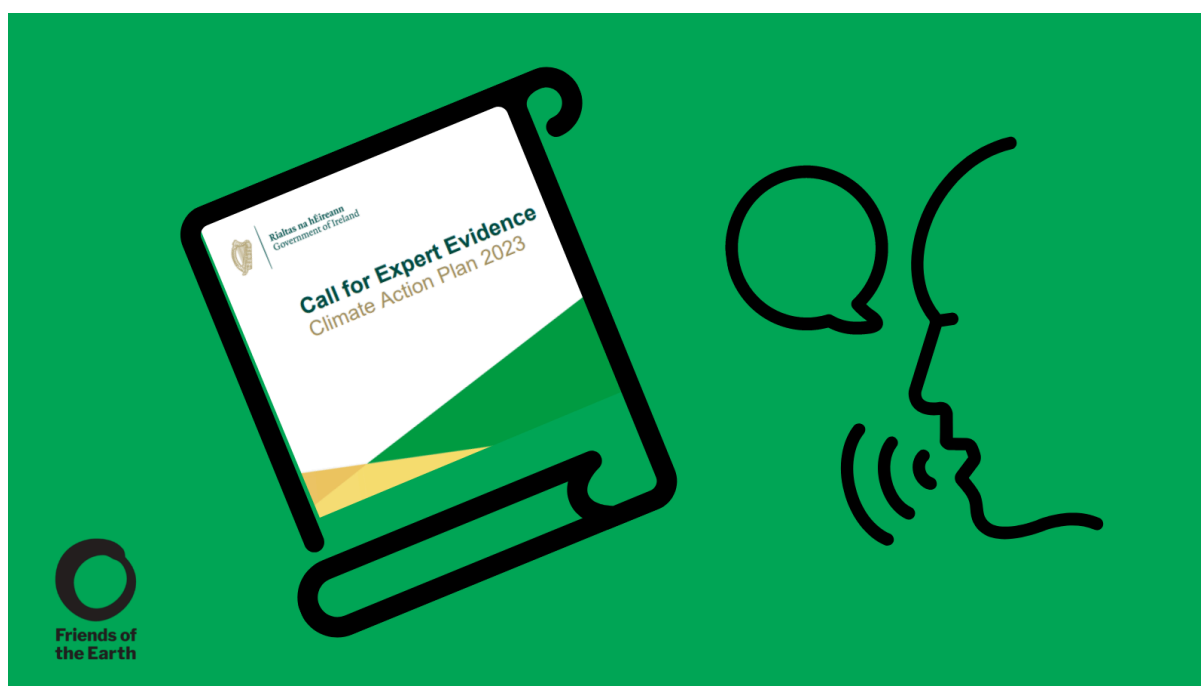


Template Submission to the Climate Action Plan Consultation

September 2022

The Government is running [a public consultation on the next Climate Action Plan](#) until Tuesday 20th September. The Plan is the first to be prepared under the new climate law and since the adoption by the Oireachtas of the first national carbon emissions budgets for 2021-2025 and 2026-2030 and the approval of sectoral emissions ceilings for the same periods by the Government in July. It is therefore arguably the most important climate action plan Ireland has ever adopted, at least since the 2000 plan adopted after the Kyoto Protocol. The final Plan is due to be agreed by Government in early November.

Friends of the Earth has produced this short template to help organisations and individuals who want to make a submission themselves by emailing CallforEvidence@decc.gov.ie **before the deadline of 5.30pm on Tuesday 20th September.**



Introduction

The latest figures from the EPA show that in 2021 emissions rose rather than fell and Ireland used a quarter of its first five year carbon pollution budget in one year. It is imperative for the integrity of the climate law that we live within the binding five year carbon emissions budget for 2021-2025 adopted by the Dáil and get on track to halve emissions by 2030, as a stepping stone to Ireland doing its fair share to contain climate breakdown. That means we now need to reduce emissions by more than 8% a year for the rest of the decade. It is past time for radical measures that reduce emissions rapidly and meet the scale and the urgency of the challenge. From the record heat in Europe to the drought in the Horn of Africa to the floods in Pakistan we are seeing what climate breakdown looks like, and those who have done least to cause it are hit hardest. We are in a climate emergency and it's time the Government started acting like it.

