**Joint Statement of the Scottish Directors of Public Health, Scottish Health Promotion Managers, NHS Health Scotland, the Scottish Public Health Network and the Scottish Managed Sustainable Health Network**

**Climate Change and Health: The Paris Agreement**

* We warmly welcome the agreement reached in Paris at the 21st session of the Conference of Parties to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21). We acknowledge the importance of the voluntary commitments made by over 195 national, business and other contributors to take actions that will seek to cut greenhouse gas emissions to a level that will restrict the global average temperature to a rise "well below" two degrees centigrade compared to pre-industrial levels.
* We also welcome the string mandate, contained within the final documents from COP21, which emphasises the importance of taking action to protect human health from the negative consequences of climate change as part of the overall efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

*“Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local* communities*, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.”*

(Adoption of the Paris Agreement: Draft Decision).

* We are encouraged by the recognition that the promotion of health, and its underlying social and economic determinant, are desirable co-benefits to be actively sought as part of the “Enhanced actions prior to 2020” when addressing climate change:

*“Recognizes the social, economic and environmental value of voluntary mitigation actions and their co-benefits for adaptation, health and sustainable development.”*

(Adoption of the Paris Agreement: Adoption, para 109).

* We urge all statutory, non-statutory and business organisations to recognise this mandate and support appropriate additional action to protect the health of the public and promote health as a co-benefit of their climate change action.
* The Public Health community in Scotland is already well placed to help meet the challenges which go alongside this mandate. We have:
	+ already established the Scottish Managed Sustainable Health Network, working as part of the Scottish Public Health Network, which brings together public health specialists with expertise in sustainability to provide the necessary support to the NHS and organisations across Scotland;
	+ through NHS Health Scotland, started work to establish the evidence-base for health and climate change adaptation and mitigation; and
	+ already undertaken local work in several of the NHS Boards in Scotland which will help act as exemplars for achieving health and climate change co-benefits.

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