Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Title of Report:	**Consultation Responses to DAERA's Climate Action Plan**
Committee Report Submitted To:	**Environmental Services Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**9th September 2025**
For Decision or For Information	**For Decision**
To be discussed In Committee ~~YES~~/NO	**Not in Committee**

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-25)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and Enhancing Our Environments & Assets
Outcome	Our natural assets will be carefully managed to generate economic and social returns without compromising their sustainability for future generations.
Lead Officer	Head of Capital Works, Energy and Infrastructure, Climate change lead Officer

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	**YES/NO – N/A**
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	**NO**
Legal Opinion Obtained	**NO**

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date: N/A
	EQIA Required and Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date: N/A
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	~~Yes~~/No	Date: N/A
	RNA Required and Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date: N/A
	Screening Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date: N/A

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)			
	DPIA Required and Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date: N/A

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform members of the consultation being undertaken by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) on their draft climate action plan, and to seek endorsement of council's officer led draft response.

2.0 Background

2.1 DAERA has been leading on Climate Change on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive. DAERA has opened consultation on their proposed Climate Action Plan with a closing date of 08/10/2025
A copy of the consultation is attached (appendix 1)

3.0 Proposal

3.1 To provide the feedback on DAERA's consultation as attached (appendix 2)

4.0 Recommendation:

It is recommended that Members note the consultation process and approve the consultation response for submission to DAERA (appendix 2).

DRAFT

NORTHERN IRELAND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Depairtment o'
Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Consultation Document
2023-2027

This document is also available on the DAERA website at:
https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation

On request, we can arrange to provide other formats of the documents above, such as:

- Paper Copy
- Large Print
- Braille
- Other Languages

To request an alternative format, please contact us:
Email: climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk
Telephone: 028 9081 6904 and talk to one of the Consultation Team.

If you have a hearing difficulty, you can contact the Department via Text Relay.
Dial: 18001 028 9081 6904

Post: Climate Action Delivery Division
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Clare House
303 Airport Road
BT3 9ED

Guidance is provided on the 'Confidentiality' of responses under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, in Annex 1 for your reference. Also, if you require any further information, please contact a member of the consultation team on 028 9081 6904.

Seeking your views

Why we are consulting?

We have engaged with organisations and individuals to start a climate conversation about this draft Climate Action Plan. However, this plan will impact everyone - so we want everyone to have the opportunity to consider and inform the final plan by holding a 16-week public consultation.

We want you to tell us what you think of the policies and proposals that we have identified and share any comments or suggestions that you have. The draft Plan will be revised to reflect the views from the consultation, before we lay a final Plan before the Assembly, following Executive agreement.

How to respond to the consultation

You are invited to respond to the questions by completing the online survey. The survey is quick and simple to complete and seeks views on our proposed approach, policies and proposals and delivery and monitoring arrangements. Please supplement your response with any relevant information, evidence or analysis.

The consultation will run from 19 June 2025 at 10:00 to 8 October 2025. We encourage early responses, and all responses should be submitted no later than **11.59pm on 8 October 2025** to ensure they can be fully considered.

If you are unable to complete the survey online, please contact the Climate Action Plan consultation team by email: **climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk**

An easy read version of the consultation document is available online but if you need documents to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.

By responding to this consultation, you are agreeing that any information gathered may be shared with other NICS departments.

There will be a series of stakeholder engagement events during the consultation period. These will take place both online and in person across Northern Ireland.

Details are available on the DAERA website:
https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation

Contents

1. Introduction

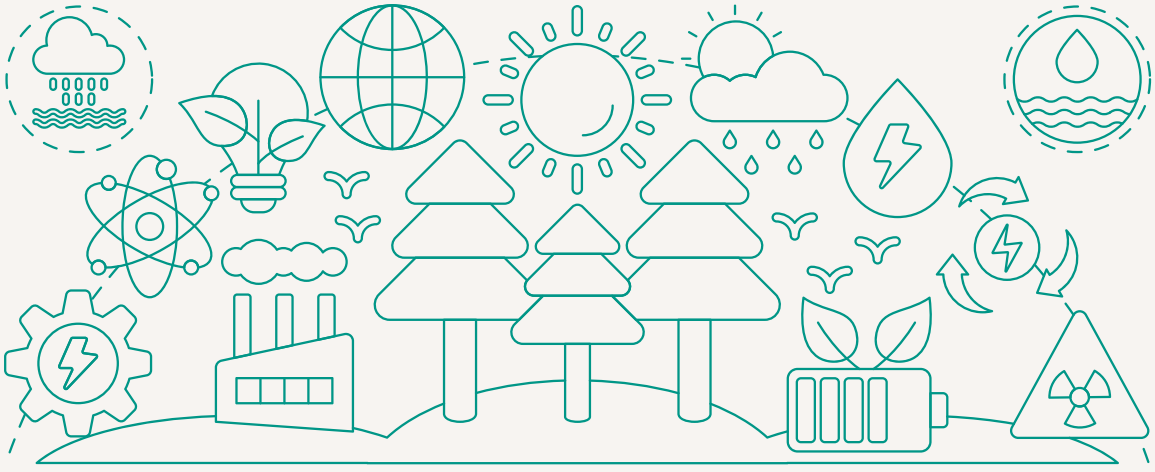
This is Northern Ireland's first Climate Action Plan 2023-2027. It is important because it is the first step on our journey to net zero. Producing this plan is a statutory requirement under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. In December 2024, the Executive agreed that for the period of this plan, 2023-2027, greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 33% on average[1], to set us on the right path to net zero and contribute to global climate targets.

This first draft Climate Action Plan sets out 52 policies and proposals to reduce emissions across nine sectors: energy production and supply; transport; business and industrial processes; residential buildings; public buildings; waste management; agriculture; land use, land use change and forestry; and fisheries.

Our analysis shows that if all the policies and proposals are implemented at the pace and scale detailed in this plan, the first carbon budget 2023-2027 can be met.

Innovation and creative solutions to existing challenges will have an important role to play in this Climate Action Plan. Without it we will not achieve our goals. New ideas and technologies will help us achieve our climate ambition and create opportunities along the way.

This draft Northern Ireland Climate Action Plan 2023-2027 Consultation Document provides some of the key elements of what is an extremely detailed, complex and technical document. The full draft Climate Action Plan is available to access on the DAERA website along with alternative formats as requested.



[1] Compared to the base year (1990 for most gases)

2. Overview

In 2022, Northern Ireland passed its first climate legislation. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (the Act) sets an ambitious target to reduce Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050. This means that we must remove at least as many emissions from our atmosphere as we produce.

The Act requires us to prepare and publish a Climate Action Plan every five years.

This plan sets out policies and proposals to achieve reductions in emissions and the actions to enable this to happen. The focus of this Climate Action Plan is on meeting the first carbon budget. A carbon budget sets a limit on the maximum amount of greenhouse gas emissions that can be produced over a five-year period. Keeping emissions within the limit set for each carbon budget period is important as it will set us on the right pathway to meet 2030, 2040 and 2050 targets, in line with the requirements of the legislation.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has co-ordinated the publication of this draft Climate Action Plan, with each Northern Ireland department identifying policies and proposals to reduce emissions to reduce emissions and ensure that the carbon budget is achieved.

2.1 Climate Commitments in Northern Ireland

In January 2020, the need for a coordinated and strategic approach to the challenge of climate change was recognised in 'New Decade, New Approach', the deal to restore devolved government in Northern Ireland. Following the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments, it committed to introducing legislation and targets for reducing carbon emissions in line with the Paris Agreement.

In March 2022, the Northern Ireland Assembly passed the Climate Change Bill fulfilling the Executive's commitment to introduce its first climate legislation. Having received Royal Assent, the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 took effect in June 2022. The Act sets an ambitious emissions target of net zero by 2050, to achieve an overall balance in the emissions that we produce and those we remove from our atmosphere.

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 sets a number of legal obligations including:

- Net zero target by 2050,
- Carbon budgets have to be set for each five year period, beginning in 2023 to 2027
- Climate Action Plans to be published covering each five year period – setting out how we will achieve our carbon budgets,
- Establish an independent Northern Ireland Climate Commissioner (being led by The Executive Office),
- Establish a Just Transition Commission,
- Establish a Just Transition Fund for Agriculture to provide advice and financial assistance to the agriculture sector,
- Sectoral Plans which set out longer term plans to meet targets,
- The requirement for Public Body Reporting legislation,
- Climate Action Plans must contain targets on soil quality, air quality and biodiversity and to support nature-based projects and solutions,
- Policies and proposals must have regard to the Just Transition Principle and the 11 just transition objectives.

2.2 Carbon Budget 2023-2027

After the Act was passed, DAERA sought advice from the Climate Change Committee (CCC) on what a path to net zero might be on appropriate emissions reduction targets for 2030 and 2040 and on appropriate levels for Northern Ireland's first three carbon budgets. This advice was provided by the CCC in its Advice Report[2] which was published in March 2023.

Following completion of the consultation exercise and consideration of the responses provided (a summary of the responses is available on DAERA's website[3]), regulations reflecting the CCC's recommendations were approved by the DAERA Minister and ultimately passed by the Assembly in December 2024. As a result, Northern Ireland's first three carbon budgets have been set in law and a new target for 2040[4] has been set through an amendment made to the Act[5]. The current emissions reduction targets in the Act and carbon budgets which have been set for Northern Ireland under the Act are outlined in Table 1.

[2] Advice report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland - Climate Change Committee (theccc.org.uk)

[3] Summary of Responses: Consultation on Northern Ireland's 2030 & 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets & First Three Carbon Budgets & Seeking views on Climate Change Committee (CCC) Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

[4] The Climate Change (2040 Emissions Target) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024

[5] The Climate Change (Carbon Budgets 2023-2037) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024

Table 1: Northern Ireland's 2030 and 2040 targets and first three carbon budgets.

Target/Budget	Emissions reductions required
2030 Target	A 48% emissions reduction by 2030 against the baseline[6]
2040 Target	A 77% emissions reduction by 2040 against the baseline
2050 Target	A 100% emissions reduction by 2050 against the baseline
Carbon Budget 1 (2023-2027)	33% average annual reduction compared to the baseline
Carbon Budget 2 (2028-2032)	48% average annual reduction compared to the baseline
Carbon Budget 3 (2033-2037)	62% average annual reduction compared to the baseline

To achieve the emission reductions in line with the first carbon budget (covering the period 2023-2027), emissions need to reduce by an average of 33% annually, from the 1990 base year emission levels, across the five-year period. Therefore, policies and proposals included in this first draft Climate Action Plan need to meet this first carbon budget over the five-year period from 2023 to 2027.

[6] The net Northern Ireland emissions account should be at least 48% lower than the baseline in 2030 and at least 77% lower than the baseline in 2040, while for carbon budgets, the recommended average annual reduction relates to reductions in the net Northern Ireland emissions account across the period compared to the baseline. The net Northern Ireland emissions account for a year means the aggregate amount of net emissions of each greenhouse gas in Northern Ireland (emissions and removals of a gas plus/minus any carbon units debited or credited to the account. The baseline is the aggregate amount of net Northern Ireland emissions of each greenhouse gas in the year specified in relation to that gas (1990 for Carbon dioxide, Methane and Nitrous oxide; 1995 for Hydrofluorocarbons, Perfluorocarbons, Sulphur hexafluoride and Nitrogen trifluoride).

