



# Summary Report

Responses to the Discussion Document on a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill

September 2021



*Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.*



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

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## Contents

1. Background .....	1
2. Introduction .....	1
3. Consultation Questions Posed .....	3
4. Consultation Responses – Amount and Format.....	4
5. Methodology .....	6
6. Statistics – High Level .....	7
7. Findings .....	8
7.1 Options for Development of a Climate Change Bill .....	8
7.1.1 Option 1 for a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill .....	9
7.1.2 Options for Development of a Climate Change Bill .....	13
7.2 Opinions on the Most Important Criteria to be Considered .....	15
7.3 Flexibility - Evidence, Science and Understanding .....	21
7.4 Carbon Budgets .....	25
7.5 Reporting by Public Bodies - Powers and Duties .....	28
7.6 Independent Advisory Body .....	31
7.7 Issues not covered .....	35
8. Next Steps .....	37
Appendix 1 – List of Respondents (Alphabetical).....	40

## 1. Background

In January 2020, Northern Ireland's 'New Decade, New Approach' (NDNA) agreement included a commitment that *"the Executive will introduce legislation and targets for reducing carbon emissions in line with the Paris Climate Change Accord"*; and the *"Executive should bring forward a Climate Change Act to give environmental targets a strong legal underpinning"*.

## 2. Introduction

In light of the commitment under NDNA in regard to bringing forward new climate change legislation for Northern Ireland, the Minister for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Edwin Poots MLA, launched an eight week consultation on a 'Discussion Document on a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland'.

The consultation ran from 8th December 2020 to 1st February 2021 on the DAERA website, with NIDirect's Citizen Space platform providing the online survey facilities.

A wide range of statutory consultees and relevant stakeholders across Northern Ireland were contacted directly via email, with detail of the consultation and its supporting documents, including web links to the consultation's website page which contained further information on how to respond. During its eight week term, the consultation was widely and regularly publicised through DAERA media platforms, including DAERA and MyNI twitter and Facebook accounts.

The Discussion Document did not introduce any new policies, but rather sought views from a wide range of stakeholders across Northern Ireland, on policy options with regard to what a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland should look like in order to inform work on delivering NDNA requirements to bring forward climate change legislation. The consultation Discussion Document presented the following two high level policy options for a Climate Change Bill in regards to setting within the Bill a net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction by 2050 target for Northern Ireland:

- Option 1: Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill setting interim emission reduction targets and a long term target of net zero emissions in Northern Ireland by 2050 (long term target does not consider expert climate change advice); and
- Option 2: Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill setting interim emission reduction targets and a long term target for Northern Ireland by 2050, the long term target is an equitable contribution to achieving UK-wide Net Zero by 2050 (long term target considers expert climate change advice).

The Discussion Document also invited views on other elements for potential inclusion in a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill. These included:

- future proofing targets;
- a duty to set five yearly carbon budgets, setting five year limits or ‘caps’ on the amount of GHGs that Northern Ireland would be allowed to produce;
- climate change adaptation and mitigation reporting requirements for Public Bodies; and
- requirements for the establishment of an independent advisory body on climate change for Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) were commissioned by DAERA to conduct analysis of the consultation responses received by the Department. A two stage analysis approach was applied in order to expedite the informing of ongoing Climate Change Bill policy development. This was necessitated by the importance of having climate change legislation in place as soon as possible, and delivering such legislation within an unprecedented timeline, in order to meet the related requirements of the NDNA agreement, i.e. delivering climate change legislation within the current Assembly Mandate (by March 2022).

The first stage analysis of the consultation responses carried out by NISRA, now referred to as ‘Stage 1’, was a high level, quantitative analysis of the data provided within the responses to the consultation. The second stage analysis, now referred to as ‘Stage 2’, was a more in-depth analysis of the more detailed, qualitative data provided within the responses.

This report provides a summary of the responses to the Discussion Document on a Climate Change Bill, based on the findings of the NISRA’s Stage 1 and Stage 2 analysis

of the consultation responses data. The outcome of the analysis of the consultation responses has part-informed an Executive-agreed Climate Change Bill, which was developed and brought forward by the DAERA Minister Edwin Poots MLA. This Bill was introduced to the Assembly on 5th July 2021, and it is currently proceeding on its legislative passage at the time of publication of this report.

This report has been published on the DAERA's website and will be made available in other formats on request.

### 3. Consultation Questions Posed

The online survey for the Consultation allowed the respondents to select an answer from tick box options and provided opportunities to express reasons for their answers in text boxes.

For example, Question 1 allowed the respondents to select either 'Option 1', 'Option 2' or 'Not sure / No opinion' and then to elaborate on the reasons for their selection. Questions 2 to 9 allowed the respondent to select either 'Yes', 'No' or 'Not sure / No opinion' and again to comment further on their own personal views for selecting which option in relation to that question.

The questions which were asked within the Discussion Document are set out below:

**Question 1:** Which of the following high level options do you think is appropriate for Northern Ireland to take forward?

**Option 1:** Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill setting interim emission reduction targets and a long term target of net zero emissions in Northern Ireland by 2050 (long term target does not consider expert climate change advice).

**Option 2:** Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill setting interim emission reduction targets and a long term target for Northern Ireland by 2050, the long term target is an equitable contribution to achieving UK-wide Net Zero by 2050 (long term target considers expert climate change advice).

- Question 2:** Do you have any opinions on what would be the most important criteria to be considered when setting or updating long term and interim emission reduction targets?
- Question 3.** Do you think flexibility should be built into the Bill, to allow consideration of new emerging evidence and science on climate change (for example on long lived and short lived pollutants) when setting emission reduction targets?
- Question 4.** Do you agree that a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill should include a duty for 5 yearly carbon budgets to set a statutory cap (interim emission reduction targets) on total greenhouse gases that can be emitted in Northern Ireland?
- Question 5.** Should provision for reporting on adaptation measures by ‘major player’ public bodies be included in a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill?
- Question 6.** Should provision for reporting on mitigation measures by ‘major player’ public bodies be included in a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill?
- Question 7.** In addition to continuing to avail of the expertise of the UK Climate Change Committee, should we also include provision in the Bill, for an independent Northern Ireland advisory body on climate change?
- Question 8.** Do you have any other comments in respect of the issues raised in this Discussion Document?
- Question 9.** Are there any important issues you feel have not been adequately covered at this early discussion stage?

