



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE SHLIGIGH
SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

Sligo.

Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Sligo County Council has prepared this Plan in accordance with the [Climate Action and Low Carbon Development \(Amendment\) Act 2021](#) and would like to acknowledge the support of the Atlantic Seaboard North Climate Action Regional Office (ASBN CARO) in the development of the Draft Plan.

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Note: This document is intended to be viewed digitally and contains many hyperlinks to various web resources where additional & supporting information can be accessed easily. Printed versions may be made available upon request.

Foreword by Cathaoirleach & Chief Executive

Cllr Gerard Mullaney
Cathaoirleach



In recent years climate change has become an issue that people are more and more concerned about. And here in Co. Sligo it is important that we play our part. We need to look carefully at what the future holds, and how we are going to change the ways in which we do things to make sure that the impact is lessened, and that future generations can enjoy all that our county has to offer. We need to stop wasting energy & resources, and make sure that we are making the most of the natural and renewable resources that we are lucky enough to have here in Co. Sligo, including its great people. We also need to find more sustainable ways to travel and to keep our homes warm. And importantly we must support vulnerable communities and all work together to make a positive difference. This Climate Action Plan is an important step in the journey, and with the support of Sligo County Council and the citizens, community organisations, businesses and other public bodies, we can, and will, play our part in tackling the climate crisis, and keeping the planet safe for our children.

Martin Lydon
Chief Executive



The evidence around climate change and the enormous impact that it is having and will have into the future, is unequivocal. The challenge to mitigate its impact now is immense, but Sligo County Council is committed to delivering on the pledges contained within the Local Authority Climate Charter. We will improve our energy efficiency, reduce our carbon emissions, cut out waste, protect & enhance nature and will engage and advocate on behalf of the people of Sligo to reach the goals that have been set for us. We will help to identify the best possible solutions and collaborate with all relevant partners to make the most of all opportunities for positive change. This Climate Action Plan sets out in detail what we are committed to working on over the next 5 years. It is designed to be considered alongside our other major corporate strategies, including the Local Economic & Community Plan and the County Development Plan, which also deal with this enormous problem in significant depth. This is an issue that affects us all, but working together we can make the differences that are needed.

Glossary of Terms:

AA - Appropriate Assessment
ASBN – Atlantic Seaboard North
BEI - Baseline Emissions Inventory
BER - Building Energy Rating
CARO - Climate Action Regional Office
CCMA - County and City Management Association
CCRA – Climate Change Risk Assessment
CDP – County Development Plan
DECA - Delivering Effective Climate Action
DECC – Department of Environment, Climate & Communications
DHLGH - Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage
DoT - Department of Transport
DRCD - Department of Rural & Community Development
DZ - Decarbonising Zone
NWRA - Northern & Western Regional Assembly
EPA - Environmental Protection Agency
ESB - Electricity Supply Board
MSLETB – Mayo, Sligo Leitrim Education & Training Board
EU - European Union
EV – Electric Vehicle
GAA - Gaelic Athletics Association
GHG - Greenhouse Gas
HVO - Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil
ICT - Information and Communications Technology
KPI – Key Performance Indicator
ktCO₂e - Kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents
LACAP - Local Authority Climate Action Plan
LASNTG - Local Authority Services National Training Group

LAWPRO - Local Authority Water Programme
LECP – Local Economic and Community Plan
LCDC - Local Community Development Committee
LEO - Local Enterprise Office
LGMA - Local Government Management Agency
LULUCF - Land Use, Land Use Change & Forestry
MD - Municipal District
NBS - Nature-based Solutions
NDCA - National Dialogue on Climate Action
NIR – Natura Impact Report
NTA - National Transport Authority
OPW - Office of Public Works
PPN - Public Participation Network
SCC - Sligo County Council
SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
SEA - Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEAI - Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SECAP - Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan
SLEA - Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency
SMART - Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic & Timebound
SPC - Strategic Policy Committee
TII - Transport Infrastructure Ireland
RDO - Regional Design Office
UNESCO - United Nations Education, Scientific & Cultural Organisation
WDC - Western Development Commission
ZEVI - Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure

There is also a [Climate Jargon Buster](#) available which explains climate related terms in plain English.

Executive Summary:

Climate Change has been identified as the defining social, economic and environmental challenge of our time. Local Government has been identified as a key player in leading climate action at a local, community-based level and planning for the effects of climate change has now become a key challenge. Local Authorities (LAs) have been tasked with leveraging support and resources to deliver effective climate action from the ground up.

This approach has been made into law requiring each Local Authority in the country to lead in Climate Action at a county level. It is envisaged that leadership will be plan-led namely through a Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP). These LACAPs will be key instruments that strengthen the links between local, regional, national and international climate policy. The plans will need to deliver effective climate action at the local and community level through place-based and evidence-based climate action. The LACAPs are statutory 5-year plans and are required to include mitigation and adaptation actions that ultimately provide pathways to achieve a decarbonised society. Each LACAP is to be adopted by their Elected Members in 2024 and will last for 5 years.

Over this period Sligo County Council (SCC) will be responsible for enhancing climate resilience, increasing energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, across its own assets, services and infrastructure. SCC will also need to proactively use its broader role of influencing, coordinating/facilitating and advocating other sectors to meet their own climate targets and ambitions. This plan outlines the ambition of SCC in climate action and sets out a clear Vision and Mission. The Vision describes how a climate-resilient Sligo will be proactive in addressing climate change and a model of best practice in climate action. The Mission Statement outlines how SCC will meet that vision. Internally the ambition is to meet our own emissions and energy efficiency targets. These include a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and a 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030. Externally the LA seeks to influence, advocate and facilitate climate action ambitions within the local and business communities. These ambitions and pathways to achieve targets are outlined in this plan.

The plan is divided into several sections. These include:

Local Authority Climate Action Planning - Introduces the plan-making process, placing in context the scope and ambition of the LACAP relative to national legally binding targets.

Risk Assessment and Evidence Base - Provides information on the baseline emissions data used to inform the plan and an overview of the Climate Change Risk Assessment prepared for the LACAP. Both have been used to inform the plan-making process placing in context the challenges faced by the county in meeting national emissions targets.

Climate Action in other SCC Policies & ongoing projects – Provides some details and references to the extensive consideration of climate change in other important corporate policies, as well as outlining some of the existing & ongoing climate action projects that are already in place.

List of Actions - The focus of the plan, outlining the strategic goals, objectives and actions that aim to bring to fruition the vision and mission. The actions aim to be specific, measurable, action-focused, realistic and timebound (SMART).

Sligo Decarbonisation Zone - As required, the plan also includes a Decarbonising Zone (DZ). The area identified in Sligo is the southeastern area of Sligo Town. The aim of the DZ is to identify pathways to meet the national emission reduction target of 51% by 2030 and net zero by end of 2050 (from the baseline year of 2018). Learnings will be gathered in the DZ on the real-life experiences and challenges to meet these targets across all sectors. This specific place-based approach seeks to promote wider collaboration with all stakeholders to create tailored policies to deliver climate action.

Implementation - The ability of the Local Authority sector to demonstrate performance on climate action will form a crucial component in successfully illustrating if and how the sector is leading by example, and what role Local Authorities are playing in national climate action targets. This section outlines three key activities that SCC must consider once the plan is adopted, including planning for Implementation & tracking of progress through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and reporting requirements and arrangements.

As required the Sligo LACAP 2024-2029 has been subject to a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA). Mitigation as required by environmental assessment has been incorporated into this LACAP.

1. Introduction:

Sligo County Council has prepared this Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, to create a low carbon and climate resilient County, by delivering and promoting best practice in climate action, at the local level. This is aligned to the Government's overall National Climate Objective, which seeks to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.

This is set out in the [Climate Action and Low Carbon Development \(Amendment\) Act 2021](#), which also frames Ireland's legally binding climate ambition, to delivering a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 51% by 2030. This will place the country on a trajectory to achieving climate neutrality by the end of 2050. In preparing the Draft Plan, the Council has also taken account of other relevant climate legislation and policy, a climate change risk assessment and a climate mitigation baseline assessment, at a County scale, which are included as part of this Plan. The Climate (Amendment) Act 2021 specifically requires all local authorities in Ireland to prepare and make a Climate Action Plan, in consideration of wider national climate and energy targets, addressing both mitigation and adaptation measures:

- **Climate Change Mitigation** relates to changing how we live, move, consume and manufacture, to reduce and/or eliminate the production of harmful greenhouse gases, it also includes how we best use our land; and
- **Climate Change Adaptation** refers to dealing with the impacts of climate change and involves taking practical actions to manage risks, protect communities and strengthen the resilience of the economy (e.g. from flooding, sea level rise etc.)

The Climate Action Plan sets a clear pathway for Sligo County Council to:

- actively translate national climate policy to local circumstances with the prioritisation and acceleration of evidence-based measures;
- assist in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels; and
- identify and deliver a Decarbonising Zone (DZ) within the local authority area to act as a test bed for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures in a specifically defined area, through the identification of projects and outcomes that will assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective.

Set against the backdrop of an evolving and ambitious framework of national climate policy, Sligo County Council maintains a strong commitment to mainstreaming climate action across its own operations and functions, whilst also pursuing a leadership role on climate action, at the local level. The Plan demonstrates a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structure of the local authority. The Plan is subject to approval by the Elected Members of the local authority, following public consultation and engagement. A range of other plans, including the Council's Corporate Plan, the Local Economic and Community Plan and Sligo County Council's County Development Plan, also support the Climate Action Plan.

2. County Profile

Area: 1838km²

Coastline Length: 190km approx.

Population: 70,198 (2022 census – 7% increase from 2016), with approximately 20,000 living in Sligo Town.

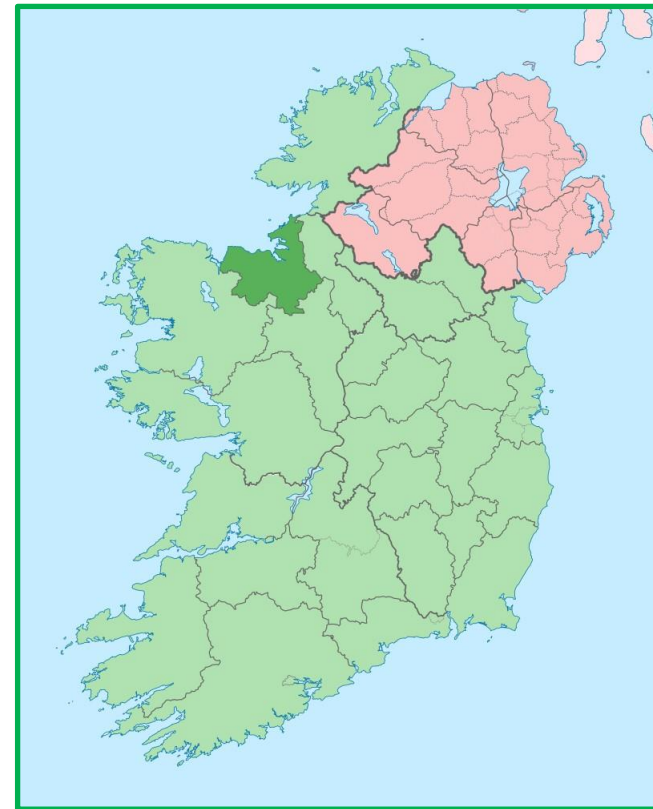
Main Towns: Ballisodare, Ballymote, Cliffoney, Collooney, Coolaney, Dromore, West, Easkey, Enniscrone, Grange, Sligo, Strandhill, Rosses Point, Riverstown, Tubbercurry.

Transport Infrastructure: There are a total of 2800 km of roads in Co. Sligo, with this being made up of: National Primary – 106km, National Secondary – 47.5km, Regional Roads – 237km, Local Roads – 2410km. Over 70% of people relied on private cars to get to work/school, while only around 1.5% of people used public transport, but nearly 10% walked or cycled.

There are several harbours/piers in the county, but only Sligo Harbour receives any significant commercial activity. Others such as Mullaghmore, Raghly, Aughris, and Enniscrone cater to small private fishing & leisure craft.

Sligo is also served by MacDiarmada Train Station in Sligo Town, which is linked to Connolly Station in Dublin.

Health: In 2022, 83% of people in Sligo stated that their health was good or very good compared with 86% in 2016. This is a similar trend to the national figures, which showed a 4% decrease in the good/very good categories, from 87% to 83%. (Census 2022)



Housing: The total housing stock was 33,711, of which vacant households (excluding holiday homes) numbered 3954. There were 26801 private households in Co. Sligo. Approximately 80% of households also relied on fossil fuels for home heating purposes and around 10% used renewable energy for this purpose.

Tenure: In 2022 in Sligo, 67% of households owned their own home, with a further 27% renting. This compared with 66% of households owning their home nationally and 28% renting.

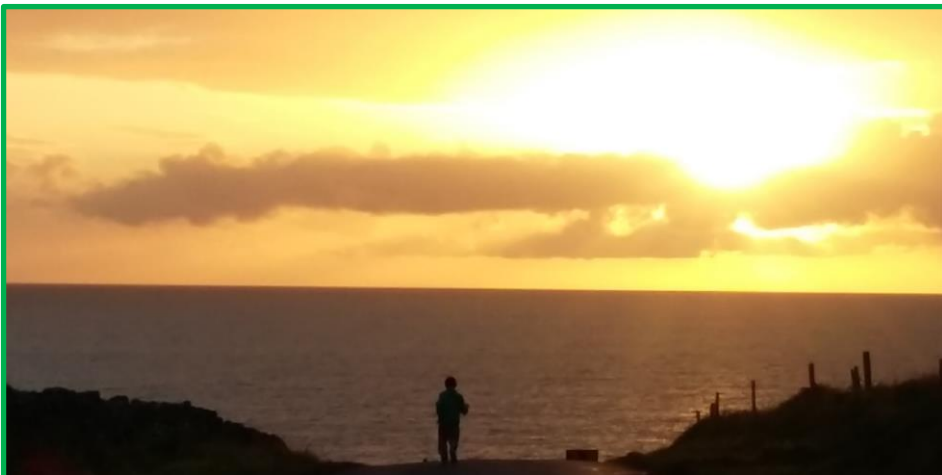
Working From Home: In Sligo, 8,216 people (aged 15 and over) worked from home at least one day a week in 2022. This represented 27% of the workforce. The national figure was 32%. (Census 2022)

3. Climate Action - Vision & Mission Statements:

Sligo County Council have been taking a range of actions across all functions and services to tackle climate change and are uniquely positioned to provide robust leadership in climate action and to create a climate resilient, vibrant, and sustainable county. It is important that our Plan has a unifying Vision which reflects a desired and shared perspective of the future in a climate resilient and climate neutral future, that will unite all key stakeholders and inspire action.

Climate Action Vision for Sligo County Council:

Sligo will be a proactive county in addressing climate change and a model of best practice in climate action with sustainability central to all areas of life. (Goal No. 3 from Sligo Local Economic & Community Plan 2023-2030 Pg. XV of Introduction)



The Vision for our Plan recognises that Sligo County Council occupies a pivotal position to deliver on national policy at community level, while understanding that climate actions and impacts from climate change will not be the same for all sectors. The Vision is therefore supported by a number of key strategic goals:

1. Achieving our carbon emission reduction target of 51% for 2030; progressing to the 2050 target for carbon neutrality and reducing climate impacts
2. Enabling a 'just transition' ensuring no household, community or business is disadvantaged by decarbonisation measures, paving the way for sustainable economic growth.
3. Cultivating decarbonisation co-benefits across key sectors in the county/city ensuring alignment with the sustainable development agenda.
4. Providing supports to communities and organisations and foster collaboration; leading the transition to an inclusive net zero economy.

While our indicative Vision Statement states that we want to be proactive and become a model of best practice, our Mission Statement takes an action-oriented focus, outlining how Sligo County Council will deliver and mainstream effective climate action across all our services and functions, and in the wider community.

While our indicative Vision Statement states that we want to be proactive and become a model of best practice, our Mission Statement takes an action-oriented focus, outlining how Sligo County Council will deliver and mainstream effective climate action across all our services and functions, and in the wider community.

Climate Action Mission Statement:

Sligo County Council will become a leader in Climate Action, by providing leadership through its own activities, by working with communities & businesses to assist them in finding the best ways for them to adapt to the impacts of climate change and reduce their GHG emissions, with a focus on the opportunities in the transport & heating related areas, as well as on protecting & enhancing biodiversity.

(Derived from key desired outcomes for Goal 3 on pg. 69 of Sligo LECP)

The elements included in the Mission statement above show that Sligo County Council are committed to leading by example, and collaborating and co-operating with other organisations, but also advocating on behalf of local communities for the positive changes that they want to see happening. The emphasis on transport and heating is related to the significant contribution that they have to the overall amount of greenhouse gases produced in the county.