3. Developing the Climate Action Plan

Developing this draft Climate Action Plan has provided a significant opportunity to work together, across government, across sectors and across society to address the most important challenge of our time. Significant collaboration across departments has taken place to understand the Act's requirements (including roles and responsibilities), determine the strategic direction, identify methodologies and agree the content of this pivotal plan. Against a background of complex circumstances, departments have managed priorities, reallocated staff resources and built internal knowledge and capacity to support the development process as far as possible. In wider engagement with stakeholders, the shared goal has been to ensure that Northern Ireland is well placed to meet the challenge of reducing emissions.

3.1 DAERA Responsibilities

DAERA is responsible for leading the preparation and publication of this draft Climate Action Plan. DAERA is required to carry out a 16-week public consultation on the draft plan and, subsequently, to lay the results of the public consultation before the Assembly, and at the same time lay a final Climate Action Plan. In fulfilling these responsibilities, DAERA is required to collaborate with all departments and other stakeholders[7].

[7] Section 29 of the Act

3.2 Departments' Responsibilities

Whilst all departments have informed the development of this Climate Action Plan, Table 2 identifies the lead department assigned to eight sectors.

Table 2: Climate Action Plan Sectors and associated Lead Department

Climate Action Plan	Lead Department(s)
Energy production and supply (including for residential, public and district heating and cooling purposes)	Department for the Economy
Transport (including shipping and aviation)	Department for Infrastructure
Business and Industrial Processes	Department for the Economy
Residential and Public Buildings[8]	Residential Buildings – Department for Communities Public Buildings - Department for the Economy
Waste Management	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Agriculture	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Land Use and Land Use Change, including Forestry	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Fisheries	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

[8] For the purposes of this plan, the two components of the buildings sector are considered separately.

3.3 Measuring Greenhouse Gases

Greenhouse Gas Inventories are compiled by following detailed guidance produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – the UN body for assessing the science related to climate change. Inventories report on seven direct GHGs:

- Carbon dioxide (CO_2);
- Methane (CH_4);
- Nitrous oxide (N_2O);
- Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs);
- Perfluorocarbons (PFCs);
- Sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6); and Nitrogen trifluoride (NF_3).

} known as Fluorinated gases or F-gases

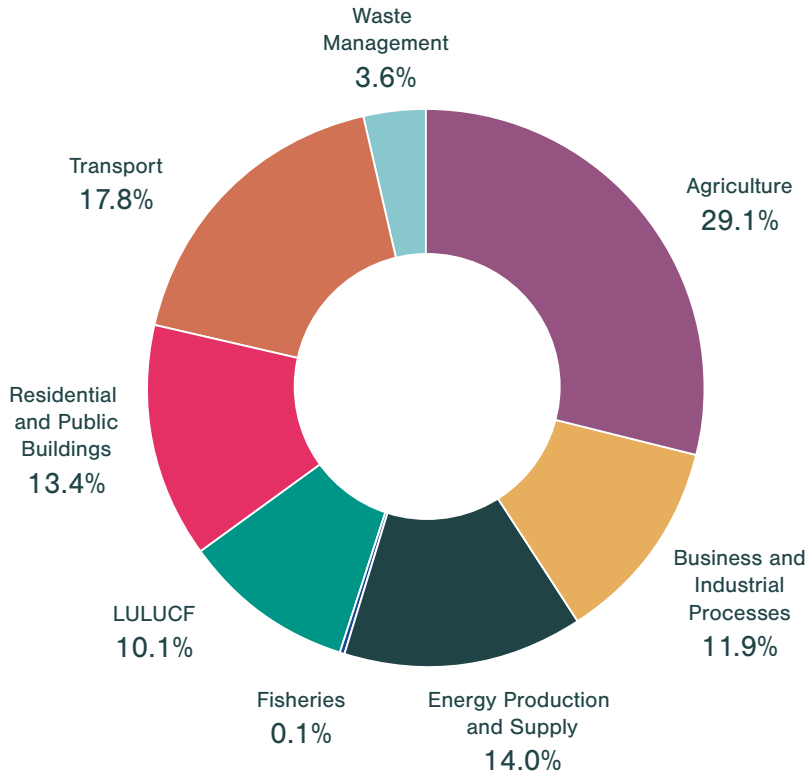
Each of these gases has been assigned a global warming potential (GWP) which defines how potent it is compared with CO_2 over a 100-year cycle (where CO_2 has a GWP of 1). Once the emissions of GHGs are converted into their GWP equivalents, the emissions are presented as CO_2 equivalent emissions, i.e. CO_2e.[9] This approach, known as GWP100, is the internationally accepted reporting standard required by the UN.

[9] Emissions are based on 100-year GWPs (without climate feedback) that are set out in the IPCC's Fifth Assessment report (AR5). As such, data contained in this document is reported on an 'AR5' basis.

3.4 Current Emissions by Sector

The Act requires that plans are made to reduce emissions by sectors. Therefore, a profile of greenhouse gases emitted within each of the sectors is detailed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector (%), 2022[10]



[10] From 2022, there have been changes to emissions reporting in the UK GHG Inventory, with NC sectors being replaced by Territorial Emissions Statistics (TES) sectors to better meet users' needs. These changes have been reflected in the Northern Ireland GHG Inventory statistical bulletins. For the Northern Ireland draft Climate Action Plan and Quantification Report, Inventory lines within the TES sectors have been mapped back to the NC sectors to maintain alignment to the sectors detailed in the Act. The data used to inform this chart is available at: Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland: 1990-2022 | National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory

4. Quantification Summary

The policies and proposals set out across the sectors in the Sector Polices and Proposals chapter in the plan represent Northern Ireland's approach to delivering the emissions reductions required during the first carbon budget period (2023-2027). To assess the impact this suite of policies and proposals will have on emissions levels, an Evidence and Analysis Group, representing each department and led by the DAERA Chief Scientific Adviser, oversaw the estimation of emissions savings arising from the policies and proposals in each sector. Details of the exercise to quantify each policy and proposal, including the methodologies used and assumptions for each sector, are set out in the Quantification Report which has been published alongside the draft Climate Action Plan. Chapter 5 in the plan summarises the approach to and results of the quantification exercise for the first carbon budget period (2023-2027).

4.1 Quantification of Policies and Proposals

Each policy and proposal within the plan was assessed for its projected impact on GHG levels and the findings were combined into sectoral and overall analyses. Emissions projections to 2027, based on the draft Climate Action Plan policies and proposals, are outlined in Table 3. These projections align with the Central Scenario for all policies and proposals and therefore represent the expected outcome of the draft Climate Action Plan.

Table 3: Annual emissions levels for period 2020 to 2027 (actual and projected)

Year	Historic Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)	Central Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)	Reduction in emissions from Base Year
Base Year*	**29.0	-	-
2020	**21.2	-	27.0%
2021	**22.0	-	24.1%
2022	**21.3		26.4%
2023	-	20.5	29.1%
2024	-	19.6	32.3%
2025	-	19.4	33.1%
2026	-	19.0	34.3%
2027	-	18.4	36.6 %
Total (2023-2027)	**-**	**97.0**	**33.1% Average Annual Reduction**

*1990 Base Year refers to 1990 for CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O, or 1995 for fluorinated gases (F-gases[11]). **published GHG Inventory data.

[11] F-gases are fluorine containing compounds which are potent greenhouse gases, including: Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF_6), Nitrogen Trifluoride (NF_3), Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

5. Sector Policies and Proposals

This chapter describes the policies and proposals required to achieve the first carbon budget for Northern Ireland.[12]

Policies and Proposals

A policy is a committed course of action to which a policy outcome can be attributed with a reasonable level of confidence.

A proposal is a suggested course of action or exploratory action, the details of which might change as this course of action is explored further. Proposals are generally at an earlier stage of development than policies and more work will be needed to determine what they entail, how they might be delivered and how they could be funded.

Collectively, the policies and proposals included in this plan describe the approach to meeting Northern Ireland's emissions reduction targets.

The policies and proposals outlined in this chapter of the draft Climate Action Plan represent those which departments consider are achievable and deliverable as part of a credible approach to meeting our proposed 2023-2027 carbon budget.

To assess the impact the suite of policies and proposals will have on emissions levels, an Evidence and Analysis Group, representing each department and led by the DAERA Chief Scientific Adviser, oversaw the estimation of emissions savings arising from the policies and proposals in each sector. For some of the policies or proposals, the emissions savings cannot be quantified at this time (referred to as unquantified in subsequent sections in this report).

[12] The sectors in this chapter are ordered to align with section 33 of the Act.

5.1 Energy production and supply

Sector Summary

Energy Production and Supply Emissions Summary	• Energy production and supply emissions are almost exclusively from burning fossil fuels for electricity generation at power stations. • Energy production and supply emissions have made the biggest contribution to the overall decrease in Northern Ireland emissions from 1990 to 2022, with a 43.8% decrease in this sector. • Renewable sources produced 45.4% of Northern Ireland's electricity from April 2023 – March 2024.[13] • The Act sets a target of at least 80% of electricity consumption to come from renewable sources by 2030.
Policy Approach	Further emissions reductions will be achieved through **increasing renewable energy production.** This requires continued management of the **Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO)** support scheme and a new **Renewable Electricity Support Scheme** which both protects consumers and provides incentives to invest in new renewable electricity projects.
Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) support scheme (jointly quantified in the 80% of electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030 target). **Proposal:** A new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (jointly quantified in the 80% of electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030 target). **Policy:** Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (F-Gases) Regulations (2015) (UK-wide policy, but with separate Regulations for GB and NI), and new EU Regulation on F-gases in 2024 (Unquantified).

Emissions Projections:
Table 4 presents the projected emissions for the energy production and supply sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Energy production and supply sector emissions are projected to be 0.52 $MtCO_2e$ less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

[13] Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland (nisra.gov.uk)

Table 4: Energy production and supply sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Energy Production and Supply	2.98	2.29	2.35	2.39	2.33	12.33	-0.52 $MtCO_2e$
Energy Production and Supply CCC*	2.76	2.63	2.58	2.5	2.37	12.85	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

5.2 Transport (including shipping and aviation)

Sector Summary

Transport Sector Emissions Summary	• Tackling transport sector emissions will require a clear, strategic, focused approach. Interventions linked to switching fuels will be crucial in decarbonising the transport sector. Whilst other interventions, such as a focus on shifting modes of travel and reducing travel journeys, will not deliver the same level of reductions to overall emissions, they will have an important role to play in contributing to the decarbonisation agenda and the wider strategic goals of DfI. • The Transport Sector includes emissions from surface road transport, domestic shipping and aviation, and aircraft support vehicles. It is the second largest contributor to emissions in Northern Ireland. • Tailpipe emissions from road transport - cars, buses, light duty trucks, heavy duty trucks, and motorcycles are responsible for 88.7% of the sector's emissions in 2022, with the passenger car being the largest contributor to transportation emissions. • The Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas emissions inventory highlights that the Transport Sector Emissions in 2022 (3.8 $MtCO_2e$) are greater than 1990 emissions (3.6 $MtCO_2e$). • This increasing road transport emissions trend is a global issue. Although there have been improvements in vehicle and fuel efficiency; this benefit has been offset by increasing numbers of registered private vehicles, increased journeys and the increasing size and weight of vehicles.
Policy Approach	Tackling transport sector emissions will require a clear, strategic, focused approach. DfI will prioritise and deliver against three policies over the first carbon budget period to reduce vehicle emissions: 1. Policy One: Reducing vehicle emissions by **switching** fuels to zero and low emission alternatives 2. Policy Two: **Shifting** modes of transport away from private car journeys to sustainable travel alternatives. 3. Policy Three: **Reducing** the need and length of vehicle journeys. • Interventions linked to switching fuels will be crucial in decarbonising the transport sector. Shifting modes of transport or reducing journeys will not, of themselves, deliver the same level of reductions to overall emissions but are important elements of our overall approach and the wider strategic goals of the Department have a relatively lower impact on transport emissions we will use a precautionary approach to sustaining or developing other forms of transport and travel options.

