

## CCC recommends a minimum 34% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, with a 42% cut if a global deal is achieved

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The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) today urged the Government to commit unilaterally to reducing emissions of all greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the UK by at least 34% in 2020 relative to 1990 levels (21% relative to 2005). This should be increased to 42% relative to 1990 (31% relative to 2005) once a global deal to reduce emissions is achieved. The CCC says meeting these targets is necessary to contain the threat of climate change.

*Building a low-carbon economy*, the CCC's first report sets out the analysis underpinning these recommendations and the proposed level of the first three carbon budgets covering the periods 2008-12, 2013-17 and 2018-22.

The budgets are a worldwide first, designed under the Climate Change Act, which also establishes the CCC as an independent advisory body to Government.

The report sets out how the budgets can be met by using existing technologies, and by putting in place a range of policies to move to a low-carbon economy:

- Moving away from using fossil fuels towards using **cleaner forms of generating electricity and heat** including greater use of renewables (wind power, biomass heat and heat pumps), nuclear and Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS);
- By using **energy more efficiently** in our homes and office buildings and in industry, through better insulation, use of more energy efficient appliances and through reducing waste by turning lights off, shutting down computers and using air conditioning less;
- By **reducing transport emissions**, developing electric cars, improving the carbon efficiency of engines, developing use of sustainable bio-fuels, better journey planning and more use of public transport.
- Through **purchasing offset credits** (e.g. Clean Development Mechanism) to meet the 42% target, but not the 34% target.

These significant reductions can be achieved without harming the UK's economy and at a cost less than 1% of GDP in 2020. In other words, an economy that might grow by 30% in the period to 2020, would instead grow by 29%. The CCC advises that this is a price worth paying, given the long-term costs of inaction on climate change.

**Chair of the CCC Lord Turner said:**

*“Climate change poses a grave threat to human welfare, the environment and the economy. We need to act now, in the UK and as part of a global agreement, to significantly reduce our emissions.*

*It is not too late to tackle climate change, but it will be unless the world takes action soon, and the developed countries need to lead the way with strong commitments and strong delivery against the budgets. The budgets we have proposed are achievable given available and developing technologies, and provided the policies in place are implemented and where necessary reinforced.*

*The reductions required can be achieved at a very low cost to our economy: the cost of not achieving the reductions, at national and global level, will be far greater”.*

**Ed Miliband, Secretary of State at the Department of Energy and Climate Change, speaking at the launch this morning, welcomed the Committee’s report:**

*“Plotting a course to a low carbon future here in the UK is vital if we are to reach our domestic goals and reach an international agreement. Carbon budgets will set our trajectory and send out a clear message that we will tackle climate change here in the UK.*

*“I would like to thank Lord Turner and the Committee for rising to the challenge and providing these very thorough recommendations. Carbon budgets will require a culture change where all important decisions will have to be made on the basis of whether they fit the budget, whether emissions savings can be made elsewhere or whether they simply can’t be done.*

*“We will give the report the in-depth consideration it deserves before responding in full but I am pleased to say that from 2009, carbon budgets will take their place alongside financial budgets, and become pivotal to policy decisions within the UK.”*

The CCC’s previous recommendation, that the UK should reduce emissions of all GHGs by at least 80% by 2050 was accepted by the Government and included within the Climate Change Act.

The targets have been designed to ensure that the UK makes a fair contribution towards a global deal aimed at keeping global temperature rises close to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

If temperatures rise beyond 2 degrees, impacts could include large numbers of species becoming extinct, increased damage from floods, storms and droughts, decreasing agricultural productivity, melting of ice sheets and sea level rises.

The CCC has advised the Government not to purchase offset credits as part of their efforts to meet the 34% target. The Government should instead aim to make these emission cuts through domestic action by improving energy efficiency in buildings

and industry, promoting fuel efficiency improvement in road vehicles and by using cleaner forms of electricity production such as renewable and nuclear power.

ENDS

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Committee on Climate Change (CCC)**

The CCC is an independent body established under the Climate Change Act to advise the Government on setting the first legally binding carbon budgets, and to report to Parliament on the progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The CCC also advises on what the UK's long-term climate change target should be as a fair contribution towards a global deal.

**Web address:** [www.theccc.org.uk/](http://www.theccc.org.uk/)

- The UK should reduce Kyoto greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 (77% below 2005 emissions). This would be an appropriate UK contribution to a global deal aiming to reduce Kyoto gas emissions to between 20-24 billion tonnes by 2050 (about 50-60% below current global levels).
- The **80% target should apply to the sum of all sectors of the UK economy**, including international aviation and shipping.
- Building a low-carbon economy sets out the UK's first three carbon budgets for 2008-2022. Carbon budgets will apply to all Kyoto greenhouse gases. Two sets of budgets have been proposed, one to apply following a global deal on emissions reductions ("**Intended**" budgets), and the other to apply for the period before a global deal is reached ("**Interim**" budgets).
- The Intended budgets require an emissions reduction of **42% in 2020** relative to 1990 (31% relative to 2005). The Interim budget requires a **34% emissions reduction in 2020** (21% relative to 2005).
- The Government should not plan to purchase offset credits (e.g. CDM) to meet the Interim budget. More generous use of offset credits, however, would be appropriate in transitioning from the Interim to the Intended budgets.
- The cost of meeting proposed budgets is **less than 1% of GDP in 2020**, and potential competitiveness issues for energy intensive industries can be addressed through appropriate design of the policy framework.

#### **For further information/ media bids please contact:**

Emily Towers, 0207 270 1910, [emily.towers@theccc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:emily.towers@theccc.gsi.gov.uk), 07766 366 577

Sharon Gaisie, 0207 270 1965, [Sharon.gaisie@theccc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.gaisie@theccc.gsi.gov.uk)

Mark Bainbridge, 0207 270 1916, [mark.bainbridge@theccc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mark.bainbridge@theccc.gsi.gov.uk), 07740 612 468