



Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Initiatives in the Isle of Man

PP 2021/0038

ISSUED 23/02/2021

RESEARCH PAPER

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1. SUMMARY

Since the Government's official recognition of the global climate emergency in May 2019, two public consultations in relation to climate change action in the Isle of Man have been conducted. The first consultation was to inform a climate change mitigation strategy for 2020 to 2030, with its findings subsequently being used by the newly-established Climate Emergency Consultative Transformation Team to inform the development of an Island climate action plan alongside Professor Curran's independent impact report.

In July 2020, a consultation on the Climate Change Bill was launched, seeking public feedback on the planned legislative framework for the implementation and delivery of the Island's climate change mitigation plans to achieve the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change's key recommendation of net-zero emissions by 2050. The Bill entered the House of Keys on 3rd November 2020 and, following much debate about the net-zero target date, passed its third reading on 9th February 2021. The Bill now awaits its First Reading in the Legislative Council.

With the aim of giving the public a more significant voice in climate change strategy development, the Citizens' Forum on Climate Change was established with a combination of sector experts, volunteer laymen and randomly selected individuals.

The presentation and approval of the 2021-22 budget at the February 2021 sitting of Tynwald revealed that more than £17 million had been committed to the Island's climate change agenda.

A number of climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives were implemented and included in Government plans prior to the declaration of the climate emergency. For example, the inclusion of climate-focused statements and targets in various versions of the Programme for Government, the implementation of a single-use plastic reduction plan for the Government in 2018, which was extended to the community in 2019, the establishment of energy efficiency and saving schemes for individual households as well as businesses, which offer financial support to those seeking to make their property or business operations more energy efficient, and an Active Travel Scheme to reduce congestion, air pollution and the use of fossil fuels.

Climate change mitigation also featured in the agendas for change of earlier administrations, with dedicated climate change mitigation strategies and adaptation reports setting action targets to be implemented by dedicated Government committees with the help of the Energy Initiatives Capital Fund, which was first introduced in 2008. Two large-scale technical studies were conducted in 2006 and 2010, with the former identifying the impacts of climate change whilst the latter explored the Island's opportunities for renewable energy developments.

The Isle of Man's UNESCO Biosphere status and rich biodiversity make it a desirable location on the international stage. An importance is, therefore, placed on being an active participant in international climate change mitigation and adaptation treaties. The Island is a co-signatory of both the [Kyoto](#) and [Montreal](#) Protocols through its relationship with the UK. In response to a question in Tynwald Court on 17th February 2021 (*Hansard* in progress), the Chief Minister advised that discussions were underway to consider extending the [Paris Agreement](#) to the Island.

The following paper presents the actions and initiatives referenced above in greater detail, offering an overview of the measures that have been taken in the Isle of Man to address the impacts of climate change.

2. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Although climate change has been a topic of discussion for several decades, its profile has grown considerably in the last two and a half years. From the highly publicised school strike for climate, later to be known as [Fridays for Future](#), under which banner school children across the globe have taken part in numerous [protests](#), to the [Extinction Rebellion](#) which reportedly describes itself as an 'international non-violent civil disobedience activist movement', 2018 saw the beginning of a number of mass gatherings seeking the official recognition of a global climate emergency by world leaders and commitments to long-term change.

In 2019, a large number of parliaments, governments and other bodies formally acknowledged the impact of climate change by making declarations of a climate emergency. In the British Isles, Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon declared a climate emergency during her speech at an SNP conference on [28th April 2019](#), and the Welsh Government became the first official body to make a formal declaration of a climate emergency on [29th April 2019](#). At a sitting of the House of Commons on 1st May 2019, a [motion was brought](#) and it [was resolved](#) that the House declared an environment and climate emergency, calling on the Government to implement a target of net-zero emissions by 2050.

A key report which influenced various jurisdictions' decisions to declare a climate emergency was the 2018 Special Report of the [Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC) 'on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty'. A [Summary for Policymakers](#) offers an overview of the report's key findings.

2.1. CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION

On [10th May 2019](#), during an Active Travel event, the Chief Minister formally recognised the global climate change emergency and announced a commitment to introduce a Climate Change Bill in the following legislative year. He advised that a Government Action Plan would be produced alongside the Bill in order to outline key objectives and that concerns raised as part of the Climate Change Mitigation Consultation had been taken on board.

The Chief Minister highlighted a number of imminent actions, including an intention to 'ban all fossil fuel boilers in new build housing by 2025, ban the sale of new fossil fuel cars by 2040 and install cycle racks and showers at all suitable public buildings, as well as introduce incentives for tree planting under the imminent revisions of the agricultural support scheme'.

