

Consultation on the setting of Northern Ireland's Fourth Carbon Budget (2038-2042)



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

This document is also available on the DAERA website at:

- <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-setting-northern-irelands-fourth-carbon-budget-2038-2042>

On request, we can arrange to provide other formats of this document, such as:

- Paper Copy
- Large Print
- Braille
- Other Languages

To request an alternative format, please contact us:

Email: ClimateChangeDiscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 9056 9708 or 028 9056 9567 and talk to one of the Consultation Team.

If you have a hearing difficulty, you can contact DAERA via Text Relay.

- Dial 18001 028 9056 9708

Post: Fourth Carbon Budget Consultation
Climate Change Legislation and Policy Division
1st Floor Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED

Contents

SECTION ONE: Introduction	5
SECTION TWO: Background to Carbon Budgets	10
SECTION THREE: Summary of the CCC’s advice on the Fourth Carbon Budget for Northern Ireland	15
SECTION FOUR: Consultation Questionnaire	18
SECTION FIVE: Next Steps	24
APPENDIX: Glossary of terms	28

SECTION ONE

Introduction

1

SECTION ONE: Introduction

1.1 Why are we consulting?

Climate change is one of the defining generational issues of our time. The Earth's climate is changing rapidly as human-induced warming is increasing at an unprecedented rate. Global temperatures have continued to increase with 2024 the warmest year on record. In recent years, we have seen the increasing impacts of climate change on a global scale, but we have also experienced first-hand the impacts of climate change locally here in Northern Ireland.

In 2020 the Northern Ireland Assembly declared a climate emergency, and in 2022 our Executive and Assembly stood together to pass the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (the Act)¹ that sets out a legal commitment to achieving net zero that aligns with UK and wider global commitments. Over 145 other countries worldwide have similar net zero targets, covering 90% of global emissions.

The Act sets out the framework for Northern Ireland to address climate change and established legally binding emissions targets, including the achievement of net zero emissions by 2050 (i.e. a 100% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions compared to a 1990 baseline), with a target for 2030 set in the Act of an at least 48% reduction in emissions, and a target for 2040 of an at least 77% reduction in emissions².

The Climate Change (Carbon Budgets 2023-2037) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024³ which were approved by the Assembly in December 2024 set the first three carbon budgets for Northern Ireland. They are:

- **First Carbon Budget:** The carbon budget for the 2023-2027 budgetary period is an annual average of 33% lower than the baseline.
- **Second Carbon Budget:** The carbon budget for the 2028-2032 budgetary period is an annual average of 48% lower than the baseline.
- **Third Carbon Budget:** The carbon budget for the 2033-2037 budgetary period is an annual average of 62% lower than the baseline.

In line with Section 27(1)(b) of the Act the Fourth Carbon Budget, to cover the period 2038-2042, must be set by 31 December 2025, i.e. twelve years in advance of the start of the period in question (2038).

In line with the requirements of sections 56 and 58 of the Act we have sought and obtained the expert advice of the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) on the level at which Northern Ireland's Fourth Carbon Budget should be set. In March this year the UK Climate Change

¹ [The Climate Change Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022](#)

² [The Climate Change \(2040 Emissions Target\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2024](#)

³ [The Climate Change \(Carbon Budgets 2023-2037\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2024](#)

Committee provided an advice report “Northern Ireland's Fourth Carbon Budget⁴”, to the Northern Ireland Executive and it recommends that the Fourth Carbon Budget is set at an annual average reduction of 77% in emissions across the period (against the 1990 baseline).

In their report, the CCC sets out “The Northern Ireland Net Zero Pathway”, which details how the carbon budget can be delivered and met. It will, however, be up to the NI Executive to decide on and agree the specific policies, and proposals that will be taken forward in NI to deliver each of the carbon budgets. This will be set out in a series of Climate Action Plans, each of which will be consulted on and presented to the NI Assembly.

1.2. Duration

In line with the requirement of section 23(2) of the Act this consultation will run for a **16-week period**, from **Monday 28th July 2025** to **Monday 17th November 2025**.

