

Malawian delegation visit reinforces 'one planet' approach to environmental regulation

✘ 13 July 2018

The Malawian Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development visited SEPA's Edinburgh office on Friday 13 July to discuss how partnership working through the Hydro Nation can help tackle the 21st century challenges facing our environment.

- Malawian Minister for Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development met experts from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) in Edinburgh.
- Working in partnership on a global scale will help tackle 21st century environmental challenges facing our planet.
- Builds on commitment made between Republic of Malawi and Scotland to increase cooperation on environmental sustainability.

SEPA's environmental experts, led by Director Allan Reid, shared the agency's knowledge and vision for developing and encouraging sustainable solutions to environmental challenges with the Honourable Joseph Mathyola Nakari Mwanamvekha.

The visit follows the signing of the Global Goals Partnership Agreement by the President of the Republic of Malawi and Scotland's First Minister in April, on behalf of their Governments, committing both countries to realise the United Nations global development goals by increasing cooperation on a range of areas including on environmental sustainability. The 2018 Agreement updated the formal agreement between the two Governments for the Sustainable Development Goals era, replacing their original 2005 Cooperation Agreement.

To help create a prosperous Scotland that lives within the means of our one planet SEPA has transformed its approach to regulation for the 21st century.

As environmental challenges and climate change are not confined within international boundaries the agency is working with partners on a global scale to share its expertise and develop a one planet economy. This is at the core of SEPA's regulatory strategy, One Planet Prosperity. Only those businesses, societies and nations that have developed ways to manage their water, waste, materials and carbon-based energy consumption will thrive.

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

It is a pleasure to welcome the Malawian Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development to our Edinburgh office to share

our expertise on how we can tackle the 21st century challenges facing our planet together.

“Sustainability does not have borders and to solve today’s biggest environmental problems it is critical that all nations work together. The world requires increasingly sophisticated solutions to today’s complex environmental challenges, and Scotland is aiming to be a world leader in environmental protection on the global stage, establishing lasting relationships and sharing best practice with other nations.

“Like Scotland, SEPA is small enough to organise itself to deliver effectively, but large enough to have a real impact not just nationally, but globally too. We are transforming our approach to create a world-class environment protection agency fit for the challenges of tomorrow. By embracing opportunities to work with others with a global voice and reach we can help make our voice heard and our vision real.

“We look forward to working further with the Government of Malawi in partnership with the Scottish Government and the University of Strathclyde to help increase sustainability on a global scale.”

Professor Robert M Kalin, Professor of Environmental Engineering for Sustainability at the University of Strathclyde said:

The University of Strathclyde, through the Climate Justice Fund Water Futures Programme, aims to support the Government of Malawi to achieve clean water and sanitation for all people.

“We will continue to collaborate with our ‘Team Scotland’ partners SEPA and Scottish Water International, and our other partners in Scotland and Malawi, to implement work streams around water asset management, policy exchange, capacity building, and research and knowledge exchange.”

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[2050 Climate Group joins SEPA in encouraging young people to get](#)

involved in flood conversation

✘ 12 July 2018

The 2050 Climate Group has joined the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) in calling on young people to take part in the national consultation to improve Scotland's future flood risk management plans.

- Take part in SEPA's national consultation on the designation of areas which are potentially vulnerable to flooding by 31 July.
- 81% of respondents so far agree that flooding is one of the major climate change challenges Scotland will face in the future.
- SEPA is seeking feedback to ensure local knowledge is captured.

Amy Ritchie, from the 2050 Climate Group, which aims to engage, educate and empower Scotland's future leaders to take action on climate change, said:

"Climate change will lead to more frequent and intense flooding in Scotland so it's really important that young people, as the generation that will be affected by these impacts in the future, take the time to review and respond to SEPA's consultation. Research shows that 18 to 34 year olds in particular are not engaged in the issue of flooding. As a result, we are urging as many young people as possible to share their thoughts on SEPA's increasingly vital work."

