



## **Climate Strategy & Roadmap**



## Climate

# Action Roadmap

## Contents

1. Introduction.
2. The Léargas Commitment to the Climate Action Plan
3. Léargas Climate Action Plan Pillars
4. Actions for Léargas
5. Léargas Climate Roadmap.

## Introduction.



In the Programme for Government and the Climate Act 2021, Ireland has committed to halving our greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest. The Climate Action Plan (CAP) intended as the methodology to deliver this, with its aim to a secure future for us and future generations.

Key Areas of impact as set out by the CAP are as follows;

### **ELECTRICITY**

Among the most important measures in the plan is to increase the proportion of renewable electricity to up to 80% by 2030, including an increased target of up to 5 Gigawatts of offshore wind energy. This will not just reduce our emissions from electricity, it will allow us to electrify other sectors such as transport and heat and reduce our emissions in these sectors too. In addition to the upcoming microgeneration support scheme for householders the government will introduce a small-scale generator scheme for farmers, business, and communities to generate their own electricity and feed into the grid. As well as developing improved storage, we will also begin to deploy renewable gas such as biomethane and green hydrogen. The government will review its strategy on data centres to ensure that the sector will be in alignment with sectoral emissions ceilings and support renewable energy targets. [62%-81% reduction in emissions by 2030]

### **ENTERPRISE**

The green economy, including retrofitting, renewable energy, clean mobility, and sustainable agriculture will create high quality employment, and the IDA will also seek to attract businesses to invest in decarbonisation technologies. The IDA, Enterprise Ireland and the SEAI will work to help decarbonise industry and align grants and other supports with emissions reductions. The government

will also produce a Climate Toolkit for business. Among the measures to cut emissions are increasing the uptake of carbon-neutral heating and decreasing the embodied carbon in building materials through using more wood in construction. [24-37% reduction in emissions by 2030]

## **BUILDINGS**

Government has already committed to retrofit 500,000 homes by 2030 (including increased funding through the National Development Plan particularly for free upgrades for low-income households) and will install 680,000 renewable energy heat sources in both new and existing residential buildings. We recognise that we will need work out ways to assist broader society with the costs of retrofitting. The new National Retrofit Plan will drive demand, make retrofitting more affordable, and expand the capacity of the industry including training of workers. A further 3 specialist training centres will be established. Other measures include increased targets for district heating and the public sector and strengthening building standards for all buildings. [44-56% reduction in emissions by 2030]



## **TRANSPORT**

The plan calls for a significant cut in transport emissions by 2030 through measures including:

- 500,000 extra walking, cycling and public transport journeys per day by 2030
- Increasing the proportion of kilometres driven by passenger electric cars to between 40 and 45% by 2030, in addition to a reduction of 10% in kilometres driven by the remaining internal combustion engine cars
- All replacements for bus and commuter rail vehicles and carriages to be low or zero carbon by 2030
- Increased rollout of rural public transport through Connecting Ireland. [42-50% reduction in emissions by 2030]

## **AGRICULTURE**

Farmers know the land better than anyone. We will empower farmers with a science-based approach, backed by robust research. Farm practices that enable farmers to produce world-class food with a lower carbon footprint are key. The plan commits to using less chemical nitrogen and more targeted use of fertiliser, while maintaining the same level of grass growth through multi-species swards. Other measures include improving the genetics of our herds to reduce emissions and improve productivity. We will also incentivise increased organic farming and diversification into forestry, biomethane and energy production. [22-30% reduction in emissions by 2030]

## **LAND USE**

Ireland's land use, land use change and forestry sector is currently a carbon source rather than a carbon sink. To reduce emissions and move to being an overall store of carbon, will involve further

bog rehabilitation, increased afforestation, improved management of grasslands on mineral soils, increasing the use of cover crops in tillage, and the rewetting of organic soils. A new forestry programme will be prepared for launch in 2023. [37-58% reduction in emissions by 2030]

## **CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

The Circular Economy and the Bioeconomy offer alternatives to today's linear 'take-make-waste' model of production. This will be supported by the publication of a Whole-of-Government Circular Economy Strategy, the enactment of the Circular Economy Bill 2021, and the development of a Bioeconomy Action Plan. We will reduce food waste by 50% and will ensure that all plastic packaging is reusable or recyclable by 2030. We will also increase our capacity to recycle packaging waste by 70%, and plastic package waste by 55%.



