

Scotland at the Crossroads

After decades of de-industrialisation and relative decline, Scotland, independence or not, now has the opportunity to democratically decide its economic destiny. The 2014 independence referendum revealed a rich seam of radical political engagement in which a strong opposition to austerity and social injustice formed a clear consensus.

Now post-EU referendum, the people of Scotland face the choice of a Tory hard Brexit in which the persistent crises of UK big business are to be solved on the backs of working people and the

poor and vulnerable or a radical alternative which has jobs, social justice, a socially driven economy and environmental solutions at its heart.

To win this vision a new type of movement with new types of engagement and policy making is needed. By combining the energies, know-how and democratic grass roots resources of workplaces, industries, communities and seats of learning, a new powerhouse for change can be built. Such a movement based on the three 'e's of employment, energy and environment is now being formed. Interested? Then read on.

About E3

E3 is a group of rank and file trade unionists, activists and environmental campaigners who have joined together to make a change. As a first step we have made a submission to the Scottish Government's Consultation on a Scottish Energy Strategy.

We believe there is a compelling case for a radical shift in energy policy. Large numbers of jobs are being lost in the Scottish oil and gas sector. Nearly a third of Scottish households suffer from fuel poverty with the elderly worst affected. In 1989 primary energy capacity in Scotland was 45% more than the level of demand, yet we're heading for a serious shortfall in energy production by 2030. And looming over all this we are on the brink of catastrophic climate change which will wreck the future for our children and grandchildren.

The stakes couldn't be higher. However, we have the knowledge and the skills to start to make a difference to people's lives in the here and now. Leaving things to 'the market' is clearly not working. A sustainable future requires a coherent strategy for jobs, energy and climate. The Energy Consultation is a first step starting an intense debate about the future of Scotland in Britain, Europe and the world. If we don't act now then when?

We can do something about jobs and fuel poverty right now. Averting catastrophic climate change requires global action, but in Scotland we have a unique set of circumstances; a strong skills base; abundant resources for sustainable energy production and an opportunity to develop a strategy that puts jobs and environment at the heart of economic strategy. What we do locally could be an inspiration for action worldwide.

In the rest of this brochure we identify some of the key issues that need to be addressed in a sustainable energy strategy. We are convinced that only an integrated strategy can work but we also believe that discussion and debate over the details is necessary in order to mobilise for the kind of change that is required.

The big energy companies will be pulling out all the stops to influence the Scottish Government's to the Energy Consultation and its future policy.

If you are convinced of the need for radical action on employment, energy and environment please email triple.e.scot@gmail.com

Climate Crisis

Levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are now higher than they have been for more than ten million years. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas; blanketing the earth is the main cause of rapidly rising global temperatures. The reason for this rise is simple. Hydrocarbons derived from decaying organic matter have been trapped underground over hundreds of millions of years. In little over a century the exploitation of coal, oil and gas has put much of the carbon back into the atmosphere. Quite simply we have to stop using hydrocarbons for energy and move rapidly to a sustainable energy economy - primarily wind, wave, tidal and solar. This sounds like a massive task - but it is perfectly feasible. We already have the technology and most important in Scotland we have the skills and knowhow. A rapid transition to sustainable energy would provide jobs for everyone in the oil and gas sector and more jobs would be created.

One Hundred Thousand New Climate Jobs

100,000 jobs - 75% in Scotland- have been lost in the North Sea oil and gas sector since January 2015. Many more skilled and experienced workers are now on short-term contracts with worsening conditions. Unemployment and underemployment is a criminal waste of the talents and skills of these workers. We need a massive investment programme in renewable energy. Investment, together with a drive to ensure that all buildings are well insulated, would provide more than enough new climate jobs for the oil and gas workforce and make good use of their valuable skills.

Green Sovereign Wealth Fund

Scotland is energy rich; in offshore oil and gas- but also in almost unlimited wind and a particularly vast tidal stream and wave resource. A sovereign wealth fund should be established like Norway has done. It would be funded initially through a production levy from offshore oil and gas.

