

9th December 2019



Re: Substantial increase of the EU's 2030 climate target during COP 25 essential to showing global leadership and avoiding massive climate disruption

Dear Minister Bruton,

The gap between efforts to reduce emissions and the objectives of the Paris Agreement is ever widening. 2020 marks the beginning of a decade in which global emissions must reduce by 55% before 2030 if the 1.5°C limit in the Paris Agreement is to remain at all feasible.¹

Only decisive frontloading of policy decisions and action will ensure reductions of this scale can be delivered. To fail to do so runs counter to the global and national public interest, threatening to significantly increase direct and indirect climate impacts, exacerbating global poverty, hunger, insecurity and population displacement, and risking global societal disruption or breakdown. The EU's fair share of the 1.5°C aligned global effort is at least 65% reductions in emissions by 2030.² Ireland has thus far failed however, to align itself with even the *least* ambitious proposals of the Commission, and the eight Member States who are calling for an increase in the EU's 2030 reduction target to 55%.³

COP 25 and the European Council meetings over the coming days are critical moments where momentum can and must be built for increases in Nationally Determined Contributions in 2020, well ahead of COP 26 in Glasgow.

We, the Stop Climate Chaos coalition, call upon the Government at COP 25 and at the upcoming Councils, to align Ireland explicitly with EU Members calling for an increase of the EU's 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target to at least 55% compared to 1990 levels. Further, we call on you to acknowledge unequivocally in your statements that even this is not commensurate with meeting the Paris temperature goals, that the EU and Ireland have significantly more to do to deliver their fair share of the global 2030 effort, and to commit to urgently increasing domestic ambition.

Despite the many commitments made since ratifying the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2016, Ireland has still not brought greenhouse gas emissions to below their 1990 levels. As a rich nation with high per capita emissions Ireland should be doing far more than is currently envisaged in the Climate Action Plan (2019) by 2030; a much more ambitious medium-term target is the only appropriate response to the stark warnings of the IPCC. Accelerating ambition before 2030 is consistent with the commitments made by Ireland at COP 21 in 2015, and a higher target will increase the chances of reaching global

¹ United Nations Environment Programme. Emissions Gap Report 2019 (Available at: <https://www.unenvironment.org/interactive/emissions-gap-report/2019/>)

² This target for 2030 is based on based on the latest science and principles of equity to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C and thus fully implement the Paris Agreement. See: <http://www.caneurope.org/publications/blogs/1740-can-europe-calls-for-an-increase-of-the-eu-s-2030-climate-target-to-at-least-65>

³ These member states include Spain, Portugal, Latvia, Sweden, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. See: <https://www.euractiv.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/10/201910-joint-letter-governments-to-Timmermans-and-EC-on-climate-action.pdf>

net zero emissions well before 2050. **The longer we delay, the costlier and sharper the social and economic adjustment will be.**

There is no time to waste. Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen promised to put forward a proposal to increase the EU's 2030 climate target within the first 100 days of her mandate. It is essential that she adheres to and fulfills this commitment *with the support of all Member States*. This will allow the EU to agree on a new target well in advance of next year's UNFCCC Climate Summit in Glasgow, ideally before the summer. Only this timeframe will allow the EU to leverage an increased domestic climate ambition to other major emitters around the world, particularly China which hosts next year's UN Conference on Biodiversity just ahead of COP 26. Failure to do so will undermine any credibility the EU has as a leader in international climate diplomacy; and, much more importantly, squander precious global response time.

The European Union, including Ireland, has both the responsibility and capacity to act faster than other countries in the world. **We call on you to i) give your support for a science-aligned 2030 target at COP 25 and ii) to urge that the Commission urgently advance a proposal to substantially increase the EU NDC figure in line with the science and the EU's fair share of the global effort within the first 100 days.**

We hope you will consider these recommendations seriously and substantively. We look forward to your *urgent* response. Every single day now matters.

On behalf of the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition,

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Devitt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catherine Devitt
Head of Policy