

Ireland's Climate Change Policy

Pat Macken

*Department of the Environment,
Heritage & Local Government*

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The Global Issue

- Overwhelming scientific, economic and political consensus on the need for major cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.
- EU's agreed objective is to limit the average global temperature increase to 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels.
- This requires a cut of at least 50% in emissions (1990 levels) by 2050.
- International negotiations aimed at an agreement in Copenhagen in December 2009.



The EU's response

- EU will cut emissions by 30% by 2020 (over 1990) in the context of a post-Kyoto global agreement (Kyoto agreement runs to end 2012)
- It has made a unilateral commitment to a 20% cut on 1990 levels and has already legislated to deliver this.
- Emissions divided into Emissions Trading Sector (ETS) and non-ETS.
- The commitment requires a 14% cut on 2005 levels:
 - 21% in ETS (operated on pan-Europe basis)
 - 10% in non-ETS (national targets from +20% to –20%: Ireland's is –20%)

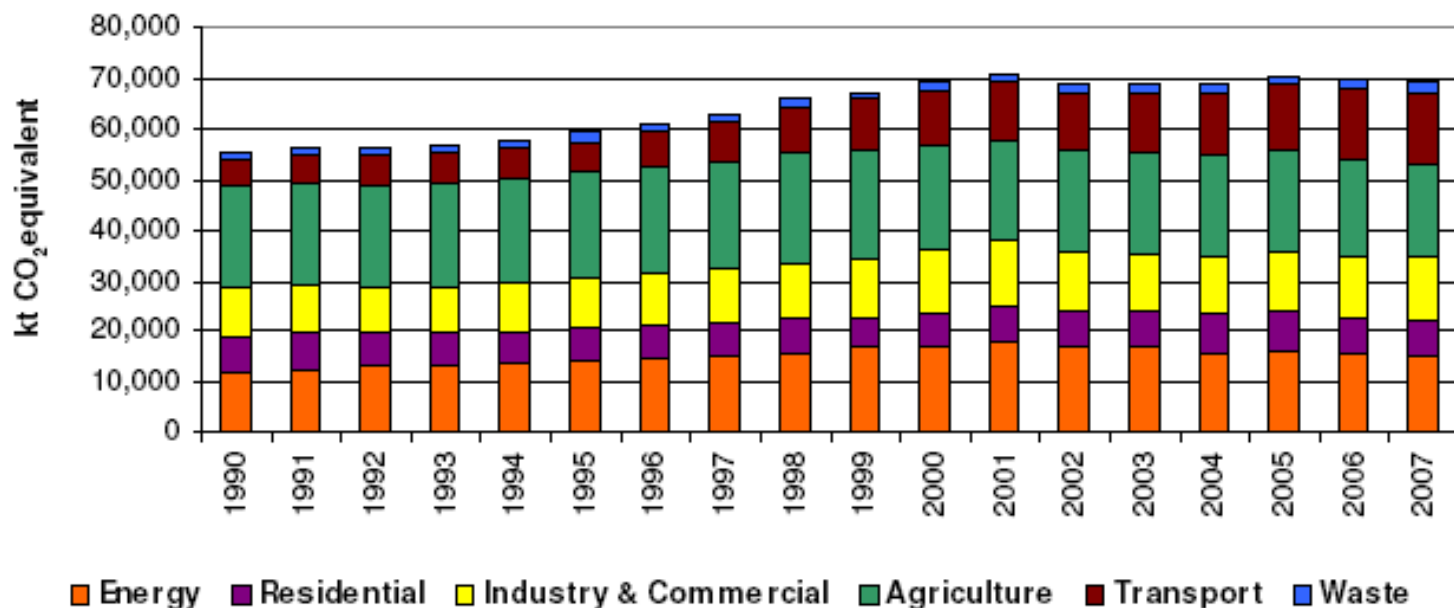


Ireland's Target

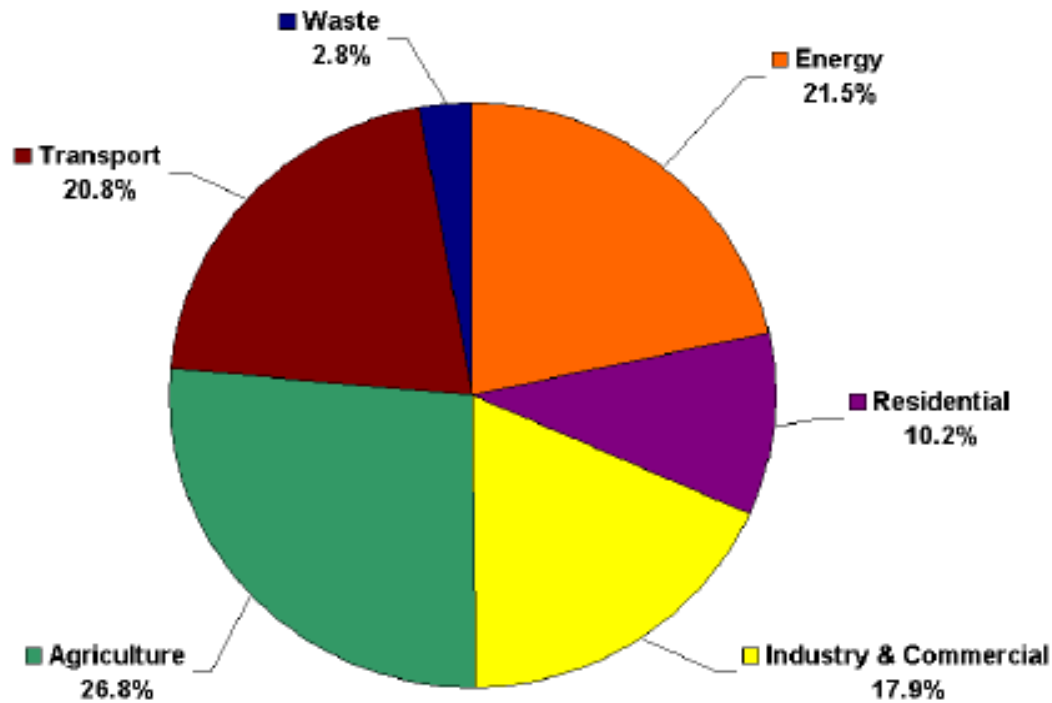
- 100+ installations, already participating in the ETS, will buy allowances on a pan-European basis. Scheme is designed to drive emission reductions.
- Government responsible for delivering the 20% cut on 2005 levels in the rest of the economy.
- Flexibilities available to secure some of the required cut by trading, where this is cost-effective in comparison to other options.