2.2. CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION STRATEGY 2020-2030

During the Tynwald Court sitting on [19th March 2019](#), the Minister for Environment, Food and Agriculture announced that a consultation was to be launched focusing on interim targets and the development of a new Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for 2020-2030. A [public consultation](#) consisting of 69 questions was open from 19th March 2019 until 17th May 2019 in order to allow the Manx community to have their say on how the Island's targets should be reached. The consultation received 1029 responses and the [findings](#) were released in August 2019.

The results revealed that there is strong support for initiatives such as developing public behaviour through awareness raising and the introduction of renewable energy on the Island; however, less support was found for initiatives which would potentially cost individuals more money. During a House of Keys discussion on [11th June 2019](#), the future role of the Island's [Energy from Waste Plant](#), which currently provides 10% of the Island's electricity, was called into question, with the Chief Minister stating that it remains a key part of any strategies and that a reduction in tonnage at the Plant due to increased

recycling of waste is not currently predicted to significantly impact the efficiency of the Plant in the near future. Results from the consultation showed that 88% of respondents were in favour of replacing fossil fuel heat sources with waste heat from the Plant.

Due to the overlap of this consultation with the Chief Minister's recognition of the climate emergency, it is likely that there will be no single document known as the 'Climate Change Mitigation Strategy 2020-2030'. Instead, as indicated in the published summary, the findings have been used to inform a new action plan which was produced in conjunction with an independent impact report (see parts 2.4. and 2.5.), as well as to inform the Climate Change Bill which underwent a further, legislation-specific consultation (see part 2.6.).

2.3. CLIMATE EMERGENCY CONSULTATIVE TRANSFORMATION TEAM

Following debates on the climate emergency in Tynwald Court sittings on [22nd May 2019](#) and [18th June 2019](#), a number of actions in relation to environmental protection were resolved, including that the Council of Ministers should "*set up a dedicated climate emergency transformation team, led by an independent Chair with relevant expertise*". The complete resolution, along with the latest actions to be taken in response, can be viewed [here](#).

The Climate Emergency Consultative Transformation Team (CECTT) was subsequently established and consists of Members of Tynwald as well as climate change specialists. In July 2019, climate scientist Professor James Curran was [appointed as the independent chair](#). He was the former chief executive of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and was awarded an MBE in 2007 for his services to the environment.

The Team was tasked with producing an Action Plan for climate change mitigation, which would inform the development of a Climate Change Bill. The Plan was presented to Tynwald as planned in January 2020 and is discussed in further detail in part 2.5. below.

2.4. 2019 IMPACT INDEPENDENT REPORT BY PROFESSOR CURRAN

In October 2019, Professor James Curran submitted to the Government the [Isle of Man Programme for Achievement of Climate Targets](#) (IMPACT), an independent report on options for targets and actions to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The report was debated by Tynwald on [21st January 2020](#) along with the Phase One Action Plan (see part 2.5.), both of which Tynwald voted in favour of unanimously.

The IMPACT report considers an extensive range of factors and options for the Island's climate change mitigation and adaptation plans, such as how strategies are to be funded, what alternatives to traditional energy production and consumption could be viable in the Island and which pathways and timeframes could be followed to meet the Island's climate targets. Professor Curran produced a list of eight recommendations for the Isle of Man in total:

1. A higher ambition pathway should be adopted, meeting 45% reduction in net-emissions in 2030, and attaining net-zero in 2050
2. An associated higher ambition action plan be adopted
3. Consideration be given to allocating an annual Government budget of £25M
4. An ecological emergency should also be recognised
5. Formal programme governance and management practices be adopted for ensuring delivery
6. Just Transition be a principle of the action plan
7. Few targets should be set against carbon emissions; programme management is better served by setting targets against deliverable actions
8. The action plan should be reviewed in 2023 and, thereafter, every five years

2.5. ACTION PLAN FOR ACHIEVING NET ZERO EMISSIONS BY 2050 - PHASE 1

The Government's [Phase 1 Action Plan](#) was published in January 2020 and was informed by Professor Curran's IMPACT report. The Plan presents ten policy commitments which are to inform future steps and guide the first phase of immediate actions. Such policy commitments include urgently establishing a Climate Change Transformation Programme with a dedicated fund and Political Steering Board to develop and deliver the action plan; securing no less than 75% of the Island's electricity from renewable sources by 2035; and increasing natural carbon capture opportunities, whilst protecting biodiversity and enhancing ecosystems, to help reach net zero by 2050.

