

Statement by the Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Council following the publication of Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2022

14 July 2023

While I welcome the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 1.9% and the progress made across sectors, at the mid-point of the first five year carbon budget we are not on track to achieve our emissions targets. The emissions reduction in Built Environment and other sectors, must be amplified further with immediate actions required across all other sectors. (See Table 1)

The best performing sector – residential buildings – is delivering benefits on the ground through the retrofitting of cold damp homes and eliminating harmful heating fuels which have high levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Emissions levels in this sector also respond to temporary factors such as weather conditions and energy prices and it is vital that the implementation of policy protects the most vulnerable from this volatility. The structured and focussed approach in this sector is seeing an uplift in the delivery of skills and is supporting the creation of new jobs. Government funding is essential to this success and needs to be continued.

In other sectors Government must implement policies that will deliver sustained and systemic change, that are not adversely impacted by external or societal developments. While transport emissions dropped during COVID, they rebounded because there were not active policies in place to maintain low emissions levels. Investment and support is needed now, to incentivise a switch to public transport and an uplift in active travel.

Movements in gas and electricity prices have laid bare our dependence on harmful fossil fuels which are a root cause of supply instability and higher levels of emissions. It is urgent that Government sets out more detailed implementation plans for each sector to ensure a focussed effort and continual monitoring of progress.

The Council is currently finalising its Annual Review of Mitigation and Adaptation, as well as recommendations for all sectors which will be published in the coming weeks.

Table 1 Sectoral Emissions Ceilings 2021-2025

Sectoral Emissions Ceilings 2021-2025, progress to 2022						
Sector	2018 Mt CO ₂ eq	2021 Mt CO ₂ eq	2022 Mt CO ₂ eq	Sectoral Emissions Ceiling for CB1 Mt CO ₂ eq	Aggregate (2021+2022) as % of CB1	% Rate of Change of Emissions 2021-2022
Electricity	10.3	10.0	9.8	40	49%	-2%
Transport	12.2	11.0	11.6	54	42%	6%
Built Environment - Residential	7.1	7.0	6.1	29	45%	-13%
Built Environment - Commercial	1.5	1.4	1.4	7	41%	-1%
Industry & Other	9.1	9.0	8.5	39	45%	-5%
Agriculture	23.4	23.6	23.3	106	44%	-1%
LULUCF	6.3	7.3	7.3	n/a	n/a	0%

If you have any questions or are seeking further comment, please do not hesitate to contact: Shane Finnegan (shane@aikenpr.com or 00447764534565) or Seamus Donnelly (seamus@aikenpr.com or 00447729556480)