## 4. Consultation Responses – Amount and Format

In total, the consultation received 285 discrete responses via Citizen Space, and direct email submissions to DAERA’s mailbox.

As with any Northern Ireland Civil Service public consultation, responses were received from a self-selecting range of respondents. This inevitably introduces the potential for selection bias. Therefore, there can be no assumption that the stakeholders who

responded to the consultation were, or were not, fully representative of the wider population.

The following is a breakdown summary of the profile of the 285 discrete responses to the consultation which were received by DAERA. Of the 285 discrete responses:

- 251 were received via citizen space containing quantitative and qualitative data;
- 34 were received via emails to the DAERA mailbox. Of these:
  - 17 represented individual responses containing quantitative and qualitative information/data;
  - 1 represented a ‘campaign response’ consisting of 430 almost identical emails;
  - 14 represented individual responses containing no quantitative data; and
  - 2 responses were forwarded in error (by two separate respondents) to an alternative generic DAERA mailbox which was not the designated nor advertised/publically promoted email address for the Department’s receipt of the consultation responses. The consultation’s designated email address was identified within the consultation’s discussion document, on the webpage, and publically promoted via the Department’s social media platforms. The two consultation responses which were sent to the wrong Departmental email address in error, were brought to the attention of the relevant Departmental consultation teams a week after the consultation itself closed to responses (8th February 2021). Due to the delay in receiving these responses and due to time constraints in delivering a Climate Change Bill within the current mandate, it was not possible for these two responses to be included in NISRA’s Stage 1 analysis, however they were included in the Stage 2 analysis instead.

The following is a description of the campaign responses received, and the process of handling of those responses during analysis of all of the consultation responses:

Government consultations often become the target of a ‘campaign approach’, where multiple identical or near-identical responses are received from members of the public who are approached and asked to submit a pre-prepared standard response. As this tactic has at times been used to skew the results of a consultation by a party seeking to influence a certain outcome, so the method of collating such responses into one ‘campaign response’ has become standard practice, applied in order to prevent statistical bias in the data.

DAERA received 430 almost identical email submissions from members of the public, in the form of a pre-prepared standard response to the consultation, from an organisation. The Department was not aware and could/did not identify which organisation provided the pre-prepared standard response template at the time of analysis of the consultation responses. These responses were handled as a 'campaign' so that the standard response was read and included as an organisation view, so to limit statistical bias. However, during the consultation analysis, all 430 campaign responses were read individually (as with all of the consultation's responses), and any information which was not identical such as 'personal views and comments' (i.e. not part of the pre-prepared standard response) were recorded, mapped and noted during the response analysis process.

## 5. Methodology

Respondents had an opportunity to include their perspectives and viewpoints in response to each of the nine questions within the consultation (to view the questions see 'Section 2 - Consultation Questions Posed' in this report).

The following is a breakdown of the methodology used in Stage 1 and Stage 2 analysis of the consultation responses.

### Stage 1 - Quantitative Responses:

The quantitative responses were based on the data collected from the tick-box options, i.e. 'yes', 'no' or 'not sure / no opinion' options, and a percentage analysis approach and application was applied to assess the preferred or dominant views within these responses.

### Stage 2 - Qualitative Responses:

The qualitative data within the responses to the consultation (responses to open-ended questions) were analysed using a 'thematic analysis' method. This method examines the data, to identify common themes i.e. topics, ideas and patterns of meaning which occur repeatedly across the collection of responses.

For each question, the qualitative responses were coded and a coding framework was developed, based on a review of the discussion questions and sample of responses was



developed. This qualitative data was further coded manually according to specific ‘themes’, with each theme aimed at providing a sense of the content across the wide range of consultation responses.

It should be noted that the qualitative analysis of the open-ended questions did not permit the quantification of results in this second-stage context. The weight of a particular view identified is signified by a factor based on the dominance of that theme across respondents; dominant, prominent and common themes are mentioned by multiple participants while some/a few are minor themes mentioned infrequently but by more than one respondent, i.e. not common.

Quotes have been included in the below sections under each theme title for illustrative examples of key themes/views – any identifying information has been removed to ensure anonymity of the relevant respondents.

## 6. Statistics - High level

Below is a summary of the high level key quantitative statistical analysis findings of NISRA’s analysis of the consultation responses to what a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland should look like:

- **40%** of respondents selected **Option 1** of the consultation (a Climate Change Bill - with targets for achieving Net Zero within Northern Ireland by 2050) as the most appropriate option for Northern Ireland to take forward.
- **48%** of respondents selected **Option 2** of the consultation (a Climate Change Bill with targets for Northern Ireland to contribute fairly to UK Net Zero by 2050) as the most appropriate option for Northern Ireland to take forward.
- **82%** of respondents had opinions on what would be the most important criteria to be considered when setting, or updating, long term and interim emissions reduction targets.

- **82%** of respondents think flexibility should be built into the Climate Change Bill, to allow consideration of new emerging evidence and science on climate change.
- **89%** of respondents agreed the Bill should include a duty to set limits in five yearly carbon budgets (five yearly caps on the level of GHG emissions which can be emitted by Northern Ireland).
- **87%** of respondents agreed provision for requiring public bodies to report on climate change adaptation measures should be included in the Bill.
- **86%** of respondents agreed provision for requiring public bodies to report on climate change mitigation measures should be included in the Bill.
- **77%** of respondents agreed provision for an independent Northern Ireland advisory body on climate change should be included in the Climate Change Bill.

## 7. Findings

This section highlights the more in-depth findings from the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the responses from each of the questions in the consultation.

### 7.1 Options for Development of a Climate Change Bill

**Question 1:** Which of the following high level options do you think is appropriate for Northern Ireland to take forward?

