Recommendations from Climate Change Advisory Council Annual Review 2023	Status	Notes	Source	Source	Source		Key
Previous Council recommendations remain critical, namely that an adaptation budget is set for 2030 and an assessment of what is required to make Ireland resilient by 2050 and beyond is undertaken, based on agreed consistent criteria. Specific funding for adaptation is needed from relevant departments, regulators and local authorities. Investment from the private sector is essential to leverage the level of public finance currently available for adaptation.	Ignored	There is no such adaptation budget.					Ignored: the State has taken no action on this.
Erosion, sea level rise and coastal storm events are being magnified by the changing climate. A clear and fit-for- purpose Coastal Management Strategy is urgently needed to help actively manage our changing coastlines and to support communities, businesses and households most at risk to build resilience.	Delayed	Such a strategy has been significantly delayed.	1				Delayed: the State has committed to this but insufficient progress has been made, or it was achieved significantly after the original timeline.
To measure the mainstreaming and impact of adaptation actions, it is recommended that a set of national adaptation indicators be established over the coming 12 months. The use of measurable key performance indicators and timelines should also be strengthened in the next set of guidelines for sectoral adaptation plans, and the implementation of these plans should be monitored and evaluated regularly.	Ignored	The Council continues to view the sectoral adaptation plans as insufficient in this regard	1				Committed: the State has committed to this and it is on track for implementation
It is essential that the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications ensures policy coherence between the new National Adaptation Framework, the next iteration of sectoral adaptation plans and the local authority climate action plans that are currently under development.	Ignored	Gaps with the Sectoral Adaptation Plans and their poor alignment with key risks has been criticised by the Council this year.	1				Implemented: this is current policy and practice in the State.
There is a greater need for a mixture of top-down and bottom-up approaches and to engage communities, non- governmental organisations and the private sector in adaptation planning and implementation. This should be promoted through the new National Adaptation Framework, the next iteration of sectoral adaptation plans and the local authority climate action plans.	Ignored	Again the Council has found serious issues with the Sectoral Adaptation Plans. Moreover, the restrictions on access to environmental justice by for example the introduction of the fees cap and the provisions of the Critical Infrastructure Act restrict people's ability to participate in environmental decision-making.					
The importance of an all-island approach to climate action is well documented and should be developed further, especially in relation to critical infrastructure and the management of cross-border natural systems.	Ignored	Meaningful progress has not been made on this front.	1				
The unallocated emissions reductions set out in National Climate Action Plan (NCAP) 2023, and the delay in setting a sectoral emissions ceiling for the LULUCF sector, continue to create uncertainty. Increased ambition within and across sectors is necessary to achieve the overall objectives.	Ignored	The sector still lacks an emissions ceiling.					
Government must redouble efforts to accelerate the deployment and prioritisation of key mitigation measures across departments and their agencies to make up lost ground.	Ignored	We are projected to significantly exceed our emissions targets.	1				
The Council strongly recommends that urgent action is taken to reform and resource planning, licensing and regulatory systems across all levels of Government to achieve the level of investment, particularly in infrastructure, required to reduce emissions at the pace required by 2030	Ignored	While the planning system's resourcing has been increased, reforms have been in the opposite direction of environmental progress, e.g. the passenger cap removal, the cap on fees for environmental litigants, and the expansion of one off rural housing.					