- The 20% target may increase in the context of a global agreement.



Mitigation: GHG emissions by sector 1990-2007



Sources of Emissions in 2007



Government responses

- National Climate Change Strategy
- Mechanisms to drive emission reductions – Cabinet Committee, supporting structures, Carbon Budget
- Carbon Tax
- Adaptation Strategy – to be published by end 2009



Distance to Kyoto target

- EPA projections 13th March 2009:
- Earlier projections based on positive economic growth
- ESRI estimated contraction of 8% GDP in the period to 2010
- Permanent loss of output so that long run GDP will be 4% below the earlier forecasts
- Applying the (recent ESRI) Economic Shock Analysis ... the Government's purchasing requirement (or need for additional domestic policies & measures) would reduce to 1.3-1.8Mt of CO₂e per annum for each of the five years 2008-2012 as compared to the 3.6Mt per annum anticipated in the NCCS.
- Pause in further purchases or commitments of credits



Distance to 2020 target

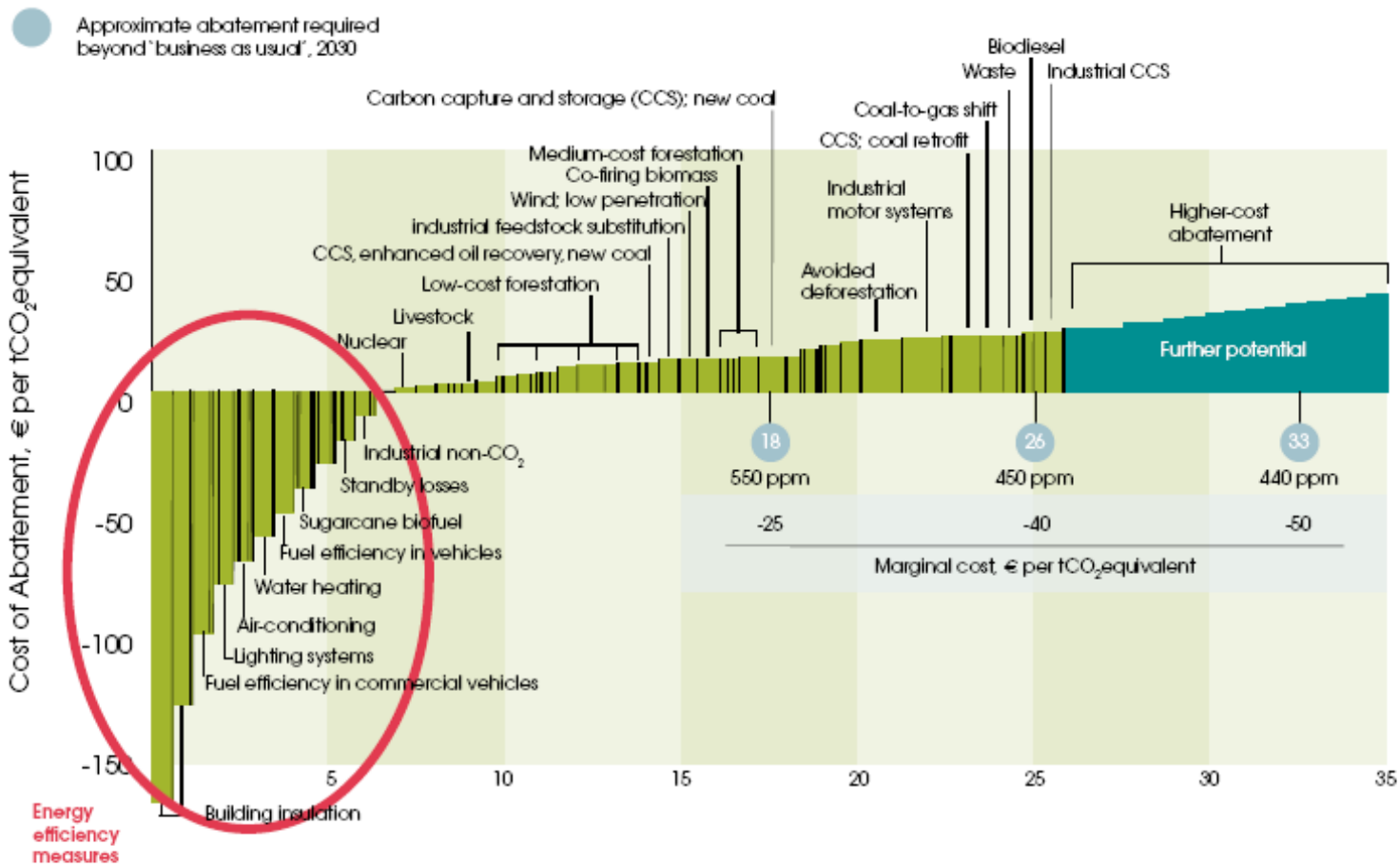
- EPA projections 13th March 2009:
 - distance to 20% reduction target projected at 8.1Mt CO₂e, without carbon sinks;
 - with carbon sinks, projected at 3.8Mt.
- EPA report shows that downturn will only mean a reduction of 1 Mt CO₂e by 2020
- Major challenge in reaching Non ETS target
- Stepping up to a 30% EU target in context of a Copenhagen deal will further increase the challenge to reduce emissions in all sectors.



Options to Reduce Emissions

- Many current and promising technologies can be used to reduce emissions
- McKinsey's Marginal Abatement Cost Curve (MACC)
- Possible to aggregate these across various sectors to produce a national schedule of options
- Traditional approaches – energy efficiency, insulation etc. most economic; new technologies tend to be more expensive.





Abatement beyond 'business as usual', GtCO₂ equivalent per year in 2030

Figure 5: Global Cost Curve of GHG Abatement Opportunities beyond Business as Usual¹²

12 Source: McKinsey Climate Change Special Initiative.



Policies and Measures

- *National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 (published in 2007)*
- *Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future*
- *National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020*
- *Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland 2007-2020*
- *Bioenergy Action Plan for Ireland*



Policies and Measures

- 33% energy savings target for the public sector
- Development of eco and green tourism
- 40% electricity from renewables by 2020
- Green public procurement guidelines
- Public sector fleets to move to biofuel blend
- Carbon offsetting of official travel
- Low carbon incentives in motor tax
- Energy efficiency through Building Regulations
- Energy rating system for public buildings
- Electric vehicles – 10% of carpark by 2020
- EU Regulation on reducing CO2 emissions from vehicles
- Efficient driving awareness
- Inclusion of Aviation in ETS



Adaptation

- Even with successful mitigation significant CC impacts are now inevitable and we must plan ahead
- EU White Paper Published and development of a National Adaptation Strategy by end 2009
- Two phase strategy:
 - Phase 1 (2009-2012) research, data sharing
 - Phase 2 (from 2013) development of a comprehensive adaptation strategy
 - Mainstreaming adaptation into relevant areas of policy and legislation



Adaptation contd.

- Degree of adaptation will vary greatly from country to country and even within countries.
- We also need to adapt issues into decision-making at national and local level.
- Report on impacts from EPA in 2009;
 - Considerable amount of research already done; including EPA research programme, Met Eireann, UCD, NUI Maynooth.
 - EPA Climate Change Research Co-ordination Committee



Adaptation contd.

- In Ireland, average temperatures will rise by 1.4-1.8°C by 2050 and will be more than 2°C above the 1961-1990 baseline by the end of the century – more pronounced in Summer/Autumn
- Winter rainfall up 10% by 2050. Summer rainfall down by 12-17% by 2050 - Southern and Eastern coasts will fall substantially more.
- Extreme events will become more frequent (storms, drought).



Adaptation contd.

- Developing National Adaptation Strategy – 2009
- Need to reflect national circumstances
- Take account of existing institutional structures, planning, water resource management
- Demand cross sectoral consultation
- Stakeholder group established
- Further steps – to identify and address vulnerabilities through policy development, implementation, review, etc.
- Key vulnerabilities
 - Biodiversity
 - Built environment,
 - Tourism.
 - Agriculture
- Integrating into spatial planning, building codes, water resource management
- Uncertainties in this area present ongoing challenge



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