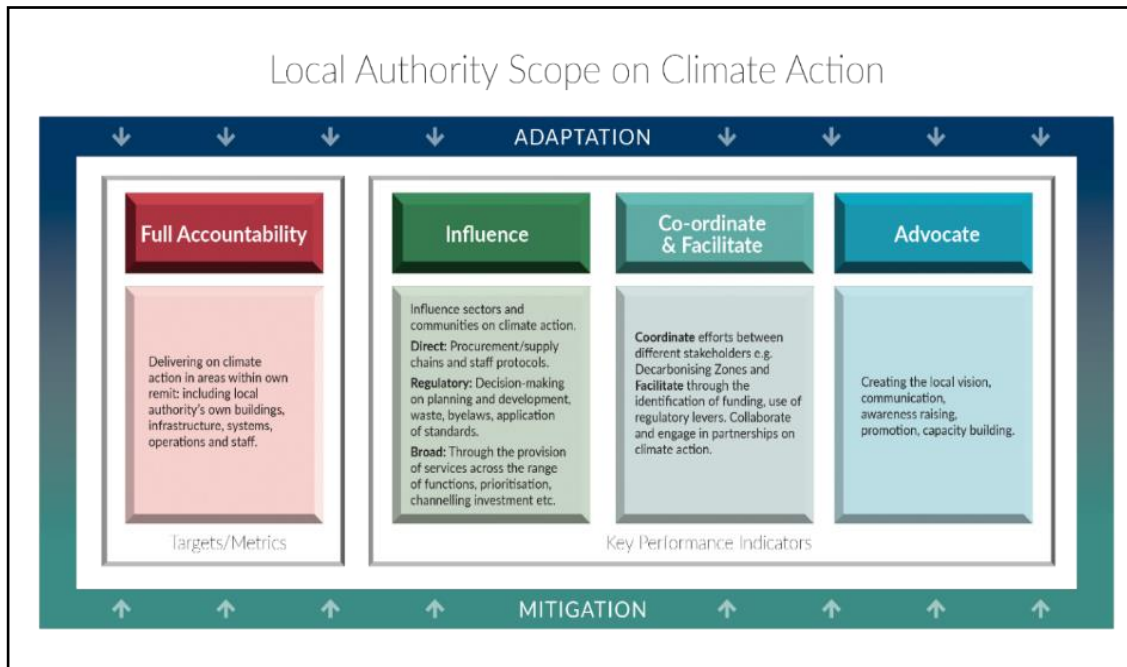
And the protection and enhancement of our natural environment and local biodiversity is one of the most important and valuable aspects of adapting to the challenges of climate change, so we must state that we are fully committed to this too.



4. Scope, Overview & Policy Context

The Plan sets out how Sligo County Council will be responsible for enhancing climate resilience, increasing energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, across its own assets, services and infrastructure, to which it is fully accountable for, whilst also demonstrating a broader role of influencing, advocating and facilitating other sectors, to meet their own climate targets and ambitions. This is necessary to ensure that the environmental, social and economic benefits that come with climate action, can be fully realised.

Figure 1 below illustrates the the scope of the local authority's responsibility on climate action.



Sligo County Council will also continue its efforts in rolling out ambitious climate action projects, drawing down available sources of funding, pursuing citizen and stakeholder engagement, all supported by a progressive policy framework. The Council will launch the Climate Action Fund Strand 1 - Building Low Carbon Communities and Strand 1a Shared Island Community Climate Action. This is a fund for local authorities across the country, to support and build low carbon communities.

In a changing climate, the aim is to become more resilient to all future possibilities, allowing local communities to thrive and work towards real solutions that are meaningful, inclusive, fair and accessible for all, thereby prioritising a just transition.

Figure 1 – Scope of LACAP (Source: Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines, 2023)

Overview of Climate Change

Climate change is increasingly understood to be the most critical, long-term global challenge of our time, its impacts continue to be felt both worldwide and at home. The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC's\) Working Group I Sixth Assessment Report](#), confirms overwhelming evidence that the climate has changed since the pre-industrial era and that human activities, through greenhouse gas emissions, are the principal cause of that change. It states the unequivocal cause of global warming has been human activities, with global surface temperatures reaching 1.1°C above 1850-1900, in the 2011-2020 period.

Ireland's climate echoes that statement. Figure 2 on the following page compares the global temperature rise since 1900 to Irish temperatures. Ireland is in line with the global temperature increases, following 2022, being a year of record-breaking extremes, in both temperature and precipitation (rainfall). Met Éireann stated that 2022 was 'the warmest year on record'. This would see Ireland's temperature above the long-term average for the 12th consecutive year. Furthermore, 2022 saw record breaking temperatures observed in Ireland during the summer, recording the second highest temperature ever recorded in Ireland at 33°C.

This is reiterated in the precipitation observations from 2022, where rainfall was recorded at below the long-term average at most stations. There was variability in rainfall throughout 2022, with extremes being felt in each of the seasons, resulting in a drier Summer and Spring, and a wetter Autumn and Winter.

Global mean sea level increased by 20 cm between 1901 and 2018. The trend in global mean sea level rise has been consistently rising since 1901. Ireland has so far seen a similar rise in sea level with an average of 2-3 mm per year. A warming climate has caused a rise in sea level, through the loss of sea ice and thermal expansion (the increase in the volume of water due to heating) resulting from the warming ocean.

Ireland has suffered from adverse climate impacts already and recent extreme weather events have highlighted the vulnerability of individuals, businesses, communities, sectors and infrastructure to climate change, emphasising the need for urgency on climate action across all sectors of society.

For example, storms such as Arwen and Barra in 2021 most notably, left 59,000 homes and businesses without power (Climate Action Plan, 2023). The adverse impacts of climate change can often compound wider reaching social, environmental and economic challenges. This can increase vulnerability and sensitivity to a changing climate and climate extremes.

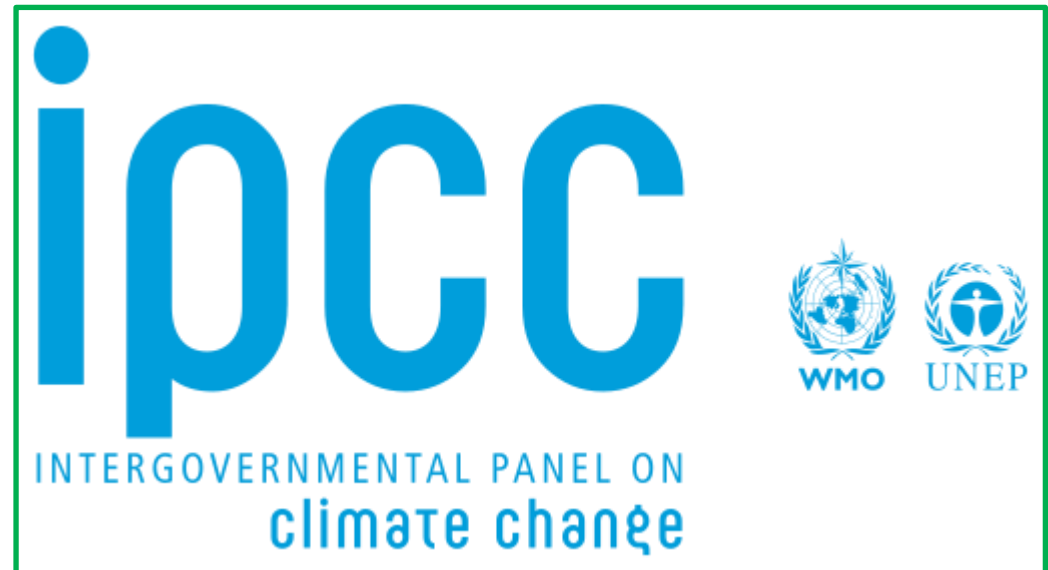
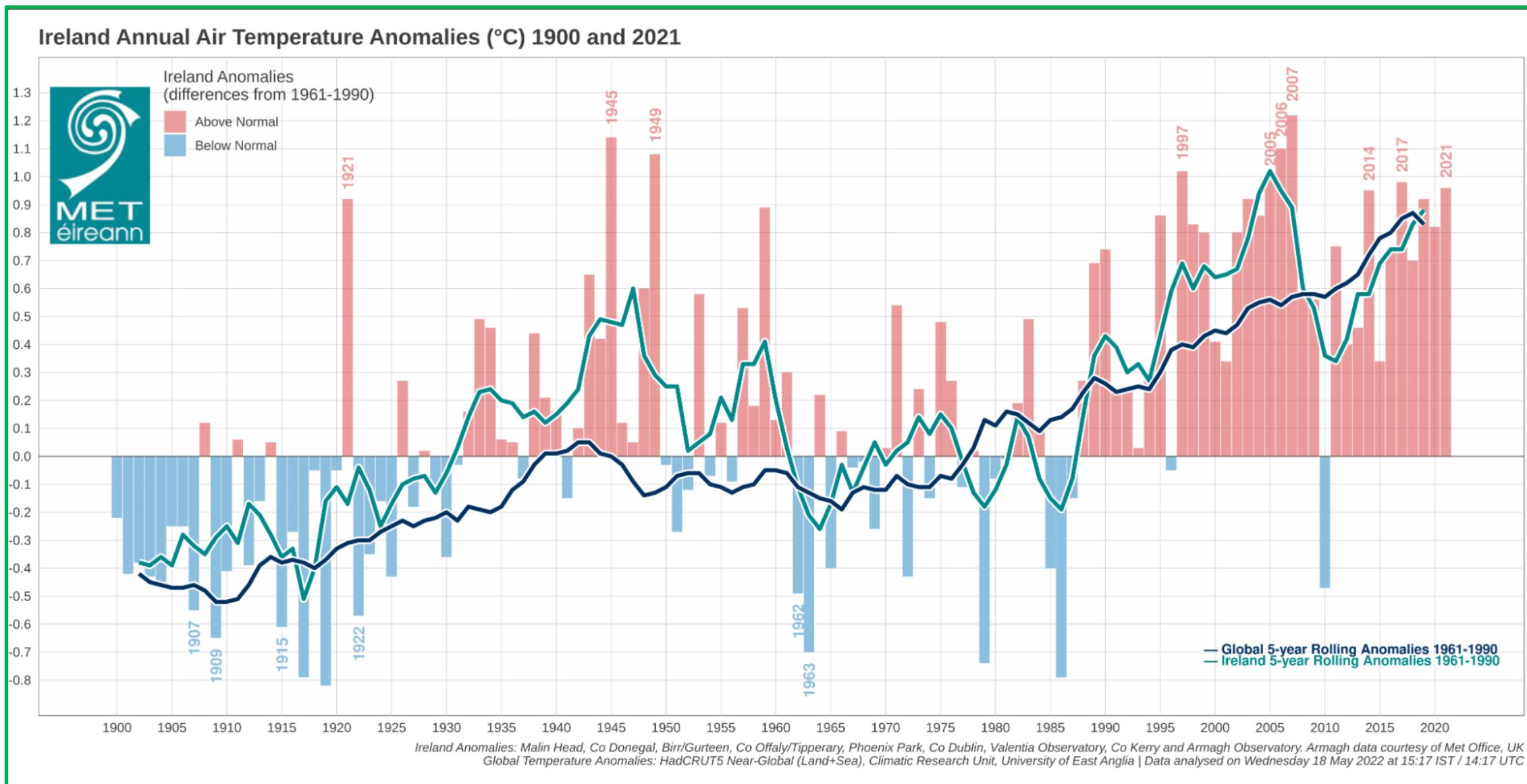


Figure 2: Island of Ireland 1900-2022 Temperature (°C) Anomalies (difference from 1961-1990)



(Source: Met Éireann)

Based on observed changes in climate and its impacts, Met Éireann, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other climate scientists, are able to make robust projections on future climate patterns in Ireland and globally. The EPA, Marine Institute and Met Éireann published [The Status of Ireland's Climate Report](#) in July 2021. Future climate projections for Sligo County Council can be summarised as follows:

- Climate projections indicate that the climate trends observed over the last century will continue and intensify over the coming decades;
- Temperatures are increasing and are expected to continue to increase and across all seasons;
- Significant reductions in levels of average precipitation (rainfall) are expected in Spring and Summer, whilst projections indicate the increased occurrence of extreme precipitation events, particularly during Winter;
- Projections show little change in average wind speed and direction. The frequency of extreme wind conditions are expected to increase, particularly during Winter;
- Based on current trends, Ireland will see an increase in sea level rise, similar to what has been experienced to date. Ireland is extremely vulnerable to sea level rise, due to its expansive coastline and the large number of the population that has settled on the coast;
- Increases in the frequency of fluvial (river) and pluvial (surface water) flooding;
- Increases in the frequency and intensity of coastal flooding and erosion;
- Increases in the frequency and intensity of summer heat waves, extreme temperatures and drought;
- Reductions in the frequency of frost and snowfall; and
- An increase in the duration of the growing season (phenological cycle).

The state of Ireland's climate today and how it may look in the future can be brought together in one simple conclusion. Ireland's climate has changed relative to the 1900's, it has undoubtedly warmed along with global temperatures, bringing about an array of impacts that are associated with a warmer climate and more extreme weather events.

Climate Policy Context

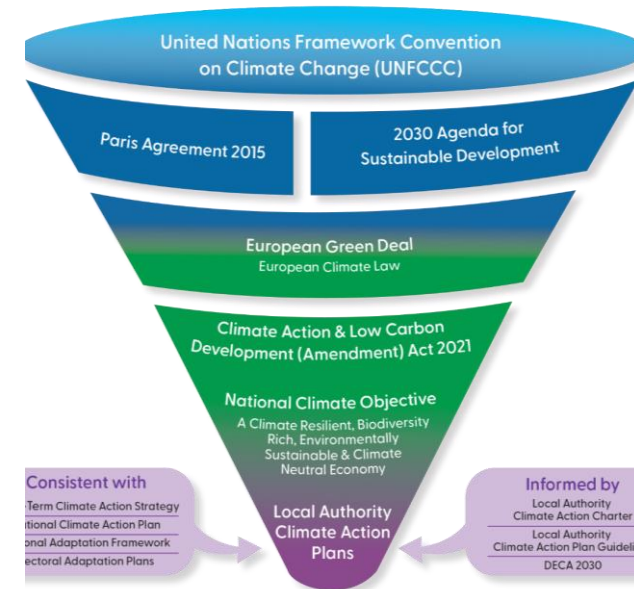


Figure 3. (Source: Climate Action Regional Offices)

Climate action is given impetus by the scientific evidence that supports the findings of human influence on climate change and the most recent legally binding international treaty on climate change, which sets the framework for ambitious and strengthened policy responses, the Paris Agreement 2015. Consequently, this Climate Action Plan is set within a broader context of international, EU, national and sectoral climate policy. This is represented in Figure 3 above.

- **International Climate Change Policy**

It has been recognised that successfully tackling climate change requires cooperation and ambition on an international level. Since the establishment of the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) in 1994, countries have sought to build international cooperation to limit the increase in the average global temperature and deal with the impacts of climate change, that result from these temperature increases.

These efforts led to the signing of the Paris Agreement 2015 at the [Conference of the Parties 21 \(COP21\)](#). The [Paris Agreement 2015](#) is a legally binding international treaty on climate change which was signed by all 196 member countries, including Ireland, and entered into force on 4th November 2016. Through two clearly defined goals the Paris Agreement strives for progressive and ambitious climate action over time to avoid dangerous climate change by:

- i. Holding global average temperature increases to well below 2⁰C and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5⁰C above pre-industrial levels; and
- ii. Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience.

Another International agreement closely linked with the Paris Agreement is the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) which was adopted by UN Member States in September 2015. At the Agenda's core are 17 [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). These goals aim to “end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere.” The 17 SDGs contain 169 targets to be achieved by 2030. In 2019, World leaders called for a ‘decade of action’ in order to achieve the Goals within this timeframe. The SDGs are also addressed in Section 6 of this Plan.

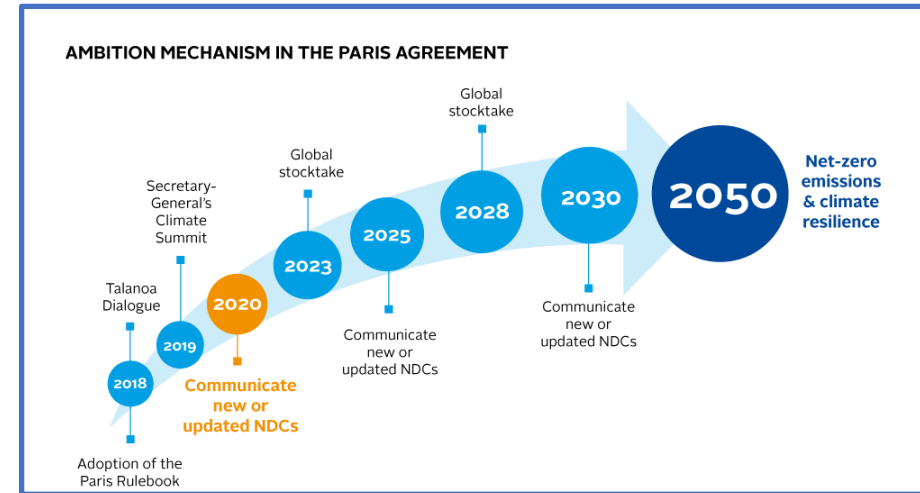


Fig. 4 Nationally Determined Contributions – Source: www.wri.org/research/enhancing-ndcs-2020-achieving-goals-paris-agreement

Towards achieving greenhouse gas emission reductions as part of Paris Agreement commitments the European Commission, in December 2019, announced the [European Green Deal](#) aimed at making Europe the first climate neutral continent. The Deal seeks to achieve no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050, to decouple economic growth from resource use, and to leave no one behind. The EU introduced a set of proposals to align the EU's climate, taxation, energy, and transport policies to support achieving this aim. The [European Climate Law](#) made these targets legally binding, which also includes achieving a reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions of at least 55% by 2030.