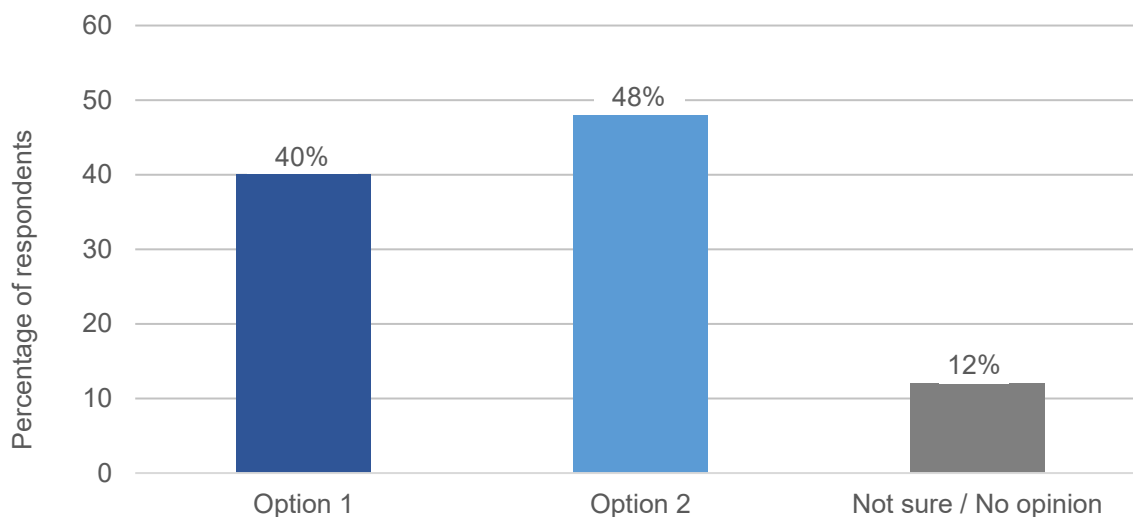
**Option 1:** Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill setting interim emission reduction targets and a long term target of net zero emissions in Northern Ireland by 2050 (long term target does not consider expert climate change advice).

**Or**

**Option 2:** Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill setting interim emission reduction targets and a long term target for Northern Ireland by 2050, the long term target is an equitable contribution to achieving UK-wide Net Zero by 2050 (long term target considers expert climate change advice).

The graph in Figure 1 represents the percentage of respondents to the consultation that had a preference for 'Option 1', 'Option 2' or who were 'Not sure or had no opinion'.

**Figure 1 – Percentage of respondents choosing Option 1, Option 2 or No opinion**



In response to providing reasons for their preferences, a number of themes emerged across respondents for each option (Option 1 and Option 2) set out in the consultation and these themes are discussed below in sections 7.1.1 and 7.1.2.

### **7.1.1 Option 1 for a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill**

Figure 2 highlights the main themes that emerged when respondents provided reasons for selecting a preference for Option 1. In this section, themes identified across the data relating to Option 1, within the responses to the consultation are discussed further, along with one or two quotes from respondents under each theme by way of example.

**Figure 2: Key Themes in response to selecting a preference for Option 1**



**Stretching, ambitious targets** - A dominant theme was the need for ambition to tackle climate change. Some of the consultation respondents felt more ambitious GHG emissions reduction targets would deliver the best results, regardless of whether the targets are considered achievable or not.

Some respondents provided their opinions that such ambition would potentially help galvanise the necessary action, incentives and investments required to drive transformational change to tackle climate change.

To quote one example:

*“We are better to set our sights higher even if we don’t achieve them, it’s better than trying to drop the bar from the outset because we think it’s unachievable. Anything less fails to provide the right message and motivation to tackle the climate crisis.”*

**Local ownership** - Another dominant theme was the idea of a Climate Change Bill rooted in local ownership in setting GHG emissions reduction targets for Northern Ireland to

deliver. Some of the consultation respondents were concerned that Northern Ireland was 'further behind' than other UK regions and ownership by Northern Ireland was needed in order to 'catch up'.

To quote one example:

*“Northern Ireland needs an aggressive strategy for playing our unique part in the global battle against climate change. This requires Northern Ireland to consider, in the context of NI, what it can do irrespective of what other countries or regions can do.”*

**Creating a sense of urgency** - A prominent theme from analysis of responses was the sense of urgency that Option 1 appeared to create in relation to climate change and the immediate attention and action that tackling climate change required.

To quote one example:

*“A lack of urgency and a deep rooted complacency about the climate issue has pervaded all aspects of economic and infrastructure planning in Northern Ireland for the last decade, if not longer, and equivocation is no longer a valid position. Every person in the jurisdiction is going to be affected, disturbed and inconvenienced by the changes which are needed to even aspire to net zero emissions by 2050 - and that is how it should be.”*

**Driving innovation** - A common theme across responses to the consultation was the view that Option 1 would drive and help deliver sustainable economic growth for Northern Ireland, through the need to innovate to achieve a stretching GHG emissions reduction target as outlined in Option 1.

To quote one example:

*“Implementing international expert recommendations urgently provides an opportunity for Northern Ireland to become a world leader in climate action and incentivises innovation, which strengthens Northern Ireland's economic position both short and long term.”*

**Taking responsibility** - A common theme for the preference of Option 1 was the need for taking responsibility to tackle climate change.

To quote one example:

*“We should take responsibility for our own emissions in Northern Ireland. Just because we have a lot of agriculture, should not mean that that industry shouldn't*

*have to take full responsibility for its emissions. There is no doubt it will be difficult, but that's no reason to give the responsibility to other regions. Every region should be aiming for net zero in 2050.”*

Other themes included the opportunity for Northern Ireland to show leadership in tackling climate change. Due to its size, some respondents to the consultation felt that Northern Ireland was more able than other regions in the UK to respond in a flexible, agile and ambitious way to tackling climate change.

**Paris Climate Agreement** - Another common theme across respondents was the need to listen to climate change expertise in setting GHG emissions reduction targets. Some respondents felt that Option 1 did not consider expert climate change advice, and this was considered by them as misleading. These respondents referenced the Paris Climate Agreement and the UK Climate Change Committee's (CCC<sup>1</sup>) statement that *'there is no purely technical reason why net-zero is not possible in Northern Ireland'*.

