

Partnership boosts sustainability potential of Scotland's waste water

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The findings, contained in a soon-to-be-released report from Scotland's Centre of Expertise for Water (CREW), will be used as part of an innovative new partnership announced today by Environment Secretary, Roseanna Cunningham MSP.

Addressing the Institute of Water 'Shaping the Future' Conference', being held in Glasgow, Ms. Cunningham announced the signing of a Sustainable Growth Agreement (SGA) between Scottish Water and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) focused on finding new ways to recover more resources from the wastes it manages and generates.

Ms. Cunningham was joined by Scottish Water Chief Executive, Douglas Millican, and Scottish Environment Protection Agency Chief Executive, Terry A'Hearn.

The agreement, which can be viewed [here](#), provides a focus for priority areas for both Scottish Water and SEPA on the environmental and economic opportunities of a circular economy and builds on the organisation's work to recycle over 115 thousand tonnes of organic material from waste water for use as a fuel, soil conditioner or fertiliser.

The partnership will contribute to the Scottish Government's [Energy Strategy](#) core objective of decarbonisation of energy by 2050, and will also help towards achieving the carbon emissions reduction target of 80% by 2050 set out by the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan.

SGAs are voluntary, formal agreements with SEPA, which focus on exploring new and innovative ways to improve environmental performance and focus on practical actions that deliver environmental, social and economic success. They are a core component of the delivery of SEPA's Regulatory Strategy, [One Planet Prosperity](#).

Under the agreement, SEPA and Scottish Water have pledged to develop, trial and then seek to deliver, innovative ways of:

- Managing rainwater and waste water drainage to help protect the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Scotland's towns and cities in a changing climate.
- Helping generate wealth not waste by maximising the recovery of resources from Scotland's sewage and cycling them back into a circular economy.
- Making choices about how to invest in protecting the quality of Scotland's water environment that minimise energy and resource use and maximise social and economic benefit now and for the future.

Scottish Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Roseanna Cunningham MSP, said:

"I am pleased to welcome this agreement which will see two public bodies work in partnership to tackle the challenges of delivering a cleaner and greener Scotland in the 21st Century. It will look for innovative ways to deliver more sustainable wastewater services, and to recover and recycle the resources that are contained within Scotland's sewage."

Douglas Millican, Chief Executive of Scottish Water, said:

"Scottish Water contributes significantly to the country's wider economic landscape in a number of ways. Innovation and being as sustainable as possible to ensure we maximise our resources to benefit customers underpins our activity as an organisation. We manage almost a billion litres a day of waste water through our sewage network and in our treatment works. We believe there is significant potential to release further economic value from that and will work with SEPA to understand how it can be delivered.

"By being forward thinking in our approaches to achieving further value from waste water, smartly managing rain water flows into our sewer networks and protecting and harnessing our water environment, we can look ahead to the future with confidence. As we deliver services for customers, we want to do so by making ever more sustainable choices for society and the environment and to reduce our reliance on resources, maximise the recovery of value where possible and minimise our environmental impacts."

Terry A'Hearn, SEPA's Chief Executive, added:

"The scale of environmental challenge facing humanity is enormous, with a real urgency to act. Every day SEPA works to protect and enhance Scotland's environment by helping communities and businesses thrive within the resources of our planet. We call this One Planet Prosperity.

"We are committed to helping all Scottish businesses to meet the environmental laws in Scotland, and we want to help as many Scottish businesses as possible go even further by helping them find profitable ways to go beyond what the law requires in reducing their use of energy, water and materials and the amount of waste they produce.

"This Sustainable Growth Agreement is an example of our commitment and a milestone for environmental management in Scotland. We will support Scottish

Water to find and take opportunities to comply with regulatory requirements and to go beyond compliance in ways that enhance the environment, minimise resource use and maximise long-term social and economic benefits.”

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