Climate Change Policy in Ireland

Climate change policy in Ireland now reflects the ambition of the EU and that required to confront the challenges of climate change. Working towards the National Climate Objective the [Climate \(Amendment\) Act 2021](#), promotes a sustainable economy and society where greenhouse gas emissions are balanced or exceeded by the removal of greenhouse gases. Through progressive economy-wide carbon budgets, sectoral ceilings, a suite of strategies devised to promote a combination of adaptation and mitigation measures, as well as robust oversight and reporting arrangements, climate policy is working to scale up efforts across all of society and deliver a step change on ambitious and transformative climate action to 2030 and beyond to 2050.

The [Climate Action Plan 2023](#), launched on 21st December 2022, is the second annual update to the States' Climate Action Plan 2019 and the first to be prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and following the introduction, in 2022, of economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emission ceilings. Climate Action Plan 2023 sets out a roadmap to 2025 towards taking decisive action to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero, no later than by the end of 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government.

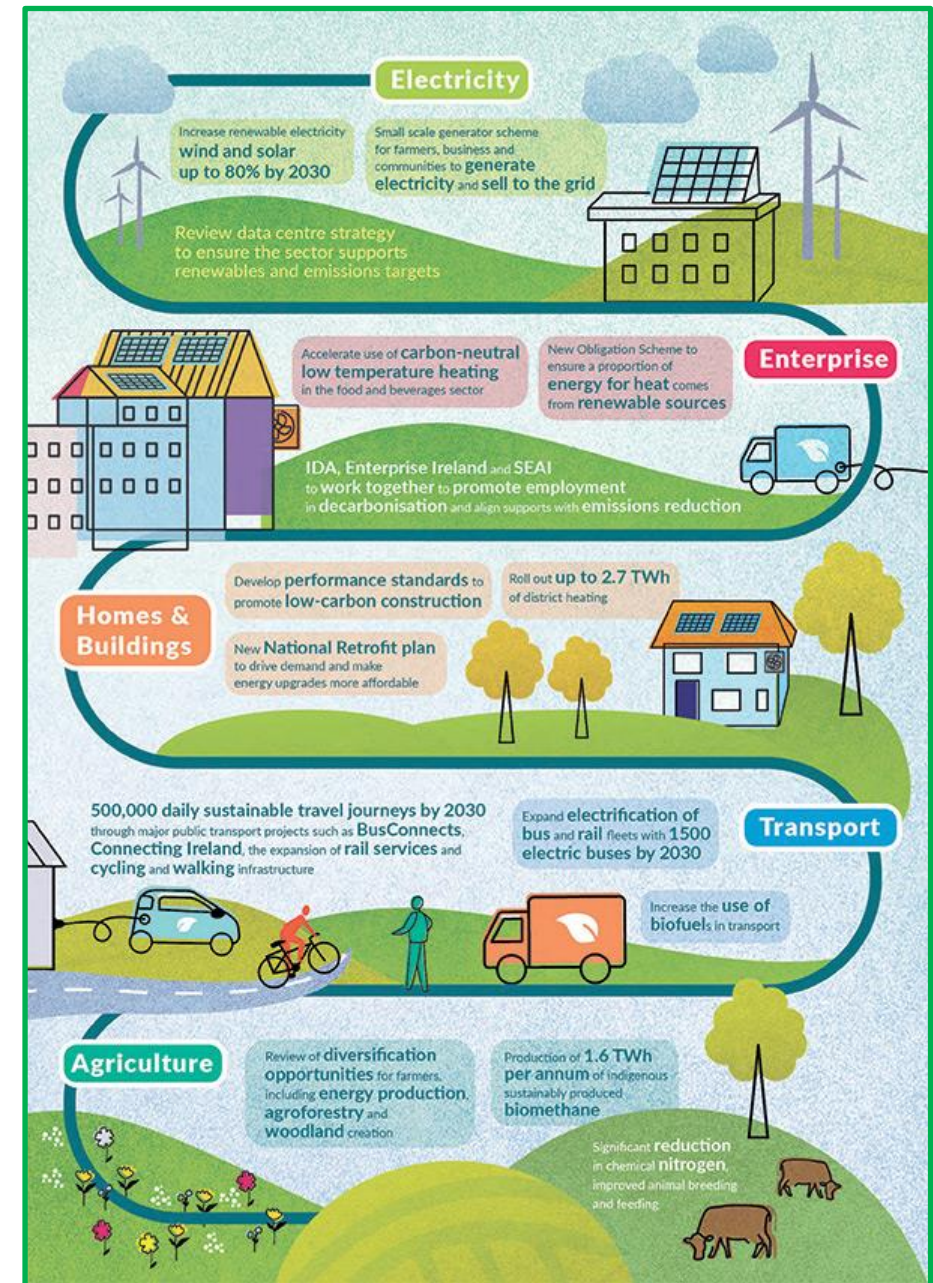


Fig. 5

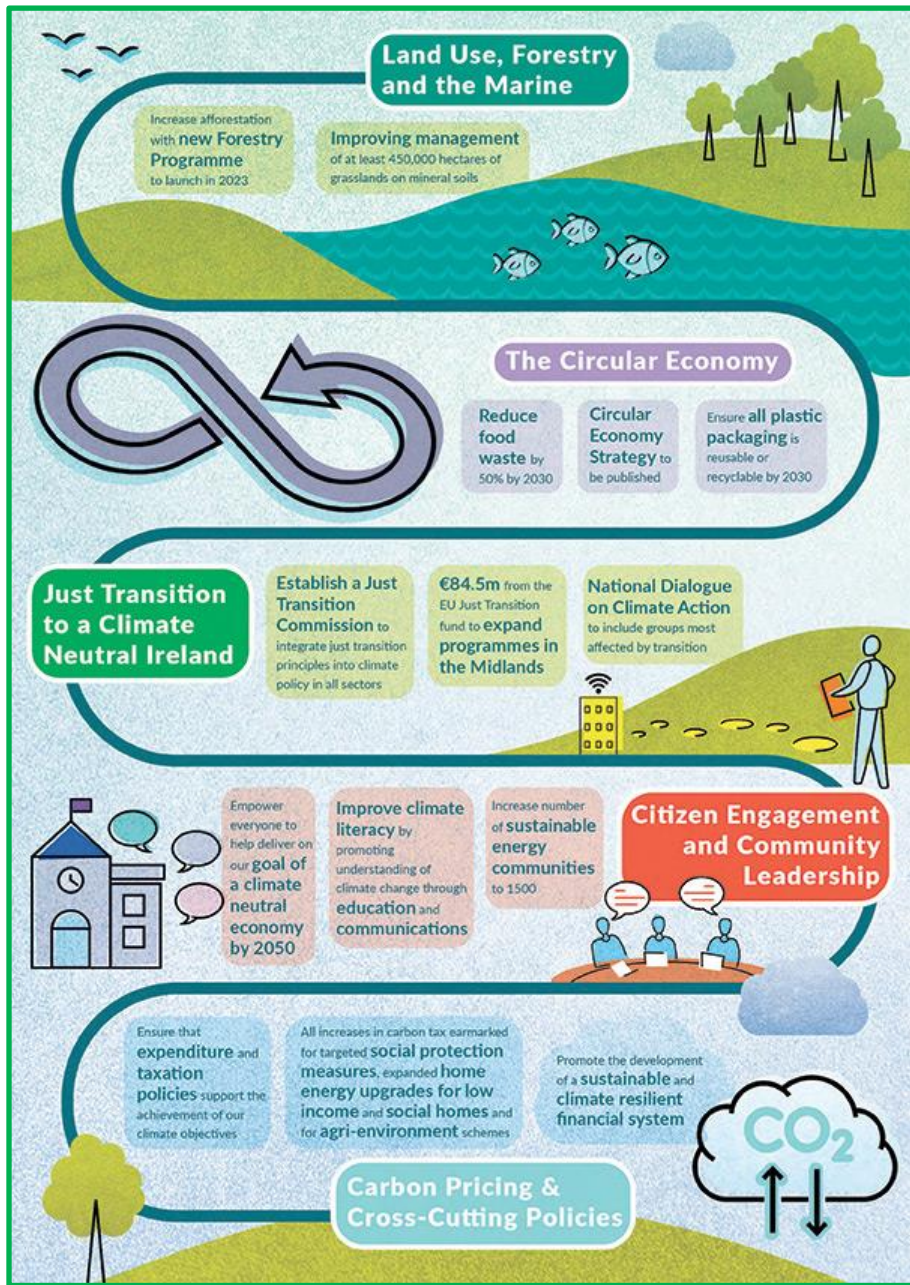


Fig. 6

Ireland published its first [National Adaptation Framework \(NAF\)](#) in 2018, which set out the context to ensure key sectors and local authorities, can assess the key risks and vulnerabilities of climate change, implement climate resilient actions, and ensure climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into national, regional and local policy making.

Ireland's current [Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions](#) sets out indicative pathways, beyond 2030, towards achieving carbon neutrality for Ireland by 2050. The Strategy builds upon the decarbonisation pathways set by the carbon budgets, sectoral emissions ceilings and the national Climate Action Plan, to ensure coherent and effective climate policy. It is underpinned by analysis of transition options across each key sector of the economy and provides a crucial link between Ireland's 2030 climate targets and the long-term goal set by Ireland's National Climate Objective and the European Climate Law.

[Sectoral Climate Adaptation Plans](#) have been published across Government departments, in response to the National Adaptation Framework. Each Plan identifies the key risks faced across the sector and the approach being taken to address these risks and build climate resilience for the future. They were developed applying a six-step adaptation planning process described in Sectoral Planning Guidelines for Climate Change Adaptation, published by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. The Plans address the following sectors: Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood, Biodiversity, Built and Archaeological Heritage, Transport infrastructure, Electricity and Gas Networks, Communications Networks, Flood Risk Management, Water Quality and Water Services Infrastructure and Health.

The [Local Authority Climate Action Charter](#), signed by Sligo County Council in October 2019, represents a commitment to scale up efforts and play a key role locally and nationally in delivering effective climate action. It tasks all local authorities with providing robust leadership in advancing climate action at regional and local levels, with adhering to the UN SDGs, in particular Goal 13 Climate Action, as well as reducing emissions from their own operations and to collaborate and partner with local enterprise, community groups, citizens as well as public, private, and educational sectors on climate action initiatives.

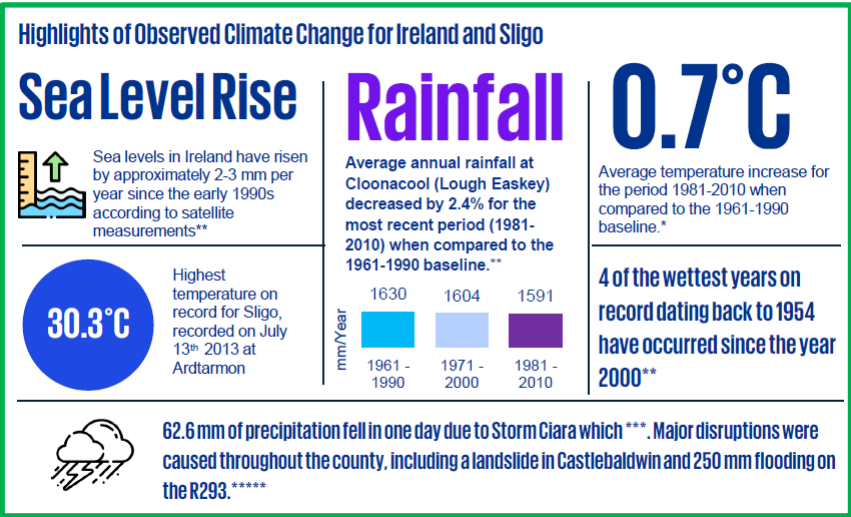


Fig. 7 Source: Climate Change Risk Assessment - See Appendix 1

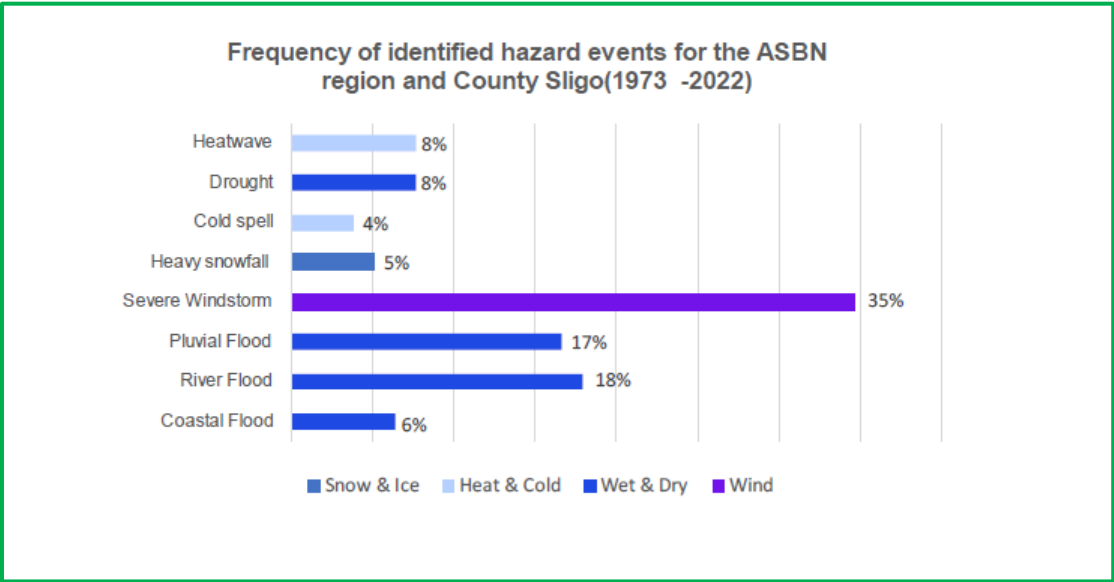


Fig. 8 Source: Climate Change Risk Assessment - See Appendix 1

[Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 \(DECA 2030\)](#) is the local government strategy on climate action published in April 2021. The strategy represents an overarching sectoral commitment to ensuring a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structures of all 31 local authorities. At a sectoral level the strategy communicates a general strategic intent through an envisaged leadership position, to engage the local authority network in effective climate action. Within the sector, the overall strategy represents a top-level consensus on the approach to climate action and a strong commitment to the prescribed leadership role. The strategy is a stated roadmap for local authorities in delivering the required decarbonisation and adaptation responses to climate change.

Local Authority Climate Action Planning

The Sligo County Council climate action plan strengthens the links between national and international climate policy and the delivery of effective climate action at local and community levels, through place-based climate action. The intrinsic value of the climate action plan is that it plays a significant role in reinforcing the commitment by the local government sector to lead on climate action at local and national levels, as reflected in the local government strategy DECA 2030. Over its preparation and implementation, the Council's climate action plan offers an opportunity to bring together critical stakeholders across communities and businesses to build a vision for a climate neutral future.

Sligo County Council and other local authorities across Ireland, are already well positioned at the forefront of climate action in Ireland. Sligo County Council plays a significant role in terms of delivering adaptation and mitigation measures at local and community levels. We are entrusted to work through our regulatory and strategic functions to operationalise the ambitious national climate targets and policy at local levels, to assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective.

The Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan is part of longer-term efforts that require a sustained and planned response to support the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels. This Climate Action Plan provides a mechanism for bringing together both adaptation and mitigation actions to help drive positive climate action and outcomes across the local authority and its administrative area. The framework of climate actions set within the plan, configures the arrangement of climate actions within a defined structure that ensures alignment between on the ground actions and the high-level vision that the plan aspires to deliver.

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the [Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines](#), published by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications in March 2023.

Structure of the Climate Action Plan

This Climate Action Plan has taken into full consideration international and national climate change policy and legislation as well as the most up-to-date knowledge on current levels of climate change as well as its impacts and projections for the future. In showing the outcome of this process, this Climate Action Plan is set out in four parts.

Firstly, the evidence base used to inform on climate action within the jurisdictional area of Sligo County Council is presented, including climate change risks and emissions baseline profile.

Secondly, the Plan outlines its framework for climate action including the Plan Vision, Mission, Strategic Goals, Objectives and Actions.

The third part focuses on Sligo County Council's Decarbonising Zone (DZ), including the Vision for the DZ, DZ Strategic Priority Areas and DZ Actions.

The final Part of this Plan sets out the Council's approach to implementing actions, measuring progress, the use of metrics as well as how the Council will report on actions over the lifetime of the Plan.