People have until **31 July 2018** to help shape SEPA's understanding of Potentially Vulnerable Areas by sharing their local knowledge to help make Scotland more resilient in the face of increased flood events.

Over 170 responses have so far been received, which can be viewed at: <https://consultation.sepa.org.uk/evidence-and-flooding/pvas2018>, with 81% of respondents agreeing that flooding is one of the major climate change challenges Scotland will face in the future.

Climate change is expected to increase flood risk, potentially doubling it in some areas in Scotland before the end of the century. SEPA is now looking for the views of young people in particular to ensure that a broad spectrum of knowledge and experience is represented.

SEPA plans to publish the results of the consultation in December 2018.

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

"We are pleased that we have received so many responses to this consultation so far which demonstrates the widespread knowledge and interest in this important issue. It may seem peculiar to ask people to think about flooding given the recent dry summer weather but please ensure you do because your views really do count and we want as many people as possible to share their views with us. The deadline is now fast approaching so I would strongly encourage you to take action now and join the discussion before 31 July."

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Notes to editors

Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVAs)

Identifying PVAs is a vital part of protecting people, properties, communities, businesses, infrastructure and environment. These are based on Scotland's National Flood Risk Assessment (NFRA) which is updated and published every 6 years. This provides a clear picture of past, current and future flood risk and feeds into SEPA's Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans.

Designation of an area as a PVA allows local authorities and public bodies to work with communities to focus activities on reducing the impacts of flooding. Better data has provided a greater understanding of the location of properties and access to better mapping and modelling has improved the assessment of flood risk.

[Over 40 of Scotland's best green businesses announced as finalists for environmental awards](#)

📅 12 July 2018

More than 40 of Scotland's best green businesses have been announced as finalists for the VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards in recognition of their commitment to tackling environmental challenges.

Now in their 19th year, the awards urge Scotland's businesses to challenge their everyday working practices and embrace the economic opportunity of sustainability.

Amongst the diverse businesses which have made the cut for their contribution to Scotland's sustainability are Wood, Glengoyne Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Devro (Scotland) Ltd, Edinburgh Trams and the Royal Zoological Society Scotland (full list in notes to editors). The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony held on 14 November at Radisson Blu in Glasgow.

The finalists have been selected across nine individual award categories which aim to recognise the different ways organisations are implementing environmental best practice in their daily activity. This could range from reducing the use of plastic or developing a new product or service, to encouraging cycle to work schemes or replacing company vehicles for electric

cars.

Sustainable best practice isn't just good for the environment but is also beneficial for business performance, with many of this year's entries reporting associated benefits including; enhanced competitiveness, a positive working culture and both environmental and financial savings.

Commenting, Bob Downes, chair of SEPA and head of the VIBES judging panel, said:

The VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards are a great chance to recognise business leadership in sustainable environmental investment. This is at the core of SEPA's One Planet Prosperity regulatory strategy. New approaches for delivering environmental improvements provide businesses with opportunities to enhance their sustainability and economic performance.

"The Awards celebrate businesses which are already stepping up to this challenge and are leading by example and are an excellent opportunity to recognise and reward these companies for going beyond "business as usual" and driving sustainable growth through innovation. It is very encouraging to see so many of Scotland's businesses leading the way and making a difference which will not only support the environment but also protect their bottom line. I would like to congratulate each of this year's finalists and wish them luck for November's ceremony."

Awards will be presented for the following categories: Management Large, Management SME, Green Team, Sustainable and Active Travel, Circular Economy, Environmental Product or Service, Innovation, and Hydro Nation Water Innovation. A Micro Business Award will also be presented to the best entry to any category from a company with less than 10 employees.

This year a Climate Adaptation commendation has also been introduced, in partnership with Adaptation Scotland, which will reward a business that has demonstrated managing climate related risks or has created a product or service to help society adapt.

Award sponsors to date include Adaptation Scotland, Anglian Water Business, Chivas Brothers Pernod Ricard, Climate-KIC through ECCI, Energy Saving Trust, Farne Salmon and Trout, Greenvale AP, Scottish Government, ScottishPower and University of Stirling Management School.