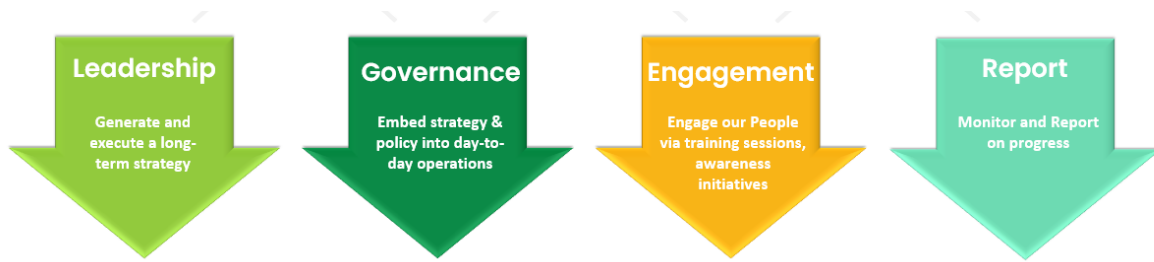
## **PUBLIC SECTOR**

The Public Sector will lead by example in this transition by reducing emissions by 51% by 2030, by mandating public sector employers, colleges, and other public sector bodies to move to 20% home and remote working, by introducing a sustainable mobility policy, by replacing all buses with electric vehicles by 2035 and by tripling the length of electrified rail by 2030.

## **The Léargas Commitment to the Climate Action Plan**

Léargas is committed to adopting the principals and guidelines as set out by the action plan were relevant and practical considering the size and scope of our organisation. We aim to set about reducing our environmental impact and ensuring long term sustainability of Léargas, by adopting the Climate Roadmap which promotes approaches to environmental awareness and action among its staff and relevant stakeholders.

## **Léargas Climate Action Plan Pillars**



## **Actions for Léargas**

### **Energy Efficiency Measures:**

1. Conduct an energy audit to identify areas of energy waste and prioritize improvements.
2. Install energy-efficient lighting systems, such as LED bulbs, and encourage staff to turn off lights when not in use.
3. Upgrade office equipment and appliances to energy-efficient models.
4. Explore the potential to implement smart thermostats and heating controls to optimize energy usage, and setting air-conditioning to the recommended 19 degrees.
5. Promote energy-saving habits among employees, such as powering off computers and other devices when not in use.



### **Transportation and Commuting:**

1. Encourage employees to carpool, use public transportation, walk, or cycle to work.
2. Provide incentives for sustainable commuting, such as subsidies for public transport passes or bicycle purchase programs.
3. Promote telecommuting and flexible work schedules to reduce commuting needs.

### **Waste Reduction and Recycling:**

1. Implement a waste management plan that focuses on reducing waste generation and increasing recycling rates.
2. Provide recycling bins throughout the organisation's premises and ensure clear signage for proper waste disposal.
3. Educate employees about waste reduction practices, such as reducing paper usage, promoting digital documentation, and using reusable cups and containers.

### **Employee Engagement and Education:**

1. Raise awareness about climate change and the organisation's sustainability goals through internal communications and workshops.
2. Encourage employee engagement by establishing a green team or sustainability committee to drive initiatives and gather ideas.

3. Offer training sessions on sustainable practices and provide resources for employees to adopt eco-friendly behaviours both at work and at home.

#### **Collaboration and Advocacy:**

1. Engage with industry associations, local communities, and other organisations to share best practices and collaborate on sustainability projects.
2. Participate in relevant sustainability events, conferences, or initiatives to stay informed and connected to broader sustainability networks.
3. Advocate for stronger climate policies and support local and national initiatives promoting renewable energy and sustainable practices.
4. Léargas will ask all our current and future suppliers for their environmental policies, for evidence of implementation of such policies and indicate that such performance will be used as criteria for supplier selection.
5. Léargas considers fair-trade and equity in selecting products.
6. Establish procurement contracts with companies offering environmentally preferable purchasing options.