Delays in the implementation of critical actions which make a meaningful contribution to the reduction of emissions in the near term mean that steeper emission reductions will be required in the future in order to remain within the carbon budgets. Government departments need to analyse and communicate the expected annual reductions in emissions in response to implementation of policy. In this way, progress can be monitored, with critical delays and underperformance identified and addressed.	Ignored	This is not established practice. The land use sector's lack of an emissions ceiling is glaring.	1				
Government must increase and better coordinate efforts to support all members of society in making the transition through the prioritisation, adequate resourcing and delivery of meaningful dialogue and engagement with civil society to help individual and societal behavioural change.	Ignored	The cessation of the Climate Conversations demonstrate a decline in stakeholder engagement.	1				
The Renewable Electricity Spatial Policy Framework and the revised onshore wind energy development guidelines are crucial and should be published by Q3 2023 at the latest to provide the necessary spatial planning guidance to support the scaled-up deployment of renewable electricity across the country.	Delayed	These guidelines were still outlined in the most recent Climate Action Plan Progress Report	1				
An Bord Pleanála, local authorities, the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority, the National Parks & Wildlife Service and other agencies must be sufficiently resourced to process the volume of onshore and offshore planning applications and associated grid infrastructure in line with the statutory timeframes for planning decisions.	Delayed	MARA has attracted criticism for significant delays in wind farm planning.	1				
A streamlined and swift permit assessment process for lifetime extension and repowering of existing onshore renewables in line with RePowerEU timelines must be implemented to guard against a significant loss of existing onshore capacity.	Delayed	Progress on this is still ongoing.	1				
Action to facilitate hybrid technology grid connections and 'private wire' networks has been delayed and must be prioritised and delivered by Q4 2023	Delayed	This was not achieved in 2023.	1				

Recommendations from Climate Change Advisory Council Annual Review 2023	Status	Notes	Source	Source	Source		Key
The failure to deliver the necessary generation capacity in the context of a forecast increase in electricity demand has undermined previous commitments to close the Moneypoint coal-fired generation plant in 2025. It is critical to phase out the use of coal in electricity generation in the near term and focus on the necessary revision of the capacity market to ensure that 2GW of new flexible gas-fired generation (which is green hydrogen ready) is delivered on time.	Ignored	Moneypoint will be retained until 2029.	1				
The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) review of the regulatory treatment of storage, due later this year and including licensing and market incentives, is crucial for increasing the flexibility of Ireland's electricity system and must be delivered on time. Further policies are essential to incentivise short- and long-duration storage to balance and optimise electricity demand and variable renewable generation.	Delayed	Ireland has some storage of long duration but we have capacity for far more.	1				
The Council regrets the delay in publication of the Electricity Demand Side Strategy, which was originally due in 2022, and urges that it is available not later than Q4 2023. This strategy is fundamental to achieving Ireland's electricity sector decarbonisation targets and the Council calls on the multiple Government departments and agencies involved in collaboration with industry to swiftly and efficiently implement the strategy.	Delayed	The Energy Demand Strategy was published in Q3 2024.	1				
Targets for 20–30% demand side flexibility, particularly for large energy users such as data centres, should be based primarily on shifting demand to times when the output of renewable energy from the system is high and avoid the use of on-site high-emission generation.	Ignored	Demand side flexibility is primarily created through Demand Side Units which often rely on on-site generation, and are not always responsive to requests regardless. We did not meet our 2025 target and will not meet our 2030 target. The Commission for Regulation of Utilities' Large Energy Users Connection Policy require 80% of on-site generation to be renewable after six years. The Council have found that this allows for increased gas usage by data centres, when accounting for the sector's growth.	1	2	3		
A clearer legislative basis to support the widest possible access to smart metering data needs to be progressed as a matter of urgency to address a significant barrier to the uptake of time-of-use tariffs.	Delayed	This was only published in March 2025, after delays.	1	2			
A review of the effectiveness of initiatives such as the 'Beat-the-Peak' pilot schemes and the 'Reduce Your Use' campaign should be conducted.	Ignored	No such review has been conducted.					
Ireland's transport system needs to make accessible, sustainable transport modes more attractive and shift away from car dependency through consideration of the proximity between people and places in land use and housing planning.	Ignored	No action in the new housing plan relates to compact planning and the government has allowed an expansion of rural one off housing. There's been a failure to deliver a sustainable rural mobility plan.					
The compact growth target in the current National Planning Framework is insufficiently ambitious to achieve the low carbon transition in the transport sector. The review of the National Planning Framework needs to reassess how Ireland approaches compact growth (housing density) and how it is measured from a spatial perspective.	Ignored	The target of 40% was retained.	1				
Poor economic incentives for urban brownfield/infill development need to be addressed in order to limit further urban sprawl, along with the development of improved incentives for urban living and the revitalisation of vacant urban buildings.	Ignored	While there is increased funding for urban regeneration projects in deprived areas it is still economically unattractive for many, and urban sprawl continues. New zoning provisions exacerbate that.	1				
Urgent investment is needed to improve the accessibility and reliability of public transport services in addition to road space reallocation, along with a fully interactive app with improved data on bus reliability and capacity. The ongoing programme of Public Service Obligation bus fleet replacement and depot charging upgrades should be expanded and accelerated with a focus on the electrification of public transport to support air quality goals.	Ignored	Progress made, but serious issues, e.g. bus charging points and buses continuing to be inaccessible. We are also far off target regarding the electrification of the bus fleet.	1	2			
The Council recommends that choices need to be made now on the design and implementation of demand management measures through the development of the National Demand Management Strategy. This should use proven approaches to drive behavioural change such as road pricing (e.g. congestion charging, low-emission zones), parking restraints and fuel pricing. The Taxsaver commuter ticket scheme and the cycle to work scheme should be updated, alongside the implementation of Part 18B of theFinance Act (No. 2) of 2008 (Parking Levy in Urban Areas) in the major urban centres of Cork, Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Waterford	Delayed	The strategy was only published in 2026, after being brought to government two years prior.	1				
The current reduction in school transport scheme fees and in public transport fares should be continued in Budget 2024. Access to school buses under the scheme should be significantly expanded. The Council recommends an assessment of the impact to date of the reduction in public transport fares on emission reduction as an input to longer term fare strategy development.	Implemented	Fare reductions were extended in Budget 2024.	1				
Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines should include specific actions and indicators in respect of accessibility, modal shift and active travel. The local authority of each city should introduce park and ride schemes along major arterial roads (by 1 January 2030), as well as produce (by 1 January 2025) and deliver (by 1 January 2030) a plan to reduce the number of public city centre parking spaces	Ignored	This expectation is not included in the LACAP Guidelines.	1				

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Motor Tax should be recalibrated to promote resource and energy efficient vehicles and should escalate year by year. Vehicle Registration Tax percentage rates for all category A vehicles (EU category M1) bands, except the least-polluting band, should also increase.	Ignored	There has been no action in this area.					