2.5.1. PROGRESS UPDATE AND IMPACT OF COVID-19

A [Progress Report and Delivery Strategy Post Covid-19 Pandemic](#) was laid before Tynwald at the July 2020 sitting. This paper provides an overview of the actions that are to be prioritised immediately following the Covid-19 pandemic, with an emphasis being placed on those actions which will 'rebuild the economy through job creation and investment, support the vulnerable, and promote emission-positive behaviour change'. These actions include establishing a transformation fund, creating the Transformation Team, encouraging mobile working for Government employees, launching a pre-tender for onshore renewable energy generation and developing the Active Travel Strategy (see part 3.3. below) for areas outside of Douglas.

2.6. CLIMATE CHANGE BILL 2020

2.6.1. CONSULTATION

A six-week consultation on a [draft bill](#) was carried out from 21st July 2020 to 1st September 2020 via the [Government's consultation hub](#). The [Consultation Paper](#) offered further background information to the development of the Bill and contained all a manual form with all consultation questions for those who wished to respond by post or email. Drop-in sessions were held in Douglas, Peel, Port St Mary and Ramsey during the consultation period in order to facilitate wider community engagement.

A total of 120 consultation responses were submitted, 88 of which were from members of the public. The remaining submissions came from businesses, third sector organisations, public bodies, local authorities, Members of Tynwald and a political party. A number of stakeholders were contacted directly for input and are listed in appendix 1 to the consultation's [summary of responses](#), which was published in November 2020. A further document with the responses that the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture has explicit permission to publish is expected to be made available on the Consultation Hub.

As a result of the consultation, 19 clauses were given further consideration, leading to changes being made to nine of them. Such changes include, for example, requiring that an interim target be set by 2022, rather than simply enabling interim targets to be set, and ensuring that the offsetting schemes under clause 16 support only carbon sequestration activities and not the general offsetting of emissions. A complete list of those clauses which were given further consideration can be found in appendix 2 to the summary of responses.

2.6.2. CORE PROVISIONS

The core aim of the Bill is to set a 2050 target date to achieve net zero emissions in line with the recommendations of the [United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#). As well as the overall target date, the Bill requires that at least one interim target be set no later than 1st April

2022. The Bill enables the Council of Ministers to change the 2050 target date; however, this is explicitly restricted to bringing the date forward, excluding the possibility of any extension.

The [Bill as introduced to the House of Keys](#) makes a number of provisions in relation to the ongoing duties of the Council of Ministers. These duties include ensuring that a climate change plan is in effect at all times, with such plans having a maximum duration of five years and requiring public consultation and Tynwald approval prior to coming into effect; laying an annual progress report before Tynwald no later than July each year; and producing a five-yearly emissions report to be laid before Tynwald no later than two years after the end of each respective reporting period.

In respect of public bodies, the only immediate requirement of the Bill is that, in the course of conducting their duties, they act in a way that best contributes towards the fulfilment of the Island's climate change targets. All other provisions under Part 5 of the Bill for the imposition of duties and reporting requirements on public bodies is first dependent on the production of regulations, guidance or designations by the Council of Ministers.

Further provisions of the Bill make it an offence to install a fossil fuel heating system in, or for use in, a new building from 1st January 2025; enable the Council of Ministers to make regulations with further provisions in respect of the use of fossil fuels and fossil fuel heating systems; and enable the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture to make regulations in respect of the manufacture, use, distribution, etc., of single use plastics.

2.6.3. AMENDMENTS TO OTHER LEGISLATION

The Bill does not provide for the revocation of any existing legislation. The following items of primary and secondary legislation would be amended in the event that the Bill be passed in its current form:

Title of Legislation	Amended/Inserted Provisions		Changes Commence
	Sections	Summary of Changes	
Forestry Act 1984	2(2), 5(3)(a), para. 1(3) of Sch. 2; 2(3), 7(4); 8	Addition of feminine pronouns; substitution of old fine amounts with the new scale system; replacement of section on turbaries with substantial provisions in respect of peatland (registration, prohibition and prevention of disturbance, restoration, rights of entry, appeals and offences, etc.)	As appointed by order of the Council of Ministers
Licensing and Registration of Vehicles Act 1985	13(1)(aa), 13(1A); 13(4)	Insertion of ability to make regulations to prohibit the registration of certain vehicle types or prescribe different fees for different vehicle types; adjustment of cross-reference	As appointed by order of the Council of Ministers
Electricity Act 1996	2(6A), 2(6B), 2(6C); 2(8A); 7(2), 12(1); 12(2)-(5)	Insertion of requirement for the MUA to have regard to duties under the Climate Change Act, to report on proposals for compliance and to consult those impacted by compliance prior to reporting; insertion of requirement for DOI to consult MUA prior to issuing electricity supply target directions; adjustment of cross-references; insertion of ability for DOI to make regulations specifying who may supply electricity without MUA permission or be involved in small-scale renewable energy generation, specification of sources of energy and technologies for electricity generation, and requirement for DOI to consult public and MUA prior to making such regulations	With the passing of the Climate Change Act