For more information on VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards please visit www.vibes.org.uk

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Notes to editors:

VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards is a strategic partnership

between Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Government, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Zero Waste Scotland, and Energy Saving Trust.

The Awards are further supported by CBI Scotland, the Institute of Directors, the Federation of Small Businesses, Bright Green Business, Quality Scotland and Scottish Council for Development and Industry.

The Awards are accredited by the RSA Environment Awards Accreditation Scheme (www.rsaaccreditation.org).

The full list of VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards 2018 categories and finalists are as follows:

Adaptation to Climate Change:

- Aberdeen City Council Countryside Ranger Service
- The James Hutton Institute
- TreeGreen trading as EGG lighting
- Universities Superannuation Scheme LTD

Circular Economy:

- Hamilton Waste & Recycling Ltd
- Kittiwig Ltd
- Remade in Edinburgh
- Renewable Parts Ltd – Refurbishment Centre
- Spruce Carpets Limited

Environmental Product or Service:

- Clearwater Controls Ltd
- Mook Environmental Solutions Ltd
- Peel Tech Ltd
- Scotch Whisky Association
- Wood

Green Team:

- Clyde Shopping Centre
- Devro (Scotland) Ltd
- Investec Wealth and Investment (Investec Plc)
- Midlothian Council (Community Payback Team)
- Royal Zoological Society Scotland

Hydro Nation Water Innovation:

- Aqualution Systems Ltd
- Clearwater Controls Ltd
- Proterra Energy Ltd
- Scotmas Limited
- Veolia (Veolia Water Outsourcing Limited)

Innovation:

- 3F BIO Ltd
- CuanTec
- eRally Motorsport Ltd and Knockhill Racing Circuit Ltd
- IntelliDigest Ltd
- McCormack Innovation Ltd
- Xanthella

Management Large:

- Devro (Scotland) Ltd
- DSM Nutritional Products (UK) Limited
- EDF Energy Nuclear Generation
- Scottish Leather Group Limited
- TechnipFMC

Management SME:

- Glengoyne Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky
- Greens deli
- Hickory
- Paterson Arran Ltd
- Sidey Solutions Limited
- The Wildcat Cafe Ltd

Sustainable and Active Travel:

- Beyond Green
- Edinburgh Trams
- eRally Motorsport Ltd and Knockhill Racing Circuit Ltd
- nextGenenergy
- Next Plc

In addition, Micro business will be considered for the Micro Business category:

- Aqualution Systems Ltd
- Beyond Green
- eRally Motorsport Ltd and Knockhill Racing Circuit Ltd
- Greens deli
- IntelliDigest Ltd
- Kittiwig
- McCormack Innovation Ltd
- nextGenenergy
- Peel Tech Ltd
- Proterra Energy Ltd
- Remade in Edinburgh
- Renewable Parts Ltd – Refurbishment Centre
- The Wildcat Cafe Ltd
- TreeGreen trading as EGG lighting
- Universities Superannuation Scheme LTD

- Xanthella
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Smart tech solution helps Scots fight flooding

22 June 2018

Edinburgh-based inventor, Gary Martin, has pioneered a new high-tech solution to help people in flood risk areas developed through Scottish Government's CivTech programme.

- Edinburgh based inventor, Gary Martin, has pioneered a new high-tech solution to help people in flood risk areas, developed through Scottish Government's CivTech programme.
- The Scottish Flood Forum and SEPA have supported a trial of his innovative flood alerting system to help inform and empower local communities.
- The Scottish Flood Forum has been nominated at the Holyrood Connect ICT Awards for its work in trialling community engagement with RiverTrack.

Supported by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), the Scottish Flood Forum has led a comprehensive community trial of RiverTrack to test the innovative flood alerting tool.