Using a stricter licensing regime- or direct public ownership- the offshore resources could be responsibly exploited and conserved whilst providing the finance for proper lay-off and redundancy pay, as well as the retraining of offshore workers. At the same time a portion of the fund could be dedicated to the ongoing development of offshore renewable energy technologies.

The coming energy crisis

In 1989 Scotland's capacity for energy production exceeded demand by 45%. The closure of coal and nuclear power stations means that on current projections there will be a 20% deficit by 2030. The gap can be met by renewables but only if we act now. However, Ineos and other energy companies are lobbying hard for their fracking option across the Central Belt of Scotland and beyond. Fracking would continue to add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. If INEOS wins the argument for fracking it will be a disaster for the health and well being of hundreds of thousands in the central belt and another step towards the abyss of catastrophic climate change.



Trident and defence diversification



Much of Scotland's remaining manufacturing industry has become over-dependent on highly morally questionable defence projects. Yet these core industries are ideally suited- both in terms of productive capacity and skills- to make the transition to manufacture a new generation of clean power generation technologies and higher energy efficiency distribution and end use systems.

In a world crying out for clean, reliable and affordable energy sources, Scotland could become an industrial exemplar of socially and environmentally driven energy technology design and production.

INEOS: Challenging Corporate Power

Ineos, almost overnight has become both a major player and major problem in Scotland's energy chain. Through its ownership of the of the petrochemical and refinery plants at Grangemouth, the company controls over 90% of petrochemical production and all of petroleum refinery production in Scotland. Ineos also leads in worst employment practice. In 2013 the company all but smashed union organisation at Grangemouth and upon the resumption of wages bargaining immediately terminated discussions and summarily terminated all trade union recognition and collective bargaining rights.

In April 2017 Ineos acquired all of BP's offshore and onshore infrastructural and operating assets in relation to the Forties fields extraction and downstream transit operations. This gives Ineos a virtual stranglehold on Scotland's hydrocarbon industries- in addition to which it also holds a commanding position in shale gas fracking licences.

Any integrated energy and social strategy must challenge Ineos on the grounds that it is unfit to remain an employer and owner/operator within Scotland's vital energy sector. Ineos should provide a model for the transfer into public ownership of the principle components of the Scottish energy economy.



The Energy Consultation and Beyond

For this to become possible we need the arguments for a radical programme for employment, energy and environment to be prominent in the current Consultation on a Scottish Energy Strategy. But that is just the start. The ideas we have identified are absolutely necessary for a sustainable future. But they will be bitterly opposed by the big energy companies. We can make them happen if we mobilise a vigorous movement that will go on to combine that vision of a future with democratic grassroots action.

E3: Employment, Energy and Environment

All the things mentioned here are possible- NOW. The factories, the shipyards, the offshore facilities and the petrochemical industries, which would form the basis of that green transition to a greener future, exist already. As do the men and women who work in

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them - to say nothing of the thousands of young people whose energy and thirst for knowledge will be the capital upon which it can be sustained.

Contact us – add your name to the submission

E3 is not the property of any political organisation. Nor is it committed to either side of the ongoing Scottish independence debate. But in order to realise any of the objectives we have outlined, change will need to be radical, green and dedicated to the pursuit of social justice and environmental sustainability - and above all, it must be democratic. Workers must be free to discuss and organise around alternative plans for their workplaces and industries. And likewise, communities will need to debate and campaign around the issues of affordable energy, decent housing and their local environmental concerns.

It's hoped that E3 can play a coordinating role to bring people and ideas together to turn these ideas into reality. E3 is just starting up; no one knows what it will become. But together with our pooled resources of ideas, energy, democracy and the shared desire for a decent, just and sustainable Scotland the very (clean) skies should be our limit. **Join us now.**

Email: triple.e.scot@gmail.com Website: www.scote3.wordpress.com

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