



ENDING FOSSIL POWER

From Crisis to Justice

Closing the gap to faster and fairer climate
action by 2030



Stop Climate Chaos is a coalition of civil society organisations campaigning to ensure Ireland does its fair share to tackle the causes and consequences of climate change.



Photo : Mark Steadman, 2025

What we're calling for:

This publication provides up-to-date analysis and supporting recommendations for fair climate action and a pathway to ending fossil fuel dependence in Ireland. It covers seven key policy areas:

1. Phasing out fossil fuels: Recommendations address the steps required to uncouple Ireland from fossil fuel dependency and its relationship to climate-harming industries.
2. Clean and affordable energy: Recommendations address fair and accessible renewable energy, funding of the green energy transition, and supports to the agricultural sector.
3. Climate law and obligations: Recommendations address the legal obligations of meeting climate targets, ensuring protection of human rights and nature.
4. Housing: Recommendations address energy poverty measures, retrofitting, clean energy and rental standards.
5. Transport: Recommendations address public transport, active transport and aviation.
6. Just Transition: Recommendations address approaches to climate policy that integrates equality and inclusion by design.
7. International climate action: Recommendations address Ireland's international climate obligations, climate finance and the Loss and Damage Fund.

Ending Fossil Power

From Crisis to Justice - Closing the gap to faster and fairer climate action by 2030

It has never been more crucial to take immediate action, not only to avert all-out climate chaos, but to respond to the escalating energy cost crisis shaped by increasingly frequent geopolitical shocks. In 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine exposed how dependence on fossil fuels leaves our societies vulnerable to conflict-driven price spikes. Today, the same pattern is repeating following the US-Israel war on Iran, where disruption in fossil fuel supply chains is again driving price volatility and massively rising costs for ordinary people.

Yet our leaders have failed to take these lessons on board. Households continue to face spiralling fuel costs, with prices likely to climb further into the future. This is a failure of political choices, not an inevitability. We want a just transition towards a future where no one is left behind, and where women and disadvantaged communities, who have so far been excluded from the benefits of climate policies, are finally placed at the heart of change. This moment presents a clear opportunity: accelerate a just transition to renewable energy, which is cleaner, cheaper, and more secure, through targeted policies that cut demand, scale homegrown power sources, and protect those in energy poverty.

Concurrently, it remains imperative to abandon proposals that are clearly incompatible with meaningful climate action, such as the development of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals or the unchecked expansion of the data centre industry. Acting now can shield us from repeated cost shocks while putting our country on a more stable, just and sustainable energy path.

At the same time that the instability of our fossil-powered global energy system is being laid bare, the world continues to fall dangerously short on climate action. Ireland can no longer continue to add to that failure. We are significantly off-track to meet our legally binding emission reduction targets, with recent assessments by both Government and the Environmental Protection Agency^[1] indicating that we will achieve barely half of what is required by 2030. This gap must be urgently closed.

The Government must uphold the Climate Law, passed on a cross-party basis in 2021, and deliver the pollution cuts agreed by the Dáil. This is not optional - it is both a moral and a legal obligation, and failure to act will cost the State billions while exposing communities to worsening climate impacts. Our elected representatives must ensure that any climate action is fair, creates good jobs, reduces energy bills, and protects living standards.

The Irish Government should use its current Presidency of the Council of the European Union to demonstrate that Europe's competitiveness, security and shared values undoubtedly depend on delivering a just transition. However, it must also be recognised that ambitious and fair climate action is a fundamental public good that must be pursued as an essential goal in its own right.

[1] [Environmental indicators ireland 2025 - Climate Change Environmental Indicators Ireland 2025 - Global Context and Climate - Central Statistics Office. \(2025, December 10\).](#)

As an island nation, our wellbeing relies on rapidly phasing out fossil fuel use to limit escalating warming impacts on the ocean system, including its circulation currents and sea level rise. We also remain deeply connected to the plight of climate vulnerable countries who are experiencing the impact first and worst, while having done the least to contribute to the climate crisis.

Our leaders must stop lagging behind and start stepping up, because the choices made now will shape not just Ireland's future but also the world's.

Where We Stand: The Emissions Gap

“Closing the climate gap requires that the 2026 Climate Action Plan deliver a decisive shift from climate-laggardism to transformative action. It requires that overarching legal commitments be translated into binding, enforceable and equitable measures.”

Ireland continues to face a persistent and widening gap between our climate commitments, as laid down under the 2021 Climate Act and successive international agreements, and our efforts to act in line with these obligations.