Building Control Act 1991	11(1)(b)-(d); 15(3)-(7)	Insertion of requirement for building authority to reject plans for new building constructions after 01/10/2024 that include fossil fuel heating systems where applicant cannot demonstrate completion of installation by 01/01/2025 and no alternative heating system is included; insertion of provision for the lapse of deposited building plans in respect of a building which fails to complete installation of prohibited fossil fuel heating systems by 01/01/2025	As appointed by order of the Council of Ministers
Customs and Excise Act 1993	1(3)(ac)	Insertion of ability to the Island by order any UK legislation imposing taxes, levies or other charges that has direct or indirect benefit to the environment and concerns the import or export of goods to/from the Island	As appointed by order of the Council of Ministers
Town and Country Planning Act 1999	2(2AA); 2A(1A); 6(3)(da)	Insertion of requirement that development plans take into account specified climate change policies established under the Climate Change Act; insertion of requirement for a national policy directive or development plan which takes into account specified climate change policies to be issued before 01/01/2025; exclusion of the removal or blocking of drainage in peatland and restoration of peatland as operations deemed to involve development	As appointed by order of the Council of Ministers
Town and Country Planning (Development Procedure) Order 2019	Para. 2A of Sch. 1	Insertion of requirement for planning approval applications to demonstrate that they have been made with regard to specified climate change policies established under the Climate Change Act (excluding applications for change of use only, approval of reserved matters, to replace a window/door in conservation area, and minor changes)	As appointed by order of the Council of Ministers

2.6.4. PROGRESSION

At the time of writing, the Bill has passed through all stages in the House of Keys and awaits introduction to the Legislative Council for first reading. The following table shows the respective sittings at which each stage has taken place so far, with links to the corresponding *Hansard*.

House of Keys - First Reading	3rd November 2020
House of Keys - Second Reading	10th November 2020
House of Keys - Clauses Stage	2nd February 2021
House of Keys - Third Reading	9th February 2021

A number of amendments were tabled for the clauses stage of the Bill in the House of Keys. A list of all tabled amendments can be found from [page 10 of the Order Paper](#) for that sitting.

2.7. CITIZENS' FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE

In his IMPACT report, Professor Curran suggested that a citizens' panel would be a useful addition to a governance model for the delivery of actions. He noted that such a panel 'could scrutinise and challenge progress, but also offer advice on societal response'. This led to the establishment of the [Citizens' Forum on Climate Change](#). The Forum is formed of 36 members from three separate groups equally. These groups are classed as invited and advertised industry leaders, advertised members of the public, and randomly selected members of the public.

According to the Forum's webpage, its remit is:

1. To provide insight and feedback to the CCTB and Climate Change Transformation Programme on climate action work from a community perspective.
2. To provide views and information on specific topics as requested.

3. To provide a representative from the Citizens' Forum to attend the CCTB, as required.
4. To provide the basis for focus groups to inform climate change research and policy, depending on the issue and the input required.
5. To engage input and participation from the wider community via the networks and influence of the members

It is expected that the Forum will meet quarterly, with sessions being offered online in the future to ensure that attendance is possible for everyone. The Forum has met in person on two occasions to date, with the addition of a short webinar which took place on 17th February 2021 in order to offer members further information about the Forum and its impact on the CCTP. The first meeting took place on 27th October 2020 as an introductory session to offer context to the work that has been, and is planned to be, done. The second session was held on 1st December 2020 and focused on the theme of 'The Built Environment'. Agendas and summaries for sessions of the Forum can be viewed on a separate webpage [here](#).

2.8. FUNDING

The [July 2020 Climate Change Progress Report](#) states that the Treasury approved a £10 million fund for climate change purposes, with Terms of Reference in relation to climate change work being agreed upon allocation. Additionally, the Report advises that work had been commissioned as part of planned action 10.3 to "undertake a comprehensive exercise to understand the funding options available and the social and economic implications of those options.

The [2020/21 Programme for Government](#) included a new action of developing a long-term funding strategy for the Climate Change Action Plan by February 2022.