We encourage early responses and responses should be received no later **11:59pm** on **Monday 17th November 2025**. All responses should be received by then to help ensure they can be fully considered. Responses received after the closing deadline may not be able to be considered.

1.3 Purpose of the consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to offer respondents the opportunity to provide their views on the percentage level at which the Fourth Carbon Budget for Northern Ireland should be set and to offer any supporting evidence which they believe should be considered. Responses will be used to help inform the development of the Regulations.

The consultation is not about the types of actions or interventions that may be considered in order to deliver on the Fourth Carbon Budget. The policies and proposals that will be selected to deliver on the Fourth Carbon Budget have still to be decided and in some cases will be new policies, programmes and interventions informed by the latest science, the circumstances at the time, by looking at international examples and through innovation. Some of those policies will be developed and implemented at a UK Government level and others by NI departments following engagement with experts and through consultation with the public.

A fourth Climate Action Plan setting out the proposed policies and proposals from all departments to meet the Fourth Carbon Budget will be required to be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly by the end of 2038. This will be consulted on before being put to the NI Executive and Assembly.

⁴ [Northern Ireland's Fourth Carbon Budget - Climate Change Committee](#)

1.4 How to respond to this consultation

There are several ways in which you can provide your response, as outlined below. The preferred method of response is through [the online survey](https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/daera/fourthcarbonbudget). This approach allows for the most efficient analysis of responses and minimises the environmental impact.

- **Online Survey**

The primary response method for this consultation is through the online survey on the Citizen Space Hub: <https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/daera/fourthcarbonbudget>

You can also access the online survey from the [DAERA consultation webpage](#)

- **By Email**

You can obtain an electronic copy of the response template by emailing the consultation team at: ClimateChangeDiscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk

You can email your response to this email address or alternatively send it by hard copy to the postal address below.

- **By Post**

Please be aware that postal responses may take longer to process.

Responses can be posted to:

Fourth Carbon Budget Consultation
Climate Change Legislation and Policy Division
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
1st Floor, Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED

By responding to this consultation, you are agreeing that any information gathered may be shared with other NICS departments.

Guidance is provided on the confidentiality of responses under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and at **Section 5.4 to 5.5** for your reference. If you require any further information, please contact a member of the consultation team on 028 9056 9567.

- **Engagement**

As this consultation is seeking views on the percentage figure to be included in the Regulations and will not provide any detail or commitment regarding how the carbon budget will be delivered there are currently no public engagement events scheduled for this consultation.

Should you wish to meet with the team to discuss this consultation, or the proposed Fourth Carbon Budget please contact the consultation team:

ClimateChangeDiscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk

SECTION TWO

Background to Carbon Budgets

2

SECTION TWO: Background to carbon budgets

2.1 What is a carbon budget?

Carbon budgets are an internationally recognised way to plan and ensure that emissions are reduced in a gradual and phased way. A carbon budget provides a limit on the maximum total amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions which should not be exceeded for a defined budgetary period in order to help meet emissions reduction targets. For Northern Ireland, carbon budgets cover a 5-year period and are set at a Northern Ireland level rather than at a departmental or sectoral level.

2.2 Carbon budget periods

The first Northern Ireland carbon budget period is 2023-2027, with further carbon budgets covering every five years thereafter. The first three carbon budgets for Northern Ireland (2023-2027, 2028-2032 and 2033-2037) were set through Regulations, approved by the NI Assembly and which came into operation on 12 December 2024. The Fourth Carbon Budget, and each subsequent carbon budget, must be set a minimum of 12 years in advance of the associated carbon budget period commencing, which means that the Fourth Carbon Budget must be set before the end of 2025. This 12-year lead in period is designed to provide long-term certainty on the budget and trajectory and allow time for departments to develop plans and policies that meet the carbon budgets. The Act requires that a carbon budget must be set at a level that is consistent with meeting the emissions targets in the Act. DAERA is therefore required to set the Fourth Carbon Budget at a level that is consistent with meeting the emissions reduction targets for 2040 which is set at 77%, and for 2050 at 100%.