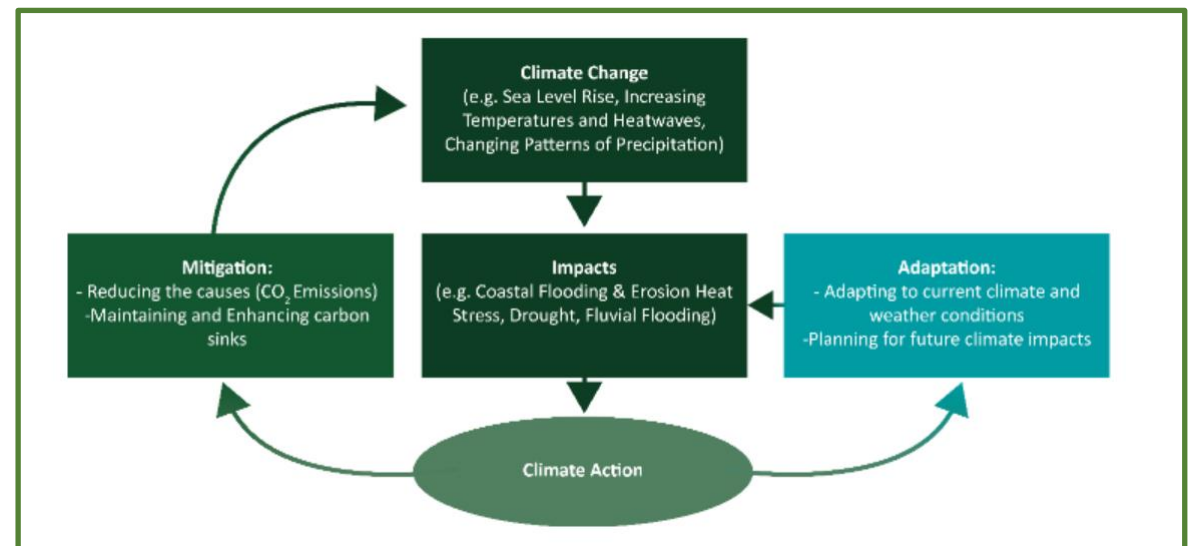
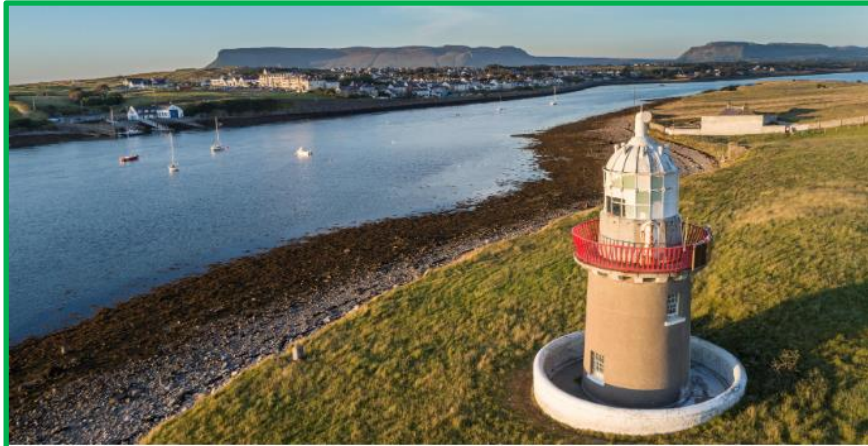


Fig. 9 The roles of mitigation and adaptation actions in managing the causes and impacts of climate change

5. Climate Action in other Corporate Policies:



Draft Sligo County Development Plan

2024-2030

Local Economic & Community Plan

Sligo's Local Economic & Community Plan for 2023-2030, entitled 'Sligo 2030 – One Voice, One Vision' sets out the vision for Sligo, which is for a smart, sustainable, and socially inclusive Sligo; one that cherishes its vibrant communities, protects and celebrates its unique environment and rich culture, and is a champion of innovative growth and development. Climate change and sustainability concerns and actions are embedded through the document and this Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan will support all the related proposals, goals & objectives.

Draft Sligo County Development Plan

The Draft Sligo County Development Plan is currently in the public consultation phase. And while there is a separate Climate Action chapter, there is a commitment to embedding climate action in the core strategy and throughout the development management policies. These include:

SP-CA-1 Support the implementation of the government's climate action policy in accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, the national Climate Action Plan 2023, the National Adaptation Framework 2018 and all subsequent relevant updates.

SP-CA-2 Ensure that Sligo County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy, Climate Action Plan and County Development Plan are fully aligned.

SP-CA-3 Integrate appropriate climate mitigation and adaptation considerations and measures into all relevant development management and development planning processes.





Climate Adaptation Strategy (2019):

Sligo County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy (CAS) contained 48 adaptation related actions, of which over 50% had been substantially completed by 2023. Those outstanding in 2023 will be incorporated into this Climate Action Plan. The CAS was adopted in compliance with the [National Adaptation Framework](#) and was the first formal climate related policy put in place by the Local Authority.

Heritage & Biodiversity Strategy:

The draft County Sligo Heritage and Biodiversity Strategy seeks to establish an ambitious vision for the management and conservation of our built, natural and cultural heritage in the changing context of the climate and biodiversity crisis. For each strategic theme, key priorities have been identified to guide action in support of the delivery of the County Sligo Heritage Strategy 2023-2030.



Climate Action in upcoming corporate policies:

County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan will be developed within 12 months of the adoption of the Climate Action Plan and will include detailed information on how Sligo County Council intends to address the many issues facing the natural environment. Protection & enhancement of protected and at-risk ecosystems will be prioritised, but there will also be actions that address biodiversity in general. Climate Action & Biodiversity are inherently connected, and many, if not all the actions will have a climate positive impact.

Regional EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy

There has been much discussion about the adequacy of the existing electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and the need for significant additional capacity to be provided. And the Local Authority has an important role to play in this process. Therefore, to ensure that the required infrastructure is built in the most efficient and considered manner Sligo County Council will participate in the development of a regional EV charging infrastructure strategy along with other Local Authorities along the west coast. Support for this process will be provided by [Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland](#) (ZEVI)

Regional Renewable Energy Strategy

The development of new renewable energy facilities and infrastructure will be a very important element in the decarbonisation of our economy & society, through the provision of green electricity. This will require very serious consideration, and therefore there is a commitment in the County Development Plan to *“developing a renewable energy strategy for Sligo and ensuring that policy frameworks are in place to assist the attraction of investment in this area”* in the short term. It is likely that this will be undertaken on a regional basis, due to the extensive nature of such infrastructure.

National Waste Management Plan

The national [Waste Management Plan](#) for a Circular Economy has recently been made and will show that Ireland is moving away from the traditional linear ‘take-make-use-dispose’ model towards a ‘circular economy’ regenerative growth model where resources are reused or recycled as much as possible, and the generation of waste is minimised. The transition to a circular economy is essential to reduce pressure on natural resources, aid in achieving climate targets, support Sustainable Development Goals and create sustainable growth and jobs. This Plan includes specific targets, policies and actions to enable the waste and resource sector to meet the circularity challenge and accelerate the transition to a circular economy.



6. Stakeholder Engagement:

In order to ensure that there was adequate engagement with all the relevant stakeholders in the process of developing the Climate Action Plan Sligo County Council have carried out a period of public consultation during summer 2023, where members of the public and other organisations were invited to make submissions relating to the Plan. Over 20 submissions were received and the content of each has been considered during the drafting of the Plan.

This is the period of statutory public consultation where members of the public and other organisations, are asked to make submissions relating to the Draft Plan. All contributions will also be considered before the final version is produced and put before the elected members of Sligo County Council for adoption in February 2023.



As well as the above Sligo County Council have also engaged with other Local Authorities, particularly those in our region, as well as the ASBN CARO, ATU, and other relevant organisations who will have an important role to play in assisting Sligo County Council in planning for the impacts of climate change.

The [National Dialogue on Climate Action](#) (NDCA)

The NDCA was established within the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) to facilitate public participation in the development of the national Climate Action Plan by engaging people in climate-related dialogue in an annual programme of events centred around inclusive climate conversations.

The 2022 NDCA, Climate Conversations 2022 suggests that there is a high level of awareness of climate change among the Irish people, and they want to get involved in climate action. The findings of the 2022 engagement programme have also shown that there is a willingness to engage in climate action, but people may not know which actions are most effective or where to start acting.

The findings of the NDCA have been considered in the development of this draft LACAP in so far as relevant to the services that the Council delivers. The publication of this Draft LACAP will help enable citizen and stakeholder engagement, and help stakeholders realise the opportunities that a transition to a carbon-neutral society and economy presents, such as new sustainable careers, warmer more energy-efficient homes, better travel options, more sustainable consumer choice, integrated spatial planning, cleaner air and water and a better environment for future generations.

7. Training:

Staff in the Local Authority have been engaged in a wide-ranging programme of training that has been developed by the Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG) in co-operation with the CAROs, the EPA, SEAI and other national bodies and academic institutions. The training has provided detailed information and opportunities to develop and enhance existing skills within our workforce. It is important that this training continues and that everyone can learn more about the different aspects of climate action. From energy management and carbon basics, to how to assist communities to implement local climate projects, Sligo County Council will continue to participate in this important element of adapting to a changing world.



We will also look for opportunities to assist in developing training programmes for communities and people who wish to become engaged in positive climate action. We have already worked with the Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education Training Board to support and promote their important new training centre in Collooney, where apprenticeships in energy retrofitting will form an important part of equipping young people with relevant skills.



8. Community Climate Action Fund:

The Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, has recently launched a new Climate Action Fund (Strand 1 - Building Low Carbon Communities). This is a fund of €24 million for local authorities to administer across their functional areas, to help support and build low carbon communities. A further €3 million is being provided to support cross-border and all-island community climate action initiatives. This funding is part of the Community Climate Action Programme, which aims to support projects and initiatives that facilitate community climate action through education, capacity building and learning by doing. Community projects eligible for this potential funding will address the following five themes:

- Community and Energy Projects
- Travel
- Food and waste
- Shopping and recycling
- Local climate and environmental action



Minister Joe O'Brien at the launch of the Sligo LECP – 'One Voice – One Vision' June 2023

Strand 1 requires the appointment of dedicated Community Climate Action Officers (CCAO) in all local authorities to guide and support communities from the very start. Sligo County Council has recruited a CCAO to facilitate the administration of this fund.



9. ISO 50001 Energy Management Standard

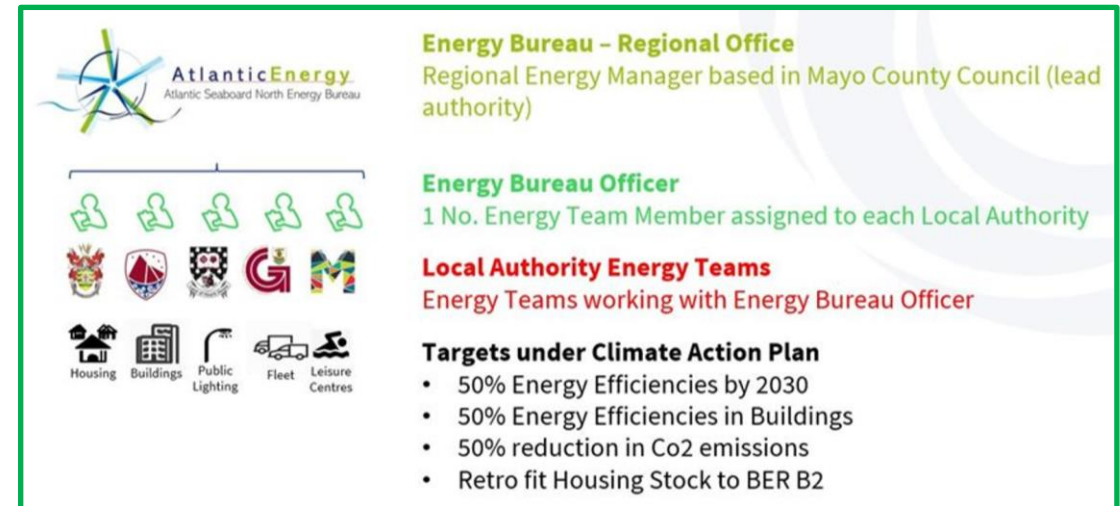
Sligo County Council are committed to implementing and maintaining the International Standards Organisation's [ISO 50001 Energy Management Standard](#).

This internationally recognised standard is designed to support organisations in all sectors and provides a practical way to improve energy use, through the development of an energy management system (EnMS). And the implementation of this type of approach across all operations of the Local Authority will be essential if we are to meet the ambitious energy efficiency and emissions targets.

The EnMS will provide an internationally method of best practice for measuring, monitoring and managing all aspects of energy use within the Organisation and will use this approach to identify opportunities for improvement on a continual basis. Training of staff is ongoing and the process to become officially certified will commence in early 2024.

10. Energy Bureau

The regional Energy Bureau was established after the CARO identified that Local Authorities in the Atlantic Seaboard North (ASBN) region would benefit from assistance with internal energy management issues. The Bureau provides support to the LAs via the provision of an Energy Officer who is dedicated to specific energy related matters such as grant applications (i.e. SEAI Pathfinder and Community Energy Grants) and the implementation & maintenance of energy management systems. As well as this the Bureau provides support for awareness campaigns and internal auditing exercises.



11. Other climate related issues:

Air Quality – The use of fossil and solid fuels has a detrimental effect on air quality. This is in addition to the high volumes of carbon dioxide that are released into the atmosphere when they are burned. It is estimated that there are approximately 1,300 premature deaths annually in Ireland due to poor air quality from fine particulate matter (PM2.5). And while Air quality in Ireland is generally good, however, there are concerning localised issues. The EPA's recent [Air Quality In Ireland 2022](#) report further identifies the critical role for local authorities in enforcement, implementation of existing plans and investment in infrastructure to encourage cleaner and healthier air quality choices. Sligo County Council continue to work with the EPA on improving air quality monitoring in County Sligo and to providing useful information to the people of Sligo.



Smart Cities – A [smart city](#) is a place where traditional networks and services are made more efficient with the use of digital solutions for the benefit of its inhabitants and business. Sligo County Council is committed to using modern information and communications technology (ICT) to understand the needs of our citizens and to improve services and how they are delivered.



12. Ongoing Climate Projects:

SCORE - One of the initial goals of the SCORE project was to establish a Coastal City Living Laboratory (CCLL) which would explore ways to increase resilience to the impacts of climate change in coastal communities. This CCLL has seen researchers from ATU working closely with Local Authority staff, as well as other organisations such as the National Parks & Wildlife Service and Clean Coasts (An Taisce). Local community groups and residents have also been involved in looking at a range of potential technological and nature-based solutions for the climate related risks in their area. Several of these initiatives are being piloted in various locations and where there are successful outcomes, these will be implemented elsewhere. It is also hoped that the CCLL will continue to operate once the present project reaches its conclusion, as it has been an effective way for various stakeholders to work effectively together.

FASTER - This project should be completed before the end of 2023 and will see the provision of two new electric vehicle charging stations. One will be located at Teach Laighne in Tubbercurry and the other in Connaughton Road car park in Sligo Town. These will be faster than the standard on street charging facilities currently available and can accommodate two vehicles at the same time.

Reduce Your Use - This national energy efficiency & awareness campaign which is supported by the SEAI and OPW was rolled out by Sligo County Council during the winter of 2022/2023, and will be again from October 2023. It provides tips & information on relevant topics for staff, which have led to energy savings in the workplace, but which can also be used at home.

Support for Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) - Sligo County Council have been providing support to local SECs including [Strandhill](#) and [South Sligo Energy Partnership](#) to develop their Energy Master Plans (EMPs). And we will continue to provide this support to other communities who wish to start their own decarbonisation journey and will actively encourage the formation of more SECs around the county.

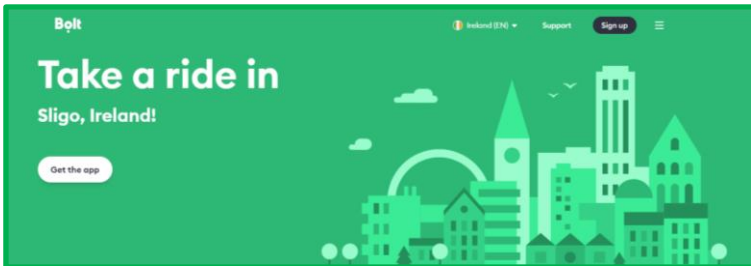




Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency (SLEA) - This is one of three Local Energy Agencies that have been founded to support homeowners, communities and small businesses to implement retrofit energy upgrades in our region. The ATU, along with partners Donegal, Leitrim & Sligo County Councils, Údarás Na Gaeltachta and Aran Islands Energy Cooperative secured EU LIFE funding to implement a workplan for home retrofitting to make our homes warmer, cheaper to heat and more valuable. It is expected that SLEA will be officially launched towards the end of 2023.



Cloonamahon Native Woodlands – Sligo County Council have cooperated with the HSE and Western Forestry Co-operative on the development of a native woodland park on HSE property adjacent to their facility in Cloonamahon. This project will see native trees being planted & protected to create a new forest, to provide a special amenity to the people of Sligo and will potentially link up with active travel routes in the surrounding area. And it is hoped that it will provide a fine example of something that can be replicated around the Country.



Bolt eBikes – In June 2022, the Bolt e-bike pilot scheme was launched in Sligo Town and by July 2023 that it has seen over 75,000 trips being taken, and over 150,000 kms travelled. This scheme has since been extended and it is hoped that this sustainable method of getting around the town will grow and become an important part of our approach to urban shared mobility.