Ireland's emissions remain the second-highest per capita in the EU^[2], and they are not falling quickly enough. Projections from the Environmental Protection Agency show, that even with full implementation of planned policies, emissions would be reduced by only 25% by 2030, less than half of the national target of 51%^[3]. Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment, Darragh O'Brien, effectively confirmed this ambition to fail in January 2026, stating that Ireland will miss its 2030 emissions reduction target by half^[4].

The Climate Change Advisory Council and the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council have warned that continuing on this trajectory could result in costs of between 8 and 26 billion euro^[5], representing a “colossal missed opportunity” to instead invest these financial resources domestically in a fast, fair transition. Ultimately, the cost of inaction - both in terms of compliance costs and devastating climate impacts - is infinitely greater than the cost of taking the required action now.

Policy has not been strengthened in response to these repeated warnings. The Climate Action Plan 2026, the legally-mandated annual update to Ireland's climate policies, has still not been published. Climate Action Plan 2026 must be urgently finalised as an emergency plan - a plan that acknowledges and reflects the gravity of the climate crisis and sets out clear, defined measures that can close the gap between our targets and our proposed actions, instead of accepting a shortfall as adequate and unavoidable.

[2] Climate Change Environmental Indicators Ireland 2025 - Global Context and Climate - Central Statistics Office. (2025, December 10).

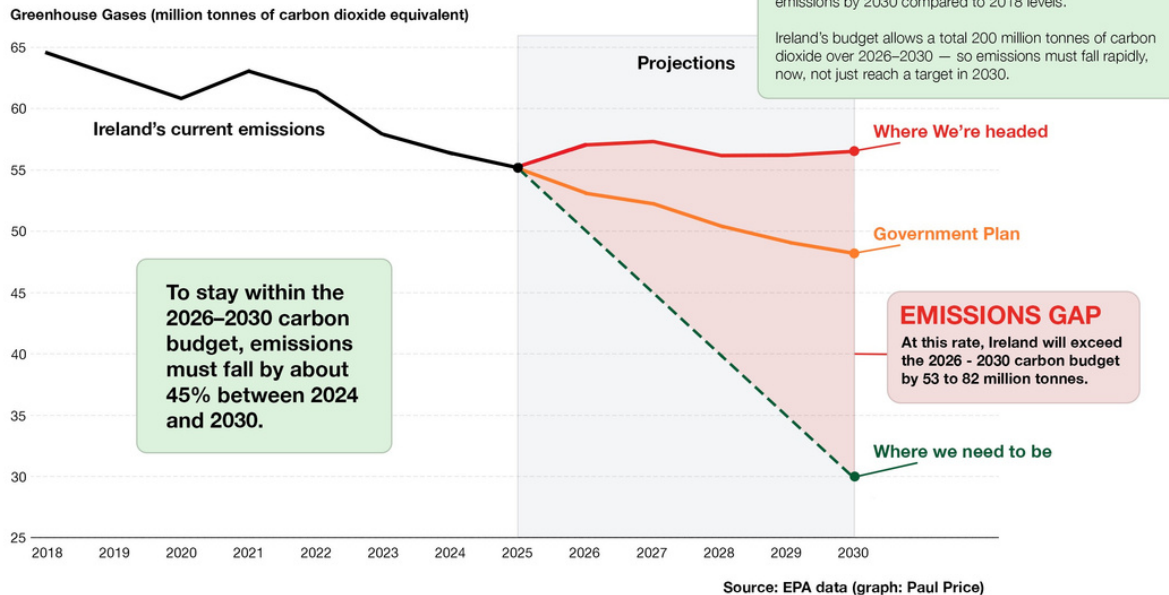
[3] Environmental Protection Agency. (2026). (rep.). Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections

[4] <https://www.irishtimes.com/politics/2026/01/07/ireland-will-miss-emissions-reduction-target-by-half-says-obrien/>

[5] A Colossal Missed Opportunity, Irish Fiscal Advisory Council, 2025

IRELAND NEEDS A MUCH STEEPER FALL IN EMISSIONS TO MEET OUR CLIMATE TARGETS

Even with all current policies, emissions remain far above the pathway needed for the 2026–2030 carbon budget.



Closing the Gap

Closing the climate gap requires that the 2026 Climate Action Plan deliver a decisive shift from climate-laggardism to transformative action. It requires that overarching legal commitments be translated into binding, enforceable and equitable measures that deliver rapid emissions reductions year-on-year. It requires a whole-of-government approach that is not only articulated in plans, but implemented in budgets, legislative programmes and regulatory decisions. It requires a willingness to confront difficult choices, including the need to rapidly phase out fossil fuel dependence and to avoid locking in new fossil infrastructure - a need which has been painfully underscored to many households recently by the escalating energy price crisis.