Electric vehicles present a means of achieving significant reductions in emissions, particularly in rural areas, and improvements in the charging infrastructure and incentives for uptake are important measures in the short term. A policy for the roll-out of vehicle-to-grid-enabled electric vehicles with bidirectional home charging should also be urgently prepared.	Ignored	There is no such policy.					
It is recommended that the target for commercial electric vehicles should be increased to 150,000 by 2030 from the current target of 95,000 to support decarbonisation of commercial vehicle activity, with consideration of additional incentives to support adoption by businesses.	Ignored	There has been no change.					
The Council welcomes work carried out in the last year to assess the challenges associated with biofuel blending and recommends continued assessment and transparent reporting in this area.	Implemented	Work continues in this area but questions could be raised regarding transparency, as seen in the second linked parliamentary question.	1	2			
A national certification/accreditation system for eco- driving programmes as identified in the Road Haulage Strategy (December 2022) should be established immediately along with a policy for the development of freight consolidation centres. A step up in ambition is also required on the future role of Ireland's rail network in order to significantly increase the proportion of inland freight tonnage moved by rail.	Delayed	Regarding the development of a policy on freight consolidation centres, the feasibility study set out as an action in the Road Haulage Strategy 2022-2031 is still ongoing.	1				
Ireland needs to develop a strategy for increasing the share of sustainably sourced aviation fuels.	Implemented	There is a roadmap on sustainable aviation fuel but it doesn't say anything about the share required.	1				
Clear policy choices need to be made about the long-term roll-out of low-carbon heat sources in Ireland's existingbuildings and the interaction between support for districtheating and deep retrofits to support heat pump installation.Introducing evidence-based zoning for district heating at thelocal authority level and comprehensive characterisation ofheat sources is crucial to progression. It is essential thatfurther research and consolidation of information on the ageof dwellings, location and specific heating systems acrossdwelling types is undertaken to support urgent delivery ofthis ambition.	Ignored	There has been minimal progress on district heating to date.	1				
The Council recommends that best practice examples from other jurisdictions are followed in terms of the roll-out, governance framework and management of district heating networks, with clear enabling legislation required urgently in this area.	Ignored	There has been minimal progress on district heating to date.	1				
Large energy users, and data centres in particular, should be obliged to build in a heat export ability at the time of construction to allow simple connection to future district heating networks. Existing data centres should progressively retrofit these.	Ignored	There is no such obligation in the Large Energy User Action Plan.	1				
Budget 2024 should set a target of 100% of social housing being raised to a building energy rating (BER) of B2 or connected to a district heating network by 2030, with retrofit measures prioritised in areas where it is unlikely that district heating networks can provide a solution. This should be supported by utilisation of local authority and Census 2022 data to assist local authorities in configuring their local authority climate action plans (LACAPs) for residential heat	Ignored	There is no such commitment.					
Significant acceleration is required to the rate of retrofit in Ireland. Properties that primarily use peat and/or coal as their heating fuels, particularly in open fireplaces, should be specifically targeted for grants for retrofitting and connection to low-carbon heating systems within the next 2 years.	Ignored	There is no such targeting.					
The Council recommends developing a register of interested homeowners via local authorities to facilitate bulk discount retrofits among residents and collective purchase schemes. Consideration should be given to expanding the pilot under way in Fingal County to other local authorities to carry out aggregate retrofit projects in housing estates with a mix of social and private housing to achieve efficiencies of scale and attractive schemes for contractors.	Delayed	SEAI is working on bulk retrofits but there has been no success or expansion thus far.					