Below are the proposed actions we have chosen to highlight for people to consider including in their submissions. [And here's the two minute e-action version](#) for those with less time.

12 steps Government can take to eliminate emissions and cut costs and 3 steps to drive a cultural transformation around pollution

Here's the list of steps broken down into the four big emissions sectors: transport, buildings, electricity and agriculture. And then we have 3 steps on "cultural transformation". Below that is more information on each of them.

You are of course free to use all of this, or none of it, in your submission to the Department. The more you say about why climate action is important to you or your organisation the better. And the more you include your own proposals for cutting pollution and changing mindsets the better. Ireland needs all the innovative and creative ideas we can find. The bigger and bolder the better. Halving emissions by 2030, and living within our current 5-year emissions ceiling, means starting an urgent and radical transformation of all sectors of the economy and society. We are now in the race of a lifetime. The race to cut emissions fast enough to prevent complete climate breakdown and fairly enough to leave no-one behind. The race to zero emissions and zero energy poverty.

At the bottom of this document there are links to additional resources you can draw on if you are preparing a longer submission.

Transport: Break our dependence on private cars and oil for mobility

1. Cycling, walking and buses to school
2. More, cheaper public transport
3. EV loans in rural Ireland, congestion charges in Dublin
4. No new fossil fuel cars from 2026

Buildings: Keep people warm and break our dependence on fossil fuel heating

5. Insulate people from fossil fuel prices
6. Get off gas
7. Transform social housing

Electricity: Ramp up renewables, reduce demand and guarantee basic needs

8. A rooftop revolution
9. No more data centres
10. A right to energy

Agriculture and land use: Reduce chemical fertilizer, ramp up peatland rewetting

11. Reduce chemical fertilizers
12. Rewet peat soils

Cultural transformation: Treat pollution like we treat smoking

1. Ban fossil fuel advertising
2. A public information campaign
3. Promote sustainable diets

Below are further details on the above. Meantime if you just want to endorse those 12-steps you can make a simple submission using [our online e-action](#). A submission you put together yourself of course will obviously carry greater weight.

Transport: Break our dependence on private cars and oil for mobility

Cycling, walking and buses to school

- Make it possible, safe and convenient for every child to go to school without using a car by September 2023
 - Guaranteeing a free school bus place for all children who live more than 1km away from school. Invest in a fleet of electric buses and mini-buses.
 - Building safe routes to school for cycling and walking within a 3km radius of every school.
 - Closing more school streets to cars and use one way systems to make arrival at school on bike and foot as safe as possible and ban engine idling near schools.

More, cheaper public transport

- The reductions in public transport fares have been popular in Ireland, but Germany's €9-a-month scheme was a runaway success. Trial a similar scheme here for 6 months. Meanwhile, accelerate the roll out of Bus Connects and develop a rural transport plan based on a vision of "every village, every hour".

EV loans in rural Ireland, congestion charges in Dublin

- Immediately introduce a state-backed interest-free loan for rural households to buy EVs. Get the most polluting cars, especially SUVs, off our city streets as soon as possible. Introduce a congestion charge in Dublin immediately that escalates by emissions and weight and extend it to other urban areas as more public transport comes on stream.

No new fossil fuel cars from 2026

- End the sale of new internal combustion engines (ICE) cars within 3 years. Start by immediately raising VRT on cars based on emissions and weight, so that the highest band is at €5,000 by 2025. Ban the sale of new ICE cars from 2026.

Buildings: Keep people warm and break our dependence on fossil fuel heating

Insulate people from fossil fuel prices

- Insulate 100,000 homes in 2023, prioritising cheaper measures that save energy and money quickly. The focus must be on reaching those most at risk of energy poverty and those who rely on coal and turf. Don't wait for them to apply to SEAI for a grant, sit down with the likes of the SVP and Age Action to plan a coordinated outreach campaign offering wrap-around supports for retrofitting.

Get off gas

- Ban fossil fuel boilers in new buildings in 2023. Ban the further expansion of the gas distribution network from 2024. Ban the sale of new fossil gas boilers for any building by 2028. Phase out fossil fuel boilers in existing buildings, prioritising residential homes, by 2033. Ensure that everyone has access alternative low-carbon heating options.

Transform social housing

- Retrofit and install fossil-free heating in all social housing stock to B2, and install solar PV on all feasible social housing units, by 2030.

Electricity: Ramp up renewables, reduce demand and guarantee basic needs

A rooftop revolution

- Drive a solar PV rooftop revolution: Put solar panels on the roof of every school by 2025, and on the roofs of 1 million homes by 2030.

No more data centres

- Introduce a moratorium on new data centres connecting to the electricity grid until electricity system pressures and gas lock-in risks are transparently and comprehensively addressed.

A right to energy

- Examine the idea of a “Basic Energy Guarantee” as proposed by the New Economics Foundation in the UK and Age Action in Ireland. Every household would get a basic allowance of electricity and gas, at a low rate for everyone and free for older people and welfare recipients. Usage at above that level would be at the very high market rates or more. Aim to have this in place by October 2023.

Agriculture and land use: Reduce chemical fertilizer, ramp up peatland rewetting

Reduce chemical fertilizers

- The key to reducing air, water and climate pollution from agriculture is reducing the use of chemical nitrogen fertilizer, which grew 28% after 2010 to 408,000 tonnes a year. It's fallen this year due to the skyrocketing price of the fossil fuels used to make it. The Government must ensure that chemical fertilizer use does not rise again in 2023 or 2024 and falls to 2010 levels no later than 2025, and continues to decline steadily to less than 200,000 tonnes by 2030.

Rewet peat soils

- Reward landowners for active maintenance of ecosystems, including rewetting of agricultural peatlands

Cultural transformation: Treat pollution like we treat smoking

Ban fossil fuel advertising

- Ban ads for fossil fuels, ads from companies or public bodies involved in fossil fuel production or distribution and ads about cars, boilers or flights that use fossil fuels.

A public information campaign

- Develop and launch a comprehensive long-term Government information campaign on climate and energy, as we have done on road safety and smoking over decades ads.

Promote sustainable diets

- Mandate the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to revise their “Healthy Eating Guidelines” to take into account the water, air and climate pollution impacts of different food types.

Other useful resources

- Friends of the Earth (2022). The working draft of our full organizational submission to the consultation is [available online here to view/pillage/ignore](#) :-).
- Friends of the Earth (2022). 5 point plan for Government to cut bills, save energy and reduce pollution. Available at:
https://www.foe.ie/assets/files/pdf/5_point_plan_to_cut_bills_save_energy_and_reduce_pollution_-_may_2022.pdf
- Joint Letter on Energy Poverty (2022). Available at:
https://www.foe.ie/assets/files/pdf/joint_letter_on_energy_poverty_and_energy_pollution.pdf
- Friends of the Earth (2022) An examination of blockages to retrofitting and heat-pump installation in Ireland. Available at:
https://www.foe.ie/assets/files/pdf/blockages_to_retrofitting_and_heat-pump_installation_in_ireland.pdf
- EPA Inventory Report (2022) Ireland’s National Inventory Report 2022 - Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2020. Available at:
https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/air-emissions/Ireland-NIR-2022_Merge_v2..pdf
- MaREI and ISEA (2022) Quantifying the potential for rooftop solar photovoltaic in Ireland. Available at:
<https://www.marei.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Quantifying-the-Potential-for-Rooftop-Solar-Photovoltaic-in-Ireland.pdf>