Sector Summary

Policies and Proposals	• DfI will develop a strategic approach to communications to support the three high level policies. This will be informed by behavioural science to increase awareness and encourage behaviour change. • DfI's bespoke Transport Emissions Model (TEM) will assist in scenario testing to identify options for future policy development. **Policy:** 'SWITCH'- Reducing vehicle emissions by switching fuels to low emission alternatives (Quantified) **Policy:** 'SHIFT' – Reducing vehicle emissions by shifting modes of transport away from private car journeys to sustainable travel alternatives (Unquantified) **Policy:** 'REDUCE' - Reducing vehicle emissions by reducing the need and length of journeys (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
Table 5 presents the projected emissions for the transport sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Transport sector emissions are projected to be 1.12 $MtCO_2e$ more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 5: Transport sector projected emissions in the Central Scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Transport	3.83	3.78	3.72	3.65	3.55	18.53	1.12 $MtCO_2e$
Transport CCC*	3.87	3.69	3.47	3.29	3.1	17.41	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.3 Business and Industrial Processes

Sector Summary

Business and Industrial Processes Sector Emissions Summary	• The business and industrial processes sector includes:
	  • Business emissions from stationary combustion in industrial and commercial sectors including industrial off-road machinery, refrigeration and air conditioning, and the use of fluorinated gases for other applications. These account for the majority of emissions in the sector at 91.9%.
	  • Industrial processes sector contains all emissions from industry except for those associated with fuel combustion accounting for the remaining 8.1% in the sector.
	• Emissions have decreased by 54.9% since 1990.
	• This is the fifth largest emitting sector, accounting for 11.9% of Northern Ireland greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy Approach	Unlike other sectors, business and industrial processes relies predominantly on UK wide policies. The UK policies are complemented by Northern Ireland specific policies that are intended to address our small and medium sized economy. There are also some EU policies that have an influence on the sector in Northern Ireland as a result of the Windsor Framework. UK and EU-led Regulation, Compliance and Reporting has an important role to play. Key policies include assessing combined heat and power schemes on the basis of their energy efficiency and environmental performance, thus ensuring that the associated tax benefits are in line with environmental performance and ensuring that harmful fluorinated gases are ultimately eliminated. Other policies relate to improving the energy performance of buildings, emissions trading, product design and labelling, the reporting of emissions and funding to support the transition. Northern Ireland-led Regulation, Compliance and Reporting also has a role. This will be through two policies and two proposals. The policies are Fuel switching to natural gas, (it is recognised that fuel switching to natural gas is not a long-term solution to emissions reduction, but gas has a role to play in the short to medium term as a transition fuel) and Uplifts to Building Regulations in Northern Ireland. This will potentially have a significant role in reducing emissions from new buildings and from existing buildings that are being upgraded. The two proposals under Northern Ireland-led regulation relate to biomethane and further uplifts to building regulations.

Sector Summary

	• There are a number of other initiatives which are being delivered by Investing in Northern Ireland's Businesses, through Invest Northern Ireland, especially in relation to capital grants, resource matching and technical consultancy. Invest Northern Ireland also lead the Industrial Decarbonisation for Northern Ireland project. The aim of the project is to identify effective ways for organisations to make environmental and economic improvements by reducing energy consumption.
Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** The Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (F-Gases) Regulations (2015) (UK-wide policy, but with separate Regulations for GB and NI), and new EU Regulation on F-gases in 2024 (Quantified) **Policy:** The EU Ecodesign Directive and Energy Labelling Framework Regulation (Quantified) **Policy:** Industrial Non-Road Mobile Machinery Decarbonisation (Quantified) **Policy:** Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) (Quantified) **Policy:** Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (Quantified) **Policy:** Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (Quantified) **Policy:** Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (Quantified) **Policy:** Combined Heat and Power Quality Assurance Programme (Quantified) **Policy:** UK Emissions Trading Scheme (Unquantified) **Policy:** Gas Network Connections General Determinations 2023-2028 (Quantified) **Policy:** 2012 and 2022 Uplifts to Part F (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland (Quantified) **Proposal:** Further Building Regulations Uplifts (Unquantified) **Proposal:** Biomethane (Quantified) **Policy:** Invest Northern Ireland Energy and Resource Efficiency Programme for Northern Ireland Businesses (Quantified) **Proposal:** Invest Northern Ireland Industrial Decarbonisation for Northern Ireland project (Quantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
Table 6 the projected emissions for the business and industrial processes sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Business and industrial processes sector emissions are projected to be 0.89 $MtCO_2e$ less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 6: Business and industrial processes sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Business	2.02	1.92	1.86	1.71	1.57	9.07	
Industrial Processes	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	1.03	
Business and Industrial Processes total	**2.23**	**2.12**	**2.06**	**1.91**	**1.77**	**10.1**	-0.89 $MtCO_2e$
Business and Industrial Processes CCC*	2.43	2.3	2.2	2.09	1.97	10.99	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.4 Residential Buildings

Sector Summary

Residential Buildings Sector Emissions Summary	• The buildings sector is covered in two sections within this draft Climate Action Plan: a Residential Buildings sector, and a Public Buildings sector. • Together they account for 13.4% of Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. • Residential buildings sector emissions have fallen by 31.4% between 1990 and 2022 and account for 89.6% of emissions from the overall buildings sector. This represents 12.0% of Northern Ireland's emissions in 2022. • Residential building emissions are primarily affected by fuel combustion for heating and the production of hot water.[14]
Policy Approach	Policies and proposals for retrofitting existing dwellings to reduce energy consumption through energy efficiency are important to reducing emissions in residential buildings and in preparing homes for the adoption of decarbonised heating systems. These will be delivered through existing schemes and delivery partners, including the Utility Regulator and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive with the delivery model for proposals for a new **energy efficiency programme** and a future warm healthy, homes scheme aimed at addressing fuel poverty, subject to necessary procurement and funding. Reducing emissions will also rely on the adoption and **use of low carbon options for heating.** This will be delivered through a policy of **fuel switching to natural gas** which includes exploring the potential **use of biomethane** to displace fossil fuel gas in the gas network and a proposal to provide support to **low carbon heating technologies** delivered through electrification. The current estimates of impacts from policies which raise standards mean they play an important part in overall emissions reduction. Savings will be delivered through current and proposed **Uplifts to Building Regulations in Northern Ireland, more energy efficient product designs and improved labelling.**

[14] 'Includes fuel combustion for heating, cooking, garden machinery, gases released from aerosols and inhalers, and emissions released from the breakdown of products such as detergents.' Emissions are affected by energy efficiency, heating and hot water demands, and the fuel type for domestic combustion.

Sector Summary

Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** Affordable Warmth Scheme (Quantified) **Policy:** Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme (including uplifts) (Quantified) **Policy:** Northern Ireland Housing Executive Stock Investment Programme – Including Thermal Improvements (Quantified) **Proposal:** Warm Healthy, Homes Scheme (Quantified) **Proposal:** Scale and Launch Energy Efficiency Programmes (Quantified) **Policy:** Clean Heat Market Mechanism (Quantified) **Policy:** Gas Network Connections General Determinations 2023-2028 (Quantified) **Proposal:** Low Carbon Heat Support Programme (Quantified) **Proposal:** Biomethane (Quantified) **Policy:** The EU Ecodesign Directive and the Energy Labelling Framework Regulation (Quantified) **Policy:** Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (F-Gases) Regulations (2015) (UK-wide policy, but with separate Regulations for GB and NI), and new EU Regulation on F-gases in 2024 (Quantified) **Policy:** 2012 and 2022 Uplifts to Part F (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland (Quantified) **Proposal:** Further Building Regulations Uplifts (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
Table 7 presents the projected emissions for the residential buildings sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Residential buildings sector emissions are projected to be 1.31 $MtCO_2e$ less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway. CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 7: Buildings sector (including residential and public buildings) projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Residential Buildings	**2.27**	**2.24**	**2.24**	**2.3**	**2.3**	**11.36**	-1.31 $MtCO_2e$
Public Buildings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1.40	
Buildings total	2.55	2.52	2.52	2.58	2.58	12.76	
Buildings CCC*	3.02	2.94	2.83	2.71	2.57	14.07	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.5 Public Buildings

Sector Summary

Residential Buildings Sector Emissions Summary	• The buildings sector is covered in two sections within this draft Climate Action Plan: a Residential Buildings sector, and a Public Buildings sector. • Together they account for 13.4% of Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. • Public building emissions account for 10.4% of the overall buildings sector emissions with a 49.8% reduction in public building emissions from the base year of 1990. This represents 1.4% of Northern Ireland's emissions in 2022. • Sector emissions primarily result from fuel combustion in public buildings for heating, cooling and hot water.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in this sector will be through two key Northern Ireland policies and two UK wide policies. Within Northern Ireland, the **Energy Management Strategy & Action Plan to 2030**[15] seeks to reduce sector emissions and manage financial exposures. It will be delivered by access to better data and analytics to inform investment decisions through an Energy Invest to Save Fund. Behavioural change, building performance standards and procurement also have key roles to play in delivery. Emissions will also be reduced through uplifts to Building Regulations in Northern Ireland which will provide a basis for emissions assessment and measuring improved standards. UK wide policies include reporting on a**nnual energy use, greenhouse gas emissions** and **energy efficiency actions** thereby encouraging cost savings and emission reductions. Also included are policies to improve the **design and labelling of products** aiming to take the least efficient products off the market and to give consumers clear energy use information to guide their purchasing decisions.
Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** The Energy Management Strategy and Action Plan to 2030 (Quantified) **Policy:** 2012 and 2022 Uplifts to Part F (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland (Quantified) **Policy:** The EU Ecodesign Directive and the Energy Labelling Framework Regulation (Quantified) **Policy:** Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (Quantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

[15] Energy-Management-Strategy-March-2019.pdf (sibni.org)

Emissions Projections:
Table 8 presents the projected emissions for the public buildings sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Buildings sector emissions are projected to be 1.31 $MtCO_2e$ less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 8: Buildings sector (including residential and public buildings) projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Residential Buildings	2.27	2.24	2.24	2.3	2.3	11.36	-1.31 $MtCO_2e$
Public Buildings	**0.28**	**0.28**	**0.28**	**0.28**	**0.28**	**1.40**	
Buildings total	2.55	2.52	2.52	2.58	2.58	12.76	
Buildings CCC*	3.02	2.94	2.83	2.71	2.57	14.07	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.6 Waste Management