The Government must end the pattern of deflection, delay and denial that has characterised recent attempts to sidestep climate law and instead uphold and actively champion the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 (as amended), the legally binding pollution limits agreed on a cross-party basis by the Dáil, and the emission reduction goals agreed with our EU partners.

Clean Energy for Households and Communities

While successive Climate Action Plans have committed to 80% renewable electricity by 2030, Government efforts have left us falling far below the trajectory needed to meet this ambition, with projections indicating a share of merely 52-59% by 2030^[6]. This betrays the story of an electricity system structurally unable to meet rapidly rising electricity demand with new renewable generation. Instead of a decisive shift to an electricity system which delivers clean, affordable energy for ordinary people, policy inaction has allowed new demand from data centre developments to outstrip renewable supply^[7], locking in continued reliance on gas^[8] and exposing households to increasingly volatile prices^[9].

Beyond our electricity system, Ireland's residential heat and transport sectors also face interconnected challenges of affordability and sustainability. Many households remain locked into inefficient, fossil fuel-dependent homes, while transport continues to rely heavily on private cars and imported fuels, leaving both sectors exposed to price shocks, supply disruptions and high social and economic costs. Although progress has been made through increased public transport use and retrofitting, delivery remains far below the scale and pace required. Without a rapid acceleration of retrofit, electrification, public transport and active travel infrastructure, Ireland risks remaining locked into high emissions, high costs and missed climate targets.

Regarding agriculture, in addition to the challenge posed by high methane emissions, the sector remains heavily dependent on fossil fuels, particularly diesel for tractors, machinery and transport, leaving small and family farmers vulnerable to fuel price volatility, supply disruptions and rising costs. High upfront costs, limited charging infrastructure and the seasonal use of machinery create barriers to electrification, particularly for smaller farms and contractors.

Alongside these multiple sectoral pressures, in March 2025, the Government approved the development of a state-owned LNG terminal to facilitate the import of expensive and polluting fracked gas^[10] and, in July 2026, fast-track legislation for the terminal was rushed through the Oireachtas. In the midst of a climate emergency the move to introduce a new fossil fuel energy source to the domestic energy mix is counter to sense and science. It would further ensure the locking in of fossil fuel dependence through expanding fossil fuel infrastructure. The provisions of the Dublin Airport (Passenger Cap) legislation and the Critical Infrastructure Act continued the worrying pattern of bypassing Section 15 of the Climate Act, exempting or deeming compliance with a key safeguard intended to ensure public bodies act consistently with both Ireland's climate obligations and the need to reduce fossil fuel dependence. This approach is increasingly difficult to reconcile with the International Court of Justice's 2025 Advisory Opinion, which recognised that a State's failure to take appropriate action to protect the climate system from greenhouse gas emissions, including through "fossil fuel production, fossil fuel consumption, the granting of fossil fuel exploration licences or the provision of fossil fuel subsidies", may constitute an internationally wrongful act^[11].

[6] [Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Projections With Additional Measures \(WAM\) 2025-2030, EPA](#)

[7] [Climate Change Advisory Council \(2026\), Annual Review 2026: Electricity](#)

[8] [Bonserio, T. and Daly, H. \(2026\) 'Data centre expansion in Ireland: the conflict between grid connection policy and national energy and climate targets', Working Paper, Zendo.](#)

[9] [Fearon, S. \(2026\) The Cost of Data Centres](#)

[10] [Government approves development of State-led strategic gas emergency reserve \(2025\), Department of Energy, Climate and Environment](#)

[11] [Obligations of the State in Respect of Climate Change, International Court of Justice, 2025](#)

In the global context, despite not being a major fossil fuel producer, Ireland plays an outsized role as an enabler of investment in the fossil fuel industry, through its status as an international financial hub. As of June 2024, Irish-based subsidiaries of multinational investment companies held €31.76 billion in fossil fuel investments, 96% of which was in corporations expanding fossil fuels^[12]. Ireland's facilitation of investments in the global fossil fuel industry and therefore in emissions occurring elsewhere is a clear example of human rights impacts beyond our own borders.

The Government must now step up and enable Ireland to play its part in the global shift to renewable energy, prioritising this resource for powering homes, schools, and communities, putting people and planet before the profits of big tech, financial and fossil fuel interests.



Photo : Garry Walsh / Trócaire, 2025

Recommendations for Climate Action Plan 2026

Act Now to Phase Out Fossil Fuels

- Urgently publish a Fossil Fuel Phaseout Plan which charts a clear course to ending Ireland's dependence on oil and gas.
- Immediately stop plans for fossil fuel expansion. Keep Ireland free of fracked gas and liquified natural gas imports, and do not permit new fossil fuel importation infrastructure, be it commercial or state-led.