2.3 Requirement to seek the Climate Change Committee's (CCC) Advice

DAERA is required by the Act to seek the expert advice of the CCC and take this advice into account before making Regulations that set a carbon budget. When providing advice on a carbon budget, the CCC must have regard to:

- United Kingdom and international law or policy relating to climate change;
- Scientific knowledge about climate change; and
- Technology relevant to climate change.

If DAERA decides to make Regulations to set a carbon budget that differs from the advice and recommendations of the CCC then, as required by the Act, it must lay a statement in the Assembly setting out the reasons for the difference.

2.4 Relevant advice from other bodies

DAERA is required by the Act to give due consideration to the expertise and advice provided by:

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); and
- The Irish Climate Change Advisory Council (CCAC).

The IPCC's advice on emission levels that will be conducive to limit warming to 1.5°C is a central consideration of the advice of both the UK's CCC and Ireland's CCAC. DAERA regularly engages with both the CCC and the CCAC.

The UK Government and each of the devolved administrations have net zero targets and have set their respective interim targets and their carbon budgets in line with the advice from the CCC.

The CCAC's recommendations for Ireland's carbon budgets show clear alignment with Northern Ireland's existing carbon budgets and proposed Fourth Carbon Budget, both in terms of the carbon budgets' scale and the rate of emissions reductions. DAERA, alongside the advice of the CCC, will take into consideration the advice and expertise of both the CCAC and the IPCC when setting the Fourth Carbon Budget for Northern Ireland.

The comparison table below details the carbon budgets set out in legislation or recommended by the CCC or CCAC for the UK, its devolved administrations and Ireland.

UK and Ireland Carbon Budgets Comparison Table						Net Zero Target
Comparable 5-year periods	2018-2022	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	
Northern Ireland	No carbon budget set	33% (2023-2027) First Carbon Budget	48% (2028-2032) Second Carbon Budget	62% (2033-2037) Third Carbon Budget	77% (2038-2042) Fourth Carbon Budget CCC Proposal	Net Zero 2050
UK (Figures set as MtCO ₂) converted to percentage for comparison purposes.	38% (2018-2022) Third Carbon Budget	52% (2023-2027) Fourth Carbon Budget	58% (2028-2032) Fifth Carbon Budget	77% (2033-2037) Sixth Carbon Budget	87% (2038-2042) Seventh Carbon Budget CCC Proposal	Net Zero 2050

UK and Ireland Carbon Budgets Comparison Table						Net Zero Target
Comparable 5-year periods	2018-2022	2023-2027	2028-2032	2033-2037	2038-2042	
Wales	23% (2016-2020) First Carbon Budget	37% (2021-2025) Second Carbon Budget	58% (2026-2030) Third Carbon Budget	73% (2031-2035) Fourth Carbon Budget CCC Proposal ⁵	Wales will seek advice from UK CCC	Net Zero 2050
Scotland	Previously worked on an annual targets model. Now moved to a Carbon Budget approach.	57% (2026-2030) First Carbon Budget	69% (2031-2035) Second Carbon Budget	80% (2036-2040) Third Carbon Budget	94% (2041-2045) Fourth Carbon Budget	Net Zero 2045
Ireland	295 MtCO _e (2021-2025) First Carbon Budget	200 MtCO _e (2026-2030) Second Carbon Budget	151 MtCO _e - 56% (2031-2035) Third Carbon Budget	120 MtCO _e - 68% (2036-2040) Fourth Carbon Budget CCAC Proposal ⁶		Net Zero 2050

2.5 Potential impacts of proposed carbon budget

DAERA is legislatively required to consider particular impacts and factors of any proposed carbon budgets. These requirements include:

- Taking account of specified social, environmental and economic factors as those listed in section 26 of the Act;
- Commissioning a financial, social, economic and rural impact assessment on the effects of the Fourth Carbon Budget as required by section 23(2)(b) of the Act;
- Complete a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) as required by the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016⁷; and
- Consider the impacts on certain groups of society as required by section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998⁸.