Sector Summary

Waste Management Sector Emissions Summary	• Emissions in the waste management sector include those released from waste disposal at landfill sites, wastewater treatment and waste incineration. • The sector is responsible for 3.6% of total Northern Ireland greenhouse gas emissions. • Waste Management Sector emissions have fallen by 62.1% between 1990 and 2022. • Household recycling rates have increased from 10% in 2002 to just over 50% in 2022/2023 • The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 includes a requirement to recycle at least 70% of waste by 2030.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in the waste management sector will be achieved through two key interventions. The first is to reduce landfill emissions, through improvements to the **separate collection of food waste from households** and a new proposal to **divert biodegradable waste from landfill.** The other is to increase recycling rates and improve quality of the material that is collected for recycling. To drive this, a target is in place to achieve a **65% local authority collected waste recycling rate whilst reducing waste to landfill to no more than 10% by 2035.** This is supported by two proposals to **increase household recycling** and the **introduction of mandatory recycling for the commercial and industrial sector.**
Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** Separate Collection of Food Waste from Households - The Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (Quantified) **Proposal:** Diverting Biodegradable Waste from Landfill (Quantified) **Policy:** Achieve a 65% municipal waste recycling rate whilst reducing waste to landfill to no more than 10% by 2035 (Quantified) **Proposal:** Introduction of Mandatory Recycling for Commercial and Industrial Sector (Quantified) **Proposal:** Increasing Household Recycling (Quantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
Table 9 presents the projected emissions for the waste management sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Waste management sector emissions are projected to be 0.15 $MtCO_2e$ less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 9: Waste management sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Waste Management	0.74	0.73	0.68	0.68	0.56	3.39	-0.15 $MtCO_2e$
Waste Management CCC*	0.79	0.75	0.71	0.67	0.61	3.54	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.7 Agriculture

Sector Summary

Agriculture Sector Emissions Summary	• In agriculture the two main greenhouse gases are methane and nitrous oxide rather than carbon dioxide. Livestock emissions dominate greenhouse gases in the agriculture sector. Other key sources are from manure management, soils and emissions from off-road vehicles and machinery. • The agriculture sector is the largest emitter and accounts for 29.1% of Northern Ireland greenhouse gas emissions in 2022. • There has been a 14.9% increase in agriculture emissions from the base year of 1990. • While the Act requires overall net emissions for 2050 to be 100% lower than the baseline, it does not require methane emissions to be more than 46% lower than the baseline.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in the agriculture sector will be achieved through the delivery of DAERA's new Sustainable Agriculture Programme. This Programme and associated **policies and proposals** will support the sector's decarbonisation, focusing on improving the productivity of the agriculture sector, delivering improvements in environmental sustainability and resilience and supply chain integration. The CCC's Path to Net Zero for Northern Ireland assumes a significant reduction in livestock numbers and an associated transition to bioenergy cropping and increased forestry on agricultural land. The reduction in livestock numbers is based on the assumption that the consumption of livestock products in the UK will fall and that this will lead to an equal reduction in Northern Ireland livestock numbers. The Sustainable Agriculture Programme encourages a rapid transition to low carbon farming practices, as advised by the CCC, but also provides an alternative approach for reducing emissions from the agriculture sector to that advised by the CCC through more targeted (but still significant) reductions in livestock numbers, delivered through improved livestock productivity while allowing the agriculture sector to maintain output, avoid carbon leakage, and contribute to the growing global demand for livestock food products projected by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Sector Summary

Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** Beef Sustainability Package (including The Beef Carbon Reduction Scheme and The Suckler Cow Scheme) **Policy:** Knowledge and Innovation **Policy:** Reducing emissions by including methane suppressing feed products in Livestock Diets and reducing the Protein and Phosphorous content of Livestock Diets (Quantified) **Policy:** Ruminant Genetics Programme (Quantified) **Policy:** Capital Investment Scheme (Unquantified) **Proposal:** Increased slurry aeration and novel slurry treatment systems (Includes pig, beef and dairy slurry aeration) (Quantified) **Proposal:** Anaerobic Digestion (Quantified) **Policy:** The Carbon Footprinting Project (Unquantified) **Policy:** The Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (Unquantified) **Policy:** The Farming with Nature Package (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
Table 10 presents the projected emissions for the agriculture sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Agriculture sector emissions are projected to be 0.93 $MtCO_2e$ more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 10: Agriculture sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Agriculture	6.03	5.97	5.88	5.67	5.44	28.99	0.93 $MtCO_2e$
Agriculture CCC*	5.98	5.74	5.6	5.45	5.29	28.06	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.8 Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry

Sector Summary

LULUCF Sector Emissions Summary	• The Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector covers emissions and removals of greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land use, land-use change, and forestry activities. • LULUCF is the only sector where removal of emissions (sequestration) is recorded with the majority of removals by forest land and grasslands. • Whilst peatland is a natural sink for carbon dioxide it is currently estimated that the majority of our peatlands are degraded and act as emitters instead. • LULUCF emissions have reduced by 20.5% since 1990 and represent 10.1% of total annual emissions in Northern Ireland in 2022.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions and increasing sequestration in the LULUCF sector can be achieved through key interventions which include, increasing forest cover through a policy to deliver the **Forests for Our Future** programme to create 9,000 hectares of new woodland by 2030. Also, through restoring peatland habitats by delivering the Northern Ireland **Peatland Strategy**. Delivering carbon sequestration will reduce emissions through land management and will be supported through agri-environment schemes such as the delivery of the **Farming with Nature Package** and the **Soil Nutrient Health Scheme.** There are also additional land use proposals to develop a future land use policy for Northern Ireland and considering the feasibility of policy development for biomass.
Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** Deliver the Forests for Our Future programme to create 9,000ha of new woodland by 2030. (Quantified) **Proposal:** Deliver the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy (Quantified) **Policy:** Sustainable Agriculture Programme – The Farming with Nature Package and the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (Unquantified) **Proposal:** Develop a future land use policy for Northern Ireland (Unquantified) **Proposal:** Consider the feasibility of policy development for bioenergy crops, engineered removals and carbon capture (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
Table 11 presents the projected emissions for the LULUCF sector across the first carbon budgetary period. LULUCF sector emissions are projected to be 0.69 $MtCO_2e$ more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 11: LULUCF sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway

Sector	Projected Emissions ($MtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
LULUCF	2.17	2.18	2.16	2.14	2.11	10.77	0.69 $MtCO_2e$
LULUCF CCC*	2.11	2.06	2.02	1.97	1.91	10.07	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.9 Fisheries

Sector Summary

Fisheries Sector Emissions Summary	• Fisheries is the smallest emissions sector and includes emissions from activities associated with sea fisheries, inland fisheries and aquaculture. • Fisheries accounts for 0.1% of Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas emissions (2022). • Fisheries emissions have decreased by 2.5% from 1990 to 2022.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in this sector will be through developing initiatives to decarbonise the fishing fleet. The **UK Joint Fisheries Statement** sets high level policies for how the fisheries policy authorities will work together to develop solutions that minimise the adverse effect of fishing and aquaculture activities on climate change whilst also adapting to climate change. In Northern Ireland the policy is to **invest in research and development** to create the innovative solutions needed to decarbonise the fishing fleet and minimise adverse effects of fishing on climate change. There is a proposal to **prepare for roll-out of electrification and low or zero emission fuels across the fishing fleet.**
Policies and Proposals	**Policy:** UK Joint Fisheries Statement (Unquantified) **Policy:** Invest in research and development to decarbonise the fishing fleet and minimise adverse effects of fishing on climate change (Unquantified) **Proposal:** Prepare for roll-out of electrification and low or zero emission fuels across the fishing fleet and reduce emissions along the fisheries supply chain (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
The fisheries policies and proposals are not expected to result in the reduction of emissions until alternative fuels and vessel designs come into operation. Emissions are expected to hold relatively stable to 2030, before reducing to close to net zero by 2050.

Table 12 presents the projected emissions for the fisheries sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Fisheries sector emissions are projected to be 16.00 $KtCO_2e$** more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 12: Fisheries sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway

Sector	Projected Emissions ($KtCO_2e$)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Fisheries	21.09	21.41	21.69	21.97	22.26	108.41	16.00 $KtCO_2e$
Fisheries CCC*	18.31	18.40	18.50	18.57	18.63	92.41	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication. ** Please note, emissions for the fisheries sector are displayed in $KtCO_2e$.*

Impact Assessments
A range of impact assessments have been conducted on the draft Climate Action Plan including environmental, economic, rural and equality impact assessments. To read a summary of the impact assessments please go to Chapter 7 in the draft Climate Action Plan document. A full suite of impact assessments are available on the DAERA website: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation

6. The Natural Environment and Climate Change

It is internationally agreed that climate change and biodiversity loss are interdependent and need to be addressed together. The Act requires us to set specific targets for soil quality, biodiversity and air quality in this draft Climate Action Plan. The proposed targets are set out below.

The proposed Soil Quality Target is:
By 2027, to have at least 75% of Northern Ireland agricultural fields soil sampled and analysed to form a baseline of key soil nutrients from which further and more refined targets in respect of soil nutrient health can be considered.[16]

The proposed Biodiversity Target is:
By 2027, to have 65% of designated features in protected sites to be in or approaching favourable conservation condition, and at least 12% of all land, freshwater and marine environments effectively conserved, managed and well connected for nature.

The proposed Air Quality target is:
In 2025 DAERA will engage with other departments and key delivery organisations, with a view to considering the feasibility of implementing new regulations that would bring into operation tighter annual average limits/targets/objectives for $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}, in line with interim target 4 of the World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines 2021 of 10 and 20 ug/m_3 respectively.

We must prioritise measures which can deliver for both nature and emissions reduction. These measures are known as Nature-based Solutions (NbS). Nature-based Solutions will create thriving habitats and ecosystems which reduce emissions, whilst also providing a landscape and marine environment which is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

It is a legal requirement of the Act[17] that, where practicable, the policies and proposals within the Climate Action Plan should support and use nature-based projects, whether alone or as part of other types of action.

[16] Soil Nutrient Health Scheme | Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

[17] Section 34 of the Act

7. Monitoring and Reporting

The Act sets ambitious targets to reduce emissions. Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of policies and actions and the resulting impact on emissions reduction will be an essential element of tracking progress towards achieving the 2023-2027 carbon budget and meeting interim targets set for 2030 and 2040. We will ensure a robust monitoring framework is in place to keep us on our net zero pathway. This framework will adapt to an evolving policy context, new data and emerging solutions. We will ensure a transparent approach to reporting that provides meaningful information and encourages participation from partners and stakeholders seeking to support our journey towards decarbonisation.

8. Public Sector Leading by Example

The public sector is critical to the successful delivery of this draft Climate Action Plan - influencing and enabling positive behaviours, driving change and acting as a leader on climate action and low carbon innovation. We are committed to forging a net zero pathway by delivering vital public services in a way that reduces emissions, reduces waste and uses scarce resources more sustainably. We will pursue a net zero approach across all sectors of our economy and society, leading by example by taking actions across our estate, fleets, procurement processes, energy use and our approach to service delivery. We recognise that transformation of public services will help us to maximise the opportunities these changes bring. During the carbon budget period, we will continue to build on the actions outlined in chapter 11 to ensure that we deliver on our climate duty.

8.1 Local Government

Local government is already leading by example on climate action. Alongside central government, it will have a vital role in driving and facilitating the realisation of Northern Ireland's climate targets. During the carbon budget reporting period, departments have been working with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) to establish structures which will facilitate a joined-up approach between central and local government. This will help to ensure strong leadership at all levels across our communities as we implement ambitious climate action.

Significant action is already being taken forward within local government; approximately half of our 11 local councils have put in place a climate action plan with target dates for reaching net zero ranging between 2040 and 2050.

9. Investment Required and Anticipated Benefits

Implementing the policies and proposals set out in this draft Climate Action Plan will require investment. This investment is necessary if we are to realise the wide-ranging benefits and transformative opportunities that come with the transition to a low carbon economy and an improved society for future generations. We also need to avoid the additional costs incurred from delayed action and the damage that occurs because of our changing climate. Additional investment by government will be crucial to finance the major infrastructure projects required to enable the transition to a low carbon economy. It will also be necessary to incentivise further investment in early-stage technologies and demonstrator projects.