[12] [The hidden truth: Ireland's role in the global fossil fuel industry \(2025\)](#), Action Aid & Trócaire

- Amend the Fossil Fuel Divestment Act 2018 to remove existing loopholes, and ensure that Irish public funds, including the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund, and the Future Ireland Fund, are fully divested from climate-harming industries including fossil fuels and harmful agribusiness.
- Regulate to stop the significant flows of private finance to harmful fossil fuel and industrial agribusiness activities via investment managers registered in Ireland.
- Champion fossil fuel phase-out internationally by endorsing the call for a negotiating mandate on a global Fossil Fuel Treaty.

Ensure Clean, Affordable Energy for People and Communities

- Introduce a permanent windfall tax on the excess profits of fossil fuel companies operating in Ireland, based on similar measures introduced in recent years and precedent in other jurisdictions, earmarking this revenue to support a fair transition to renewables for those struggling under the burden of high energy prices.
- Impose a moratorium on new data centres connecting to the grid until the electricity system has fully been decarbonised. Prohibit connections between data centres and fossil fuel generation in the proposed Private Wires Bill.
- invest in renewable energy infrastructure to achieve a 100% renewable power system by 2035 and drive down gas demand over the next decade to near zero.
- Deliver the 500 MW community energy target through dedicated funding, priority grid access, and a regulatory framework that enables community ownership of renewable energy projects at scale.
- Accelerate electrification and energy resilience in agriculture by incentivising the uptake of electric agricultural machinery, including electric tractors, recognising their potential to provide on-farm energy storage and improve resilience in rural areas vulnerable to electricity disruption.



Photo : Garry Walsh / Trócaire, 2025



Photo : Friends of the Earth, 2024

Keep Climate Promises

- Restore the integrity of Section 15 of the Climate Act by repealing legislative exemptions and deemed compliance provisions introduced through the Strategic Gas Emergency Reserve Act, the Dublin Airport (Passenger Cap) Act, and the Critical Infrastructure Act.
- Omissions from the Sectoral Emissions Ceilings, such as the Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector, means the legal requirement to align sectoral ceilings with the overall carbon budget has not been met. Include all sectors of the economy in the Sectoral Emissions Ceilings and ensure related policies are included in CAP26.
- Ensure no further lock-in to Investor State Dispute Settlement mechanisms that would create regulatory chill and legal and financial risk for the state from required climate action.
- Cut methane emissions, including from agriculture, by at least 30% by 2030, in line with Ireland's commitment to the Global Methane Pledge.
- The proposed Carbon Budgets 3 and 4 (2031-2040) should be subjected to an open and independent peer review process. Temperature neutrality should be rejected as a basis for Ireland's carbon budgets and budgets should be adopted to be in line with Ireland's fair share of limiting global warming to 1.5°C on the basis of equity and the "CBDR-RC" principles set out in the UNFCCC and international climate obligations.



Photo : Garry Walsh / Trócaire, 2025



Photo : Children's Rights Over Flights, 2025

Provide Warm, Affordable, Fossil Fuel-Free Homes for All

- Finalise and publish Ireland's National Social Climate Plan to allow access to vital funds that directly support vulnerable households, communities suffering from energy poverty and those hit hardest by the ongoing energy crisis.
- Introduce the promised minimum BER standards for rental properties immediately, starting with the coldest, most inefficient homes, while also ensuring adequate protections for tenants.
- Prioritise energy poverty measures for marginalised groups, including older people living in badly insulated homes, those in the Traveller community living in trailers, Roma, students, one-parent families, people in emergency accommodation, and tenants renting from private landlords.
- Expand the Warmer Homes Scheme to include HAP tenants, on the condition that a long-term lease is offered.
- Create a targeted retrofit scheme for rural homes that rely on solid fuel, oil or gas boilers, enabling their transition to heat pump systems powered by local solar PV and battery storage.
- Do not introduce any Renewable Heat Obligation that supports HVO or biomethane blending in heating fuel or the gas network, as this will only perpetuate the vulnerability of rural and energy-poor homes to future fossil- and bio-fuel cost increases.