⁵ On 14 May 2025, the Welsh Government received advice from the CCC on its Fourth Carbon Budget. The CCC have advised Wales that their Fourth Carbon budget should be set at a 73% reduction in annual emissions over the five-year period from 2031-2035.

⁶ The Climate Change Advisory Council has proposed an emission reduction of 56% for Carbon Budget 3 (2031-2035) and a provisional emissions reduction of 68% for Carbon Budget 4 (2036-2040) for Ireland.

⁷ [Rural Needs Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#)

⁸ [Northern Ireland Act 1998](#)

Work is being progressed to ensure all of these legislative requirements are met. The estimated costs/benefits and other impacts associated with the CCC's advised Fourth Carbon Budget level are being carefully considered and analysed.

2.6 Consultation requirements in the Climate Change Act

The Act requires that a 16-week consultation is carried out on the proposed Fourth Carbon Budget. The Act also requires DAERA to consult with the Just Transition Commission and the Northern Ireland Climate Commissioner in respect of a proposed carbon budget.

Once these bodies are established and members have been recruited, there will be engagement with them in respect of the actions that are being taken forward through a series of Climate Action Plans to deliver each carbon budget.

SECTION THREE

Summary of the CCC's advice on the Fourth Carbon Budget for Northern Ireland

3

SECTION THREE: Summary of the CCC's advice on the Fourth Carbon Budget for Northern Ireland

3.1 Context of CCC advice

This section provides a summary overview of the key recommendations contained in the CCC's "Northern Ireland's Fourth Carbon Budget" which was published on 19 March 2025.

The CCC in their report have recommended the level for the Fourth Carbon Budget as well as providing examples of the policies that the Northern Ireland Executive could put in place to achieve its proposed level for the Fourth Carbon Budget. This means there is a modelled pathway to achieve the reduction in emissions required to meet the Fourth Carbon Budget, however this is only one pathway, and it will be up to the NI Executive, informed by public consultation, to decide on the most appropriate pathway for NI. The CCC has indicated that its analysis is based on technological, social and economic evidence, sector modelling and the latest available data, and they have included this data in the supplementary documents to their advice report.

3.2 The role of the CCC

The CCC is an independent, statutory Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) established under the (UK) Climate Change Act 2008. The Committee is responsible for providing independent, climate change expert advice to the UK government and all UK Devolved Administrations (including Northern Ireland).

The CCC is co-sponsored by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), DAERA, the Scottish Government, and the Welsh Government.

3.3 CCC recommendations for the Fourth Carbon Budget

CCC advice on the level of the Fourth Carbon Budget:

The CCC in their advice report recommends Northern Ireland sets the Fourth Carbon Budget (2038-2042) at an annual average reduction of 77% compared to the 1990 baseline across the 5-year period from 2038 to 2042. This is in line with the existing statutory target for Northern Ireland of an at least 77% lower than the baseline reduction in emissions by 2040.

The CCC in making their recommendations have developed a 'Northern Ireland Net Zero Pathway' in order to reach net zero in Northern Ireland by 2050. The CCC acknowledges that

delivering the types of actions set out in its pathway will be challenging but maintains that its recommended level for the Fourth Carbon Budget is attainable, positioning Northern Ireland on the right trajectory to meet the emissions reduction targets in the Act. The CCC further recommends the Northern Ireland Executive should aim to achieve this budget primarily through domestic measures (i.e. those actions taken within the UK) avoiding the use of carbon credits.

CCC advice on the NI Pathway to Net Zero:

In advising the level for the Fourth Carbon Budget, the CCC sets out 'The Northern Ireland Net Zero Pathway' that contains a set of possible policies and interventions that might guide the NI Executive and departments. It remains, however, the responsibility and authority of the Northern Ireland Executive and departments to determine the policies and proposals to be brought forward and progressed to reduce emissions to meet each of the carbon budgets and the targets outlined in the Act.

