



25th July 2018

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

Ireland is not on track to meet its 2020 or 2030 targets, or to decarbonise its economy by 2050, according to the Climate Change Advisory Council's Annual Review 2018.

"Following on from last year's Annual Review, Ireland is now in an even worse position. Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions increased again in 2016, with the projections of emissions to 2035 showing that we are completely off course in addressing the challenge of climate change," said Chair of the Council, Professor John FitzGerald.

"Instead of achieving the required 1 million tonne per annum reduction in carbon dioxide emissions consistent with the National Policy Position, Ireland is currently increasing emissions at a rate of 2 million tonnes per year. We need immediate and urgent action to put us back onto a pathway to achieve transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable economy and society."

"The Council believes that the current level of the carbon tax in Ireland and the price of carbon in the EU Emissions Trading System are insufficient to achieve our climate target targets and objectives," said Professor FitzGerald.

In the Council's Annual Review 2018, the Council recommends an initial increase in the carbon tax to €30 per tonne in Budget 2019 as an essential component of achieving low-carbon transition. The Council further recommends that Ireland work with other European countries to introduce a regional carbon price floor in the electricity sector to support decarbonisation.

"We have an opportunity to address Ireland's reliance on fossil fuels in our economy, and encourage innovation and change of behaviour in businesses and households towards greener and more efficient energy solutions. The Council recommends that any increase in carbon taxation should be accompanied by measures to address any negative impacts of carbon taxation on poorer households."

The Council welcomes the Government's commitment to end the burning of coal at Moneypoint by 2025. However, the Council is concerned that planned support for biomass co-fired with peat has the effect of supporting the continued burning of peat for electricity generation. This contributes to higher emissions. Public funding could be better spent supporting real emissions reduction and the low carbon transition of fossil fuel dependent communities.



The Annual Review 2018 welcomes the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan as potentially significant contributions to addressing the challenges of climate change in Ireland. The Council highlights the importance of robust delivery of these plans to achieve the intended results. Transparent delivery of actions in the National Mitigation Plan and the National Adaptation Framework is also required.

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

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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 2016 and projections from 2017 to 2035 released in May 2018.

The Annual Review 2018 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)

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))

Jim Gannon (CEO Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI))

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)