4 July 2025

An Taisce Climate Committee — Press Release

Latest emissions figures show that we are still losing on climate action

The EPA's draft greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventories now published signal yet another year of climate action drift by the Irish State, and an ongoing failure of policy to address the climate emergency. While a tiny reduction of 1.9% in total emissions is welcome, the emissions trajectory for Ireland has been, and remains, so far off what is needed to deliver on Ireland's international commitments and our own legally binding carbon budgets. The figures only emphasise Ireland's failure to accept its fair share of responsibility.

The last Government committed to average annual reductions of 7% this decade. We now know that this is not happening and overshooting the first legally binding carbon budget period is now a near certainty. Since 1990, the EU as a whole has reduced its emissions by 37%, a figure dragged down by a laggard Ireland which has achieved a mere 3.6% over the same period.

It is also clear from the flat lining figures that some of the key drivers in lowering emissions in recent years were explicitly not policy-driven outcomes but reflected changes in fertiliser costs, cross border fuel tourism, massive electricity imports from the UK and methodological changes in assessing emissions. Importing 14% of our electricity from the UK to feed burgeoning demand from data centres is now clearly increasing energy insecurity. Furthermore, since agricultural emissions are way over target for their relatively lax required carbon budget reduction of only 10%, this demonstrates that the much lauded roadmap, a dozen years into its rollout, has not been delivered.

Successive Climate Action Plans have tinkered with the problem while the political will to take the radical steps necessary is absent. Climate solutions require political leadership and transformative thinking. Today's children deserve the right to enjoy a livable planet. Depleting Ireland's national carbon budgets, and failing to implement climate action, strips them of that option.

As the Vice-President of the EU Commission, Teresa Ribeira, said yesterday:
"*You can't tell people that climate change is the great existential problem of our generation, and then say, 'I'm sorry, we're not going to do anything.' It is no longer acceptable that policymakers speak in the abstract about climate action, while the world around us burns and floods."*

Terri Morrissey, Chair of An Taisce Climate Committee said:
"What will it take for our elected representatives to take this climate crisis seriously? We call for urgent social, economic and political leadership to implement the transformative systemic change needed."