The types of actions that the CCC have suggested might be considered in NI to reduce emissions include:

- decarbonising our electricity supply through greater renewable generation;
- supporting households to install low carbon heating;
- reducing energy demand and use in our buildings;
- expanding electric vehicle charging;
- replacing oil and gas with the electrification of key technologies in transport, building and industry;
- incentivising farming practices that reduce emissions;
- restoring peatland and nature to increase natural carbon sequestration; and
- carbon capture and storage.

A fourth Climate Action Plan setting out the proposed policies and proposals from all departments to meet the Fourth Carbon Budget will be required to be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly by the end of 2038. Whilst 2038 is 13 years away and the policies and proposals that will be implemented to deliver upon it have not yet been identified; it is important to set the carbon budget now to meet our statutory requirement and the legal deadline of December 2025. This will also allow time for the necessary policy development, consultation and engagement required to develop and implement measures that suit NI.

SECTION FOUR

Consultation Questionnaire

4

SECTION FOUR: Consultation Questionnaire

4.1 Consultation questions

Fourth Carbon Budget (2038-2042)

Context:

In answering these consultation questions, it is important to note that each of the carbon budgets, including the proposed Fourth Carbon Budget for the period 2038 to 2042, must be consistent with the legally binding emission reduction targets in the Act, including being consistent with establishing a credible pathway to net zero by 2050.

About you

What is your name?

What is your email address?

Is this submission your personal views or do you represent an organisation?

☐ Personal

☐ Organisation

Are you representing an organisation? Please provide the organisation's name.

Context:

DAERA is required by the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 to set the Fourth Carbon Budget which covers the period 2038 to 2042 in line with the 2040 and 2050 emissions reduction targets in the Act.

DAERA proposes to set the Fourth Carbon Budget at an average annual reduction of 77%, in line with the advice received from the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC).

Question:

Q1. Do you feel this would provide the necessary trajectory to reduce Northern Ireland emissions and meet the legislative requirements?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide any additional comment together with any supporting evidence for your choice:

Context:

NI must balance ambition in reducing emissions with many other considerations including economic and social considerations and fairness for future generations.

Question:

Q2. Whilst DAERA must set carbon budgets in line with the targets in the Act, what considerations/factors are important to you?

Please select all that apply:

Equity among sectors - this means ensuring that all sectors of our economy play their part.	
Fairness for citizens - including our children and young people and across regions and communities.	
Innovation and Technological readiness.	
Economic opportunities including green jobs.	
Environmental and public health benefits.	
Maintaining alignment with UK, Ireland, and global emissions reduction targets.	
Taking account of scientific advice and the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland.	
Fairness to future generations.	
Other, please specify.	

Please provide any additional comment in support of your choices above:

Context:

Northern Ireland taking action to meet the proposed Fourth Carbon Budget may have impacts and bring benefits to society. The Department recognises specific benefits and impacts will be dependent on emissions reduction policies that are agreed by the NI Executive closer to 2038.

Question:

Q3. Do you have any views on the potential impacts (positive and negative) that will be realised in Northern Ireland reducing its emissions to meet the proposed Fourth Carbon Budget?

You may wish to consider the impacts /benefits in the categories below:

- A) Financial impacts**
- B) Economic impacts**
- C) Social impacts**
- D) Rural impacts**
- E) Equality impacts**
- F) Impact on children and young people**

Please provide comments:

Question:

Q4. We appreciate your feedback on the questions above, this comments box is to provide you with the opportunity to add anything further that you have not already had an opportunity to do so regarding the Fourth Carbon Budget.

Please provide any additional comments you wish to make:

SECTION FIVE

Next Steps

5

SECTION FIVE: Next Steps

5.1 Publication of Responses and Confidentiality

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation may be disclosed on request. The Department can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances.