AIM Centre - The AIM Centre is funded by Enterprise Ireland, the Atlantic Technology University (ATU), Sligo County Council, and Leitrim County Council with the aim being to become a leader in developing world leading solutions that advance end-to-end supply chain management. And the centre has incorporated modern renewable energy production and control technologies to ensure that it is an example of modern NZEB construction.

13. Strategic Environmental Assessment/Appropriate Assessment:

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a statutory process, involving the systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Climate Action Plan before a final decision has been made to adopt it. It is carried out in parallel to the Climate Action Plan making process. The SEA report is available in Appendix 1 of this draft document.

The EU Directive on Habitats (92/43/EEC) aims to create a network of protected wildlife sites in Europe through the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) - collectively known as Natura 2000 sites. It is a requirement of the Directive and legislation to carry out an **Appropriate Assessment** (Natura Impact Report) on any plan or project that is likely to have a significant effect on the conservation status of a site.

There is a statutory requirement for this Climate Action Plan to be screened to ascertain whether it has any significant impact on any Natura 2000 site. This process is occurring in parallel with the current public consultation phase, and a Natura Impact Report (NIR) is also available in appendix 1 of this draft Climate Action Plan



Section 14: Developing the Baselines



14.1: Climate Change Risk Assessment

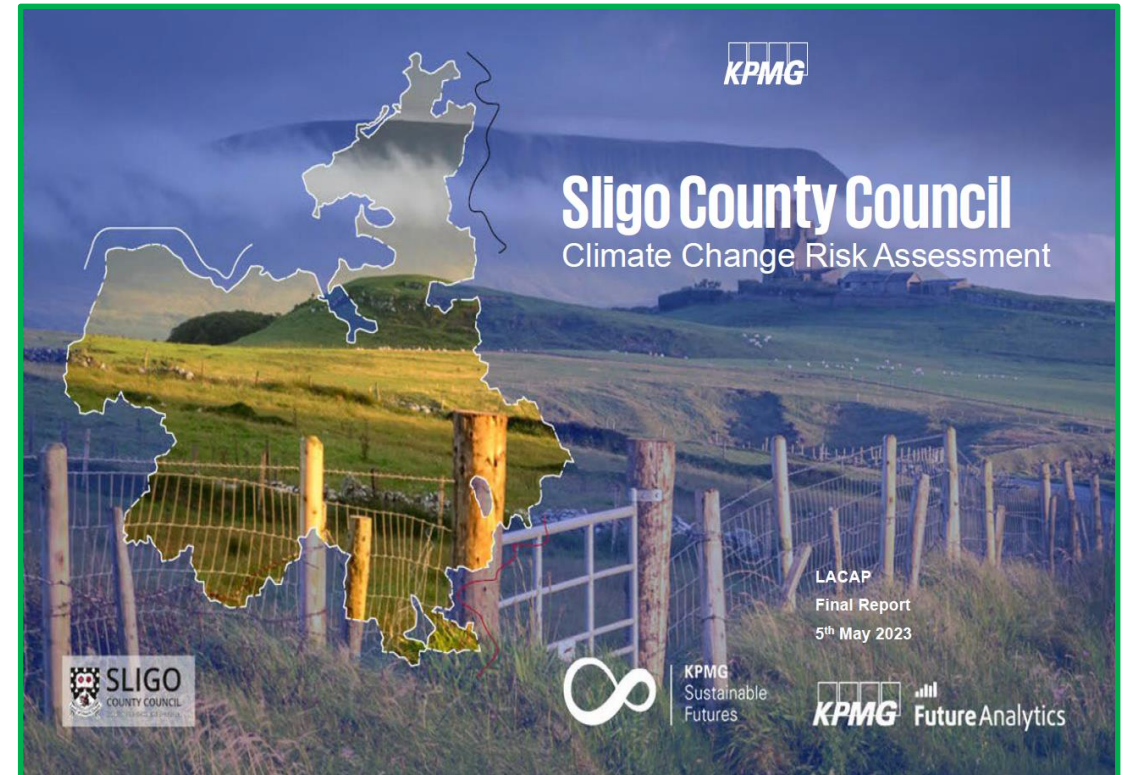
Context and Scope of the Report

Climate change poses a critical challenge for Sligo. It will result in a wide range of impacts across Sligo, from damaging infrastructure such as roads, to biodiversity, and limits on water supply. These bring substantial implications for Sligo County Council.

Internationally, national and local governments are increasingly compelled to take ambitious action to increase resilience to climate change within their organisations and their functional areas through adaptation and mitigation measures.

Ireland's Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021 highlights the role of the Local Authority in meeting national emission reductions targets and achieving climate resilience. The Act stipulates that local authorities need to prepare a Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) that will drive local response to the challenges posed by climate change, translating the national climate policy to the local level.

The report provides an assessment of Sligo's climate change risks and impacts on the delivery of services by Sligo County Council. The aim of the report is to provide the evidence base and inform the development of the Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan.



Key results & findings:

As illustrated in the climate risk matrix on the right the level of risk associated with some hazards (e.g. coastal, river and pluvial flooding, coastal erosion, heatwaves and drought) will increase while others will remain the same (e.g., severe windstorms). Projections indicate a decrease in the frequency of some hazards (such as cold spells and heavy snowfalls) with decreases in levels of associated risk.

Recent experiences of **river and pluvial flooding** events in 2020 and 2021, resulted in damages to residential properties, closure of businesses (Mowlam Nursing Home, 2018), disruption to public services and closure of transport networks. Projected increases in the frequency of extreme precipitation events will result in increased surface water and riverine flood risk for Sligo.

Coastal erosion and coastal flooding already pose a significant risk for County Sligo and have resulted in disruption of transport networks and damage to coastal habitats (e.g. Strandhill). Rising sea levels will increase the rate of coastal erosion and frequency of coastal inundation, resulting in an increased coastal erosion and flood risk for County Sligo.

Severe windstorms are currently experienced on a frequent basis in Sligo and result in wide-ranging impacts, including disruption to energy supply and transport networks. Projections indicate no significant change to this frequency.

Heatwaves and droughts have contributed to the imposition of restrictions on water supply, damage to road surfaces (e.g. N15 in 2018) and have placed an increased demand on recreational areas. Projected increases in the frequency of heatwaves and drought conditions will mean that events currently experienced on an infrequent basis will become more frequent.

Recent experiences of **cold spells and heavy snowfall** events in 2018 and 2022, demonstrated the wide range of impacts for County Sligo. These included, amongst others, disruption to public transport networks (e.g. rail and Bus Eireann bus services) and road closures. Projected increases in average temperature and decreases in the frequency of snowfall indicate a decrease in the frequency of cold spells, heavy snowfall, and their associated impacts.

To increase resilience, Sligo County Council will need to proactively plan for and adapt to the **current and future climate change risks** identified through this report.

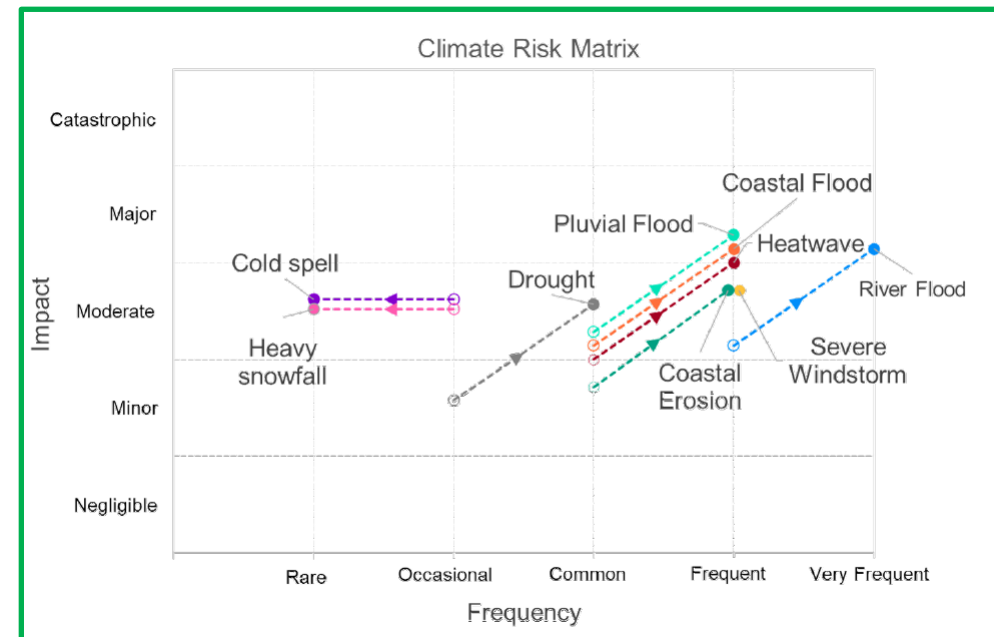


Figure 4. The risk matrix above shows the current and future level of risk associated with climate hazards for Sligo. The hollow marker showing the current level of risk and the solid marker the future level of risk. The dotted line shows the change between the current and future risk.

Projected Changes in Exposure and Vulnerability

In the future, County Sligo will also change in terms of its population and developments. This will potentially affect the exposure and vulnerability of people and assets within the region. National, regional and local strategies that outlined expected and possible sociodemographic and infrastructure developments within County Sligo were reviewed to understand how exposure and vulnerability may change by 2050. A summary of the results of this review are shown below.



How is Ireland projected to change by 2040?

- Extra 1m population, 500,000 in rural areas / regional centres
- Extra 660,000 jobs



- Extra 550,000 homes
- 'Housing for All' promotes a 'town centre first' approach

Cross-Sectoral National Priorities:

- Infrastructure and Services
- Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation
- Regeneration, Repopulation, Resilience

How is County Sligo projected to change?



- Population to increase from 65,500 in 2016 to **71-72,500 in 2028** (NPF)
- Sligo Town population targeted to **increase by 8,000** between 2016 and 2028. (RSES)
- **c.2,764** new housing units required by 2028 (DHLGH HNDA Toolkit)
- Sligo's total road network of **2,831 km**, consists of 153 km national roads, 236 km regional roads and 2,442 km local roads (TII)

RSES Objectives: "at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements with a population of at least 1,500..., within the existing built-up footprints."

Planning for adaptation

Coastal and Flood Defence Schemes:

The Office of Public Works-Council projects for 2021 include an approved €124,000 funding for Rosses Point (i.e. to install 34m of rock revetment to protect the public path) and €72,000 Strandhill Bay (i.e. a Coastal Erosion & Flood Risk Management Study).

Key national road infrastructure projects include focus for council:

- N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin
- N16 Sligo to County Boundary
- N16 Lugatober Road Development
- N17 Knock to Collooney [AEC]
- N4-N15 Sligo Urban Improvement Scheme



Notable renewable energy initiatives include:

- 10 X Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) (e.g. Curry SEC and Aurivo Cooperative)
- Wind Farms (e.g. Carrane Hill and Lackan)
- Sligo SEC Proposal – to develop a Satellite Gas Network in Sligo Town. The project would provide 'enabling infrastructure' for locally-sourced low carbon renewable gas (i.e. Anaerobic Digestion and Hydrogen).



Planning for mitigation








Case Study in Urban Planning: Sligo Town Regeneration Project

- **€47 million** has been allocated to Sligo Town under 'Call 2' of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF).
- The funding will go towards a new cultural and learning hub called 'City Campus'. This will include a library to be developed by Sligo County Council and IT Sligo.
- Public Realm projects will see €19.16 million spent on re-designing streets and spaces. The aim is to make these spaces more attractive and pedestrian friendly and to encourage visitors to the town.

Summary

The CCRA detailed within this report provides an assessment of County Sligo's climate change risks and has been produced to support Sligo County Council's efforts to prepare its LACAP. The CCRA has been developed in line with the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines, Technical Annex B, drafted by the Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs). The key results are summarised below:

-  • Recent experiences of **river and pluvial flooding** events in 2020 and 2021, resulted in damages to residential properties, closure of businesses (Mowlam Nursing Home, 2018), disruption to public services and closure of transport networks. Projected increases in the frequency of extreme precipitation events will result in increased surface water and riverine flood risk for Sligo.
-  • **Coastal erosion and coastal flooding** already pose a significant risk for County Sligo and have resulted in disruption of transport networks and damage to coastal habitats (E.g. Strandhill). Rising sea levels will increase the rate of coastal erosion and frequency of coastal inundation, resulting in an increased coastal erosion and flood risk for County Sligo.
-  • **Severe windstorms** are currently experienced on a frequent basis in Sligo and result in wide-ranging impacts, including disruption to energy supply and transport networks. Projections indicate no significant change to this frequency.
-  • **Heatwaves and droughts** have contributed to the imposition of restrictions on water supply, damage to road surfaces (e.g., N15 in 2018) and have placed an increased demand on recreational areas. Projected increases in the frequency of heatwaves and drought conditions will mean that events currently experienced on an infrequent basis will become more frequent.
-  • Recent experiences of **cold spells and heavy snowfall** events in 2018 and 2022, demonstrated the wide range of impacts for County Sligo. These included, amongst others, disruption to public transport networks (e.g. rail and Bus Eireann bus services) and road closures. Projected increases in average temperature and decreases in the frequency of snowfall indicate a decrease in the frequency of cold spells, heavy snowfall, and their associated impacts.

To increase resilience, Sligo County Council will need to proactively plan for and adapt to the current and future climate change risks identified through this CCRA.

14.2: Baseline Emission Inventory

Local Authorities (LA) are taking a leadership role in acting on climate. As part of the National Climate Action Plan, they are developing comprehensive Local Authority Climate Action Plans to address greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in their administrative areas. These plans will be based on evidence, with the impacts measured over time. Enabling this is Baseline Emissions Inventories (BEI), a key instrument to enable LAs to design their climate plans and measure the impact of its associated actions related to emission reductions across the LA's operations and varying sectors of society. This report presents the results of a BEI for Sligo County Council, breaking down the county's emissions by sector and providing Sligo-specific context towards the sectors. In addition, the emissions that the Local Authority is directly responsible for are presented.

The calculations for this inventory were made primarily using a dataset for 2019 from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) called MapEire, which is the result of the National Mapping of GHG and non-GHG Emissions Sources project. The project spatially mapped GHG emissions on a square kilometre scale for the entire Irish Exclusive Economic Zone, assigning the emissions to where they were produced. This dataset was the basis for measuring emissions in County Sligo for the sectors Industrial Processes; Waste; Agriculture; Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), as well as the direct combustion emissions for the Residential, Commercial Services, and Manufacturing sectors. The latter three sectors (referring to the sectors mentioned earlier) also include electricity consumption emissions, which, in MapEire, are categorized separately from other emissions due to the spatial methodology used, where all emissions from electricity are assigned to the power plant of generation, and not allocated to specific sectors.

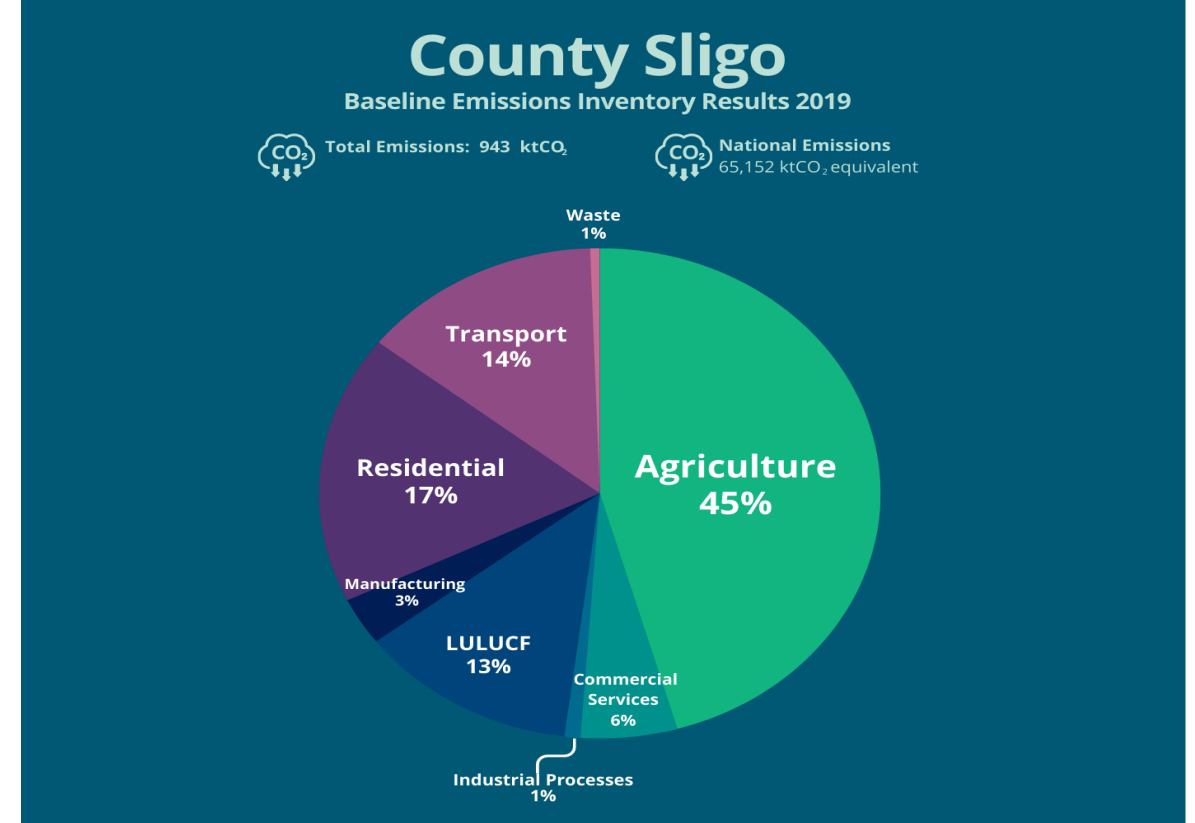


The GHG emissions for County Sligo in 2019 totalled 943 ktCO₂e, about 2% of the national total. Sligo County Council's own emissions account for 3 ktCO₂e, less than 1% of the county's emissions.