Green financing solutions to assist homeowners and businesses to access longer term low cost rates are essential to address some of the barriers to decarbonisation in this sector. While low-cost personal loans supported by national and EU risk sharing mechanisms are to be welcomed, mortgage providers should be encouraged to provide finance solutions for retrofits based on green mortgage structure and pricing to improve long-term affordability and encourage broader uptake of retrofitting initiatives.	Implemented	Implemented, although the business grants were timebound and are already closed.	1	2			
It is recommended that climate maps and data which take account of current and projected climate factors are reflected in future building regulations to enhance resilience in support of adaptation to climate change.	Implemented	This has happened.	1				
The preparation of a decarbonisation roadmap for industrial heat based on the recommendations of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) National Heat Study must be delivered by Q4 2023 and provide clear signals for the industry to identify appropriate locations for an intensified roll-out of industrial-scale heat pumps for medium-temperature heating, along with examining links to biomethane to achieve total decarbonisation.	Delayed	The Council reported delayed and partial delivery. Some recommendations of the SEAI Heat Study remain undelivered.	1				

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Given the high costs of energy it is essential that there is a greater emphasis on energy efficiency for small and medium-sized enterprises in the National Climate Action Plan (NCAP) 2024, to be assisted by knowledge sharing, research and supports from Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, SEAI and local enterprise offices and other Government agencies with industrial policy and broader cross-cutting policy mandates	Implemented	The Council cite a number of ways this has been fulfilled.	1				
It is recommended that the action in NCAP 2023 to specify low-carbon construction methods and low-carbon cement material as far as practicable for publicly procured or supported construction projects be made mandatory.	Implemented	This is now an obligation under the Public Service Mandate	1				
The NCAP 2023 commitment to increase the use of timber in construction to replace cement is welcome. However, the building regulations will need to be updated to support the use of timber in construction, and detailed policies to implement this change along with clear timelines for its delivery are required, for example how the use of timber frames in construction will be realised and its linkage to commercial forestry in Ireland.	Ignored	This was not an outcome of the Timber in Construction Steering Group's work.	1				
Greater efforts to reduce the emissions intensity of cement and concrete used in construction are required. The use of innovative lower carbon cements and concretes, for example, by replacing clinker with lower carbon cementitious materials, need to be facilitated in both national and European standards.	Ignored	Outside of public procurement change described above, there are no new regulations around clinker.	1				
To achieve targets there is need for increased focus on food waste and food packaging waste segregation in businesses and households, including public education campaigns and economic incentives such as deposit return schemes.	Ignored	We missed the 2025 municipal waste target.	1				
The Council welcomes the EPA's development of national end-of-waste criteria for recycled aggregates due in September 2023 and is calling on the Department of the Environment, Climate, and Communications to promote markets for the reuse of construction and demolition waste as secondary raw materials in construction engineering processes.	Ignored	The Circular Economy Strategy makes reference to the EPA's work but makes no new commitments for promotion of markets.	1				
Farmers need to be supported to diversify on-farm activities to reduce emissions and enhance carbon removals. Co-benefits for mitigation, adaptation, water quality and biodiversity should be pursued and impacts monitored. These supports should be provided on the basis of payments for ecosystem services.	Ignored	We are falling short of targets for example around organic farming and straw incorporation and agricultural emissions continue to exceed their ceiling.	1	2			
The recently published marginal abatement cost curvefrom Teagasc (July 2023) identifies pathways to meet theagricultural sectoral emission ceiling by 2030. Governmentshould ensure a rapid uptake of the proven and effectivemitigation measures across the agricultural sector. Theseinclude a reduction in the average finishing age of cattle of 3months; replacing 90% of calcium ammonium nitratefertiliser and 100% of straight urea with protected urea; theuse of feed additives to reduce enteric methane in half ofdairy cows and the uptake of diversification options todisplace 140,000 livestock units. This will require providingappropriate incentives and support including advisoryservices, training and resources.	Ignored	CAP24 and CAP25 didn't increase targets to meet MACC recommmendations.	1	2			
The National Biomethane Strategy, due in Q3 2023, combined with the Renewable Heat Obligation Scheme, due in Q4 2023, should clearly set out holistic policies for income diversification opportunities for farmers; the volumes of fossil fuel substitution and emission reductions expected, and the potential for employment in the rural economy.	Delayed	The Renewable Heat Obligation Scheme has still not been introduced.	1				
Mitigation measures identified in the National Climate Action Plan (NCAP) 2023 for diversification could not be incorporated into the EPA's projections modelling because of a lack of detail in policy design and plans for implementation. Council recommends that the policies and measures are sufficiently detailed to ensure inclusion in subsequent EPA projections scenarios.	Ignored	Diversification continues to not be included in the model due to an unclear implementation pathway.	1				
Agriculture is also responsive to market signals. Government should invest strongly in consumer information initiatives, with the support of retail outlets and consumer organisations, to better inform consumer choice in relation to sustainable diets. The initiatives should include cross-sectoral issues of food waste and food packaging. This will provide the necessary market signals to food processors and primary producers to enhance the environmental sustainability of the food system.	Ignored	There haven't been new consumer information campaigns strongly invested in.	1	2			
The Council recommends that Government fully reflect the agreed EU LULUCF target when establishing the LULUCF sectoral emissions ceiling	Ignored	The LULUCF sector still has no emissions ceiling.					