To quote one example

*“Consideration should be given to net zero by 2045 if at all possible as scientists now advise that Net Zero by 2050 is not enough to avoid a climate crisis through global warming.”*

It should be noted however, that these respondents to the consultation did not elaborate further in their response to the consultation that the same CCC's advice from which their quoted CCC's statement came from, also clearly incorporated a CCC statement which stated that *“a net zero target for Northern Ireland cannot be credibly set at this time”*.

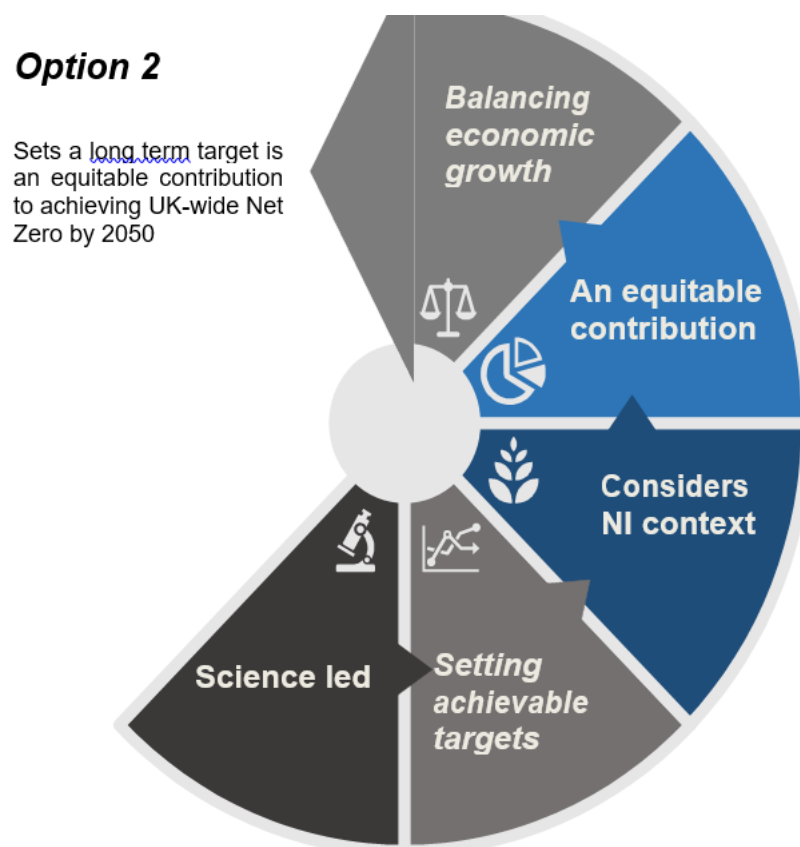
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<sup>1</sup> The UK Climate Change Committee ('CCC') is an independent expert advisory body established under the UK Climate Act 2008 who advises the UK government and UK Devolved Administrations on climate change.

## 7.1.2 Option 2 for Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill

Figure 3 highlights the main themes that emerged when respondents provided reasons for selecting a preference for Option 2. In this section, themes identified across the data relating to Option 2 within the responses to the consultation are discussed further, along with a sample of quotes from respondents under each theme by way of example

**Figure 3: Key Themes in response to selecting a preference for Option 2**



**Science led** - A dominant theme in support of Option 2 was the need for legislation to follow the science, and for the setting of GHG emissions to be informed by the experts. Some respondents to the consultation felt it is critical that GHG emission reduction targets considered expert climate change advice in order to respond to the particular challenges and opportunities for Northern Ireland in relation to tackling climate change.

To quote two examples:

*“Climate change is a huge science in its own right, how can progressive useful decisions not be evidence based? It should be expert led to ensure the changes are fair to those making financial sacrifices to ensure that a difference can actually be*

*made to the current climate crisis.”*

*“This Climate Change Bill and how it is delivered is quite possible the most important piece of legislation in our lifetime. Matters of this magnitude must consider expert climate change advice.”*

**Setting achievable targets** - A prominent theme in support of Option 2 was the need for achievable, realistic targets with some respondents noting *“there is little to be gained from selecting an option that cannot be achieved”*.

To quote two examples:

*“There is little to no possibility of Northern Ireland meeting net zero by 2050. It is reasonable to adopt an approach whereby we make a fair contribution based on expert assessments and taking into account our differing economic model and physical infrastructure arrangements.”*

*“The target needs to be achievable and there's scepticism that Northern Ireland could reach zero emissions due to the nature of farming in Northern Ireland.”*

**Considers Northern Ireland context** - A common theme in support of Option 2 was that it considered the Northern Ireland context, reflecting unique local characteristics such as an ‘over reliance on agriculture’ and ‘less choice on energy options’ rather than adopting a ‘one size fits all approach’.

To quote two examples:

*“Northern Ireland has an unusual spread of GHG emissions, some of which relate to its relatively large agriculture sector. As the UK has offered to compensate for these excess emissions by reductions in other parts of the UK, it would be sensible for Northern Ireland to adopt this option.”*

*“Option 2 considers Northern Ireland's baseline conditions that make its planned greenhouse gas reductions possibly more challenging to deliver than in other parts of the UK.”*

**An equitable contribution** – One of the other themes that emerged in support of Option 2 was the equitable approach, in that it favoured the benefit of Northern Ireland. Some respondents felt Northern Ireland should contribute in a proportionate manner, as advised by the CCC, and that this approach provides consideration to the nature and make-up of



the industrial sectors contributing to the Northern Ireland economy as well as infrastructure development.

To quote one example:

*“Option 2 sounds more able to consider Northern Ireland’s baseline conditions that make its planned greenhouse gas reductions possibly more challenging to deliver than in other parts of the UK. This should help achieve a more balanced approach for the contributing sectors of greenhouse gas emissions specific to Northern Ireland.”*

**Balancing economic growth** - Likewise, some respondents to the consultation felt that there needed to be a focus on green economic recovery and Option 2 was in a better position to achieve this. These responses expressed the view that the primary objective of the Climate Change Bill must be to confront the accelerating climate crisis, while achieving balance with economic growth, for example in the case of electricity, delivering a low-carbon, cost-effective power system.

