

## Natural resources

Scotland has a wide range of resources that are important to the economy.





Scotland has an abundance of natural resources. We have a wide range of geological resources available for use in the energy, construction and manufacturing industries, making a major contribution to the economy.

At the same time, we produce millions of tonnes of waste, which can be used as a resource if its value is recovered through reuse or recycling. Although the amount of waste we generate has decreased (and measures are in place to try and ensure it continues decreasing), there are still large amounts of waste produced, which needs to be managed. Waste could supply some of the materials critical to Scotland's economy.

The amount of resources we use and the waste produced are driven by economic factors and the behaviour of people and companies.

Production of many of Scotland's resources is only viable if the global price of that resource is high compared to the costs involved in producing it. Scotland still has significant resources of coal and aggregates, and exploitation at the current rates could be sustained for many years. However, these resources are finite and careful management is necessary to ensure sustainability.

[Click for explanation of diagram.](#)

Topic	Summary
<p data-bbox="188 530 544 564"><u><a href="#">Fossil fuels and minerals</a></u></p>  <p data-bbox="188 689 759 819">Scotland has a wide range of natural resources for energy, construction and manufacturing, making a major contribution to the economy.</p>	<p data-bbox="809 530 1378 696">Geological resources underpin a significant part of Scotland's economy, and are crucial to many aspects of modern life. Many of these resources are non-renewable, and therefore need careful management.</p> <p data-bbox="809 734 1386 864">In 2008 the total value of minerals produced onshore in Scotland was over £600 million, while in 2009 direct oil and gas exports from Scotland were valued at £2.5 billion.</p> <p data-bbox="809 902 1401 1068">They include fossil fuels for energy; materials used in construction; metallic minerals; and a wide range of other 'industrial minerals' that are used, for example, to make glass and ceramics.</p>
<p data-bbox="188 1075 469 1108"><u><a href="#">Timber and forestry</a></u></p>  <p data-bbox="188 1234 778 1332">Our forests provide a range of benefits, including providing timber and removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere.</p>	<p data-bbox="809 1075 1398 1276">Woodlands and forests deliver many benefits: fostering and supporting jobs, education and skills development; contributing to the recreation, tourism and health sectors; and offering accessible green space in urban areas.</p> <p data-bbox="809 1314 1390 1444">Scotland's forest resource is a vital component of climate change mitigation and underpins our value-added forest industries and the fast developing wood fuel sector.</p> <p data-bbox="809 1482 1369 1581">It is hugely important to our landscape and offers a range of habitats that nurture and enhance Scotland's biodiversity.</p> <p data-bbox="809 1619 1398 1749">The Gross Value Added (GVA) of the forest industries in Scotland including forest-related tourism is £670 million, supporting 31,000 jobs, mostly in rural areas.</p>

## Waste



A zero waste society produces and landfills less waste, recycles more and safely recovers energy and value from those materials that cannot be recycled.

Scotland is aiming to become a zero waste society in which all resources are valued, meaning fewer raw materials are consumed and any waste is reused or recycled, not landfilled.

As well as being better for the environment, this will contribute to Scotland's climate change and renewable energy targets and boost the economy, bringing investment and jobs.

[Scotland's Zero Waste Plan](#) (2010) sets recycling and landfill reduction targets that will help Scotland realise the full resource potential of its waste. We all have a role to play in achieving these targets if we are to protect our environment, conserve our natural resources and maximise the resource value of our waste, both now and for generations to come.