



PRESS RELEASE: CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COUNCIL

EMBARGO 12:01PM on WEDNESDAY 24 JULY 2019

Please note the attached ANNUAL REVIEW 2019 is also EMBARGOED until 12:01PM WEDNESDAY 24 JULY 2019

IRELAND REMAINS COMPLETELY OFF COURSE TO ACHIEVE ITS 2020 AND 2030 CLIMATE CHANGE TARGETS

Ireland is already experiencing the impacts of climate change and, regardless of the success of national or global mitigation measures, adaptation to climate change is essential due to the effects of continuing global greenhouse gas emissions.

“The impacts of climate change often seem distant from everyday life, but we have experienced several extreme weather events in recent years which have exposed the vulnerabilities of our society and economy. Despite these events, awareness of the need for adaptation remains low. Adaptation is not only a matter for Government but will require a response by households and the business sector,” said Chair of the Council, Professor John FitzGerald.

Key areas which are not addressed under current development of sectoral adaptation plans include our coasts, housing and planning.

Robust carbon pricing is essential to support action by individuals and businesses to eliminate their greenhouse gas emissions. The revenue raised should be used to ensure a just transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable economy and society, protecting those on low incomes. The Council recommends that the carbon tax increase to €35 per tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent in Budget 2020, increasing to at least €80 per tonne by 2030.

The Council has given particular attention to the agricultural sector in this year’s Annual Review. There is the potential for a substantial reduction in agricultural emissions while at the same time safeguarding farm incomes. This includes targeted measures to reduce the national herd.

“Urgent actions are necessary in the Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use sectors. The Council recognises that opportunities exist to reduce emissions while providing multiple co-benefits to society. In recent years, the expansion of the national dairy herd has been the major contributor to increases in agricultural emissions. Reduction of the suckler herd would make an important and cost-effective contribution to mitigation, could support alternative land uses, such as afforestation, raise farm incomes and reduce exposure of the sector to external market shocks.”



The Council recommends that the Government publish the detailed plan to achieve its commitment to end the burning of coal at Moneypoint by 2025. The Council also recommends the cessation of peat-fired electricity generation in 2020.

“The building sector is operating at near full capacity however there is an urgent need to increase the skillsets to deliver the necessary retrofit programme. The Government has the opportunity to lead by example through investment in local authority buildings and housing. This would provide certainty to businesses that there is a long-term commitment to retrofitting Ireland’s housing stock,” said Professor John FitzGerald.

“The recently published Climate Action Plan 2019 has proposals for a wide range of measures and new governance arrangements which would enable us to achieve our 2030 targets. Implementation in a cost-effective manner is critical to realise the ambitions set out in the Plan,” said Professor John FitzGerald.

The Council is an independent statutory body, established under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. Its role is to review national climate policy and advise government on how Ireland can move to a low carbon, climate resilient economy and society by 2050.

The full report will be available for download at www.climatecouncil.ie

Ends

Please note the attached Annual Report 2019 is also embargoed until 12:01PM WEDNESDAY 24 JULY 2019.

For further information please contact:

Climate Change Advisory Council Secretariat

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Important Note

In this Annual Review, the Climate Change Advisory Council has reviewed progress towards transition based on analysis of data from 1990 to 2017 and projections from 2018 to 2040 released in May 2019.

The Annual Review 2019 is mandated under Section 12 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. The Act outlines that the Council should conduct a review of the most recent national inventory and projections of greenhouse gas emissions prepared by the EPA, of progress made towards achieving greenhouse gas emissions reductions and in furthering the transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.

Editor Notes

The Climate Change Advisory Council is an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. Its role includes the provision of advice to Government on national policy relating to climate change. It was formally established in January 2016.

At its meeting on the 19 October 2017, the Climate Change Advisory Council took the decision not to print hard-copies of reports. Therefore, only electronic copies will be available from its website.

Climate Change Advisory Council Members

Prof John FitzGerald, Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Council

Laura Burke (Director General, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); ex-officio)

Prof Alan Barrett (Director, Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI); ex-officio)

Jim Gannon, (CEO Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI); ex-officio)

Prof Gerry Boyle, (Director of Teagasc; ex-officio)

Prof Ottmar Edenhofer, (Designated Director and Chief Economist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK))

Prof Frank Convery (Chief Economist, Environmental Defence Fund, New York)

Prof Peter Clinch (Jean Monnet Chair of European Economic Integration and Professor of Public Policy at University College Dublin)

Prof Anna Davies (Professor of Geography at Trinity College Dublin)

Prof Alan Matthews (Professor Emeritus of European Agricultural Policy at Trinity College Dublin)

Dr Joseph Curtin (Senior Research Fellow, at the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA).



Climate Change Advisory Council Adaptation Committee Members

Prof John FitzGerald, Chair of the Adaptation Committee

Mark Adamson (Head of Flood Relief and Risk Management Division, Office of Public Works (OPW))

Prof Gerry Boyle, (Director of Teagasc)

Laura Burke (Director General, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA))

Prof Robert Devoy (Professor in Physical Geography and Emeritus Professor in Geography University College Cork (UCC))

Ciarán Hayes (Chair of the County & City Management Association (CCMA) Committee on Climate Change)

Dr Ina Kelly (Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Health and Wellbeing, Health Service Executive (HSE))

Eoin Moran (Director, Met Éireann)

Dr Conor Murphy (Lecturer in the Department of Geography at Maynooth University)

Roger Street (Technical Director United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) Environmental Change Institute, Oxford University)