic approach and an innovative and diverse energy mix to deliver carbon neutrality for the Island. Your work as a Citizen's Assembly is crucial in delivering the energy transition needed for Jersey.

Thank you.

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