#### **Water Use**

1. Staff make every effort to conserve water daily. Whenever possible, staff will promote and provide tap water and avoid the use of bottled water during meetings.
2. Léargas provides water dispensers in the office and staff are provided with renewable and sustainable bottles for personal use

#### **Meeting & Event Planning**

Staff will make every effort to conduct meetings with minimal environmental impacts and promote environmental conservation. Whenever possible, we will:

1. Consider online meetings as a sustainable option, where suitable
2. Review the work of meetings to reduce committee sizes and frequency of meetings and use online meeting facilities as appropriate
3. Consider attendance at meetings on every occasion, staff should only attend when an active role is required.
4. Minimize carbon emissions from travel by promoting non-motorised travel, public transport, through taxi-sharing lists, shuttle services taxi shares and where necessary private car /transport and public transportation.
5. Eliminate bottled water, in favour of tap or filtered water.
6. Eliminate disposable products and encourage the use of biodegradable and reusable products, including dining items.
7. Make sure recycling bins are easily accessible at meals and breaks if there will be recyclable materials present.
8. Consider public transportation options, the city or region's conservation projects or "walkability," when selecting a location.

9. Support facilities with recycling programs, efficient water use equipment, and other green initiatives
10. Limit hard copy handouts and make programs and itineraries available online or on posted signage.
11. Print double-sided on any necessary hard copy materials.
12. Encourage a badge return at the end of the conference or use only sustainable badge materials

#### **Governance:**

1. Have a formal policy in place on green / sustainable matters.
2. Embed in day-to-day practices covering matters such as Procurement.
3. Ensure relevant filings such as SEAI and Carbon usage returns are submitted on time
4. Review and report performance.

#### **Offsetting**

As an island and as an agency which supports the benefits of intercultural and international exchange, we acknowledge the necessity of Air Travel and its high carbon impact. We commit in 2023 to exploring the options available to responsibly offset this impact, considering our scale, structure, and resourcing.

Consider including a section on education, training and awareness. Target groups include staff as well as current and potential beneficiaries.

#### **Digital footprint**

While minimising paper use is valuable, data storage has its own environmental impact, therefore Léargas will consider and review digital practices with a view to the followings:

1. Training and support for staff on the impact of digital activity: File Management, retention and file sharing
2. Considering when video calls are needed vs voice calls - video calls use significant bandwidth

## **Léargas Project Beneficiaries**

Léargas manages the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes in Ireland. Both of these programmes have specific priorities regarding the environment, climate change and sustainability.

As such, all projects and activities which are funded or otherwise supported under these programmes are expected to consider their environmental impact and include sustainable actions.

This is built into the award criteria for applicants, and they may gain or lose points in their application score based on how they have addressed the question. In addition, projects which choose to use



“green travel” methods can benefit from additional funding and time allowed in order to reach their destination in a low-impact way.

Further actions we can take:

1. Provide training and guidance for beneficiaries on implementing their projects in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
2. Share resources and best practices from around Europe with current beneficiaries as well as applicants
3. Offer specific guidance and best practice examples of green travel to applicants and beneficiaries in the context of living on an island.
4. Promote the green priorities of our programmes in our communications activities.

## Léargas Climate Roadmap



As a small organisation committed to sustainability and climate action, we embrace the opportunities presented by the climate action plan. Through our dedication and collective efforts, we can play a significant role in shaping a more sustainable future. By implementing the strategies outlined in the plan, we are not only reducing our environmental impact but also positioning ourselves as leaders in our industry and community.

Our commitment to energy efficiency, renewable energy adoption, waste reduction, and sustainable practices will not only contribute to mitigating climate change but also bring numerous benefits to our organisation. We will become more resilient, innovative, and cost-effective, unlocking new opportunities for growth, and demonstrating our commitment to a greener and more sustainable world.

Together, we can inspire change, not only within our organisation but also among our stakeholders and peers. By acting and sharing our successes, we can encourage others to follow suit, amplifying the positive impact we are making on the planet.

In embracing the climate action plan, we are not only securing a better future for our organisation but also contributing to a more sustainable and resilient world.