

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 3 August 2021

## Declaration on Food and Climate

Executive/routine                      Executive  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Sustainability Committee:
  - 1.1.1 Notes the content of the Declaration on Food and Climate provided at Appendix 1.
  - 1.1.2 Notes that the declaration is in line with existing Council commitments on food and climate; and,
  - 1.1.3 Agrees that the Council now formally signs the Declaration on Food and Climate.

**Stephen S. Moir**

Executive Director of Corporate Services

Contact: Fiona Macleod, Senior Policy Officer.

Policy and Insight Team, Corporate Services Directorate

E-mail: [fiona.macleod@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.macleod@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 469 3513

## Declaration on Food and Climate

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 The Leader of Glasgow City Council has written to all Scottish Council leaders asking them to formally sign the Declaration on Food and Climate. The Declaration aims to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable food systems to tackling both the climate and biodiversity emergencies, as well as helping to reduce poverty, inequality and poor health.
- 2.2 It seeks a commitment by local and regional governments to helping tackle the climate and biodiversity emergencies through renewing their commitment to sustainable food policies and joined up action. It calls on national governments to put food and farming at the heart of the global response to these emergencies.
- 2.3 The signing of this declaration aligns with the Council's ambitious target for the city of achieving net zero carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change by 2030 (as set out in the draft 2030 Climate Strategy, which was approved by Committee in June 2021 and is currently out for public consultation).
- 2.4 Food plays a crucial role in helping us achieve this target, as well as helping to tackle other key issues, in relation to protecting and enhancing biodiversity, alleviating poverty and improving health. The Council, as a lead member of the Edible Edinburgh partnership, is working towards developing Edinburgh as a sustainable food city and is in the process of implementing Growing Locally, Edinburgh's first Food Growing Strategy.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 Food systems currently account for a third of total GHG emissions and simultaneously hold the potential to deliver on climate action with co-benefits for biodiversity, health, livelihoods and justice. COP26 being hosted in Scotland is a unique opportunity to bring food systems reform to the forefront of the climate debate.
- 3.2 Since March 2020, Glasgow City Council has been part of a process led by Nourish Scotland and IPES-Food in partnership with Sustainable Food Places, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, ICLEI and others, aimed at highlighting the importance of local

and regional work on sustainable food and integrated food policies to tackling the climate and biodiversity emergencies. The Food and Climate Declaration is the outcome of this process.

- 3.3 By signing the Declaration, local and sub-national governments renew their commitment to including a food system approach in their local efforts to tackle the climate emergency and to continue to work on developing and implementing integrated sustainable food policies. At the same time, they add their voice behind the call to national governments to put food and farming at the heart of the global response to the climate and biodiversity emergencies.
- 3.4 In the lead up to COP26, the Declaration partners will provide a platform for signatories to share best practices and insights on developing and monitoring sustainable integrated food policies and collaborate on promoting the Declaration. At COP26 the partnership and signatories will host events highlighting the values contained in the Declaration and the role of local and regional governments in building sustainable food systems.

## 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The Declaration on Food and Climate seeks a commitment from local and sub-national governments to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergencies through integrated sustainable food policies and joined up action and calls on national governments to put food and farming at the heart of the global response to these emergencies.
- 4.2 The Declaration highlights the impact of COVID-19 on our food systems and the need for preparedness and resilience in the face of future shocks, acknowledges that food systems currently account for 21-37% of total greenhouse gas emissions and are at the heart of many of the world's major challenges including biodiversity loss, hunger and malnutrition and the public health crisis. It recognises that unsustainable dynamics are locked in along the whole food chain, primarily from industrial and farming systems and recognises the inequalities in it which disproportionately affect vulnerable communities.
- 4.3 The Declaration argues that only through a food systems approach targeting all the Sustainable Development Goals can effective intervention points be identified to accelerate climate action while delivering co-benefits, including biodiversity gain, ecosystem regeneration and resilience, circularity, equity, access to healthy and sustainable diets for all, and the creation of sustainable livelihoods for farm and farm workers.
- 4.4 Cities and regions are leading the way in pioneering integrated food policies and strategies at the local level to reduce their environmental footprint, drive positive food system change and ensure greater resilience to shocks. As such, the Declaration is calling on cities and regions to:

- 4.4.1 Develop and implement integrated food policies and strategies as key tools in the fight against climate change and reduce emissions from urban and regional food systems.
- 4.4.2 Call on national governments to establish supportive and enabling policy frameworks and multi-level and multi-actor governance mechanisms, allowing coordinated decision-making on food systems.
- 4.5 By signing the Declaration, the Council along with its partners shows its commitment to tackling the climate and biodiversity emergencies through its sustainable food work. The Edible Edinburgh partnership, of which Councillor Gordon is Chair, works towards developing Edinburgh as a sustainable food city and outlines actions for delivering this transformation through its Sustainable Food City Plan 2014-2020, which is due to be refreshed this year.
- 4.6 Growing Locally, Edinburgh's first food growing strategy aims to increase local food growing activity and the supply of locally produced food, raising public awareness and engagement about the importance of sustainable food to our environment, economy and communities. The Council works in partnership with Edible Edinburgh, other relevant stakeholders and our citizens to do this.
- 4.7 The Edible Edinburgh partnership is a member of the UK Sustainable Food Places (SFP) Network which supports over 48 UK cities and places in developing cross sector approaches to building healthy and sustainable communities by transforming food systems. The partnership received Bronze Award accreditation from SFP in 2019 and is now working towards Silver Accreditation.
- 4.8 Edinburgh has been a Fairtrade City since March 2014 and the Lord Provost currently acts as Vice Chair of the Edinburgh Fairtrade Steering Group which includes a range of city organisations and businesses, and a number of Elected Members. By being a Fairtrade City, Edinburgh is supporting sustainable and fair global farming practices and helping to address challenges such as inequality, gender rights and climate change, and other objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