Photo : Mark Steadman, 2025



Photo : Irish Cycling Campaign, 2015

Make Transport Sustainable and Affordable

- Reverse fare hikes and make public transport permanently affordable. Introduce €2 flat 90-minute fares nationwide with integrated daily and weekly caps; make travel free for students and anyone under-26; and protect and expand free travel for older people, people with disabilities and carers.
- Build on existing cost-benefit appraisals to assess this full fare package, explicitly accounting for the wider economic and social costs and benefits, including impacts on congestion, emissions, air pollution, road traffic collisions and car dependency.
- Guarantee a school bus place for anyone who wants one. Roll out School Streets and Safe Routes to Schools to every school and a connected segregated cycle network in both rural and urban areas, ensuring a safe route to school by walking or cycling for anyone who lives within 3km.
- Fast track new public transport over new road construction, particularly progressing a metropolitan rail system in Limerick, DART+, and new Luas lines for Cork, Galway, Waterford, and Dublin.
- Increase investment in active transport to €500 million per annum.
- Prevent further growth of aviation emissions by developing a clear, targeted pathway to aviation decarbonisation, including the re-introduction of Ireland's air travel tax, private jet taxation, and the inclusion of international aviation in Ireland's carbon budgets.



Photo : Garry Walsh / Trócaire, 2019



Photo : Garry Walsh / Trócaire, 2019



Photo : Mark Steadman, 2023

A Just Transition Where No One is Left Behind

- Ensure all climate policies and actions promote equality and address pre-existing inequalities including those based on gender, social class, race/ethnicity, religion and disability amongst others.
- Develop and publish a whole-of-government National Just Transition Strategy that applies across all sectors of the economy and embeds social justice, equality and public participation in climate policy.
- Recognise care work as essential green work and key to our Just Transition, ensuring it is well-paid work and included meaningfully in Irish climate policy.
- Strengthen and resource an autonomous community sector, particularly in marginalised areas and amongst marginalised groups, to ensure their input into climate policies and actions.
- Urgently convene a National Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture and Land Use to develop a shared long-term vision for Irish agriculture, grounded in Just Transition Principles.



Photo : Mark Steadman , 2025

Meet Our International Climate and Human Rights Obligations

- To align with the 1.5°C limit and equity, the EU must raise its climate ambition to achieve domestic net zero by 2040 at the latest, and the Irish Government must use its Presidency to drive this ambition. The 2040 target, including possible international credits, does not represent a fair share approach and risks weakening climate action, undermining environmental integrity and human rights, and delaying the EU's economic transformation. Any integration of international credits to the EU's post 2030 climate policy framework must be rejected, as it would further weaken an already inadequate 2040 target that does not reflect the EU's fair share of action.
- Announce new and additional grant-based climate finance pledges so that Ireland can meet its fair share of climate finance for mitigation and adaptation. This was estimated at €500 million per annum under the old \$100 billion commitment which ended in 2025 but will increase from 2026, in line with the NCQG and rising climate finance needs that exceed the NCQG.
- Urgently scale up Ireland's contributions to the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage through significant, new, and innovative sources of public finance grounded in the polluter pays principle, and work with international partners to develop a pathway to delivering Ireland's fair share of Loss and Damage finance of €1.5 billion per annum by 2030.



Photo : Mark Steadman, 2025

This report provides context, recommendations and resources for climate action and policy development and implementation is based on climate justice and science to advance Ireland's progress to a stable society, environment and economy free from fossil-fuels.

Stop Climate Chaos call for the urgent climate action that is ambitious and fair, ensuring that climate action is pursued for the public good. Ireland, and countries across the world, are at a fundamental moment where leadership, and dedicated and critical action must be taken to stop all out climate chaos.

Our Vision

That Ireland makes a rapid and just transition to a carbon-free future.

Our Values

We will strive for climate action that respects and promotes:

- Science
- Human rights
- Public participation
- Social justice
- Equality
- The natural environment
- Creativity, diversity and persistence in our campaigning

Members

Aontas na Mac Léinn, Action Aid, Afri, An Taisce, BirdWatch Ireland, CBM, Children's Rights Over Flights, Christian Aid, Climate Justice Universities Union, Comhlámh, Community Work Ireland, Concern Worldwide, Congregation of Dominican Sisters Cabra, Cultivate, Dublin Friends of the Earth, Eco Congregation Ireland, ECO-UNESCO, Environmental Justice Network Ireland, Fairseas Ireland, Feasta, Friends of the Earth, Friends of the Irish Environment, Good Energies Alliance Ireland, Irish Cycling Campaign, Irish Development Education Association, Irish Second-Level Students' Union, Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, Just Forests, Le Chéile, Latin America Solidarity Centre, Methodist Church of Ireland- Council of Social Responsibility, National Youth Council of Ireland, National Women's Council, Oxfam Ireland, Opportunity Green, Parents for Future Ireland, Presentation Ireland, STAND, Trócaire, V.O.I.C.E., Vita, World Vision



Photo : Stop Climate Chaos, 2007

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