



Terms of Reference for the Committee on Carbon Budgets

Context

The Council agreed at its meeting on Friday 5th March to establish an *Ad Hoc* Committee on Carbon Budgets (AHCCB). This paper describes proposed terms of reference for the new Committee. Terms of Reference must be agreed by Council in order to formally establish the Committee.

The Committee will assist the Council in development of a methodology and evidence base for carbon budget proposals and may be extended to address ongoing required engagement with Government on the setting of decarbonisation target ranges for sectors.

The Council decides the membership of the Committee. Prospective Committee members have been invited to participate in two informal meetings based on the document sent to the Council on 12th March, however the Council may decide to add to the membership at its discretion.

Governance

The Chair of the Committee will be a member of the Council and appointed at the discretion of the Council.

The membership of the Committee and its Terms of Reference are a decision of the Council. The membership of the Committee can be reviewed at the discretion of the Council, or at the request of the chair of the Committee.

The findings/recommendations/outputs of the Committee will be fed back to the Council for its consideration by the Secretariat and/or the Chair of the Committee. It remains the role of the Council to take the final decision on the carbon budget proposals to submit to Government. The Council does not delegate any decision making authority to the Committee.

The Committee will be empowered to arrange its work programme and meetings as it wishes (within the resources available to it) to fulfil the Terms of Reference set by the Council.

Substance

The first task of the Committee will be to draw up draft carbon budgets for the periods 2021-25, 2026-30 and 2031-35 to be considered by the Climate Change Advisory Council. As part of this task, the Committee will include the criteria set out in the Climate Action Bill (2015) and the current draft of the Amendment Bill (2021) in its consideration of carbon budgets. These criteria are set out in the Appendix. If there are any updates to these criteria within the timeframe of the Committee's work on Carbon Budgets, the Committee will consider those new criteria.

In drawing up the draft carbon budgets as above, the Committee would;

- Top-down: Estimate an appropriate carbon budget for Ireland for the period 2021 – 2050 based on consideration of the global carbon budget [addressing criteria: national climate objective, UN, Paris Agreement, science, climate justice]
 - a. The potential for negative emissions
 - b. The role of different gases
 - c. The global carbon budget
- Bottom-up: Consider what legislative requirements at national and EU level mean for emissions up to 2030, covering the first two carbon budgets. [addressing criteria: national climate objective, 51%, EU, inventories and projections, science, reporting, economy, and climate justice]
 - a. The implication of required compliance with EU and National Targets (e.g. 51%) incl. treatment/inclusion of LULUCF
 - b. Feasibility, competitiveness impacts, implications for investment
 - c. Distributional impacts, jobs

The role of the Committee may evolve after this task has been completed. It is anticipated that during subsequent stages of the carbon budgeting process, the Council will have opportunity to provide recommendations and advice, particularly with regards to any adjustment to the carbon budgets the Government may propose, and also with respect to detailed disaggregation of the carbon budgets to sectors. It is at the discretion of the Council to consider extending the mandate of AHCCB beyond June 2021.

Logistics

The Committee would be expected to meet approximately once a month up to and including June 2021. Meetings would take place virtually, for approximately 2-3 hours. Additionally,

topic specific meetings for a more in-depth consideration of evidence may be held. External speakers may be invited by the Committee to present to the Committee.

Appendix:

Criteria Shorthand	Quoted Text from the 2020 Bill
'National Climate Objective'	6A(1) A carbon budget, consistent with furthering the achievement of the national climate objective, shall be proposed by the Advisory Council
'51%'	6A(5) The first 2 carbon budgets proposed by the Advisory Council shall provide for a reduction of 51% in the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions over the course of the first 2 budget periods ending on 31 December 2030, from the annual greenhouse gas emissions reported for the year ending on 31 December 2018, as set out in the national greenhouse gas emissions inventory prepared by the Agency.
'UNFCCC'	(i) that is consistent with the ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and the matters specified in subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of section 3(3)(a), and
'EU'	3(3)(a)(i) any mitigation or adaptation commitments entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective
'Paris Agreement'	3(3)(a)(ii) the steps specified in Article 2 and 4(1) of the Agreement done at Paris on 12 December 2015 to achieve that objective,
'inventories and projections'	(ii) which takes account of— (I) the most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas emissions, prepared by the Agency,
'science'	(II) relevant scientific advice, including with regard to the distinct characteristics of biogenic methane,
'reporting'	(III) international best practice on the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions and removal,
'economy'	(IV) in so far as practicable, the need to maximise employment, the attractiveness of the State for investment and the long term competitiveness of the economy,
'climate justice'	(b) have regard to climate justice when carrying out its functions under this section