To quote one example:

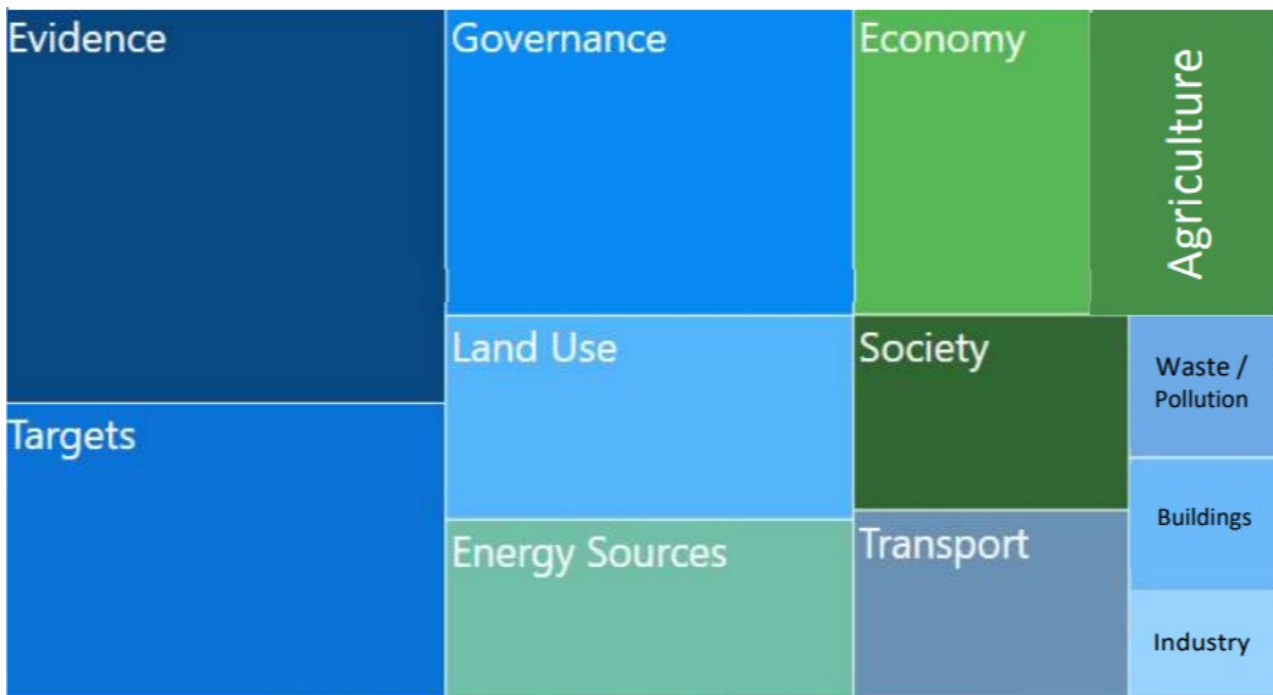
*“A holistic Bill which enables Northern Ireland’s Green Economic recovery in the short-term; while facilitating long term prosperity, employment and investment opportunities, health benefits and environmental protection is required. It should have a broad, yet measurable impact across key sectors of society and across all government functions.”*

## 7.2 Opinions on the Most Important Criteria to be considered

**Question 2:** Do you have any opinions on what would be the most important criteria to be considered when setting, or updating, long term and interim emission reduction targets?

**82%** of respondents had opinions on what would be the most important criteria to be considered when setting, or updating, long term and interim GHG emissions reduction targets.

Figure 4 illustrates the key themes that emerged from a wide range of opinions that were expressed by respondents to the consultation, in response to a question on what would be the most important criteria to be considered when setting, or updating, long term and interim GHG emissions reduction targets. These themes are set out in more detail below.

**Figure 4 - Key Themes in response to the most important criteria to be considered**

The importance of transitioning to a low carbon economy/society, and fundamentals within how that should/could be achieved was not a consultation response theme itself, however it is fair to interpret that it was reflected to a certain degree as an element within a number of the actual themes themselves, for example there was some reference to:

- The desire to transition to more sustainable, renewable energy sources and becoming more energy efficient across different sectors, in our homes, our buildings and our transport;
- How we can use our land to reduce carbon emissions; and
- Support with transitioning as well as elements of affordability and acknowledging the economic and societal opportunities, benefits and potential impacts across all of society.

**Evidence** - This was a dominant theme emerging across respondents to the consultation. Respondents to the consultation acknowledged the importance of evidence and its value in monitoring and supporting the progress towards achieving GHG emissions reduction targets. They raised a number of issues relating to the evidence base; other expert climate change bodies; monitoring; and more detailed climate change specific evidence considerations.

To quote two examples:

*“It is imperative that Northern Ireland’s carbon and GHG emissions targets are credible and evidence based.”*

*“The most important criteria when setting or updating interim and long-term targets is scientific advice on climate change. All targets should be developed or updated in line with the most up to date scientific advice.”*

Some respondents to the consultation felt that consideration should be given to other bodies of evidence such as commitments within the ‘Paris Agreement’ accord and the ‘CCC’.

To quote two examples:

*“The targets should be based on Climate Change Committee advice with aspirational interim targets that are regularly reviewed, modelled on the approach taken by Scotland.”*

*“Global climate change statistics and goals set by the UK CCC should be taken into consideration.”*

On the role of evidence in an operational climate change regime, some respondents to the consultation commented on the role of monitoring and how it can contribute towards the supporting evidence.

To quote one example:

*“There are many gases either used within sectors or released from sectoral processes that have a much higher warming potential than carbon. These gases may not always be monitored or focused upon but it is important to somehow capture these in monitoring programmes due to their potential warming capabilities.”*

**Targets** – ‘GHG emission reduction targets’ was a dominant theme across respondents, with issues raised relating to the description of the target, setting targets for other bodies and some suggestions for specific targets to be considered.

To quote two examples:

*“More ambitious targets, we need detailed breakdowns of the areas (e.g. agriculture) which create the highest carbon emissions so that we can form an appropriate, targeted response to tackle them.”*

*“Targets are equitable across society so that no particular social group is more negatively impacted by the targets than another.”*

The alignment of targets with other commitments/targets was also highlighted by some respondents.

