This paper examines the contribution of the 'nation' in accelerating progress towards sustainable development in Scotland and whether nationalist discourses can help define and promote sustainable development. More specifically, it considers whether being a subnational nation as opposed to simply a subnational region adds value to sustainable development discourses by enabling the former to move beyond symbolic politics to something more transformative.

It begins with a short history of sustainable development and calls at international meetings for national governments to re-assess their approaches to economics and governance to promote 'the Future We Want'. Previous research into the role of subnational regional government in promoting the transformation needed is examined and reasons behind the limited success at this level to date explored. The potential differences between subnational 'regions' and subnational 'nations' are then highlighted as an area for study followed by a discussion on territorial identity, nationality and nationalist discourses. The paper then explores the relationship between Scottish nationalist discourses and sustainable development discourses using three case studies: the development and passage of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009; the relationship between sustainable development and sustainable economic growth as set out in the Economic Strategy and in the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014; and lastly, the debates and discussions leading up to the referendum on Scottish independence on September 18, 2014. The subsequent analysis shows how nationalist discourses have been used to shape distinctively Scottish interpretations of sustainable development. It also shows the potential of sustainable development discourses to shift the focus of nationalist discourses away from the past and the present to imagine new and brighter futures for Scotland. The paper concludes that the links between nationalist and sustainable development discourses have the potential to invigorate the politics of both sustainability and nationalism.

**Keywords:** sustainability, Scotland, nationality, discourses

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