Emissions Category	County Sligo Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)	National Emissions ¹ (ktCO ₂ e)
Residential	167 (17%)	9,552 (15%)
Commercial Services	53 (6%)	4,618 (7%)
Manufacturing	30 (3%)	6,737 (10%)
Industrial Processes	9 (1%)	2,267 (3%)
Transport	131 (14%)	12,196 (19%)
Waste	5 (1%)	991 (1%)
Agriculture	429 (45%)	22,134 (34%)
LULUCF	119 (13%)	6,657 (10%)
Total	943 (100%)	65,152 (100%)

Therefore, it is necessary for a separate analysis to distribute electricity emissions to the Residential, Commercial Services and Manufacturing categories. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has metered electricity consumption available at the county level, split between residential and non-residential usage. This consumption data was then converted to carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), the standard measure for measuring the global warming potential of GHGs and assigned to the sectors. Commercial and Manufacturing electricity were split based on an indicator of economic output.

Transport emissions were calculated using the National Transport Authority's (NTA) model and emissions from the local authority's own activities from the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland's (SEAI) Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) programme. An inventory of Fluorinated gases, or F-gases, for the county, was also extracted from the MapElre dataset.



Note: Energy industry emissions have been allocated to the categories where they are consumed.

Local Authority Own Emissions:

All public bodies in Ireland must achieve a 51% reduction in energy-related GHG emissions and a 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030. This is tracked through the SEAI's Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system, in which each public sector organisation reports the following:

- Annual energy consumption for all energy types.
- Annual value that quantifies the level of activity undertaken by the organisation each year. This is referred to as the activity metric.
- Details of energy-saving projects implemented and planned.
- Summary of the approach adopted for reviewing the organisation's energy management programme.

As of 2020, public bodies have saved €2 billion and 6 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions through avoided energy use between 2009 and 2020. The public sector is 34% more energy efficient than in 2009 and exceeded its 33% energy efficiency target for 2020. In 2019 approximately two-thirds of LA electricity consumption was for Public Lighting. The remaining third was primarily used in LA buildings.

The total emissions from the public sector in Sligo are 2.8 ktCO₂e. This represents less than 1% of the total emissions for County Sligo. These emissions are not separated from the broader MapElre inventory but rather provide a closer look at the emissions the LA is directly responsible for. Differently, from the national patterns Sligo's own emissions come mostly from Thermal Energy (60%) followed by electricity (22%) and transport (19%).

The complete Baseline Emissions Report can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.



15. Strategic goals, objectives & policies:

The [National Policy Position](#) establishes the fundamental national goal of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. And the interim objectives for 2030 are for an energy efficiency improvement of 50% and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030.

This Climate Action Plan seeks to bring together all the actions contained herein, as well as those within the LECP, and the policies of the CDP, to clearly contain in one document, the efforts that will be made over the lifetime of the Plan to meet national emission reductions & energy efficiency targets, while developing & strengthening resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Strategic Goals:

- 1. Achieving our carbon emission reduction target of 51% for 2030; progressing to the 2050 target for carbon neutrality and reducing climate impacts**
- 2. Enabling a 'just transition' ensuring no household, community or business is disadvantaged by decarbonisation measures, paving the way for sustainable economic growth.**
- 3. Cultivating decarbonisation co-benefits across key sectors in the county/city ensuring alignment with the sustainable development agenda.**
- 4. Providing supports to communities and organisations and foster collaboration; leading the transition to an inclusive net zero economy.**

The County Development Plan (CDP) is the principal policy document that outlines the policies that will be put in place to achieve the strategic goals and objectives of the Local Authority. The strategic policies included in the draft CDP relating to climate action are as follows:

- SP-CA-1 Support the implementation of the government's climate action policy in accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, the national Climate Action Plan 2023, the National Adaptation Framework 2018 and all subsequent relevant updates.
- SP-CA-2 Ensure that Sligo County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy, Climate Action Plan and County Development Plan are fully aligned.
- SP-CA-3 Integrate appropriate climate mitigation and adaptation considerations and measures into all relevant development management and development planning processes.

16: List of Actions:

The actions contained within this Climate Action Plan have been grouped under six different themes, with the related objectives for each set on actions also provided.

Themes:

- **Governance & Leadership**

Thematic objectives:

1. Provide leadership in climate action

2. Embed climate action into all activities & operations of Sligo County Council

- **Sustainability & Resource Management**

1. Ensure that all operations of Sligo County Council are managed to improve efficiency & reduce emissions

2. Promote the move to a circular economy

- **Built Environment & Energy**

1. Support the key areas identified in the National Climate Action Plan in relation to energy efficiency & emissions reductions

2. Ensure that a Just Transition to a climate positive society is achieved

- **Community Resilience & Transition**

1. Foster & support climate action within local communities

2. Build capacity within the community to progress climate action

- **Environment & Biodiversity**

1. Protect & enhance our natural environment

2. Promote the use of Nature Based Solutions

- **Transport & Mobility**

1. Reduce transport related emissions

2. Support the shift from dependence on private cars to shared, sustainable travel options

Objectives were identified to mobilise actions under each area in support of strategic goals, informed by detailed interdepartmental discussion and pre-draft submissions invited from the public. Actions outlined are in support of adaptation and mitigation measures, and in some cases a combination of both.

SMART Actions:

The list of actions contained in this Plan only includes Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic & Timebound (SMART) actions whose completion will result in the fulfilment of the strategic objectives of the Organisation. And where there are other significant current or future corporate plans, policies or strategies that address climate change and action, these have been referenced also i.e. Active Travel, Circular Economy, CDP, LECP, Biodiversity.

And where specific actions are completed within the lifetime of this Climate Action Plan, and where the actions concerned may lead to a requirement for further issues to be addressed, then the implementation plan for that action shall be amended to reflect this, and progress in that area shall be reviewed on a regular basis.

Theme 1 – Governance & Leadership

Objective 1: To provide Leadership in Climate Action

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
1	Maintain established Climate Action structures in Local Authority to lead & coordinate the implementation of the Climate Action Plan	Both	No. of Steering Group meetings. No of Climate Action Team meetings	Environment	All SCC sections	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	Availability of relevant staff members	Full accountability
2	Ensure that all Environmental & Climate related objectives in the County Development Plan (CDP) are supported, pursued & implemented.	Both	Adoption of a climate positive County Development Plan	Planning	Multiple	Lifetime of CDP (2024-2030)	Significant staffing & funding resources will be required to achieve the objectives of the CDP	Influence
3	Ensure that relevant & appropriate climate training is provided to all staff on a continuous basis.	Both	No. of staff who have received training	Environment	Corporate (HR), CARO, LASNTG	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	Availability of relevant training course & availability of staff	Full accountability
4	Develop & deliver staff climate awareness campaign that will assist staff with implementing good practice & achieving continuous improvements.	Both	No. of campaigns/annum.	Environment	CARO, SEAI, Energy Bureau, SLEA, ATU	Start within 6 months, and continue for lifetime of CAP	Relevant content & information, participation of staff	Coordinate & Facilitate

Theme 1 – Governance & Leadership (Contd.)

Objective 2: To embed Climate Action into all activities & operations of the Local Authority.

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
5	Ensure that Climate Action is to the forefront of all Corporate Strategies, policies & plans.	Both	No. of Climate Action objectives in each document	Environment	Corporate	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	Senior management team approval and support from relevant sections	Coordinate & Facilitate
6	Ensure that Green Public Procurement guidelines are implemented fully across all procurement carried out by or on behalf of Sligo County Council	Mitigation	Inclusion of relevant criteria in all SCC purchasing & tendering. Development of GPP strategy.	Finance	All SCC sections, Suppliers	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	Minimal	Influence
7	Ensure that Blended Working policy is applied with a view to reducing energy use & emissions to the greatest extent possible	Mitigation	Reduction in energy use in SCC buildings	Human Resources	All SCC sections	Within 2 years	Adequate resources within HR to manage system and cooperation of staff	Full accountability
8	Actively encourage the use of online & virtual methods for suitable meetings & training courses	Mitigation	No. of virtual events/Kms of travel avoided	Corporate	All organisations that work with SCC	For the lifetime of the LACAP	Cooperation of other organisations and adequate IT resources	Energy and Buildings/Transport
9	Ensure that climate change is fully incorporated in to the the Major Emergency Plan (MEP) during review.	Adaptation	Reviewed MEP	Fire Services	Transportation, Environment, Corporate	Within 6 months	Availability of appropriate information to inform the MEP	Coordinate & Facilitate

Theme 2 - Sustainability & Resource Management

Objective 1: Ensure that all operations of the Local Authority are managed to improve efficiency & reduce emissions

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
10	Implement ISO 50001 Energy Management System across the entire organisation to continually improve energy management standards & performance to achieve the 2030 targets (50% energy reduction & 51% GHG emission reduction from a 2016-2018 baseline).	Mitigation	Yr. 1 - Achieve certification. Yr. 2 & beyond. % reduction in GHG emissions, % increase in energy efficiency.	Environment	SEAI, Energy Bureau, All SCC sections	Lifetime of LACAP	SMT support. After initial resource allocation full implementation of the EnMS will result in ongoing monetary & energy savings	Full accountability
11	Support and Implement Digitization across the organisation	Mitigation	No. of Online Forms; No. of Digital procedures; % reduction in paper used.	ICT	All SCC sections	Within 2 years	Adequate digital & ICT resources for all sections	Full accountability

Objective 2: - Promote the move to a circular economy model

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
12	Support & implement the objectives and actions of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy, as they relate to Sligo.	Both	% Reduction in residual waste volumes % Increase in recycling/reuse/repair rates	Environment	CURWMO, NWCPD, WERLA, waste management industry	Lifetime of Plan (2023-2029)	Support for related initiatives	Influence
13	Continue the provision of climate friendly schemes like Green for Business and Energy Efficiency Grant schemes and provide information, training & support to new & existing businesses to improve sustainability & energy efficiency	Mitigation	No. of businesses supported	LEO	Sligo Chamber of Commerce, local businesses	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	Availability of resources to continue providing grant schemes and availability of up to date information	Influence
14	Include 'Sustainability and Climate Change' criteria on relevant LA grant conditions.	Adaptation	Inclusion of relevant criteria in assessment procedures & No. of projects incorporating climate positive aspects	Community & Enterprise	Environment, Heritage, Biodiversity, PPN	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	Continuation of grant programmes and participation of community groups	Influence

Theme 3 - Built Environment & Energy

Objective 1: Support the key areas identified in the National Climate Action Plan in relation to energy efficiency & emissions reductions (retrofitting & renewable energy)

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
15	Ensure that the Social Housing Retrofitting Program is completed each year, and expanded where possible.	Mitigation	No. of houses retrofitted	Housing	DHLGH, SEAI, SLEA	Lifetime of LACAP	Additional funding for increased activity	Full Accountability
16	Work with Regional Energy Bureau to develop grant applications for SEAI Pathfinder grant programmes, and implement decarbonisation projects on Local Authority buildings.	Mitigation	No. of successful applications. Kgs of CO2 saved. No. of projects implemented.	Environment	Facilities & Assets, Energy Bureau, SEAI,	Within 1 year.	Match funding of 50% of total cost	Full Accountability
17	Ensure all public lighting is retrofitted to low energy lamps and that the system is monitored and managed to maximise energy efficiency, and to avoid and/or mitigate for impacts on natural habitat and	Mitigation	No. of lights retrofitted. Kgs. Of CO2 saved	Transportation	Mayo Co. Co., Data management service provider	For the lifetime of the LACAP	Resources being made available by Dept.	Full Accountability
18	Continue to support the operation of the Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency in their primary mission to increase the rate of housing retrofitting	Mitigation	No. of houses retrofitted.	Environment	SLEA, Houseowners, Construction industry	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	SEAI grant funding, participation by home owners	Influence
19	Continue to work with Sligo SEC partners on exploring the potential for developing a green gas network and a biogas facility in Sligo.	Mitigation	Development of facilities	Environment	SLEA, ATU, GNI, Sligo SEC	Within 2 years	Funding to complete studies	Influence
20	Support independently run, but publicly owned facilities to improve energy efficiency & reduce their emissions.	Mitigation	kWhs/Kgs CO2 saved.	Facilities & Assets	Regional Sports Centre, Waterpoint, The Model, Surf Centre of Excellence	Over lifetime of Climate Action Plan	Resources to develop proposals and funding to implement	Influence

Theme 3 - Built Environment & Energy (contd.)

Objective 2: Ensure that a just transition to a climate positive society is achieved

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
21	Identify potential energy saving initiatives that can be applied to social housing stock and carry out pilots before extension to all stock	Mitigation	No. of initiatives completed, No. of houses involved	Housing	Academic institutions, SEAI, SLEA	Lifetime of LACAP	Availability of suitable initiatives, funding to implement pilot schemes	Full Accountability
22	Achieve energy efficiency objectives of Housing Delivery Action Plan	Mitigation	No. & energy rating of developments delivered	Architects	DHLGH, SEAI, SLEA	Within 3 years	Resources being made available by Dept.	Full Accountability

Theme 4 - Community Resilience & Transition

Objective 1: Foster & support climate action within local communities & ensure that a just transition to a climate positive society is achieved

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
23	Monitor the implementation of all climate/energy/sustainability related actions contained within the Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP).	Both	No. of actions completed	Community & Enterprise	Multiple	Lifetime of LECP (2023-2030)	Several energy & climate related actions are contained in the LECP and will require significant resources from various sources to be implemented	Full accountability
24	Continue to work with ATU to establish and support a climate forum for young people	Both	Formation of Forum & no. of meetings	Environment	ATU, schools	Within 1 year	Participation of young people	Advocate
25	Support and participate in regular public events that will improve awareness around the impacts of climate change and ways that we can adapt. Work with PPN to identify relevant topics & communities with a key focus on message and communicating to vulnerable groups	Adaptation	No. of events organised	Library Service	Environment, Arts, Creative Ireland, ATU, SEAI	For the lifetime of the LACAP	Resources to organise & hold events	Advocate
26	Continue to promote & support the Green Club Programme	Both	No. of clubs participating	Environment	C&E, PPN, SEAI, NPWS, Uisce Eireann, Sporting organisations	For the lifetime of the LACAP	Participation of clubs, availability of resources to carry out identified actions	Coordinate & Facilitate
27	Continue to promote & support the Green Schools programme	Both	No. of schools participating	Environment	An Taisce Green Schools, schools	For the lifetime of the LACAP	Participation of schools	Coordinate & Facilitate

Theme 4 - Community Resilience & Transition (Contd.)

Objective 2: Build capacity within the community to progress climate actions

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
28	Deliver the Community Climate Action Fund, and the promotion of other related funding streams, including the Creative Climate Action Fund, and ensure full use of available resources.	Both	No. of projects delivered	Environment	DECC, PPN, Community & Enterprise, ATU, SLEA, Sligo LEADER Partnership, WDC	Within 18 months of CCAF being made available and ongoing	Identification of adequate number of suitable projects and ongoing community capacity	Coordinate & Facilitate
29	Support the formation of new Sustainable Energy Communities, and provide support to develop their Energy Master Plans (EMPs)	Mitigation	No. of SECs formed, No. of EMPs delivered	Environment	SEAI, ATU, SLEA	For the lifetime of the CAP	Ongoing community interest, SEAI grant support	Coordinate & Facilitate

Theme 5 - Environment & Biodiversity

Objective 1: Protect & enhance our natural environment

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
30	Develop a Biodiversity Action Plan for Co. Sligo which addresses all of the relevant climate related issues & includes appropriate actions which supports green & blue infrastructure, NBSs, integrates biodiversity considerations into new & existing operations & developments. The implementation of the Biodiversity Plan will be underpinned by ecological surveys and assessments to ensure interventions are appropriate to the receiving environment.	Both	Publication of Policy & implementation of actions	Biodiversity	Heritage, Climate, Environment, NPWS, LAWPRO	Develop action plan within 12 months and actions over lifetime of LACAP	Support from DHLGH and other sections	Full accountability
31	Complete the work of the SCORE project with ATU (ends July 2025) and identify ways of continuing the work of the Coastal City Living Laboratory model.	Adaptation	Completion of project objectives	Environment	ATU & other project partners. Various public bodies.	SCORE to finish in July 2025. CCLL to continue indefinitely	Ongoing community involvement. Support from other public bodies.	Coordinate & Facilitate
32	Expand roll out of Weather Impact Register (WIRE) app to gather extreme weather event related data	Adaptation	No. of events recored	Environment	CARO, Transportation, Fire Services	For the lifetime of the CAP	Staff cooperation in the use of the system, GIS resources	Coordinate & Facilitate
33	Continue to monitor coastal erosion along Sligo shoreline and maintain existing sea defences, considering application of nature based solutions, and in line with conservation management objectives of European Sites.	Adaptation	No. of projects completed	Environment	OPW, ATU, NPWS, Biodiversity Officer	Lifetime of LACAP & beyond	Continued provision of adequate resources from Dept.	Full accountability
34	Identify & register heritage sites that are at risk from climate related weather events	Adaptation	Creation of register including details of risks involved & potential mitigation measures	Heritage	OPW, Heritage Council, local heritage groups	Within 2 years	Staff resources	Coordinate & Facilitate

Theme 5 - Environment & Biodiversity (Contd.)