## 5. Next Steps

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On signing, the Council together with its partners across the city, contribute to the aspirations of the Declaration by its work helping develop Edinburgh as a sustainable food city, implementation of Edinburgh's first Food Growing Strategy, work towards achievement of SFP Silver Accreditation and promotion of fair trade products in the city.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with the Glasgow Declaration. It is voluntary, non-binding, and has no legal status.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 The signing of the Declaration is supported by members of the Edible Edinburgh partnership.
- 7.2 This report has been assessed in respect of the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties. In summary, the proposals in this report will help improve social justice, economic wellbeing and environmental good stewardship.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 [The Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration](#)
- 8.1 [Growing Locally, Edinburgh's Food Growing Strategy 2021-2026](#)
- 8.2 [Edible Edinburgh Sustainable Food City Plan 2014-2020](#)

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix 1 – The Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration

### The Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration

*A commitment by subnational governments to tackle the climate emergency through integrated food policies and a call on national governments to act*

**This Declaration brings together all types and sizes of local authorities – from small and medium sized towns to mega-cities, districts and regions, territories, federal states and provinces – to speak with a unified voice in renewing their commitments to develop sustainable food policies, promote mechanisms for joined-up action and call on national governments to put food and farming at the heart of the global response to the climate emergency.**

1. *Concerned* that the COVID-19 crisis has exposed the fragility of our food systems, the vulnerabilities of large parts of urban and rural populations and the critical need for preparedness and resilience in the face of shocks;
2. *Acknowledging* that food systems currently account for 21-37%<sup>1</sup> of total GHGs, and are at the heart of many of the world's major challenges today including biodiversity loss, enduring hunger and malnutrition, and an escalating public health crisis;
3. *Recognizing* that unsustainable dynamics are locked in along the whole food chain, primarily stemming from industrial food and farming systems;
4. *Recognizing* that extreme inequalities are pervasive throughout the food system, and are disproportionately affecting communities including people living in poverty, people experiencing racism, people displaced due to climate change or conflict, people with precarious legal status, and many others; and furthermore that many of these same groups are exploited for their labour globally;
5. *Convinced*, therefore, that only a food systems approach targeting all the Sustainable Development Goals can identify effective intervention points to accelerate climate action while delivering many co-benefits, including the promotion of biodiversity, ecosystem regeneration and resilience, circularity, equity, access to healthy and sustainable diets for all, and the creation of resilient livelihoods for farm and food workers;
6. *Recognizing* the need to involve all food system stakeholders in decision-making for a sustainable and just transition – including food and farm workers, civil society groups, researchers, indigenous communities, women, and especially youth whose future are the most at risk from the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss;

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC (2019). Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems [P.R. Shukla, J. Skea, E. Calvo Buendia, V. Masson-Delmotte, H.- O. Pörtner, D. C. Roberts, P. Zhai, R. Slade, S. Connors, R. van Diemen, M. Ferrat, E. Haughey, S. Luz, S. Neogi, M. Pathak, J. Petzold, J. Portugal Pereira, P. Vyas, E. Huntley, K. Kissick, M. Belkacemi, J. Malley, (eds.)].

7. *Recalling* that cities and regions are leading the way in pioneering integrated food policies and strategies at the local level to reduce their environmental footprint, drive positive food system change and ensure greater resilience to shocks;
8. *Building* on the number of commitments on sustainable urban and regional food policies already made by cities, local and regional governments over the last two decades, in particular the 2014 World Urban Forum Medellin, the 2015 Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), the 2015 Seoul Declaration, the 2016 New Urban Agenda, and the 2019 C40 Good Food Cities Declaration;
9. *Recognizing* that actions must be aligned horizontally (across policy areas) and vertically (between different levels of governance) to accelerate the transition to sustainable food systems;
10. *Emphasizing* that cross-sectoral, multi-level, and multi-actor governance of food systems is required in order for sustainable and just food systems to take root, and that this requires national governments to take a proactive and enabling role;
11. *Acknowledging* that cities and regions are becoming a high ambition coalition for sustainable food system development, and that the rapidly growing global movement of city and regional food partnerships provides a uniquely powerful mechanism to deliver these reforms;
12. *Acknowledging* that without accompanying regulatory and legislative reforms at the national level, the impact of such partnerships and policies will be limited;
13. We, the undersigned elected leaders of subnational governments, in anticipation of the 26th Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in Glasgow, commit to accelerate climate action by building and facilitating sustainable food systems transformation, by:
14. ***Developing and implementing integrated food policies and strategies*** as key tools in the fight against climate change; and ensuring that these instruments adopt a food systems approach that involves actors across all parts of the food chain; include metrics to assess GHG emissions reduction targets from food systems, as well as opportunities for cooperation and best practice sharing between subnational governments.
15. ***Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from urban and regional food systems*** in accordance with the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals and building sustainable food systems that are able to rebuild ecosystems and deliver safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, and sustainable diets for all.
16. ***Calling on national governments to establish supportive and enabling policy frameworks and multi-level and multi-actor governance mechanisms***, allowing coordinated decision-making on food systems. These mechanisms will support the drafting of inclusive national food policies to be included into the revisions of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