The [2021-22 Budget](#) added £2.25 million of funding to the Department of Infrastructure's Climate Change Adaptation budget in order to support further flood-defence works, bringing the proposed total expenditure for 2021-22 to £9.25 million. The Treasury's proposed total expenditure for Climate Change Mitigation Initiatives sits at £10 million. The Environmental Protection Fund, which was established in 2020 as an Internal Reserve with £5 million, received an additional £5 million. In the [Treasury Minister's Tynwald Court speech](#), he explained that almost £900,000 had been included to facilitate the establishment of the Climate Change Transformation Team in the Cabinet Office and that, overall, the 2021-22 Budget committed more than £17 million towards the climate change agenda.

3. OTHER PLANS AND INITIATIVES OF THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION

3.1. PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT 2016-2021

Following the General Election in 2016, the Council of Ministers produced a 5-year [Programme for Government](#) for 2016-2021. It is described in the introduction as a living document which can evolve over time and allow the Government to react quickly to any emerging threats and challenges. The Programme contains various statements which have a focus on reducing emissions and meeting climate challenge targets, such as:

Support and promote healthy, safe and cost-effective travel and encourage the uptake of low carbon transport (page 7)

Support the three goals of energy security, the 2050 Emissions Reduction target and affordability to ensure an effective, secure and appropriate long term energy plan (page 7)

Deliver against our commitment to reduce our carbon emissions (page 9)

Take care of nature and wildlife so that our uplands, plantations, glens, and rivers can help us deal with the challenges of a changing climate (page 11)

Implement an [energy efficiency scheme](#) for the Island by the end of 2017 (page 18)

One year after the introduction of this Programme, the Government undertook its first [annual review](#) in order to amend the document to represent any changing needs and address new challenges. This involved adding the target to reduce plastic waste within the Government. This subsequently led to the introduction a single-use plastic reduction plan. The [Year 3 Programme for Government update](#) included further new actions concerning climate change adaptation and mitigation, such as:

To launch the IOM as a suitable location for developing and testing the technologies needed for autonomous vehicles (page 8)

Introduce and All Island Action Plan for Single Use Plastics (page 11)

Bring forward an action plan for CO₂ emissions reduction (page 12)

The most recent update, the [Programme for Government 2020/21](#), was debated and received by Tynwald later than usual, in [October 2020](#), as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Programme highlights the four focus areas for the remainder of the administration as community, health, climate and economy. It adds that climate change considerations will form part of the Government's recovery plan post-Covid-19 and that the issues that gave way to the 2019 floods in Laxey must also be addressed.

3.2. ENERGY EFFICIENCY GRANT SCHEME

An [Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme](#) was announced in a statement by the Environment, Food and Agriculture Minister at the [December 2017](#) sitting of Tynwald Court and began offering support in 2018. The Scheme is aimed at helping homeowners and tenants to cover up to 75% of the cost of energy efficient upgrades in their homes. The Scheme offers a maximum of £1,000 per property in grants and is available to those who do not earn more than £15,000 over the income tax allowance, as detailed in this [guidance note](#).

3.3. ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY

The [Active Travel Strategy](#) was published in May 2018 and approved by Tynwald on [18th July 2018](#). The Strategy predominantly aims to encourage people to begin walking or cycling more in order to improve overall health and well-being, but also to aid in reducing carbon emissions and improve air quality as part of the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy 2016-2020 (see part 4.6. below). It is stated that 'the long-term vision for the Isle of Man is: to be an Island where cycling and walking are normal and realistic transport choices for people of all ages and abilities'. One of the aims of the Strategy was to 'achieve an increase in the number of people travelling actively to work to 20% by 2020'.

In March 2019, [Sustrans](#), a UK-based charity that aims to make it easier for people to walk and cycle by collaborating with 'decision-makers' to create policies and schemes, were commissioned to produce the [Isle of Man Active Travel Investment Plan](#). The document aims to identify the key problem areas for encouraging active travel on the Island and proposes potential solutions to such problems. The document contains a detailed table of priority actions that should be taken to facilitate active travel for the public. It highlights the Douglas Promenade, the Sea Terminal and North Quay, and the introduction of cycle exemptions to one-way streets as top priority projects. Whilst this document focuses solely on the Douglas area, Phase 1 of the Action Plan to achieve net-zero emissions (see part 2.5. above) makes a clear commitment to developing active travel options in other areas of the Island.

3.4. SINGLE-USE PLASTIC REDUCTION PLAN

In July 2018, a [single-use plastic reduction plan](#) was implemented within the Isle of Man Government, removing such plastics from offices and other establishments in order to reduce plastic waste and pollution. In July 2019, further plans were announced to widen this initiative to take the entire [Isle of Man community](#) into consideration. Amongst encouraging greater awareness and education within the community and recycling initiatives, it is intended for the sale and distribution of plastic items such as carrier bags, straws and cutlery to be banned, as well as rinse-off personal care products containing micro beads, to be implemented within the planned Climate Change Act.