Afforestation rates remain very low. The Council strongly recommends that Government immediately put in place the necessary resources to streamline and accelerate processes to implement the new Forestry Programme 2023–2027 following State aid approval	Ignored	We are continuing to fail to meet targets.	1				
Improved understanding of the impact of afforestation on drained peatlands indicates that historical planting onthese lands had adverse impacts on climate and biodiversity.The Council recommends that Government recogniseslandowners' need for resources and practical guidance tobest manage these areas, including options for rewetting andrehabilitation, to enhance their carbon storage capacity andresilience to climate change. In addition, review and revisionof the primary legislation regarding afforestation and themanagement of existing forest should be considered.	Ignored	Further uncertainty was created by ministerial recommendation of policy reversal, and certain kinds of planting on peatland is allowed.	1	2			

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The extraction of peat for horticulture is unsustainable and must cease. There remain a number of enterprises that continue to extract peat, in a number of instances without planning permission or an environmental licence. The government in collaboration with industry should enable the necessary research and development to identify alternative sustainable horticultural substrates.	Ignored	It has not stopped.	1				
An ambitious and adequately resourced policy framework is needed for the conservation and restoration of biodiversity. This framework should be aligned with and support the achievement of the National Climate Objective.	Ignored	The Council identified many weaknesses with the Biodiversity Action Plan.	1				
A holistic and coordinated across Government approach to nature-based solutions is now needed, targeting different land uses and habitats, including the urban and built environment, coastal and marine habitats, agricultural land, forests, peatlands, and riverine and freshwater environments. All sectors and local authorities should identify and implement appropriate nature-based solutions and integrate them within climate action plans and sectoral adaptation plans.	Ignored	All local authority CAPs and almost all Sectoral Adaptation Plans have commitments around NBP, with the exception of health.	1				
he Council recommends that the restoration of degraded carbon stocks such as peatlands, salt marshes and seabed grasses within special areas of conservation, special protected areas and national heritage areas should be prioritised	Ignored	Peatlands continue being degraded.	1				
he Council recommends that evidence-informed Just Transition pathways to reduce national greenhouse gas emissions and to build adaptive capacity and resilience towards climate change are developed across all sectors.	Ignored	A just transition approach has not been integrated into climate action plans.	1	2			
The Council recommends that a set of national indicators is identified to measure the implementation of the Just Transition principles across policy actions.	Delayed	This has still not materialised.	1				
The need for sustained dialogue with representatives from across all of Irish society is required to ensure equitable and fair outcomes. This should be grounded in evidence based best practice that ensures an inclusive representation of Irish society. Therefore, it is recommended that a transparent methodological approach is identified that supports the implementation of social dialogues that are grounded in evidence-based best practice.	Committed	Unclear whether this will happen; the National Dialogue on Climate Action is under review.	1				
Understanding vulnerability in the context of a Just Transition is essential. Vulnerability assessments across society, the economy, the environment and health are required to ensure a Just Transition across all sectors. This will ensure the protection of workers and those who will be negatively affected by the transition but will also identify vulnerable groups more broadly such as vulnerable communities.	Ignored	Some Sectoral Adaptation Plans do not include vulnerability analysis across society.	1	2			
To ensure that Just Transition principles are being embedded across the development and implementation of climate policies, engaging strategic expert advice through the establishment of a Just Transition Commission is recommended	Ignored	Policies that fly in the face of JT are evident, like the removal of the Dublin Airport passenger cap and limits on one off rural housing. There is no evidence of engagement with JTC on these measures.					