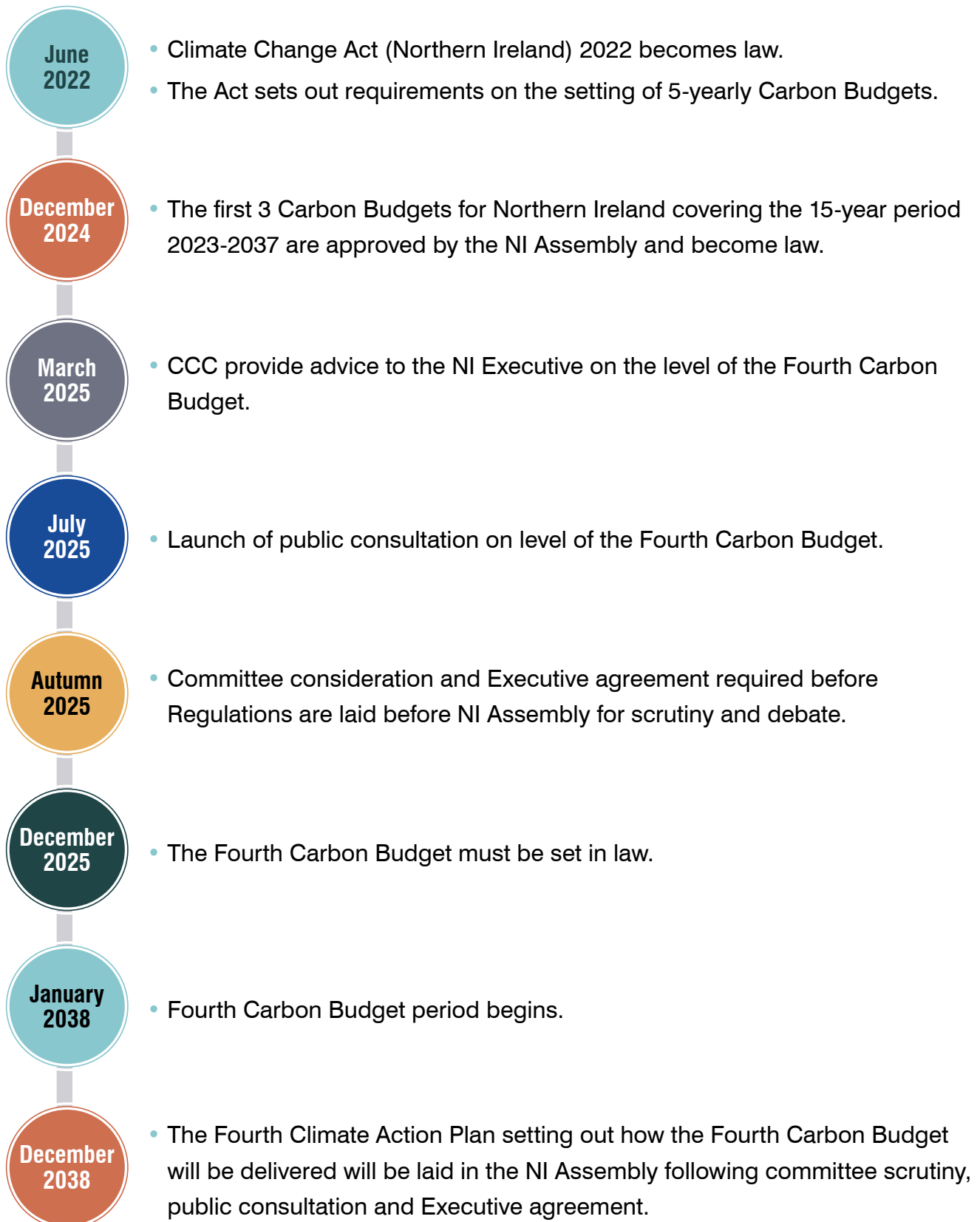
Before you submit your response, please read paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 on the confidentiality of consultations as these provide guidance on the legal position of any information given by you in response to this consultation. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in e-mail responses will not be treated as such a request.

5.2 Development of Regulations

Following completion of this consultation process, the views of respondents will be considered to help inform decisions on the appropriate level of the Fourth Carbon Budget for Northern Ireland. Work will continue to complete the necessary impact assessments and ensure all requirements of the Act are adhered to.