In Tynwald Court on 22nd July 2020, in response to two questions, the Minister for Environment, Food and Agriculture gave updates on the progress of implementing the Plan for both [the Government](#) and [the community](#). In his responses, the Minister advised that progress had continued to be made, with the [Refill Isle of Man](#) scheme proving successful in both Government buildings and in the wider community. He added that a number of other initiatives to reduce plastic waste and pollution were being delivered, such as engaging with and supporting [Beach Buddies](#), signing up to the [Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Community](#) campaign and being a member of the [World Network of Island and Coastal Biospheres](#) and its [Zero Plastic Group](#).

3.5. BUSINESS ENERGY SAVING SCHEME

The [Business Energy Saving Scheme](#) (BESS) was launched in [February 2019](#) to replace the Green Business Loan Scheme, which had been established in 2011 to offer interest-free loans for the purpose of helping businesses become more energy efficient. The BESS continues to operate on this same basis, offering eligible businesses across all economic sectors unsecured loans from £1,000 to £20,000 with a maximum repayment term of five years.

Examples of the projects that the Scheme aims to support include the installation of heat recovery systems, wind turbines, insulation upgrades and electric vehicle charging points. Further information about the Scheme, including the complete eligibility criteria and application process, can be found in the [BESS Guidelines](#). Businesses are encouraged to apply for an energy survey report under the [Business Improvement Scheme](#) (BIS), as this can then form part of their BESS applications.

4. ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES OF PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS

4.1. 2006 ACCLIMATISE CLIMATE CHANGE SCOPING STUDY

A study to identify the potential impacts of climate change on the Isle of Man was commissioned by the Isle of Man Government and produced by Climate Risk Management Limited (acclimatise) in 2006. The year-long [Isle of Man Climate Change Scoping Study](#) revealed that the Island's climate was changing in line with observations in the UK and other countries worldwide and that these changes would have an effect on not only the environment but also the economy.

The study recommended that government strategies be put in place to begin reducing carbon emissions and that plans be made for how to deal with future changes. It also pointed out the need for studies to be regularly reviewed due to the frequent developments in the understanding of climate change and the ways in which technology is being used to analyse data.

4.2. 2010 AEA RENEWABLE ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

In 2010, the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture commissioned AEA to carry out a systematic review of the potential for renewable energy on the Island and to provide an evidence base which would allow the Government to make informed decisions regarding long-term renewable energy

targets along with an understanding of the measures required to implement such changes. The results of this review are detailed in the [Renewable Energy Sustainability Study – Impacts and Opportunities for the Isle of Man](#). The study looked at the potential for developing a variety of renewable energy sources around the Island, such as on- and offshore wind, biomass, wave, tidal current and solar photovoltaics. It also took into consideration the potential for introducing a district heating system which would allow for certain localities to be provided with heat from a central source, such as the Energy from Waste plant.

The study concludes by recommending that the Isle of Man focus on developing biomass technologies, as this represents the best overall renewable energy option for the Island and would have the most significant impact on CO₂ emissions reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation ambitions. Onshore wind is also recommended as a priority option for meeting short- and long-term targets as it has the potential to deliver large amounts of energy with significant reductions in CO₂ emissions whilst reducing the need for gas imports.

4.3. AGENDA FOR CHANGE 2013 AND 2015

The [Agenda for Change](#) was debated and received by Tynwald on [15th January 2013](#). The Environment and Infrastructure Committee Sub-Committee of the Council of Ministers was tasked with spearheading the delivery of the nine key objectives listed in section 6 'Environment and Infrastructure':

- *identify sustainable ways to reduce the financial and environmental cost of energy in the medium to long term*
- *address the issues posed by the effects of climate change*
- *produce a marine spatial plan to guide appropriate future commercial use of our territorial seas*
- *prioritise the schemes in the capital programme which further develop our infrastructure and support economic development*
- *make sure town and country planning supports economic development*
- *ensure our transport links are secured*
- *develop a realistic strategy for food security in the Isle of Man*
- *promote the value and utilisation of our amenity, cultural and landscape resource*
- *encourage sustainable economic activity in harmony with our natural resources*

In July 2015, an [updated Agenda for Change](#) was published in order to detail new targets for the remainder of that legislative term. Climate change adaptation was listed as one of the major challenges that needed to be tackled within the following decade. The core objectives that remained in relation to the matter were to reduce the carbon footprint, improve public awareness of the threats of climate change and increase capital spend on flood risk management. Tynwald debated and received the updated Agenda on [21st July 2015](#).