To quote one example:

*“Ensure that they (emission reduction targets) align to UK targets that there is close collaboration throughout the UK nations. There must also be collaboration with the EU and Ireland.”*

**Governance** - Governance was a dominant theme, with some respondents to the consultation commenting on a wide range of sub-issues, relating mainly to support and the roles to assist with the delivery of reducing emissions.

To quote some examples:

*“Interim targets should again demonstrate strong moral leadership and ambition and be underpinned by clear action roadmaps across a range of sectors (‘sector specific plans’).”*

*“Sustained government funding support for renewables, including wave power as well as solar and wind, rollout of electric vehicles and better public transport, home insulation, carbon reduced construction, tree and hedgerow preservation, tree planting and bog/wetland preservation etc. so organisations in those fields can plan effectively and grow a green economy.”*

*“Carrot and stick. There needs to be real incentives for activities that reduce climate changing emissions and real punishments for those that exacerbate them.”*

**Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry** - This was a prominent theme, with respondents to the consultation commenting on a number of ways land can be used to assist with lowering GHG emissions such as planting more trees and the preserving and restoring of peatland.

To quote one example:

*“Carbon sequestering improvements by tree planting and peatland restoration.”*

Some respondents also made reference to the impacts and loss of biodiversity.

To quote one example:

*“Important to recognise the biodiversity emergency as well as the climate emergency. Must not trample over biodiversity in order to address climate change. For example windfarms sites can damage much high value land for biodiversity.”*

**Energy sources** - Energy sources emerged as a prominent theme across some respondents to the consultation, with a number of areas highlighted by respondents relating mainly to transition and sustainable, renewable energy.

To quote one example:

*“Prioritise renewables for our electricity supply – wind and solar and geothermal – for homes and for industry. Make it economically attractive to phase out coal and gas. Bring in hydrogen use.”*

**Economy and society** - Both economy and society emerged as prominent themes across some respondents. Some respondents commented on a number of potential opportunities, benefits and impacts of the actions relating to climate change. Some respondents referred to sustainable job opportunities and growing the green economy as well as actions and an awareness that should benefit the community as a whole.

To quote some examples:

*“The scope for targets to include green jobs and positive sectoral changes in Northern Ireland’s economy is one of the most important criteria. Jobs and economic growth are important factors in bringing the Northern Ireland population with the government on the transition to a cleaner, green, thriving economy in Northern Ireland.”*

*“Targeting transport to reduce reliance on fossil fuels especially through better public transport in cities and especially in rural areas. This has the added benefit of creating a more integrated society.”*

*“Sustainability: the critical environmental targets must also consider the economic impacts of these measures.”*

**Agriculture** - Agriculture was a prominent theme, with comments relating to sustainable or alternative practices and actions for reducing agricultural GHG emissions.

To quote some examples:

*“Drastic reduction of agricultural emissions given their massive impact in Northern Ireland.”*

*“Work in partnership with the local farming community to encourage and assist this sector to be able to carry out more sustainable methods of farming.”*

*“Agricultural practices and types need to be a main priority. This is the biggest emitter in Northern Ireland. There should be a reduction in cattle rearing and any agriculture practices should ensure they don’t harm biodiversity further e.g. trees, flowers, bushes should be left alone.”*

**Transport** - This too was a prominent theme with some respondents commenting on the need for improved infrastructure for public transport and cycling, as well as more eco-friendly vehicles to help reduce GHG emissions.

To quote two examples:

*“A total overhaul is required for transport infrastructure in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland is reliant on car transportation due to a chronic underinvestment and lack of development of public transport and cycling.”*

*“Phase out petrol and diesel cars. New cars should be electric or hydrogen. We need more charging points for charging cars.”*

**Waste/pollution, buildings and industry** - Waste/pollution, buildings and industry all emerged as common themes in the responses to the consultation. Some consultation respondents commented on the need for less pollution.

To quote two examples:

*“Clean air, less pollution and healthy cities.”*

*“As with the Scottish Climate Change Act, it is imperative that a Northern Ireland Act establishes a duty on Ministers when setting targets and interim targets to have regard to the likely environmental impact, particularly on biodiversity.”*

Some respondents to the consultation also commented on transitioning to more energy efficient buildings and working towards less industrial emissions.

To quote two examples:

*“High insulation standards for new homes and retrofitting of old buildings for energy efficiency. Consider the complete replacement of older non-heritage public buildings (such as hospitals and schools) with optimal efficiency standards.”*

*“Engagement with industries and sectors is critical to bring society along to ensure the target is met. This must be done swiftly and remain in place for the duration of the target and thereafter to ensure compliance and assistance is given for those to adapt.”*

### 7.3 Flexibility - Evidence, Science and Understanding

**Question 3:** Do you think flexibility should be built into the Bill, to allow consideration of new emerging evidence and science on climate change (for example on long-lived and short-lived greenhouse gases) when setting emission reduction targets?

**82% of respondents think flexibility should be built into the Climate Change Bill, to allow consideration of new emerging evidence and science on climate change.**

Figure 5 illustrates the themes that emerged from the views of respondents to the consultation with ‘Evidence’ and ‘Evolving Science’ and ‘Technology’ emerging as dominant themes. These themes are set out in more detail below.

**Figure 5 - Key themes in response to Flexibility being built into the bill – Evidence, Science & Understanding**



Whilst built-in flexibility into the Climate Change Bill elements can allow for new evidence through evolving science and technology to be considered, whilst in favour of this flexibility, some respondents to the consultation also expressed concerns that there may be a number of potential risks/issues posed by such flexibility.

To quote one example:

*“Flexibility to improve, not excuse the target as technology and initiatives improve.”*

**Evidence** - This emerged as a dominant theme across respondents with an emphasis on evidence based targets, policy, actions and decisions as well as the need to reflect the most up-to-date evidence. Some of the consultation respondents felt that the evidence should be reliable and trustworthy.

To quote two examples:

*“The importance of basing decisions on the most accurate, up-to-date scientific evidence is vital.”*

*“Information technology is advancing at such an advance speed, we should interpret the data and utilise as widely as possible until 2050.”*

Whilst being guided by the science, some of the consultation respondents felt that other sources of evidence should be considered.