Objective 2: Promote the use of Nature Based Solutions

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
35	Develop a register of Council owned properties; that may potentially be used for Nature based solutions, including community gardens and allotments, and the establishment of a native treeplanting programme, that targets planting in appropriate place with	Both	Register created with all suitable sites included/No. of trees planted per year	Facilities & Assets	Roads, Environment, Biodiversity, F&A Team, Coillte, Forestry service providers	Within 1 year (Follow on actions required)	Availability & suitability of locations	Full accountability
36	Create working group on Nature Based Solutions to identify suitable options and explore their use and expansion within the County.	Both	Establishment of working group and set of proposals	Environment	ATU, NPWS, LAWPRO, Biodiversity Officer, other academic institutions	Within 2 years	Funding to carry out pilot projects and feasibility studies	Advocate
37	Convene a Flooding Working Group to improve local flood protection (maintenance) and enhanced flood response (required resources). Examine areas where sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) and nature based solutions can be considered.	Adaptation	Formation of Working group and set of proposals	Environment	OPW, Uisce Eireann, transportation, fire Services, LAWPRO, IFI	Within 1 year	Identification of suitable sites for SUDs trials	Coordinate & Facilitate

Theme 6 - Transport & Mobility

Objective 1: Reduce transport related emissions

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
38	Develop a comprehensive Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Co. Sligo & implement relevant actions	Both	Publication of Strategy; No. of EV chargers installed	Transportation	Environment, ZEVI, other Local Authorities	Within 12 months	Support from ZEVI	Full Accountability
39	Develop & implement a fleet decarbonisation strategy	Mitigation	No. of non-diesel vehicles in fleet; Reduction in fuel energy use	Transportation	SEAI, Energy Bureau, SEAI	Lifetime of LACAP	Training, charging infrastructure, work scheduling, funding	Full Accountability

Objective 2: Support the shift from dependence on private cars to shared, sustainable travel options

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies	Local Authority Role
40	Deliver on existing multi-annual Active Travel programme and continue to work for future expansion of the network.	Both	No. of journeys completed (measured by survey); % Modal Shift away from private car	Transportation	National Transport Authority, Parks, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Environment	As per programme schedule	Ongoing provision of resources by NTA	Full Accountability
41	Develop Sustainable Travel Mobility Hubs and promote shared mobility solutions that will allow for the move away from private car ownership	Both	No. of hubs created; Kgs of CO2 saved; Kms of sustainable travel journeys	Transportation	Environment, Facilities & Assets, SEAI, service providers	Within 2 years	Availability of adequate space & support from community	Coordinate & Facilitate
42	Liaise with public transport providers in relation to the draft Local Transport Plan to ensure maximum coverage throughout Sligo for all modes of transport, excluding private cars.	Both	No. of routes covered by public transport. No of shared mobility stations in Sligo.	Transportation	Environment, public transport service providers	Lifetime of LACAP	Cooperation of other relevant organisations	Influence
43	Liaise with key employers in Sligo to promote 'Smarter Travel for workplaces'.	Both	No. of employers signed up to the scheme.	Environment	TFI, ATU, other employers	Lifetime of LACAP	Cooperation of other relevant organisations	Coordinate & Facilitate

17. Sligo Decarbonisation Zone (SDZ)



Introduction & profile:

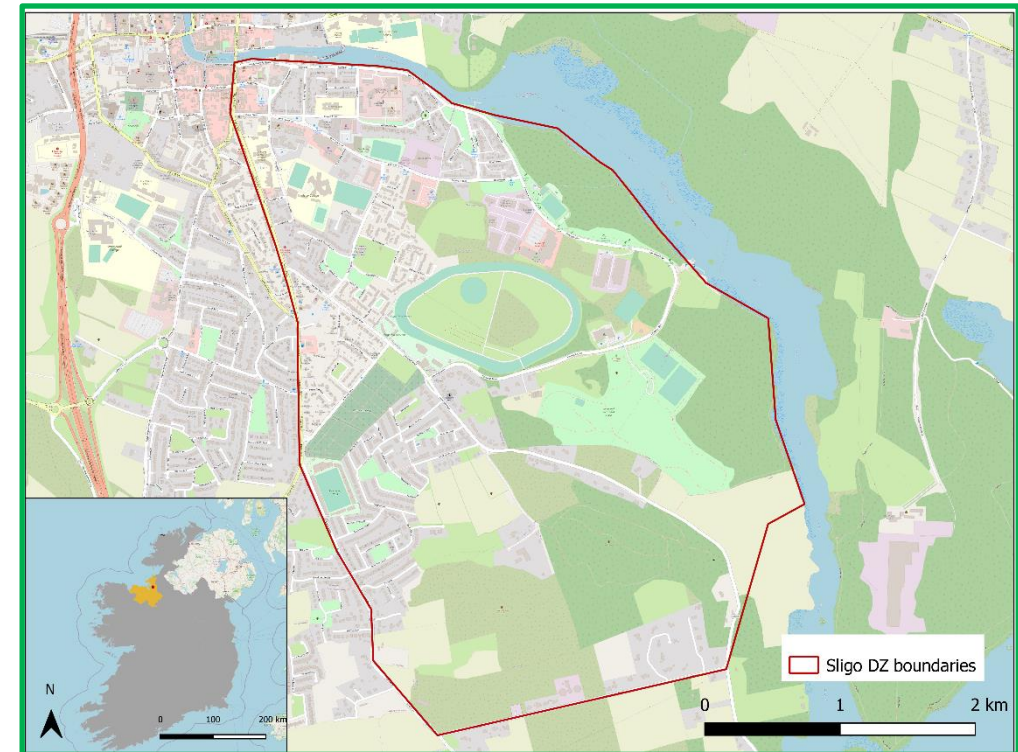
As part of the process involved in developing the LACAP each Local Authority was directed to identify a Decarbonisation Zone within their functional area. So having considered the criteria outlined in the briefing paper for Local Authorities - '[Developing Decarbonising Zones in Ireland](#)' Sligo County Council have selected an area in the southeast of Sligo Town (which includes the townlands of Abbeyquarter North, Abbeyquarter South, Cleveragh Demense, Tonaphuble & Carns) as the Decarbonisation Zone for County Sligo.

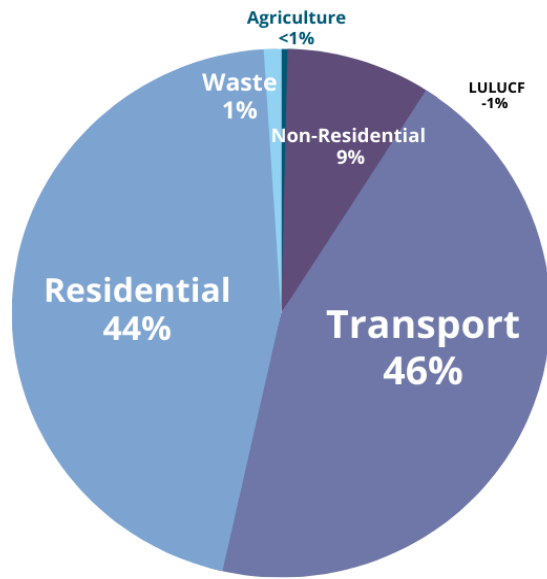
The Sligo DZ is approximately 4 sq. kms in size and has a population of just under 4000. There is a good mix of publicly & privately owned buildings, as well as a significant area of parkland and open green space. Sligo County Council's main offices at Riverside are located within the DZ, as is the Regional Sports Centre, for which SCC is responsible. There are several large housing estates, which contain a mix of Local Authority owned houses and private residences. This includes the Cranmore estate which is currently undergoing a major Regeneration project. This has already seen a significant amount of work carried out on improving energy efficiency in both LA & private houses, and work will also soon commence on a new community centre for the area. This was seen as an ideal opportunity to use this as a flagship project for the Decarbonisation Zone. SCC are also about to commence work on a major lighting refitting project, in conjunction with one of the obligated suppliers under the EEOS scheme, which will also help to start the overall process of decarbonisation in the area. This project includes both SCC's main offices, as well as the Regional Sports Centre.

The selection process that we followed initially identified several potential locations around the county, and each of them was then considered for suitability under the criteria that were outlined in the briefing paper mentioned above. The location that has been selected was found to be the most suitable for several reasons which are outlined below. The issue was discussed at the Climate Strategic Policy Committee, and it was agreed that we should take the advice of the available experts when identifying the most suitable location for the DZ.

Some of the issues considered by the SPC were:

- Responsibility within SCC - The Climate Action Team will work on this, and support is available from ATU Sligo, Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency, as well as the CARO.
- Responsibility within the Community – Sligo County Council are currently working on a project called [Connected](#) (funded by Pobal) which is focused on developing capacity within communities to deal with Climate Change. The project will include supporting the development of a local committee and producing a climate change toolkit for use by citizens.





Emissions breakdown per sector. Page 5 DZ BEI Report – Appendix 4.

Main areas for consideration:

- Energy Baseline/ Carbon Footprint/Emissions Mapping – As part of the process of developing the DZ Sligo County Council have commissioned a Baseline Line Emissions Inventory, like that produced for the County, but specifically for the DZ area. See figure and table across. The Connected project will also examine carbon footprints and potential methods of measuring and reducing them.
- DZ Priorities and funding opportunities - Designation as a DZ should attract more opportunities for funding. There are various EU & national schemes that could be applied to for various initiatives. And the Community Climate Action fund would also be another potential source of funding.
- Defining the DZ Spatially – It will be very important to have the Planning Section & the GIS Officer fully engaged with the project in the early stages.
- Select Policy and Objectives - It would be beneficial to set some early objectives that may already be partially achieved. Therefore, any policies that are drawn up at the start of the process should be fully informed of current initiative. The inclusion of the DZ, as well as other climate positive actions & policies, should be included in all future SCC plans & strategies in any case. But having an active committee in place, comprised of residents from within the DZ, will be vital in identifying viable & practical objectives.
- Project Implementation - Implementation plans & KPIs should be developed early, and adequate resources, both financial & HR, should be identified and allocated.

Emissions Category	DZ Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)	County Sligo Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)	National Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)
Residential	13.2 (44%)	167 (18%)	9,552 (15%)
Non-Residential	2.57 (9%)	92 (10%)	13,622 (21%)
Transport	13.5 (46%)	220 (8%)	12,196 (19%)
Waste	0.308 (1%)	5 (0.6%)	991 (2%)
Agriculture	0.112 (<1%)	429 (46%)	22,134 (33%)
LULUCF	-0.37 (-1%)	119 (13%)	6,899 (10%)
Total	29.693 (100%)	943 (100%)	65,394 (100%)

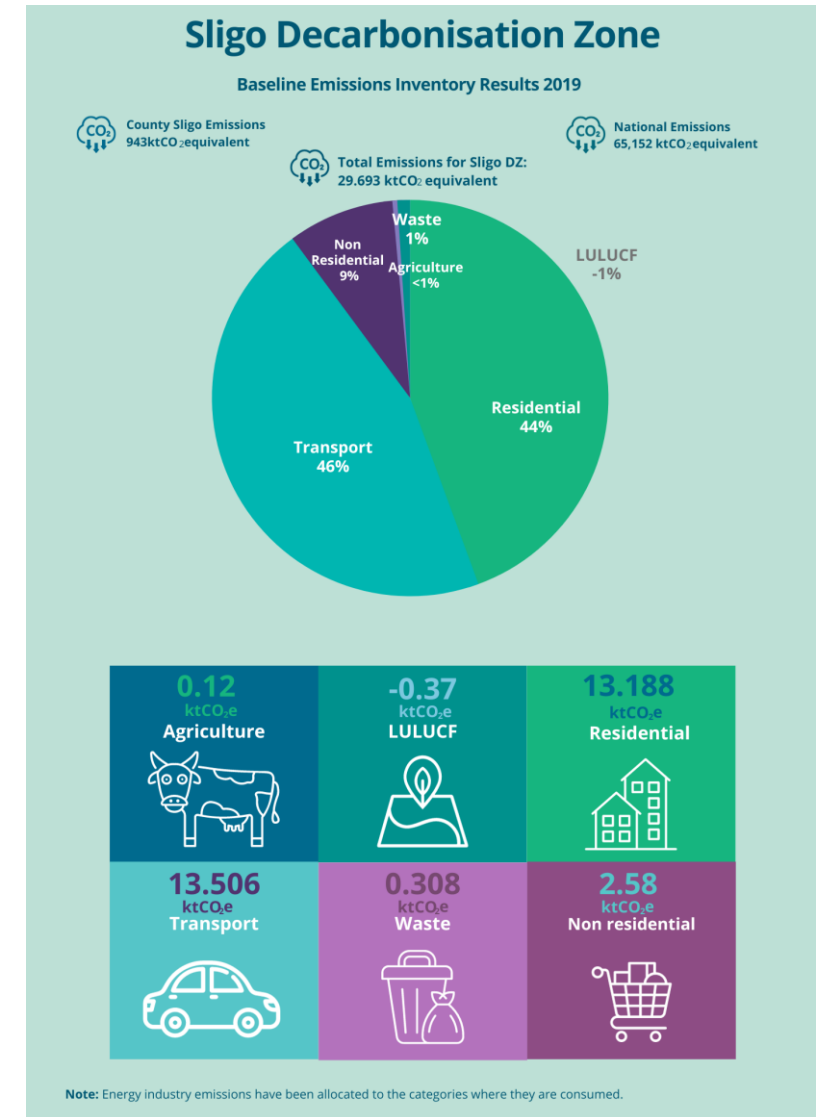
Emissions breakdown per sector. Page 5 DZ BEI Report – Appendix 4.

DZ Baseline Emissions Inventory

In contrast to County Sligo, and due to the fact that the area is peri-urban/urban with a significant part of superficial surfaces and forest, agriculture exerts minimal influence on the overall emissions. The same description falls under the LULUCF results, which contribute to the overall emissions count, but in a very positive way, minimising them. Such impact is attributed to the absorption of CO₂ by the forested land in the region. The primary contributors to emissions are residential sources, primarily related to heating, and transportation, primarily due to privately owned cars and goods vehicles (vans and trucks). Additionally, there is a notable impact from non-residential emissions, particularly those of commercial nature, which aligns with expectations given the high concentration of business in the area.

With the results from the Baseline emissions inventory in hand, Sligo can develop a comprehensive Climate Action Plan for the area, that outlines specific strategies and targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Decarbonisation Zone will possibly be the first area to be decarbonised in County Sligo and should be a future example of good practices and transformative use cases related to decarbonisation.

The complete DZ Baseline Emissions Report can be found in Appendix 4 of this document.



From Page 20 of the DZ BEI report (See appendix 4)

Decarbonisation Zone Objectives:

What is a Decarbonising Zone?

“Decarbonising” - Taking carbon out of the equation completely by removing fossil fuels from electricity, heat and transport.

A Decarbonising Zone is a specific area that has been chosen by the local authority where a range of solutions will be identified to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate needs to contribute to national climate action targets.

In other words, these areas across the country will act as test-beds for innovation with the aim of improving local communities and reducing emissions.

Therefore, the main objectives for the Decarbonisation Zone will be:

- **Promote community leadership & participation in the decarbonisation process**
- **Support the development of a sustainable plan for the Sligo Decarbonisation Zone**
- **Identify & implement appropriate & ambitious decarbonisation projects that will benefit the local community and be replicable in other locations**

Sligo County Council will also work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to develop and progress future-proofing projects/initiatives with particular focus and support for those that will also provide co-benefits to other environmental resources such as water, air quality, human health, biodiversity and landscape.

And with respect to all the actions identified for implementation within the DZ we will ensure that they are aligned with the conservation objectives for the Lough Gill SAC, Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and the Cummeen Strand SPA.