4.4. 2013 REPORT ON ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

In May 2013, the Council of Ministers produced a [report](#) outlining 17 key objectives building upon the responsibilities of the Environment and Infrastructure Policy Sub-Committee in respect of the Agenda for Change. Examples of such objectives include:

Government will develop a national energy strategy which balances the competing needs of supply security, sustainability and affordability.

Government will adopt a greenhouse gas emissions target for the Isle of Man of 80% reduction of 1990 levels by 2050.

Government will develop policies and strategies to ensure that it understands the risks of climate change to the Isle of Man and adapts to these risks.

The Report lists flooding and coastal erosion, along with increased competition for water, energy and materials, as some of the main climate challenges that businesses will face. Attention is also drawn to the negative impacts that climate change risks can have on the public health service and on the overall wellbeing of Island residents, largely due to inefficient housing that places those on low incomes at the greatest risk. The report explored the idea of introducing the [Energy Efficiency Scheme](#), which now assists residents with fuel bills and provides up to £1,000 towards home improvements that will increase energy efficiency (see part 3.2. above).

4.5. 2015 MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION POLICY REPORTS

During the Tynwald Court sitting of [19th May 2015](#), two reports from the Council of Ministers were received and their policy recommendations approved. Both reports presented developments in other jurisdictions, predominantly UK policies and EU strategies, to inform the recommendations being made for policy development in the Isle of Man. The [Policy on Sustainable Development and Mitigating Climate Challenges](#) report recommended a total of six policies:

- 1. Sustainability will be central to Government's policy and decision making to ensure we balance the long term needs of society with the needs of the economy and the environment.*
- 2. To deliver the agreed scale of emissions reduction it will be necessary to ensure that total greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generated on Island will be close to zero by 2050.*
- 3. To deliver the agreed scale of emissions reduction it will be necessary to ensure that net emissions of greenhouse gasses from buildings will be close to zero by 2050.*
- 4. To deliver the agreed scale of emissions reduction it will be necessary to ensure that all surface transport will be powered by ultra-low greenhouse gas emission technology by 2050, with the exception of machines of cultural importance such as those used on the heritage railways and for motor racing events.*
- 5. To deliver the agreed scale of emissions reduction it will be necessary to ensure that all land use practices will adhere to the principles of sustainable development by 2050 to minimise greenhouse gas emissions.*
- 6. Government will assess how greenhouse gas emissions from the Island can be reduced and review this assessment and progress against it every 5 years.*

The [Adaptation Policy for our Climate Challenges](#) report proposed a policy be adopted "to reduce risks and maximise benefits Government will both promote and undertake appropriate proactive adaptation to the current and projected climate".

4.6. CLIMATE CHALLENGE MITIGATION STRATEGY 2016-2020

In June 2016, a climate challenge mitigation strategy for the Isle of Man titled [Greater efficiency, Cleaner energy, Resilient economy](#) was published by the Government. The strategy outlined the foundations of a 5-year action plan which would aim to see the Island reduce its carbon emissions and start making ground on delivering Tynwald's target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. The strategy presents a proposed approach to reducing emissions, based on the principle of an emissions hierarchy. This would see energy demand be eliminated in first instance, followed by improving energy efficiency and substituting fossil fuels with sustainable alternatives.

Delivery of the actions identified in the appended Action Plan were to be coordinated by the Environment and Infrastructure Policy Sub-Committee, with a new Action Plan being established on a rolling five-year basis. Strategies presented in the 2016-2020 Plan included developing a competition to design Near Zero Emissions Houses, committing to lowest practicable vehicle licence fees for Electric Vehicles by 2020 and

proposing a plan for the provision of renewable energy options. The Strategy was debated and approved by Tynwald on [20th July 2016](#).

4.7. ENERGY INITIATIVES CAPITAL FUND

The establishment of the Energy Initiatives Capital Fund was approved by Tynwald for the 2008 budget and £3.0 million transferred from the general revenue account. According to the [July 2015 Medium-Term Financial Management Strategy](#), the purpose of the Fund was to provide additional funding to Government Departments for schemes which aided reductions in carbon emissions, reduced costs as a result of using fewer fossil fuels and allowed for the introduction of more renewable energy options in the Island.