To quote two examples:

*“There should also be flexibility to benefit from learning of good practice and successful climate change intervention measures adopted by other countries.”*

*“Flexibility is essential because significant gaps exist in the body of environmental knowledge and science is continually adding to this body of knowledge.”*

**Evolving science and technology** - Evolving science and technology emerged as a dominant theme, with respondents acknowledging the need to use evolving science and technology to advance and make the best impacts possible.

Some respondents to the consultation acknowledged that science is evolving, with advances/changes in technology and new evidence emerging.

To quote two examples:

*“Our knowledge of the science behind climate change is constantly evolving and must*



*be considered on a regular basis.”*

*“New technologies and practices are also being developed rapidly on a global scale which Northern Ireland should be in a position to adopt and where appropriate lead.”*

Some respondents also felt that the evidence is providing new and a greater understanding of climate change science.

To quote two examples:

*“New understandings on the impact of climate change are constantly developing based on emerging evidence and our understanding of inter-linked areas of climate change, environmental degradation and bio-diversity loss.”*

*“If science is improving all the time in affording greater understanding as to the damage being done to the environment and the steps that be taken to redress the imbalance, then we should be constantly reassessing the evidence to make best impacts possible.”*

**Flexibility risks/issues** - This emerged as a prominent theme across respondents. Whilst some respondents welcomed flexibility for adaptable emission reduction targets allowing for opportunities to improve and make an impact, they also identified a number of associated risks/issues, i.e. ensuring that there was no flexibility for not achieving, or rolling back on, the set GHG emission reduction targets.

To quote one example:

*“It would be ludicrous to ignore scientific updates, however, this flexibility should not be abused, it must only be implemented to improve our targets, not excuse them.”*

Some respondents to the consultation felt flexibility should not be an opportunity to reduce or weaken targets.

To quote two examples:

*“Flexibility should only be used to increase the targets, never to decrease them.”*

*“We would caution that our interpretation of the need for flexibility should not equate to lowering commitments or renegeing on carbon reduction targets.”*

Some respondents also commented that there should be no backtracking. They felt it was important that flexibility built within a Climate Change Bill should not be seen as an opportunity to renege on responsibility.

To quote some examples:

*“This Bill should include safeguards to prevent backsliding, so as to avoid a situation where residual emissions are put off into the next carbon budget, potentially causing a cascade of missed targets.”*

*“Politicians in Northern Ireland have historically used flexibility as an excuse to shirk responsibility for a wide range of their responsibilities to Northern Ireland citizens.”*

*“The problem with building in flexibility tends to be that it is used to obfuscate, or take a longer, later view and delay the transmission. So flexibility, but only to speed things up, not delay the goal of 2050.”*

A small number of respondents to the consultation did not think that flexibility, to allow for consideration of new emerging evidence and science on climate change, should be built into the Climate Change Bill. They expressed their belief that this could result in opportunities for not meeting, reducing or weakening GHG emission reduction targets. A few of these comments from some respondents suggested that they believed the current available climate change science and evidence should be sufficient going forward into the future.

**Targets** - Targets emerged as a prominent theme across respondents. Several respondents to the consultation had the view that flexibility would allow for the targets to be adaptable, providing opportunities for improvement based on the best scientific evidence available.

To quote two examples:

*“To allow us to adapt our targets with the science so they have the biggest impact possible.”*

*“Only in cases where it strengthens and not weakens emission reduction targets – they should be ambitious’.”*

**Governance** - Governance emerged as a prominent theme across a lot of respondents to the consultation. Some respondents reflected and communicated that there was a need for responsiveness, to adapt and be reactive to emerging climate change and related evidence.

To quote some examples:

*“Evidence emerging all the time of interconnectivity of climate change cause and effect, government needs to be nimble and react to evidence.”*

*“Knowledge and understanding is developing all the time. The bill should be written with the ability to consider the evidence as it is determined and to react accordingly.”*

*“Technologies will change and new opportunities will emerge as well as the constantly improving science – we will need to be adaptable.”*

Some respondents to the consultation commented on the need for target/policy reviews to ensure progression in reaching the set targets.

To quote one example:

*“A set review point of 5 years in and if targets are not on track at this point mitigations to be proposed and agreed to get targets back on track.”*

**Emissions/carbon** - This was a common theme across respondents, with some respondents making a number of other comments relating to GHG emissions/carbon. In particular, with their reference to methane and agricultural emissions.

To quote two examples:

*“The planet is warming way too fast now. That means that all the existing levels of GHGs in the atmosphere need to be reduced. This clearly, and unavoidable means that current methane levels in the atmosphere need to be reduced.”*

*“Emissions from livestock may be changed by the introduction of chemical and technological innovations.”*

## 7.4 Carbon Budgets

**Question 4:** Do you agree that a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill should include a duty to set limits in 5 yearly carbon budgets to set a statutory cap (interim emission reduction targets) on total greenhouse gases that can be emitted in Northern Ireland?

**89%** of respondents agreed a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland should include a duty to set GHG emission limits in five yearly carbon budgets.

Figure 6 illustrates the themes that were identified from the comments of the respondents

to the consultation in response to providing reasons for supporting a duty to set limits on GHG emissions in five yearly carbon budgets. These themes are set out in more detail below.

**Figure 6 - Key themes in response to including a duty in the Bill to set limits for carbon budgets**



**Monitoring & evaluation** – Some respondents felt that setting interim GHG emission reduction targets and applying five yearly carbon budgets should be the backbone of a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill. A dominant theme for including this duty within the consultation responses was the need for monitoring and for regular reporting, to evaluate progress against the target and budgets, allowing the Northern Ireland government to continuously evaluate mitigation measures and the impact of policy decisions. Some respondents felt carbon budgets including targets, milestones and sectoral performance are crucial to deliver understanding, not just across policy makers but among the entire population.