Delivering a cost-effective path to decarbonisation in Northern Ireland requires action across all sectors of the economy and a joined-up approach.[18] Funding our net zero transition will be a collaboration between the public and private sectors.

9.1 Investment Required and Anticipated Benefits

Public Sector Investment to Deliver the Draft Climate Action Plan

Delivering the emissions savings projected in this plan will require a commitment to investing in net zero. In developing this draft Climate Action Plan, departments have sought to estimate the capital investment required to deliver the policies and proposals outlined in the Sector Policies and Proposals chapter.

The information presented in this section focuses on the anticipated level of Climate Action Plan investment from the Northern Ireland Executive budgets to support our transition to net zero. All values provided are in line with the Central Scenario criteria, which assumes that credible funding arrangements are in place or there is high confidence of funding availability.[19]

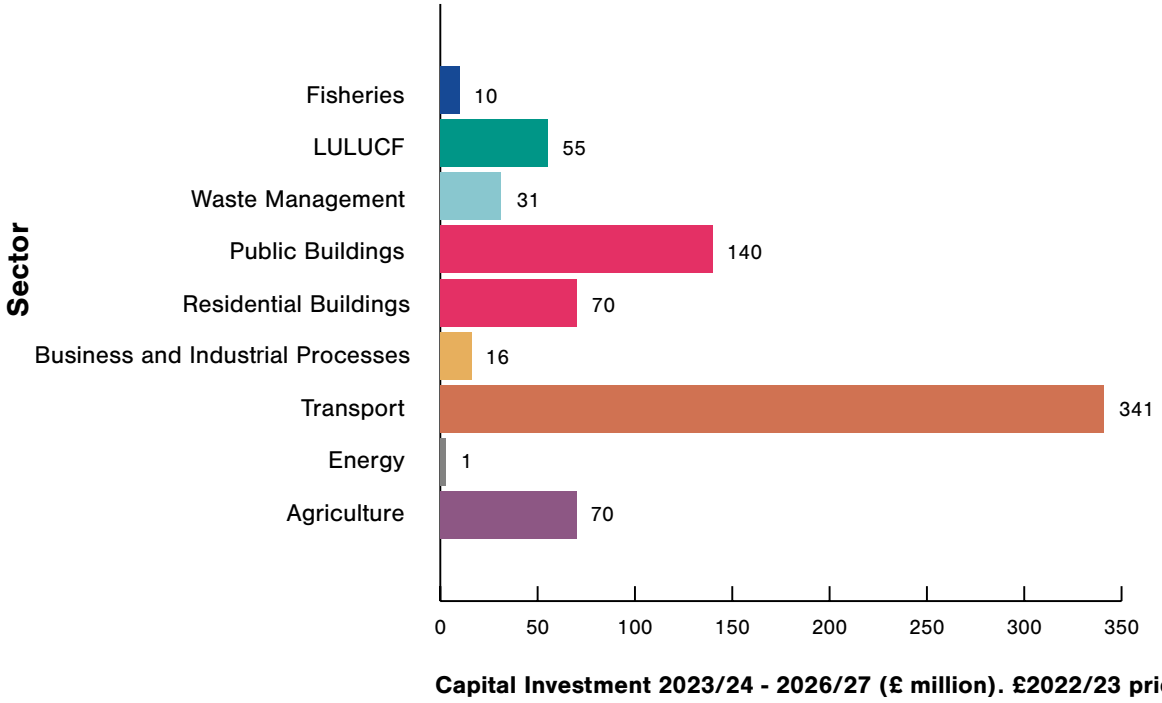
Across the four full financial years of the Climate Action Plan (2023/24 – 2026/27), it is estimated that a total of £718million[20] of capital investment will be directed to deliver the policies and proposals within the draft Climate Action Plan. **This equates to an average total capital investment of £93 per person, per year.** Figure 2 illustrates the level of capital investment required by each sector.

[18] Reducing emissions in Northern Ireland - Climate Change Committee (theccc.org.uk)

[19] See Chapter 5 for full definitions

[20] All costs listed within this chapter are in £2022/23 prices

Figure 2: Sector Capital Investment[21]



It is not possible to accurately estimate what portion of total Northern Ireland Executive capital budgets would have been spent on policies to promote decarbonisation without the draft Climate Action Plan. It is likely that at least some of this capital would have been invested through the same (or a similar) set of policies and proposals to support other legislative requirements and strategic commitments. Not all of this increase in expenditure will result in an equivalent increase in departmental budgetary pressures.

While significant investment will be required across the public and private sectors to meet our net zero target, the transition to a low carbon economy will present many opportunities as we deliver green jobs, reduce pollution, promote more efficient use of resources within a circular economy, improve infrastructure and support sustainable economic growth. The up-front costs represent investments in an improved society for future generations and the cost of delaying action will ultimately be much greater.

[21] Note that values will not tally to total due to duplication of costs between sectors.

The transition to a low carbon society will have wider implications on how we live our lives. Although rarely measured, quantified, or monetised, co-benefits[22] increasingly form a key consideration in decisions relating to climate change.[23] The policies and proposals which are identified in this Plan and which contribute to decarbonisation are expected to bring substantial co-benefits, particularly for public health, green jobs, households and businesses, the natural environment and climate resilience.

Figure 3: Selected benefits of Climate Action

While investments through the Climate Action Plan are aimed at reducing our GHG emissions, many investments also **improve our resilience**. The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) recognises that achieving net zero carbon emissions is the necessary pathway to limit the worst impacts of climate change yet to come. As the impacts of a changing climate are already being felt, prioritised investment is required to ensure infrastructure is equipped to handle a range of shocks and stresses in the short, medium and long term.[24] Investment through the implementation of the draft Climate Action Plan policies and proposals – particularly through investments in the LULUCF, agriculture, transport and energy sectors – can help to maximise long-term benefits from maintaining, planning and delivering resilient infrastructure.

[22] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "Fifth Assessment Report, Annex II Glossary". IPCC, 2014

[23] Measuring the Co-Benefits of Climate Change Mitigation | Annual Reviews

[24] Resilient Infrastructure for Northern Ireland | 2024 | Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

10. Adaptation and Mitigation

Whilst in recent years much focus has been placed on climate mitigation measures concerned with reducing our emissions, we must not lose sight of the fact that reduction of emissions is only part of the climate change challenge. Even when emissions are reduced to net zero, we will still have locked in climate change impacts as a result of historic emissions. To properly address the impacts of climate change, we must ensure that there continues to be adequate investment and attention given to climate adaptation measures, whilst we simultaneously continue to progress work to reduce our emissions.

Some measures, such as peatland restoration and afforestation provide dual mitigation and adaptation benefits through the carbon they store and their contribution to flood prevention through increased water storage capacity and lag time following periods of heavy rainfall. However, it is also critical that we continue to invest in and take forward specific climate adaptation measures, focused on protecting our economy, communities and environment from the impacts of climate change that cannot be avoided through emissions reduction alone.

Consultation Questions

Overview

Public Consultation on Northern Ireland's draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027

In 2022, Northern Ireland passed its first climate legislation - the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (the Act).

The Act sets an ambitious target to reduce Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050. This means by 2050 that we must remove at least as many emissions from our atmosphere as we produce each year.

The Act requires us to prepare and publish a Climate Action Plan every five years. The draft Climate Action Plan (2023-2027) is the first step on Northern Ireland's journey to net zero. It sets out policies and proposals to achieve reductions in emissions and the actions which will enable this to happen. The focus of this draft plan is on meeting the first carbon budget.

A carbon budget sets a limit on the maximum amount of GHG emissions that can be produced over a five-year period. Keeping emissions within the limit set for each carbon budget period is important as it will set us on the right pathway to meet 2030, 2040 and 2050 targets, in line with the requirements of the legislation.

In December 2024, the Executive agreed that for the period of this plan, 2023-2027, greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 33% on average, to set us on the right path to net zero and contribute to global climate targets.

Innovation and creative solutions to existing challenges will have an important role to play in this Climate Action Plan. Without it we will not achieve our goals. New ideas and technologies will help us achieve our climate ambition and create opportunities along the way.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has co-ordinated the publication of this draft Climate Action Plan, with each Northern Ireland department identifying policies and proposals to reduce emissions in line with the carbon budget.

The draft Climate Action Plan is available to access on the DAERA website along with alternative formats on request. There will be a series of stakeholder engagement events during the consultation period.

These will take place both online and in person across Northern Ireland. Details are available on the DAERA website https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation

Why your views matter

We have already engaged with organisations and individuals in the development of the draft Climate Action Plan. However, given its impact, we are now holding a 16-week public consultation, to provide everyone with the opportunity to consider the draft plan.

We want you to tell us what you think about the draft Climate Action Plan and share any comments or suggestions that you have.

It is not essential for everyone to answer every question, rather, we would prefer you to only answer the questions you feel are relevant to you or the organisation you are responding on behalf of. We are encouraging everyone to respond to this consultation through our Citizen Space website as this makes analysing the responses and any future decision making more consistent and provides better data outputs. However, if you cannot respond using the website and would like to submit your response using a different format, please contact climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk

Your feedback will be used to inform the final Climate Action Plan which will be laid before the Assembly, following Executive agreement.

Privacy

The information you provide in completing this consultation will be controlled and processed in line with Data Protection Legislation by DAERA. To find out more about how we handle your personal information, DAERA's Privacy Notice can be viewed online at http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/daera-privacy-statement

Further information about the consultation

The draft Climate Action Plan and other supporting documents are also available on the DAERA website at: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation

On request, we can arrange to provide other formats of the documents, such as:

- Paper copy
- Large print
- Braille
- Other languages

To request an alternative format, please contact the consultation team:

Email: climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk
Telephone: 028 9081 6904

Post:
Climate Action Delivery Division
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Belfast BT3 9ED

If you have a hearing difficulty, you can contact the Department via Text Relay:
Dial: 18001 028 9081 6904
Guidance on the confidentiality of responses under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is provided in Annex 1 of the Consultation Document for your reference. If you require any further information, please contact the consultation team using the details provided above.

About You

First, please tell us a little ‘About You’ to help us analyse the responses.
A. What is your name?
Name (Required)

B. What is your email address?
Email (Required)

C. What is your postcode?
Postcode (Required)

D. Are you responding as an individual or as part of an organisation?

(Required) Personal response
Organisation (Please tell us your organisation name or what sector you operate in)

Questions

Consultation Questions

Relates to Chapter 5: Quantification Summary

Quantification of Emissions Reduction from Policies and Proposals

1. To what extent do you agree with the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
2. Do you have any comments on the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals?
   Yes/No If yes, please provide your comments

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Energy Production and Supply Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027
Energy production and supply emissions are almost exclusively from burning fossil fuels for electricity generation at power stations.

3. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to to reduce emissions for the energy production and supply sector?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
4. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the energy production and supply sector?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Transport Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027
The transport sector includes emissions from surface road transport, domestic shipping and aviation, and aircraft support vehicles. It is the second largest contributor to emissions in Northern Ireland.

5. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the transport sector?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
6. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the transport sector?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Business and Industrial Processes Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027
Business emissions from stationary combustion in industrial and commercial sectors including industrial off-road machinery, refrigeration and air conditioning, and the use of fluorinated gases for other applications.

7. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the business and industrial processes sector?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

8. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the business and industrial processes sector?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Residential Buildings Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027
Residential building emissions are primarily affected by fuel combustion for heating and the production of hot water.

9. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the residential buildings sector?
   Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
   Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

10. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the residential buildings sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Public Buildings Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027
Sector emissions primarily result from fuel combustion in public buildings for heating, cooling and hot water.

11. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the public buildings sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

12. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the public buildings sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Waste Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Emissions in the waste management sector include those released from waste disposal at landfill sites, wastewater treatment and waste incineration. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 includes a requirement to recycle at least 70% of waste by 2030.

13. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the waste sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
14. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the waste sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Agriculture Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

In agriculture the two main greenhouse gases are methane and nitrous oxide rather than carbon dioxide. Livestock emissions dominate greenhouse gases in the agriculture sector. Other key sources are from manure management, soils and emissions from off-road vehicles and machinery.

15. To what extent do you agree with the proposed enabling actions to reduce emissions for the agriculture sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

16. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the agriculture sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

The Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector covers emissions and removals of greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land use, land-use change, and forestry activities.

17. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the LULUCF sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

18. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the LULUCF sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Fisheries Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027
Fisheries sector includes emissions from activities associated with sea fisheries, inland fisheries and aquaculture.

19. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the fisheries sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

20. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the fisheries sector?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 7: Impact Assessments

Impact Assessment of the Climate Action Plan
Several impact assessments have been undertaken as part of the development of the draft Climate Action Plan. Individual assessments have been carried out for the policies and proposals across all sectors, with each assessment proportionate to the scale and likely impact of the respective measure. In addition, overarching impact assessments have been conducted to consider the cumulative effects of the draft plan as a whole. Where proposals are at an early stage of development, some impacts may not yet be fully identified, and these will be considered further as the proposals are refined.

21. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

22. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

23. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Equality Screening and Equality Impact Assessment?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

24. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Rural Needs Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

25. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

26. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

27. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

28. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Regulatory Impact Assessment?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

29. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Children's Rights Impact Assessment?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

30. Can you provide any further information which will help to supplement the completion of these impact assessments?
    Please provide details, identifying the assessment to which the information relates

Relates to Chapter 8: The Natural Environment and Climate Change

Soil Quality, Biodiversity and Air Quality Targets
The Act requires us to set specific targets for soil quality, biodiversity and air quality in this draft Climate Action Plan. The Act also requires that, where practicable, the policies and proposals should support and use nature-based projects, either individually or as part of wider action.

31. To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Soil Quality?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

32. To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Biodiversity?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

33. To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Air Quality?
    Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
    Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Nature-Based Solutions to Reducing Emissions

Nature-based Solutions will create thriving habitats and ecosystems which reduce emissions, whilst also providing a landscape and marine environment which is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

34. Can you provide any further information which will help us to incorporate Nature-based Solutions into our policies and proposals?
Yes/No If yes, please provide details

Relates to Chapter 9: Governance for Delivery

Climate Action Governance Arrangements
We will only meet our carbon budget if we can successfully deliver the policies and proposals we have identified. Achieving this will require ongoing commitment and prioritisation of this work, shared ownership and cross-departmental working, and appropriate levels of oversight and scrutiny to keep us on track. Managing this implementation process will mean establishing appropriate governance structures within government, creating new statutory oversight bodies and working in partnership with existing independent oversight bodies.

35. To what extent do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements to support the delivery of the Climate Action Plan?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 10: Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and Reporting on Policies and Proposals
Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of policies and actions and the resulting impact on emissions reduction will be an essential element of tracking progress towards achieving the 2023-2027 carbon budget and meeting interim targets set for 2030 and 2040. We will ensure a robust monitoring framework is in place to keep us on our net zero pathway.

36. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to monitoring and reporting on policies and proposals?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 11: Public Sector Leading by Example

Public Sector Leading by Example
The public sector is critical to the successful delivery of the draft Climate Action Plan - influencing and enabling positive behaviours, driving change and acting as a leader on climate action and low carbon innovation. We are committed to forging a net zero pathway by delivering vital public services in a way that reduces emissions, reduces waste and uses scarce resources more sustainably.

37. Do you have suggestions about other actions that we should be taking across the public sector?
Yes/No If yes, please provide details

Relates to Chapter 12: Enabling the Transition to Net Zero

Enabling the Change to net zero
The draft Climate Action Plan sets out the importance of science and innovation, education and skills, infrastructure, planning, behaviour change and communication as enablers to delivering our pathway to net zero.

38. To what extent do you agree with the actions that we are taking to enable the transition to net zero?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 13: Investing in Climate Action

Cost of Implementing the Climate Action Plan
Delivering a cost-effective path to decarbonisation in Northern Ireland requires action across all sectors of the economy and a joined-up approach. Funding our net zero transition will be a collaboration between the public and private sectors.

39. To what extent do you agree with the assessment of the costs of implementing this Climate Action Plan?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

40. Do you have any other information to inform this cost assessment?
Yes/No If yes, please provide details

Just Transition Fund for Agriculture
The purpose of this scheme is to provide advice and financial assistance to the agriculture sector to deliver its contribution to meeting the carbon budgets and emissions reduction targets by implementing proposals and policies to be included in Climate Action Plans.

41. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to establishing a Just Transition Fund for Agriculture?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Annex 1

Publication of Responses

Confidentiality
The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation may be disclosed on request. The Department can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations as these provide guidance on the legal position of any information given by you in response to this consultation. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in e-mail responses will not be treated as such a request.

Data Protection
Section 8 (e) of the Data Protection Act 2018 permits processing of personal data when necessary for an activity that supports or promotes democratic engagement. Information provided by respondents to this consultation exercise will be held and used for the purposes of the administration of this current exercise and subsequently disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation.

Freedom of Information
The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority (the Department in this case). This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature;
- Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office:

0303 123 1113
ni@ico.org.uk
www.ico.org.uk

Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Depairtment o'
Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Consultation questions for the climate action plan for DAERA

https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/public-consultation-northern-irelands-draft-climate-action-plan-2023-2027

Relate to Chapter 5: Quantification summary

1. To what extent do you agree with the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals? Please provide your reasons and any alternatives.

Chapter 5 explains that the climate action plan uses a sector-by-sector modelling approach to estimate emissions reductions for each policy and proposal. Breakdown:

- Each policy is assessed using bottom-up qualification, which is calculating potential emissions savings by using activity data (e.g. how many EV's are likely to be used, or how many buildings will be retrofitted).
- With good quality data there will be more detailed modelling used including emissions factors, uptake emissions etc.
- Three scenarios were used: a central scenario (used as the core path), and two others to test uncertainties
- The plan admits that there are uncertainties and data gaps, especially in areas like behaviour change or agriculture. Future plans will refine these estimates.

Formal response

Agree, the quantification methodology used in the draft demonstrates a structured and proportionate approach to estimating emissions reductions from proposed policies and proposals. The methodology applies a sector-by-sector bottom-up model, supplemented by expert judgement where data is limited, which aligns with recognised practices used in the wider UK policy environment. This approach also mirrors how many public bodies report emissions data to DAERA.

The plan recognises the complexity of attributing emissions reductions to individual policies and adopts the use of policy packages to prevent double counting and better reflect real world interactions. The use of three scenarios, central, stretch and high emissions, provide a degree of robustness and transparency around uncertainties. This enables clearer evaluation of policy effectiveness and supports accountability throughout the carbon budget period.

Suggested improvements- more detail on how the assumptions were derived for high impact areas like transport electrification and building retrofit.

- Greater clarity on how council-level emissions impacts could be modelled or estimated, to support local delivery planning.

- Publishing summary modelling tools or calculation sheets for transparency and stakeholder engagement.

Reference: chapter 5.2-5.4

2. Do you have any comments on the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals. Yes/No please provide comments

While we welcome the structured and transparent approach to quantifying emissions in chapter 5 of the draft climate action plan, we believe there are areas where the methodology could be strengthened to enhance delivery, evaluation, and local relevance.

Firstly, the reliance on assumed uptake rates and technology pathway, particularly in the energy, transport, and building sectors- means that the outcomes are highly sensitive to changes in funding, behaviour, or supply chain capacity. We support the inclusion of risk sensitivity analysis and encourage future iterations to provide more visibility of these variables and their thresholds.

Finally, we note that some policy areas, particularly those dependent on cross departmental coordination or behaviour change, that this remains unquantified or labelled "policy support measures." While this is understandable in an initial plan, we would encourage future to include targeted monitoring frameworks that allow these to be evaluated over time and do not allow key area (e.g. education, skills, awareness) to fall through the cracks.

Relates to chapter 6: Sector policies and proposals.

3. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the energy production and supply sector? Please provide your reasons and any alternatives.

The climate action plan outlines of policies aimed at decarbonising energy, including.

- Increasing renewable electricity to 80% by 2030
- Expanding offshore and onshore wind, solar PV, and grid infrastructure.
- Developing hydrogen and bioenergy supply chains.
- Encouraging community energy projects and shared ownership models.

Formal response

Agree, causeway coast and glens borough council broadly support the proposed policies and direction outlined for achieving a just transition in the energy production and supply sector, as outlined in chapter 6.2. These policies, particularly the expansion of renewable electricity targets, support for community energy

schemes, and investment in grid and storage infrastructure. This aligns well with the principle of energy justice and economic diversification.

The inclusion of shared ownership and community energy models is particularly welcome, as it has the potential to directly benefit rural communities, alleviate fuel poverty, and increase public support for renewable infrastructure. Additionally, the plans recognition of the need to align energy decarbonisation with workforce development (e.g. through retraining and skills) reflects an understanding of just transition principles.

However, the approach may benefit from additional detail and policy commitments in the following areas: place-based delivery, workforce transition planning, community energy scales up.

4. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the transport sector? Please provide you reasons for any alternatives.

The transport sector accounts for 25% of NI's emissions, the plan proposes the following:

- Mode shift from private car to active travel and public transport
- Electrification of transport
- Low emission zones and vehicle efficiency improvements
- Freight decarbonisation
- Behaviour changes programmes to reduce car dependence

The overall direction of transport decarbonisation policies set out in chapter 6.3.1 of the draft climate action plan. The proposals included the commitment to mode shift, electrification, freight transition, and behaviour change. These are aligned with the UK CCC's guidance and reflect a strong understanding of the emissions profile of the transport sector.

The council particularly welcomes the ambition to reduce reliance on private vehicles and improve access to active and sustainable travel. We also support the proposed increase in EV infrastructure, which will require close coordination with local authorities and private partners for effective delivery.

However, we would say further strengthening in the following areas: rural transport integration, funding and delivery clarity and public transport decarbonisation beyond urban areas.

5. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the transport sector? Please provide reasons and any alternatives.

The plan aims to reduce transport emissions through:

- Modal shift
- Electrification
- Behaviour change
- Freight reform

Plans include

- General commitments to affordability and accessibility,
- Some references to community and transport disadvantages,
- Recognition of the need to build infrastructure equitably.

Formal response

Neither agree nor disagree

There is intent to deliver a just transition within the transport sector. The ambition to shift away from private car use, promote active travel and decarbonise fleets is commendable and essential for meeting climate targets.

However, we find that the just transition dimension of this sector could be significantly strengthened. In particular, the draft proposals currently lack sufficient detail regarding how fairness, affordability, and equitable access will be operationalised, especially for rural area, low-income communities, and workers within the conventional transport or vehicle sectors.

6. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the business and industrial processes sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The business and industrial processes sector accounts for 13% of NI's emissions. The plan proposes:

- Energy e improvements through invest NI and collaboration with academia
- Expansion of the circular economy approach to reduce material use and waste
- Introduction of carbon audits and emissions reporting for large businesses
- Use of the NI green innovation challenge fund to support decarbonisation in SME's and manufacturing
- Encouraging fuel switching (e.g. hydrogen, electricity, biomass)
- Increased support for supply chain transformation and public procurement decarbonisation.

Formal response

Agree. Th plan appropriately focuses on enabling measures such as support for innovation, carbon auditing, and low carbon supply chains, which are essential for supporting local enterprises, especially SME's, in navigating the transition to net zero.

The inclusion of programmes such as the green innovation challenge fund, the promotion of circular economy principles, and support for alternative fuels reflect a strong understanding of industrial decarbonisation needs.

With regulatory clarity and ambition, we could have clearer timeframes for setting minimum emissions performance standards across sectors, particularly in construction and manufacturing. The council supports the creation of local or regional decarbonisation hubs or industrial clusters that can pool resources and share best practices. More targeted assistance for small and micro business is needed, particularly in rural boroughs. This could include one stop shop advisory services, grant simplification, or carbon literacy training. Alongside place-based targeting, with emissions intensive industries within council areas should be engaged in partnership to co-design tailored decarbonisation pathways.

7. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the business and industrial processes sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Commitments to minimise economic disruption and protect vulnerable groups, engage stakeholders and promote place-based delivery, develop reskilling and education plans aligned with net zero goals.

Formal response

Neither agree nor disagree. Contains a strong set of enabling policies for business and industrial decarbonisation and the over arching just transition principles articulated in chapter 4 provide a positive framework for equitable climate action.

However, the approach for the just transition in the business and industrial processes sector requires further development. The current proposals do not clearly articulate:

- How existing industrial workers in high emitting sectors will be supported,
- How small businesses (especially in rural and coastal area) will access funding, expertise, and infrastructure.
- What place-based mechanisms will be used to ensure equity in delivery.

With dedicated support for workforce transition. A clearer programme for retraining and upskilling workers in high emission sectors would help mitigate economic risk and ensure employment continuity. While access to funding for rural SMEs with equity funding and resource access should be actively tracked to ensure fair support across geographies and business sizes. The local industrial decarbonisation partnerships, can be empowered to host or coordinate industrial clusters and innovation hubs, ensuring locally appropriate delivery.

8. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the residential buildings sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Key policies for residential relevant:

- Energy efficiency upgrades for existing housing stock
- Roll out of low carbon heating technologies
- Promotion of zero emission new builds, through improved building regulations.
- Alignment with fuel poverty strategy and social housing retrofit schemes.
- Investment in public engagement with housing providers and NI housing executive for delivery.

Formal response

Agree- The direction of the policies aimed at reducing emissions from the residential buildings sector, particularly the focus on energy efficiency, heat decarbonisation, and regulatory reform outlined in chapter 6.4. These measures are essential to addressing the high energy demand and carbon footprint of NI's housing stock.

The integration of fuel poverty considerations and social housing retrofit delivery pathways is welcome and reflects a joined-up approach to improving both emissions performance and household wellbeing.

Some suggestions may be a rural retrofit strategy. Private sector support and local authority alignment

9. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the residential buildings sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Although the plan lacks a dedicated 'just transition for residential buildings' section, we can infer its approach from: chapter 6.5 and 4. The just transition features noted, that the support for fuel poor households, particularly through social housing retrofit. The use of public funding and behaviour change initiatives to increase uptake of energy

saving measures. Alongside the engagement with housing bodies and stakeholders to deliver improvements.

The weaknesses limited on detail on rural equity, landlord/tenant challenges, or affordability for private homes. There is no dedicated workforce plan for retrofit jobs or low carbon heating trades. The just transition is implicit, not explicitly embedded in housing proposals.

Formal response

Neither agree nor disagree the climate action plan provides a foundation for fairness in housing decarbonisation.

However, the plan does not go far enough in operationalising a just transition for all housing and locations. Rural households, which are disproportionately reliant on oil heating and face higher retrofit costs, are not explicitly addressed. Similarly, the plan does not set out how private landlords, tenants, or low-income homeowners will be supported to overcome financial and regulatory barriers to decarbonisation.

Improvements that could be made would be the rural equity having a dedicated rural housing decarbonisation plan should be developed to ensure equitable access to law carbon heat and energy efficiency upgrades. Affordability and landlord engagement, the plan should outline options for tenant protections, landlords support schemes, and mechanisms to avoid rent inflation due to retrofit requirements.

10. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the public buildings sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The following are included looking at relevant policies; a commitment to lead by example through public sector carbonisation. A goal to improve the energy efficiency of the public estate, including building retrofits and transitions to low carbon heating. Support for data gathering and monitoring via energy management systems. The reference to the NI executive's energy management strategy and broader capital investment plans. The role of councils and departments in delivering estate improvements.

There is no detailed timeline or delivery model specific to the public estate, no defined performance standards or reporting requirements for different tasset classes. No specific funding route described for local government buildings or community assets.

Formal response

Agree- the plans emphasis on public sector leadership in energy efficiency and carbon reduction is critical to building trust, demonstrating progress, and catalysing wider societal change.

We welcome the commitment to improving the public estate, especially through retrofitting existing assets and upgrading heating systems. These measures are consistent with our own ambitions to decarbonise local authority and reduce long term energy costs.

Some alternatives and improvements would be a clearer implementation framework to encourage the inclusion of a delivery framework or public estate decarbonisation roadmap, setting clear expectations for timelines, standards, and departmental responsibilities. Support for local authorities, councils should be supported to invest in building upgrades through targeted capital investment and grant schemes, particularly for community and heritage buildings.

11. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the public buildings sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

There is no specific 'just transition' section for public buildings, however we can draw conclusions based on chapter 6.5 and 4.

There is no clear plan for how upgrades will prioritise low-income areas or disadvantage service users. There is no ringfenced employment or training programmes tied to public sector decarbonisation. The risk of spatial inequality if urban areas benefit from investment before rural regions.

Formal response

Neither agree nor disagree the council believes that improving the energy performance of public buildings can bring significant co benefits, including warmer and healthier environments for service users, lower operational costs, and job creation opportunities.

However, the current plan lacks sufficient detail on how just transition principles will be practically applied in the public building sector. For example, there is little clarity on how investments will be prioritised across areas, how vulnerable users will be safeguarded during disruption, or how local employment and skills can be tied into public sector upgrades.

12. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the waste sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor

disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The plan addresses the waste sector under chapter 6.6- waste, which includes the following key points:

To achieve 70% recycling rate and 50% reduction in food waste by 2030. They develop extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging waste. Encourage reuse, repair and material recirculation under a broader circular economy strategy. Implement mandatory separate food waste collections. An increased use of anaerobic digestion and organic waste treatment infrastructure. And to reduce on landfill and incineration, both of which are high emission pathways.

The plan refers to existing strategies but doesn't expand much on delivery specifics. Targets are ambitious but contingent on behavioural change and infrastructure upgrades. Also, less attention is given to rural waste collection logistics or community led reuse schemes.

Formal response

Agree- The integration of waste reduction, improved recycling rates, and a shift toward circular economy principles is aligned with best practice and necessary for reaching the proposed net zero trajectory.

The emphasis on extended producer responsibility, food waste reduction, and organic waste processing infrastructure reflects a progressive approach to managing both the supply and demand side of waste. These measures will also bring important co-benefits such as reduced pressure on landfill, job creation in reuse and repair sectors, and improved resource efficiency.

13. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the waste sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The waste sector proposals are found in chapter 6.6 and just transition principles more generally in chapter 4. There is no dedicated just transition section for waste.

There is emphasis on the circular economy jobs and the reuse/repair industry growth, whilst touching on behavioural change programmes to encourage household participation. There are potential economic opportunities through EPR schemes and organic waste processing.

There is no specific mention of how waste workers will be reskilled or supported. Furthermore, there is limited reference to equitable delivery in rural or deprived areas.

There is no detail on inclusion of community-led waste enterprise or cooperative models.

Formal response

Neither agree or disagree- This action could provide important co-benefits, including job creating and reduced environmental harm.

However, the current proposals do not go far enough to ensure that this transition is fair and inclusive. For example, there is no indication of how existing workers in landfill, incineration, or conventional waste logistics will be supported. There is not sufficient clarity on how reuse and repair jobs will be created in rural and coastal boroughs.

Some suggestions for alternatives and improvements consist of reskilling and transition plans, community and enterprise model and equity in access and infrastructure. This is to ensure the rollout of food waste collections, recycling centres, and reuse initiatives reaches rural communities equitable.

14. To what extent do you agree with the proposed enabling actions to reduce emissions for the agriculture sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The agriculture section is found in chapter 6.7. This sets out enabling actions rather than direct policies. These focus on encouraging and supporting the sector to decarbonise while remaining productive.

Key actions is the implementation of the green growth strategy recommendation and future agricultural policy framework. To also increase the use of low-emission livestock breeding and feeding techniques and expand precision agriculture and digital monitoring tools.

Enhance the support for knowledge transfer, innovation, and advisory services. To also encourage uptake of carbon audits, soil testing, and climate-smart farming whilst improving the sustainability of agri-food supply chains, including emissions labelling and consumer behaviour change.

Gaps and limitations that are highlighted are most actions are enabling or voluntary there is no firm emissions caps or regulations. It is reliant on farmer uptake and advisory support, the risk of uneven participation. It is also unclear how this will be monitored.

Formal response

Agree- The proposals reflect a pragmatic, partnership-based model that recognises the unique emissions profile of agriculture in NI and the central role of farmers in shaping sustainable land use outcomes. The alignment with DAERA's green growth strategy and

the future agricultural policy framework reinforces coherence with other sectoral policies.

A suggestion may be support for small farms, the additional measures may need to ensure small and marginal farms, especially in rural areas. Also, incentives for high impact change, such as funding or reward mechanisms should target practices with the highest emissions reduction potential, such as grassland management, livestock feed innovation, and slurry handling.

15. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the agriculture sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The agriculture section doesn't contain a dedicated 'just transition' heading, there are several relevant principles that it can be drawn from, such as chapter 4.

The implied just transition focuses on support and incentives, not regulation, to drive behaviour change. There is a commitment to knowledge exchange, skills development and collaborative innovation, it's intended to avoid economic disruption and protect rural employment.

There is no detailed roadmap for how farm incomes will be protected during the transition with no explicit rural equity strategy or differentiated support but farm type or scale. There is also no mention of engagement with farming organisations or co design of solutions.

Formal response

Neither agree or disagree- The reliance on knowledge transfer, innovation, and voluntary uptake is what will aid build trust and resilience across the farming community.

However, the plan refers to a just transition principles in chapter 4, there is a lack of clarity on how these principles will be operationalised for farmers. There is limited detail on how small farms, upland farms, or economically vulnerable producers will be supported, or how income risk during transition will be managed.

With co designing with farmers, there can be development in transition pathways in partnership with farm unions, cooperatives, and rural networks to ensure tailored and trusted delivery. Furthermore, with established funding mechanism for a more tiered support scheme that will recognises the difference in farm scale, land type and market access.

16. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the LULUCF sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The LULUCF policies are found in chapter 6.8, this outlines the role of land-based carbon removals in the net zero strategy.

