



Brussels, 18.12.2023
C(2023) 9624 final

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

of 18.12.2023

**on the consistency of Ireland's measures with the Union's climate-neutrality objective
and with ensuring progress on adaptation**

(Only the English and Irish texts are authentic)

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 292 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999¹, and in particular Article 7(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 (the European Climate Law), the Commission is required to assess the consistency of national measures with the climate-neutrality objective and with ensuring progress on adaptation. The Commission assessed the consistency of Ireland's measures with these objectives². The below recommendations are based on that assessment. Ireland should take due account of the present recommendations and follow up on them in accordance with the European Climate Law.
- (2) While the Union's net greenhouse gas emissions (including from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) and excluding international transport) show a steady downward trend overall, broadly in line with the linear trajectory achieving the Union's 2030 climate target of -55% and the Union's 2050 climate-neutrality objective, the pace of emission reduction needs to accelerate and action by Member States is essential. Progress across Member States has been mixed with several sectoral challenges and weaknesses that need to be remedied without further delay. The assessment, based on the available information, shows that progress towards the Union's climate-neutrality objective appears largely insufficient for Ireland. Moreover, Ireland has only recently submitted to the Commission its national long-term strategy in accordance with Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council^{3,4}. The Commission will assess whether the national

¹ OJ L 243, 9.7.2021, p. 1.

² EU Climate Action Progress Report 2023, COM(2023) 653 final, and Commission Staff Working Document Assessment of progress on climate adaptation in the individual Member States according to the European Climate Law, SWD(2023) 932.

³ Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 1.

long-term strategy is adequate for the collective achievement of the objectives and targets of the Energy Union. Reliable long-term strategies are the cornerstone for achieving the economic transformation needed to move towards the Union's climate-neutrality objective.

- (3) Adaptation measures need to be implemented for improving preparedness and resilience. They may be prepared through adaptation pathways, setting out a sequence of measures towards an adaptation goal. Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation efforts is necessary for maintaining accountability and improving adaptation policy. Various EU funding instruments can be mobilised to fund adaptation. Climate resilience considerations should be put in the forefront when Member States design their national plans under the relevant EU funds. None of the spending should do harm to adaptation: that is, increase vulnerabilities either for the beneficiaries or for others.
- (4) The most vulnerable communities are those with elevated likelihood of being impacted by climate change. Unequal exposure and vulnerability to climate impacts of different regions and socio-economic groups worsens pre-existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. Just resilience should reduce the unequal burden of climate risk and ensure equity in the distribution of the benefits of adaptation,

HEREBY RECOMMENDS THAT IRELAND TAKES ACTION TO:

Consistency of national measures with the climate-neutrality objective

- 1. Step up climate mitigation efforts, by making tangible progress on the existing and planned policies and consider additional, urgent measures to align the expected greenhouse gas emission reductions and projections with the climate-neutrality objective.
- 2. In particular, effort should be directed towards reducing emissions in agriculture and enhancing removals in the LULUCF sector.

Consistency of national measures with ensuring progress on adaptation

- 3. Ensure progress in the implementation of adaptation measures. Ensure that adaptation policies are monitored and evaluated systemically and regularly, and results reflected in the ensuing revised policy design and implementation. Put climate resilience considerations more to the forefront in the use of support from EU funding programmes, such as the common agricultural policy, cohesion policy funding and other relevant EU funds. EU funds should be spent in such a way that they increase climate resilience and do not increase vulnerabilities (i.e. do no significant harm to adaptation).

⁴ Since Ireland had not submitted the long-term strategy required by Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 within the required deadline, on 29 September 2022, the Commission opened an infringement procedure against Ireland in accordance with Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (ref. INFR(2022)2088). On 5 October 2023, Ireland informed the Commission that the draft national long-term strategy sent to the Commission on 12 May 2023 had been adopted by the Government.

4. Continue to engage stakeholder groups that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in Ireland's adaptation policy design and implementation. Document the processes and outcomes of such consultations.

Done at Brussels, 18.12.2023

For the Commission
Wopke HOEKSTRA
Member of the Commission