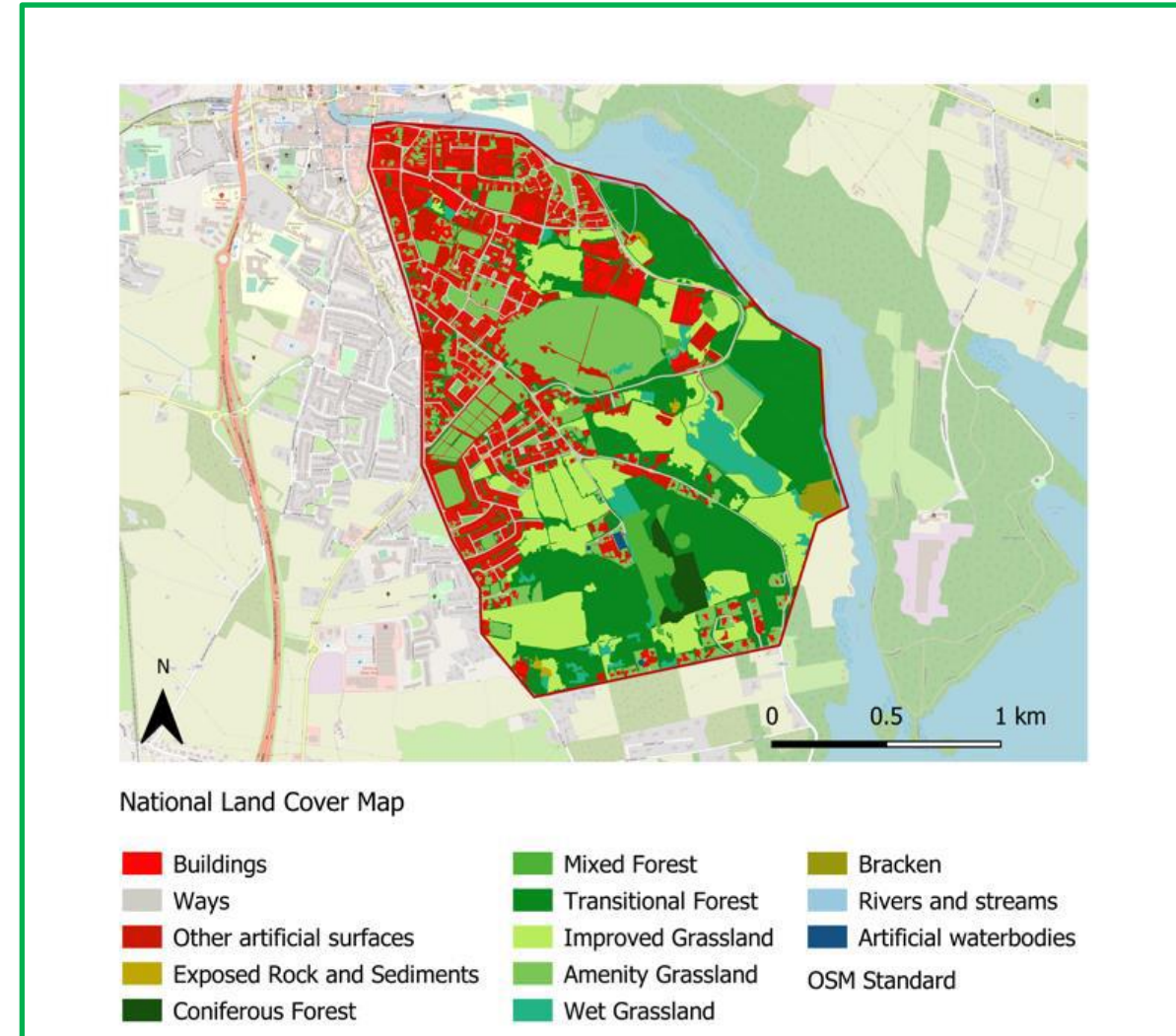


Figure 7 from DZ BEI Report - Decarbonisation Zone Land Cover map, National Land Cover map (own elaboration)

DZ Actions:

Action No.	Action Description	Adaptation/Mitigation	Tracking Measure	Lead Department	Partners	Timeframe	Dependencies
1	Establish DZ Committee (Connected Project)	Adaptation	Formation of Committee	Environment	Local community groups & representatives, C&E, PPN, Cranmore ReGen office, SLEA, UG, Connected project partners	Within 1 year of adoption of LACAP	Community support & participation
2	Develop decarbonisation tool kit for communities	Adaptation	Delivery of toolkit	Environment	UG, local community, PPN, ATU	Within 2 years	Community support & participation
3	Identify at least 3 pilot projects that will demonstrate practical decarbonisation in different aspects of the DZ, with at least one of these being in the area of active travel and decarbonisation of transport.	Both	Identification of projects.	Environment	ATU/CRU, Cranmore Office, Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency, Local community groups, Gemini project partners	Within 1 year of adoption of LACAP	Successful project identification & subsequent funding applications
4	Ensure that the development of the Cranmore Community Centre is carried out to the highest sustainability & energy efficiency standards	Mitigation	Energy rating of final building	Cranmore ReGen	SEAI, SLEA	Within 3 years	Resources from Dept, Community support
5	Identify existing community groups within the DZ and engage with them regarding climate & energy related matters that they have identified as being a priority for their group.	Adaptation	No. of community groups engaged with	Environment	SEAI, PPN, SLEA	Within 1 year of adoption of LACAP	Community support, resources for meetings
6	Commission a detailed study on the potential for carbon sequestration within the DZ.	Both	Delivery of report	Environment	ATU/CRU, Cranmore Office, NPWS, Coillte	Within 2 years	Funding for research & study
7	Identify publicly owned properties that could potentially be used for community climate projects, including nature based solutions.	Both	Register of properties	Environment	Facilities & Assets team	Within 1 year of adoption of LACAP	Suitable locations
8	Commission a District Heating feasibility study	Mitigation	Delivery of report	Environment	SEAI, GSI	Within 2 years	Funding for feasibility study

18. Implementation & Reporting

18.1 Planning for implementation

The Climate Action Plan will be implemented by Sligo County Council. Whilst the plan requires a whole-of-Council approach, the ownership of the Draft Plan is held within the Infrastructure, Environment and Fire Services Directorate.

A Climate Action Team was established in Sligo County Council in 2023. This team is to include a Climate Action Coordinator, Climate Action Officer and Community Climate Action Officer. The role of this team is to mainstream climate action into the activities of the whole Organisation and to monitor the implementation of the actions of the Climate Action Plan, as well as to coordinate the reporting and evaluation of the Plan, following its approval by the Elected Members.

The core Climate Action Team is supported by the wider subgroups across the organisation, that have ownership of specific actions in the Plan. These include the following Sections – Housing, Planning, Corporate, Heritage & Biodiversity, Fleet Management, Roads, Active Travel & Environment. The core Climate Action Team will also be the point of contact for the public to learn about climate action in the County.

Following approval of the Plan, an Implementation Plan/Summary will be developed for each action, which will set out in detail how the action will be delivered including the responsible department and timescales. Sligo County Council will align the timing of internal implementation reporting intervals with that of sectoral progress reporting requirements.



Sligo County Council will work collaboratively and in partnership with a range of key stakeholders to support the delivery of this Plan. These stakeholders include but are not limited to the following – the neighbouring local authorities of Donegal, Mayo, Galway County & Galway City, the ASBN CARO, Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency, Atlantic Technological University, the Local Authority Services National Training Group, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, Local Government Management Agency, City and County Management Agency, Public Participation Network, Age Friendly Ireland, Comhairle na n'Og. These partnerships can provide opportunities for collaboration on projects, shared learnings, technical support and leveraging of funding opportunities during the implementation of actions in the Draft Plan.

It is also clear that climate change is a transboundary challenge; it does not stop at political and geographical borders. As such, a regional approach has been agreed by the local authorities in the Atlantic Seaboard North Climate Action Regional Office (ASBN CARO) whereby they can collaborate closely on the implementation of the Climate Action Plans.

The concept of Co-Design, through collaborative stakeholder engagement where possible, will also be incorporated in the development of implementation plans for the CAP. This is already working in the SCORE project and has been found to work well in certain situations.

In implementing this Climate Action Plan, we will ensure compliance with the forthcoming Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030, and current CDP and local area plan objectives and policies, relating to environmental management, the protection of statutory Conservation Areas and ensure compliance with specific environmental management measures relating to this plan. Landuse plans and projects arising from this CAP will be underpinned by Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, and Ecological Impact Assessments as relevant.

During implementation Sligo County Council will consider any relevant recommendations contained in the EPA's State of Our Environment Report 2024, once published, and any other relevant EPA research publications, as well as any relevant updated actions, measures or recommendations that may arise from updates to the National Climate Action Plan over the lifetime of the Plan.

18.2 Funding and Partnerships

To lead by example and drive the transition to a climate neutral society, Sligo County Council will need access to adequate funding for climate action projects towards achieving its 2030 and 2050 targets. Local authorities can access various types of funding such as government grants, European funds, private sector investment and community co-financing. It is recognised that while new climate action targeted funding calls may become available in the future, already established funding bodies will introduce or increase the level of funding streams to climate action focused categories. Sligo County Council will continue to actively pursue new and existing funding opportunities from both European and National bodies that are aligned with its climate action objectives.

Examples of projects that have benefitted from external funding include the [FASTER](#) project, which was funded by the [EU's INTERREG fund](#) where we are working with partners in Northern Ireland, and the [SCORE](#) project which was funded by the [EU's Horizon 2020](#) programme where we are working with partners from all across Europe. The [Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency](#) (SLEA) was established with the support from the [EU LIFE programme](#) under an initiative called Local Energy Agencies for Peripheral regions (LEAP). SLEA also receives direct support from both Sligo and Leitrim County Councils.

Partnerships are also a key ingredient towards realising low carbon solutions for the sector. The private sector is already playing a role towards achieving the National Climate Objective and this type of collaboration can enhance the capabilities of the sector even further in achieving reductions in Ireland's greenhouse gases by 51% by 2030 and becoming climate neutral by no later than 2050. There are also benefits for the local government sector in partnering with the Third Level sector. The Third Level sector can provide research and development expertise to help local authorities and implement innovative solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. These partnerships can also help local authorities access funding opportunities for climate action projects and initiatives. Sligo County Council will encourage and facilitate collaboration with the private sector and Third Level sector where possible.



18.3 Tracking Progress through Key Performance Indicators

Performance by Sligo County Council on the delivery of energy efficiency and emission reductions relating to the Council's infrastructure and assets, as prescribed by national climate obligations, will continue to be tracked through the established Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system managed by the Sustainable Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

For actions outside of this, one of the reporting avenues that Sligo County Council engages with to communicate progress on the delivery of actions is through Sectoral Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This informs the performance of the local government sector on climate action.

Strengthened climate action policy at national level inspired a determined response and commitment by local government, as a sector. This commitment is set out in the County and City Management Association (CCMA) published strategy on behalf of local government entitled [Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 \(DECA 2021\)](#).

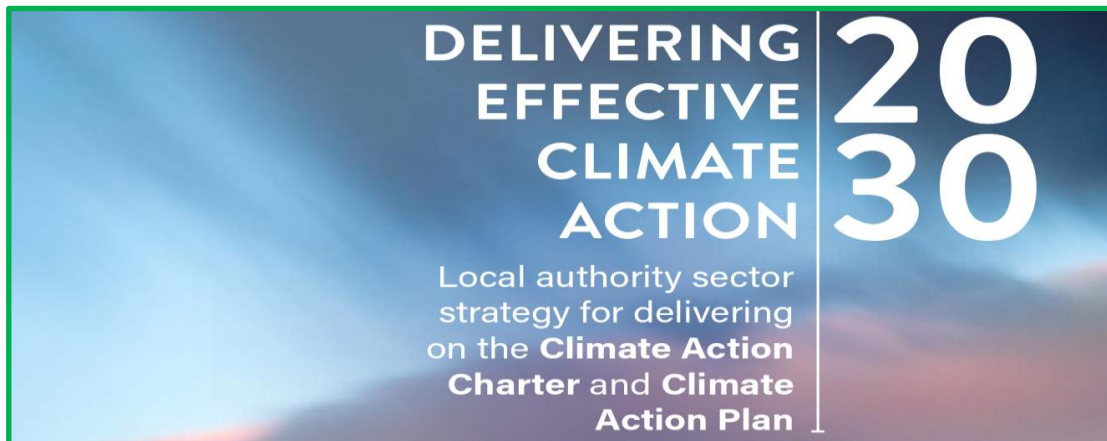
A key consideration for the local government sector on this strengthened role on climate action is accountability, and in particular the ability to track, measure and report on progress in delivering effective climate action at both local authority and sectoral levels. In this regard, KPIs will continue to play a significant role.



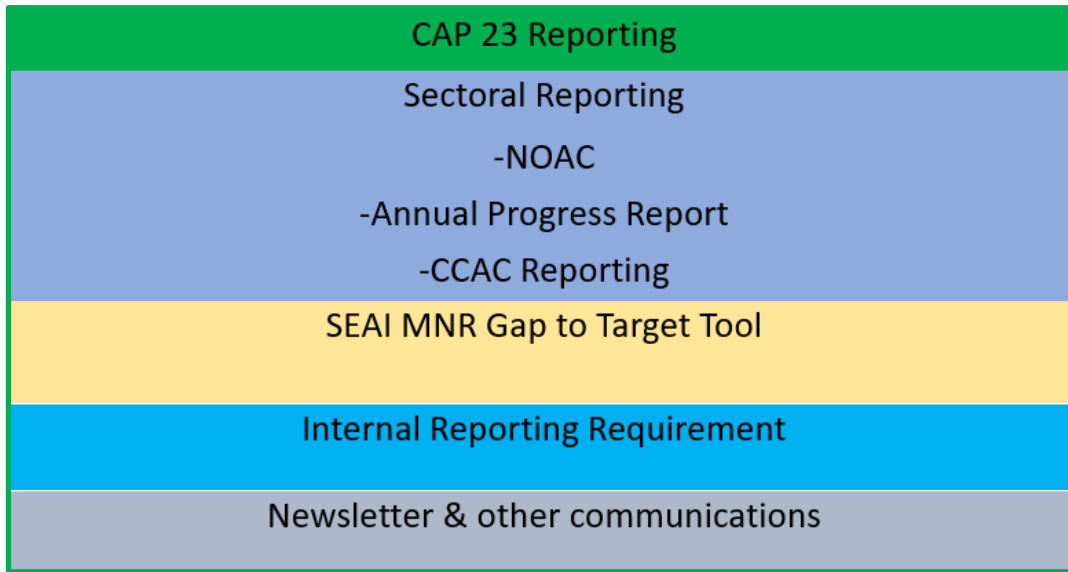
The CAROs along with the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) collect data on an annual basis relating to a range of themes including:

- Climate Action Resources;
- Climate Action Training for local authority staff and elected members;
- Actions delivered;
- Enterprise support in are of climate action;
- Energy efficiency;
- Emission reductions;
- Active travel measures; and
- Severe weather response.

KPIs will continue to be added as necessary by the sector and Sligo County Council will contribute relevant information as required, to assist in highlighting the progress of the local government sector on climate action.



18.4 Reporting Requirements and Arrangements



18.4.1 Internal Reporting

To ensure that delivery is timely, the implementation of the Plan will be monitored via an in-house tracking system, as well as annual reporting to the CARO. The local authority will also facilitate reporting to elected members on a regular basis, as well as to each meeting of the Climate Strategic Policy Committee each quarter.

Climate related information & training will also be provided internally on an ongoing basis.

18.4.2 Monitoring and Reporting System (M&R)

Sligo County Council will continue to report as required on their energy performance and emission targets annually to the SEAI via their [monitoring and reporting portal](#).

18.4.3 Sectoral Performance

Sligo County Council will report annually on their performance on climate action by way of KPIs (as outlined in Section 6.2) to inform the performance of the local government sector on climate action, as part of the local government DECA 2030 Strategy.

18.4.4 National Climate Action Plan

Sligo County Council will, in accordance with part 3(w) of the [Local Authority Climate Action Charter](#), report as required to the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications on progress on climate action at local level as part of the delivery of the national climate objective. Progress on all actions will be reported via a reporting tool developed by CARO.

18.4.4 Covenant of Mayors & EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change

Sligo County Council is a signatory to both the [Covenant of Mayors](#) for Climate and Energy and the [EU Mission: Adaptation to Climate Change](#) and as such commits to the requirements of, and to participating in each of these important initiatives.

18.4.5 Sustainable Development Goals

The 2018-2020 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) National Implementation Plan acknowledged that local government “has a crucial role to play in translating national policies into tangible practical actions that can help to concretise the SDG objectives into our individual and communities’ behaviours and goals.” Ireland’s Second National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024, intends to build on the role of local government in Ireland and incorporates specific actions to do so which include:

- i. Showcasing, sharing and building on existing initiatives
- ii. Capacity building and awareness raising
- iii. Embedding the SDGs in Governance and reporting frameworks
- iv. Incorporating the SDGs within local planning frameworks
- v. Community Engagement



Furthermore, local authorities are recognised as one of Agenda 2030’s nine “Major Groups”, which play a crucial role in sustainable development ³¹ and Agenda 2030 also highlights the role of local authorities and communities in sustainable urban development.

Sligo County Council is working to advance the SDGs, including through:

- the incorporation of the SDGs into their Corporate and City/County Development Plans;
- joining/establishing local and/or international partnerships;
- development of a mapping tool to map SDG-related actions in the Council area
- the provision of training and;
- the holding information events with external groups including universities, PPNs, Tidy Towns and Creative Ireland.



19. Appendices:

1. SEA Report & NIR Reports
2. Full Climate Change Risk Assessment Report
3. Full Baseline Emissions Report
4. Full DZ Baseline Emissions Report