They key policies and proposals increase woodland creating, aiming for significant afforestation targets, aligned with the forestry strategy for NI. The restoration of peatlands, by recognising their value as carbon sinks and biodiversity hotspots. Furthermore, improving soil carbon retention through better land management practices whilst promoting hedgerow planting, agroforestry, and use of native species to enhance multifunctional land use. The encouragement of integration with farming systems, biodiversity strategies, and ecosystem resilience.

There is limited detail on landowner incentives, monitoring or delivery partnerships. It lacks granularity on how land use decision will be prioritized or balanced (e.g. carbon v food v biodiversity). The afforestation targets may compete with farming or amenity use in some areas.

Formal response

Agree- The focus on woodland expansion, peatland restoration, soil carbon improvements, and multifunctional land use is consistent with emerging best practice and the needs of both climate and nature recovery.

17. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the LULUCF sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

There is no dedicated ‘just transition’ section for the LULUCF sector, but we can infer relevant ideas for chapter 4 and chapter 6.8

The implied principles for the just transition consist of the use of nature-based solutions to support resilient landscapes and livelihoods. There is acknowledgment to the peatlands, woodlands, and soil that play both environmental and community roles. There is particular emphasis on co-benefits for biodiversity, water and recreation.

There is no clear guidance on equitable access to afforestation schemes or landowner incentives. There is also no mention of land rights, community involvement, or tenant protections. It lacks specific plans for skills training or economic diversification in rewilding/reforestation areas.

Formal response

Neither agree or disagree- These actions are essential to building long term resilience and delivering net removals from the land sector. The draft climate action plan does not provide sufficient clarity on how these changes will be delivered in a fair, inclusive, and locally appropriate manner. In particular, the absence of specific plans to involve communities, protect land users, or create local jobs in ecosystem restoration means the just transition intent remains largely aspirational.

The community led land use models, support the co-design afforestation or peatland projects with farmers, community groups and local councils. Ensure that both landowners and tenants can access support for nature-based solutions without disadvantage.

18. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the fisheries sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The fisheries sector is addressed briefly in chapter 6.9. it addresses the commitment to support low emissions fishing practices, vessel modernisation, and innovation. It mentions enhancing fuel efficiency and explore alternative fuels for vessels. The promotion of sustainable fisheries management to ensure healthy stocks and resilient marine ecosystems. It also recognises the role of aquaculture and marine planning in emissions reduction and sustainable development.

However, there is no explicit mention of funding, timelines or pilot projects. Coastal infrastructure is not clearly addressed.

Formal response

Neither agree or disagree the principles outlined in chapter 6.9 of the draft climate action plan, particularly the intention to modernise fleets, support low-emission fishing, and ensure sustainable fisheries management.

However, the lack of detail on delivery mechanisms, infrastructure investment, and technical support for vessel upgrades makes it difficult to assess the feasibility and scope of these proposals. Coastal and fishing communities in our borough are economically vulnerable and will require targeted, well-resourced support to navigate the transition.

Suggested initiatives and improvements may be pilot schemes, to test alternative fuel vessels or retrofit support for small scale fisheries. The coastal infrastructure investment, this links to the fisheries decarbonisation to port, processing, and cold chain upgrades to ensure full system efficiency. Potential to establish a stakeholder

working group with fisheries and marine industries to co design transition plans and share innovation.

19. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the fisheries sector? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The fisheries sector is discussed in chapter 6.9 and just transition principles are found in chapter 4. There is no standalone just transition strategy for fisheries, but some themes are indirectly mentioned. The need to modernise vessels and practice support low emission fishing. There is emphasis on sustainability and resilience of the marine ecosystem as a shared resource. There are potential links to innovation, low carbon supply chains and coastal regeneration. There is no mention of skills training, job transition, or financial support for small scale or ageing fleets. There is a lack of detail on rural and island port infrastructure, or community engagement. There is also no defined detail on rural and island port infrastructure, or community engagement alongside no defined plan for how economic or social equity will be protected in the transition.

Formal response

Neither agree or disagree- The draft climate action plan mentions the need for sustainable and low-emissions practices, it does not provide enough detail on how these changes will be delivered in a fair and inclusive way. There is limited consideration of the economic vulnerabilities of small-scale fisheries or coastal communities, and no apparent roadmap for how decarbonisation efforts will be tied to training, funding, or inclusive consultation processes.

A suggestion would be for targeted support for small fleets, this would include funding, retrofit support, and innovation grants for smaller vessels and family run fishing businesses. The coastal infrastructure development should ensure fair investment in rural ports, cold chains, and harbour facilities to support transition.

Relates to chapter 7: Impact Assessments

20. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree

nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

Agree- The financial, social and economic impact assessment was appropriately developed with sector level analysis and considered the interactive effects of proposals. It finds that while short term financial costs are expected, there are offset by longer-term financial benefits, such as avoided health and environmental costs are increased by longer term financial benefits, such as avoided health and environmental costs and increased tax revenue. The FSEIA identifies positive social outcomes in terms of reduced household costs, health and wellbeing benefits, and skills developed. The positive economic impacts are also expected, especially in the waste and agriculture sectors.

Future versions could strengthen transparency by summarising sector-specific impacts more clearly within the main body of the climate action plan. With enhanced integration of local level modelling would support tailored mitigation actions.

21. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

The climate action plan references overarching impact issues in a general, high-level way across the document, but the full overarching financial, social and economic impact assessment appears to be in an annex.

The plan implies that decarbonisation will deliver long term savings in energy and environmental damage, the green growth and innovation will lead to new jobs and sectors. A phased transition is essential to maintain a social and economic stability, the impacts of climate policy will be uneven, so targeting and support mechanisms will be needed.

Neither agree or disagree- The plan reflect a clear awareness of the risks posed by inaction, the opportunities associated with green jobs and innovation, and the need for inclusive and fair delivery mechanisms. However, the overarching financial, social and economic impact assessment is not included in the main document*********

22. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Equality Screening and Equality Impact Assessment? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

The plan is expected to have overall positive impacts across all section 75 categories. The positive impacts include improved health, air quality, access to cleaner energy, and potential reduction in fuel poverty. It highlights the benefits and impacts may not be evenly distributed, for example males that work in agriculture may benefit due to current workforce composition. Inclusive engagement is emphasised to ensure a socially just transition.

Formal response

The EQIA appropriately identifies that the climate action plan is expected to have an overall positive impact for all section 75 groups, particularly in areas such as health, fuel poverty alleviation, and environmental quality.

23. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Rural Needs Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

The rural needs impact assessment is a statutory requirement under both the climate change act NI and the rural needs act NI. The climate action plan includes both: individual RNIA's for specific sectoral policies and an overarching RNIA considering cumulative and interactive effects.

There are potential for green jobs in rural areas aligned with the just transition principles for example the energy transition opportunities e.g. for community owned renewables. The sustainable agriculture and land use changes are seen as supporting a more resilient rural economy with the potential to improve sustainable travel, which could have health and access benefits.

Older farmers may struggle with new environmental/agricultural policies unless they are well supported. The farming efficiencies may affect employment patterns. There will be higher energy costs and slower transition in off gas grid rural areas and the ius limited public transport access and longer distances to services.

Formal response

The RNIA appropriately identifies both the opportunities and challenges rural areas face in the climate transition, and it acknowledged that targeted support, training, and investment will be required to ensure rural communities are not left behind.

The plans recognition to support green employment opportunities in rural areas, the role of community owned renewables and sustainable agriculture and the need for

mitigation in areas such as energy access, agricultural support and public transport are all highly valuable key aspects within this section.

24. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

The overarching RNIA reviewed interactive and cumulative effects of all policies and proposals across sectors. It identified positive impacts on rural areas which include the green jobs and regional economic opportunities, expanding the role of community led renewables and more sustainable agriculture and land use models. Furthermore, the improved health and environmental outcomes through transport and energy policy.

However, the access to energy networks and limited transport infrastructure remains large barriers. The older farmers and low-income rural residents may need tailored support. The adaptation to policy change will require more training, engagement and financial assistance.

Formal response

The RNIA provides a comprehensive and balanced overview of how the climate action plan may impact rural areas. the commitment to community ownership models, rural green jobs, and resilient agriculture. The consideration of cumulative impacts and proposed mitigations demonstrates a strong understanding of the complexity of rural transitions.

The embedded overarching RNIA findings into delivery plans for each sector, ensuring that rural mitigation is part of the implementation. To provide ringfenced rural transition funding to address transport, skills, and energy poverty. To include a rural pilot project within the final plan to test locally tailored solutions and build scalable models.

25. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Most policies and proposals are expected to have minor to significant positive effects across all six SEA themes.

Agree- The SEA appears to have been conducted comprehensively across relevant environmental themes, and the projected positive impacts on biodiversity, air quality,

community wellbeing, and ecosystem resilience are consistent with the councils' environmental priorities. There is particular emphasis on the role of ecosystem services in both mitigation and adaptation. The potential for landscapes and heritage protection through sensitive planning and the recommendation for a monitoring programme to track outcomes and address negative externalities.

Could include clearer links between SEA findings and how sector policies will implement mitigation, share monitoring data publicly to support local transparency and accountability.

26. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The habitats regulations assessment is a statutory process that evaluates whether a plan or project will have a significant effect on protected habitats or species. For this plan an external specialist was commissioned to complete the HRA. It was assessed whether any policies or proposals in the draft climate action plan would likely impact Natura 2000 sites (special areas of conservation and special protection areas)

The HRA concluded that the high-level strategic nature of the climate action plan means that no likely significant effects are anticipated on any protected habitats, either alone or in combination with other plans. The assessment included sites within and beyond NI where transboundary impacts could occur.

Formal response

Agree- the conclusion that the plan will not result in likely significant effects on protected habitats, either individually or in combination, is consistent with the strategic nature of the climate action plan.

27. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Regulatory Impact Assessment? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The regulatory impact assessment (RIA) evaluates whether policies will impose regulatory burdens (e.g. costs, compliance, admin) on businesses or individuals. The key findings highlight a regulatory impact screening was carried out, the draft itself does not create any new regulations, so it does not trigger a full RIA. If any individual policy pr proposal later introduces a regulatory burden, a full RIA will be carried out by the department responsible.

Formal response

Agree- Given that the plan itself does not make new regulations or impose direct compliance burdens, the decision to screen out a full RIA at this stage is appropriate.

28. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Children's Rights Impact Assessment? Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

The children's rights impact assessment (CRIA) was completed using a template from the NU commissioner for children and young people (NICCY).

This illustrated that all children, youth and future generations will be affected by climate change but not equally. Factors such as age, health and socioeconomic background influences how a child experiences the impact of the climate policy. Most policies are expected to result in positive long-term benefits, including a healthier environment, improved wellbeing and between economic and job prospects in the green economy.

The assessment has also acknowledged the potential risks such as the increased child poverty or service access barriers if policies aren't implemented equitably. The need for investment and a just transitions to ensure support for vulnerable children.

Formal response

Agree- the CRIA rightly identifies children and young people as both vulnerable to climate impacts and climate stakeholders in shaping a just, sustainable future.

The plans recognition that climate action must be inclusive of children's needs and right, including the importance of a clean environment, equal access to opportunities and targeted support for those at risk of poverty, exclusion or disruption to youth services.

A recommendation would be that the future iterations of the plan include child focused co design elements particularly in education and public space planning and transport.

29. Can you provide any further information which will help to supplement the completion of these impact assessments? Please provide details, identifying the assessment to which the information relates***