Considering the CCC advice, in conjunction with this consultation, the Department will progress draft Regulations to set the Fourth Carbon Budget. These draft Regulations will be brought to the Northern Ireland Executive for their agreement before arranging to lay the draft Regulations in the Assembly for their debate and approval.

5.3 Timeline and next steps for Fourth Carbon Budget:



5.4 Data Protection Section

Section 8(e) of the Data Protection Act 2018 permits processing of personal data when necessary for an activity that supports or promotes democratic engagement. Information provided by respondents to this consultation exercise will be held and used for the purposes of the administration of this current exercise and subsequently disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation.

5.5 Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority (the Department in this case). This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- the Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- the Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature; and
- acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office:

- Telephone: 0303 123 1113
- Email: ni@ico.org.uk
- Website: <https://ico.org.uk>

APPENDIX

Glossary of terms

APPENDIX: Glossary of terms

We have provided this glossary for some of the key terms that have been used in this consultation document. You may find it helpful to review this when considering responses to the consultation questions.

Carbon budget	<p>A carbon budget provides a limit on the maximum total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions which should not be exceeded for a defined budgetary period, in order to help meet overall and longer-term emission reduction commitments.</p> <p>For Northern Ireland, the budgetary periods cover 5 years with the first carbon budget covering the period 2023-2027.</p> <p>First Carbon Budget (2023-2027), Second Carbon Budget (2028-2032) and Third Carbon Budget (2033-2037) have all been set by way of Regulations, with the approval of the Assembly achieved in December 2024.</p> <p>The Fourth Carbon Budget covers the period 2038-2042.</p>
Climate Action Plan (CAP)	<p>A Climate Action Plan sets out the policies and proposals that departments will implement to meet the corresponding carbon budget as well as set out how the emissions targets will be achieved. This will contain actions from every Northern Ireland department and will be consulted on and laid in the NI Assembly.</p>
Climate Change Committee (CCC)	<p>The UK Climate Change Committee is the statutory, independent, climate change advisory service to the UK Government and all UK Devolved Administrations (including Northern Ireland).</p>
Climate Change Advisory Council	<p>Ireland's Climate Change Advisory Council is an independent advisory body tasked with assessing and advising on how Ireland will undertake the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.</p>
Greenhouse Gas (GHG)	<p>Greenhouse gases (GHGs) absorb heat from the Earth's surface and remain in the atmosphere for decades to centuries. They trap significant heat, similar to a greenhouse trapping the sun's rays. The seven main gases are: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride and nitrogen.</p>

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)	The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change.
Net emissions	The amount of emissions of a greenhouse gas (or gases) for a period minus the number of removals of the gas (or gases) for the period. Emissions can be released into our atmosphere from a number of sources such as a result of our industrial activities, using transport, heating our homes and offices, and from our agricultural livestock. Removals of a gas can be through land use, land-use change, and forestry and through carbon capture and storage technology.
Net Zero	Net Zero means not adding to the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible, and balancing out any that remain by removing an equivalent amount.
Net Northern Ireland emissions account	The aggregate amount of net emissions of each GHG in NI plus or minus any carbon units debited or credited.
Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)	A RIA is a tool to inform policy making. It assists with the consideration of potential economic impacts of a proposed or existing policy or legislation.
Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)	A rural needs impact assessment is a process aimed at helping public authorities understand the positive and negative impacts of proposed policies and/or Regulations on people in rural areas.
'The Act'	The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Web Links

Relevant NI Climate Change legislation:

Climate Change Act 2008	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents
Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2022/31/enacted
The Climate Change (Carbon Budgets 2023-2037) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2024/215/made
The 2040 Target was amended in the Act by the Climate Change (2040 Emissions Target) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2024/214/contents/made

CCC Advice Report

CCC advice on Northern Ireland's Fourth Carbon Budget	https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/northern-irelands-fourth-carbon-budget/
---	---

Other Relevant Legislation

Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/19/contents
Northern Ireland Act 1998	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/47/section/75

Fourth Carbon Budget Consultation
Climate Change Legislation and Policy Division
1st Floor Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED

Email: ClimateChangeDiscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk

www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk