COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

of 18.12.2023

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

(Only the English and Irish texts are authentic)
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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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


Whereas:

(1) Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 (the European Climate Law), the Commission is required to assess the consistency of national measures with the climate-neutrality objective and with ensuring progress on adaptation. The Commission assessed the consistency of Ireland’s measures with these objectives. The below recommendations are based on that assessment. Ireland should take due account of the present recommendations and follow up on them in accordance with the European Climate Law.

(2) While the Union’s net greenhouse gas emissions (including from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) and excluding international transport) show a steady downward trend overall, broadly in line with the linear trajectory achieving the Union’s 2030 climate target of -55% and the Union’s 2050 climate-neutrality objective, the pace of emission reduction needs to accelerate and action by Member States is essential. Progress across Member States has been mixed with several sectoral challenges and weaknesses that need to be remedied without further delay. The assessment, based on the available information, shows that progress towards the Union’s climate-neutrality objective appears largely insufficient for Ireland. Moreover, Ireland has only recently submitted to the Commission its national long-term strategy in accordance with Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The Commission will assess whether the national

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2 EU Climate Action Progress Report 2023, COM(2023) 653 final, and Commission Staff Working Document Assessment of progress on climate adaptation in the individual Member States according to the European Climate Law, SWD(2023) 932.
long-term strategy is adequate for the collective achievement of the objectives and
targets of the Energy Union. Reliable long-term strategies are the cornerstone for
achieving the economic transformation needed to move towards the Union’s climate-
neutrality objective.

(3) Adaptation measures need to be implemented for improving preparedness and
resilience. They may be prepared through adaptation pathways, setting out a sequence
of measures towards an adaptation goal. Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation
efforts is necessary for maintaining accountability and improving adaptation policy.
Various EU funding instruments can be mobilised to fund adaptation. Climate
resilience considerations should be put in the forefront when Member States design
their national plans under the relevant EU funds. None of the spending should do harm
to adaptation: that is, increase vulnerabilities either for the beneficiaries or for others.

(4) The most vulnerable communities are those with elevated likelihood of being
impacted by climate change. Unequal exposure and vulnerability to climate impacts of
different regions and socio-economic groups worsens pre-existing inequalities and
vulnerabilities. Just resilience should reduce the unequal burden of climate risk and
ensure equity in the distribution of the benefits of adaptation,

HEREBY RECOMMENDS THAT IRELAND TAKES ACTION TO:

Consistency of national measures with the climate-neutrality objective

1. Step up climate mitigation efforts, by making tangible progress on the existing and planned
policies and consider additional, urgent measures to align the expected greenhouse gas
emission reductions and projections with the climate-neutrality objective.

2. In particular, effort should be directed towards reducing emissions in agriculture and
enhancing removals in the LULUCF sector.

Consistency of national measures with ensuring progress on adaptation

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

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4 Since Ireland had not submitted the long-term strategy required by Article 15 of Regulation (EU)
2018/1999 within the required deadline, on 29 September 2022, the Commission opened an
infringement procedure against Ireland in accordance with Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning
of the European Union (ref. INFR(2022)2088). On 5 October 2023, Ireland informed the Commission
that the draft national long-term strategy sent to the Commission on 12 May 2023 had been adopted by
the Government.
4. Continue to engage stakeholder groups that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in Ireland’s adaptation policy design and implementation. Document the processes and outcomes of such consultations.

Done at Brussels, 18.12.2023

For the Commission
Wopke HOEKSTRA
Member of the Commission