Using cutting edge technology RiverTrack sends accurate time sensitive information to individuals about their local watercourse. The system, which uses an array of low-cost sensors positioned over waterways, can give communities advanced warning when flooding is likely by broadcasting real-time water level data to display screens located anywhere in the vicinity.

Water level sensors are attached to an agreed point on a stream or river and this information is then transmitted to RiverTrack's display screen using a licence-free, low power radio frequency either with or without an internet or cellular connection.

RiverTrack provides constant reassurance about the state of current river levels unlike for example home smoke detectors which only inform people when there is a problem. A trigger alert level is set by the user so that an alarm sounds if water levels reach a threshold of concern to them.

The Scottish Flood Forum's successful trial of RiverTrack in two small communities in Dumfries and Galloway and Clackmannanshire has now been shortlisted at the Holyrood Connect ICT Awards which take place on 27 June in Edinburgh.

SEPA is currently conducting an operational trial of RiverTrack alongside its

existing river level monitoring in the Highlands. This is part of SEPA's commitment to support the development of new technologies which can enhance the response and resilience of small communities or individuals not currently served by SEPA's flood warning service.

Stewart Prodger, from SEPA's Flood Unit, said:

As many communities across Scotland know – flooding can have a devastating impact. One of the key ways to reduce that impact is early notice, so people can take action, and SEPA's Floodline service provides valuable local flood warnings in many places across the country, 24/7. But recognising it's impossible to have these schemes everywhere, we wanted to see what else we could do to help people help themselves.

"We were keen to see the use of innovative technology to provide something simple and affordable, but just as vital was accessibility, for the individual user and further afield. So having SEPA, RiverTrack and the Scottish Flood Forum work in partnership with these community flood groups has been a great way for us to tackle flooding problems together."

Scottish Flood Forum's Kirsty MacRae, said:

The Scottish Flood Forum is delighted with this Holyrood recognition for a partnership project we are proud to have led. The RiverTrack device could provide invaluable help for small communities dealing with flood risk from local watercourses, and vital to that is its user-friendliness.

"SEPA's sponsorship allowed us to properly trial RiverTrack in two communities, Moniaive in Dumfries and Galloway, and Menstrie in Clackmannanshire, with involvement and support from local authorities. These pilots are almost complete and proving to be a great success, with community testers reporting very positively.

"We are very excited about the possibilities that RiverTrack brings to helping flood risk communities, will be evaluating its potential and looking to engage communities and grant funders to explore what we can achieve next."

RiverTrack's Gary Martin added:

In my work, my focus has always been on using technology to help people in their daily lives by making vital data and information more accessible to them. When I saw the CivTech challenge from SEPA, I immediately thought of using a sensor-display combination to deliver real-time river level data into people's homes and

communities to give them crucial time to react.

“I also wanted a collaborative approach, working closely with affected communities and existing flood groups to deliver a solution that is tailored to their needs. The feedback from the pilot projects was very positive and I can’t wait to work with more community groups through the Scottish Flood Forum in the future.”

Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said:

It’s great to see the success of RiverTrack in Dumfries and Galloway and in Clackmannanshire where it has helped communities prepare for flooding. Individuals living in these areas have been able to gain a better understanding of their potential flood risks so they can take the necessary action to protect themselves, their property or their business.

“The Scottish Government is committed to reducing flood risk across Scotland and is investing £42 million every year to protect homes in many of our most flood-prone areas.

“RiverTrack is another example of the innovative work coming out of the CivTech programme which is teaming up entrepreneurial start-ups and Small to Medium-Sized Enterprises with public sector organisations to help them find new ways of addressing the challenges they face.”

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Notes to editors

You can find out more about RiverTrack at:<http://rivertrack.org/>

[Partnership boosts sustainability potential of Scotland’s waste water](#)

 21 June 2018

Scotland’s sewage and solid organic waste can make a contribution to the country’s heat and power needs and contribute to further reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to tackle climate change, according to experts from Scottish Water and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

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country's heat and power needs and contribute to further reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to tackle climate change, according to experts from Scottish Water and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

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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