The Fund financed the 2010 AEA Renewable Energy Sustainability Study. As detailed in the [2015/16 Detailed Government Accounts](#), other projects which have been financed by this fund include air tightness work at the Island's prison, the installation of energy efficient lighting in Noble's Hospital and the construction of the Island's first officially certified Passivhaus development in Janet's Corner, Castletown. The fund was closed on 1st April 2016 with any remaining balance being transferred to the [Invest to Save Fund](#).

4.8. COMMITTEES

4.8.1. GOVERNMENT COMMITTEES

4.8.1.1. ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

An Energy and Climate Change Committee/Officer Group was established in 2008 and tasked with looking into both climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Committee brought forward the notion of an Energy (Climate Change) Bill, with aims of reviewing energy policy, developing a renewable energy strategy and deciding upon both long- and short-term targets.

In response to a question during a sitting in the House of Keys on [8th December 2009](#), the Minister for Local Government and Environment stated that, following consideration of a paper from the Committee in the Council of Ministers, it was agreed that individual Departments and Boards were to be instructed to include two actions in their service delivery plans for the following year which would contribute towards lowering emissions. It was also noted that Departments were to work together with the group to monitor their energy usage and develop strategies to reduce consumption in future years. A further initiative involved instructing all Departments and Boards to encourage their employees to consider alternative methods of commuting in order to reduce emissions from cars.

4.8.1.2. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

In March 2012, the Council of Ministers [established the Environment and Infrastructure Committee](#) as one its Sub-Committees. The Committee was tasked with ensuring that any environmental impacts resulting from Government strategies are thoroughly taken into consideration and any negative impacts avoided or minimised.

4.8.2. PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

To date, no dedicated parliamentary committees have been formed in order to scrutinise the issue of climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Isle of Man. However, the remit of the [Environment and Infrastructure Policy Review Committee](#), which was established under the Standing Orders of Tynwald Court in 2011, is to scrutinise the policies of the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture and

the Department of Infrastructure. Both of these Departments play a significant role in developing and implementing climate change mitigation policies and initiatives and are often asked to comment on their progress during oral evidence hearings with the Committee.

5. UNESCO BIOSPHERE STATUS AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

The Isle of Man is currently the only entire nation to have been declared a [UNESCO Biosphere](#), including all of the Island's territorial seas. This status helps to encourage responsible development and protection of the natural landscape. Two of the Island's [Biosphere Pledges](#) are to protect natural resources and make any environmental impact positive where possible.

In 2015, the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture produced [Managing our Natural Wealth, The Isle of Man's First Biodiversity Strategy](#) for 2015-2025. The Strategy aims, by 2025, to:

- manage biodiversity change to minimise loss,
- maintain and where necessary restore or enhance native biodiversity, and
- actively involve society in understanding, appreciating and safeguarding biodiversity.

The Strategy presents seven core objectives for achieving these aims, two of which are focused on recognising and addressing the impacts of climate change:

- By 2025 all sites of critical importance for conservation of our biodiversity will be effectively protected and managed so that resident or migratory wildlife has adequate refuge to safeguard its future survival, recognising the challenge of climate change. To achieve this we will prevent loss of priority habitats, significantly reduce habitat degradation and fragmentation and, where appropriate, restore key species populations and priority habitats.
- By 2025 Government will monitor, understand and substantially reduce the other main pressures on biodiversity, particularly environmental pollution and the prevalence of invasive non-native species and will take measures to meet the biodiversity challenges posed by climate change.

An [Action Plan Mid-Term Audit](#) was published in August 2020, offering an overview of progress that has been made along with new challenges that have been identified and indicating whether actions are likely to be achievable. The Audit states that more long-term studies should be encouraged in order to aid the identification of species and habitats that are at the greatest risk of being affected by climate change. It also notes that the Phase 1 Action Plan and the Climate Change Bill recognise the intimate link between progress in climate change mitigation and the health of the Island's biodiversity, with a clear commitment being made to ensuring that biodiversity and the Isle of Man Biosphere are protected during the development of future strategies in order to accelerate positive change.

6. FURTHER READING

1. [Summary for Policy Makers](#) – Climate Change and Land: An IPCC Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems (last revised January 2020)
2. [Summary for Policy Makers](#) – IPCC Special Report on Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (2019)
3. [The Island's Natural Advantages](#) – Clean Tech Information Note (October 2014)
4. [Strategy for Offshore Energy Production](#), A Report by the Council of Ministers (April 2014)
5. [Paris Agreement](#) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (2016)
6. [Kyoto Protocol](#) to the United Nations Framework Convention On Climate Change (1997)
7. [Montreal Protocol](#) on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Handbook, 14th Edition, 2020)
8. '[Climate Change Bill – The Key Points](#)', article by Eve Aycock LLM, M&P Legal (September 2020)

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