

Assessing Ireland's energy CO₂ emissions under the first (draft) National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)

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Under the terms of the EU Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union, which entered into force in December 2018¹, all member states are now required to prepare and submit National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) on an ongoing basis. The plans should cover ten-year periods and provide an overview of the current national energy system and policy situation, should set out national objectives, with corresponding policies and measures to meet those objectives, and have an analytical basis. The first plans, covering the period 2021-2030, were due for submission in draft form by 31st December 2018. Following assessment by the European Commission, and “early and effective opportunities” for public participation, the plans should be finalised by the end of 2019. In this presentation we focus on one of the key dimensions of the Energy Union addressed in the NECP process, having central environmental importance, namely *energy system decarbonisation* as a critical contributor to climate change mitigation. We review the provisions of the Irish (draft) NECP, and specifically assess its alignment with the goals of the Paris Agreement. We find that, under all scenarios currently presented in the NECP, Irish energy CO₂ emissions would show negligible absolute reduction over the period of the plan. This would lead to early, and escalating, overshoot of the estimated Irish “fair share” of the remaining, Paris-aligned, Global CO₂ Budget, thereby transferring onto young Irish people today responsibility for very large scale and very rapid, future carbon dioxide removal (CDR) from atmosphere. Given large uncertainties in CDR technical feasibility, scale and ultimate cost, this is classified as a *prima facie* high risk and inequitable approach to this key policy domain.

Keywords: Climate Change Mitigation, EU Policy, National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP).

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¹<http://tinyurl.com/y7xmcuh9>