To quote one example:

*“Reducing Northern Ireland's GHG emissions is going to be difficult. Making the changes required is going to be painful for everyone. So we will need help in all possible ways including regular reporting and revision of the targets taking into account progress, or lack thereof.”*

**Accountability** - A dominant theme in support of setting the duty to achieve the limits set in Carbon Budgets, was the need for accountability. Some respondents to the consultation felt detailed interim targets for net GHG emission reductions were vital for building accountability across government. They felt that the requirement to legislate five yearly carbon budgets, with strict ministerial and governmental reporting and responsibility for meeting them, is essential to the success of a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland.

To quote two examples:

*“Politicians in Northern Ireland have shown themselves, repeatedly, to be willing to miss environmental and other social targets because they felt they were too hard to sell to their particular communities or electoral pressure groups.”*

*“Mandated 5 year budgets prevent Northern Ireland politicians and governments from back end loading GHG emissions reductions i.e. pushing them out beyond current electoral cycles where they will be tomorrow’s politicians’ problems.”*

**Planning** - A prominent theme was the need for five yearly carbon budgets for planning purposes to allow industry and government to budget and plan for changes required as well as developing long term financial and sustainability strategies and ‘*to make sure that long-term targets are kept on track*’.

**Catalyst for change** - A common respondent theme in support of the duty was the catalyst for change it would create by helping focus on emission reduction targets and driving momentum for action.

To quote one example:

*“A clear carbon budget is important in order to implement the legislation and create an incentive and driver for action, as well as provide clarity for stakeholders.”*

**Urgency** - A common theme for the duty was the opinion it would create a sense of urgency for action to tackle climate change, making the task more real and tangible. Some respondents to the consultation felt carbon budgeting is an essential component of any Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland.

To quote one example:

*“To date Northern Ireland has considered a decadal approach to emission reduction*

*targets. This approach to date has fundamentally undermined the urgency of emission reductions in Northern Ireland.”*

**Enforcement** - A common theme in support of the duty was that it would allow for enforcement of a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland and provide a basis for sanctioning those who do not meet the targets.

To quote one example:

*“A Northern Ireland Climate Change Act should place a duty on all government departments to develop five-yearly sector-specific Climate Action Plans and targets. These must be robust and ambitious and clearly identify the roles of both local and national government. They need to include 5 yearly reports and sanctions for failure to achieve targets.”*

**Other Themes** – In other themes that emerged, concerns were voiced over the duty to set a statutory cap within carbon budgets (on the total net GHGs that can be emitted in Northern Ireland), that this could cause negative effects, or even drive unintended effects. One example provided was the perceived potential for increased risk in fly tipping occurrences, as a result of a landfill tax.

Some respondents to the consultation noted a concern at the economic impact of a carbon duty such as reduced food production in Northern Ireland and increased imports from countries whose agricultural systems have a higher carbon footprint than Northern Ireland’s agricultural sector.

## 7.5 Reporting by Public Bodies - Powers and Duties

**Question 5 & 6** Should provision for reporting on adaptation/mitigation measures by ‘major player’ public bodies, be included in a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill?

**87%** of respondents agreed provision for reporting on climate change **adaptation** measures by public bodies should be included in a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland.

**86%** of respondents agreed provision for reporting on climate change **mitigation** measures by public bodies should be included in a Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland.

**An integral component to the Bill** - Many respondents expressed the view that reporting was an integral part of the Bill, in order to ensure transparency and credibility to the process, which would in turn help retain commitment of stakeholders. They felt, that without gathering data on what their activities are, and how each one contributes to global warming, those public bodies would not be able to assess the most cost effective measures available to them, to address climate change.

To quote two examples:

*“It’s important that a user friendly and accountable reporting framework be created to track progress, monitor feedback on successes and build future resilience.”*

*“If it does not get measured, it will not get done. This is a basic management maxim.”*

A wide range of ‘major player’ public bodies were identified for reporting purposes by the consultation respondents.

## Organisations who should report



**Government Departments** was a prominent suggestion across respondents due to their influence and ability to encourage, change and set an example to the rest of society, particularly through procurement of products and services.



Some participants singled out DAERA and Department of Infrastructure (DfI) as the key government departments for reporting as it was suggested by the respondents that these were the ‘main GHG producers’ in government and due to their departmental policy responsibilities for agriculture and transport sectors.

Respondents felt, that it was the role of public bodies and in particular government departments to lead by example in terms of reducing emission and tackling climate change.

To quote an example:

*“Leaders should lead by example. Government should have solar panels on its building before telling business to have solar panels on their building. That will encourage more than anything and lead to steady growth toward lower emission ways of working.”*



**Utility providers** including Translink, Northern Ireland Water and ‘the Housing Association’ were common suggestions due to the respondents view of the size and nature of these organisations’ activities and the reach of their activities throughout Northern Ireland.



Some respondents wanted any authorities linked to people's health and safety, as well as quality of life to be included in the provision for reporting. This includes essential services such as **NHS & Health Trusts** as well as the **Police**.



Some respondents acknowledged that most of Northern Ireland's 11 Local Government **Councils** already report on their carbon performance. They expressed the view that as key players in delivering sustainable development, should be at forefront of tackling the climate crisis through reporting.



Some respondents wanted any organisation in receipt of public money to be included in reporting, to ensure climate-accountable expenditure of public money across the Public Sector.

To quote an example:

*“Requesting all public bodies to report on the actions that they are taking to mitigate and adapt to climate change would improve the quality and consistency of climate change information.”*



Some respondents felt that the provision for reporting should not be limited to public bodies. Rather provision should be included for all organisations including **private sector** organisations and businesses to report on climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to get a comprehensive understanding on the range of adaptation and mitigation measures being implemented across Northern Ireland. An alternative view put forward was the provision for voluntary adaptation and mitigation reporting for civil society.





A small number of respondents felt that there should be **no reporting**, on the basis that whilst it provides useful information and assurance that appropriate climate change adaptation measures are in place, such administrative duties involve the risk of drawing resources away, under legal mandate, from the core objective of activities to reduce carbon.



Some respondents felt reporting duties should be **proportionate to size and capacity** of the organisations involved. The rationale expressed for this were that the costs of auditing across a wide spectrum of activities will probably be met by savings in terms of energy expenditure but would require well trained technical staff who can set, monitor and control energy usage and emissions.

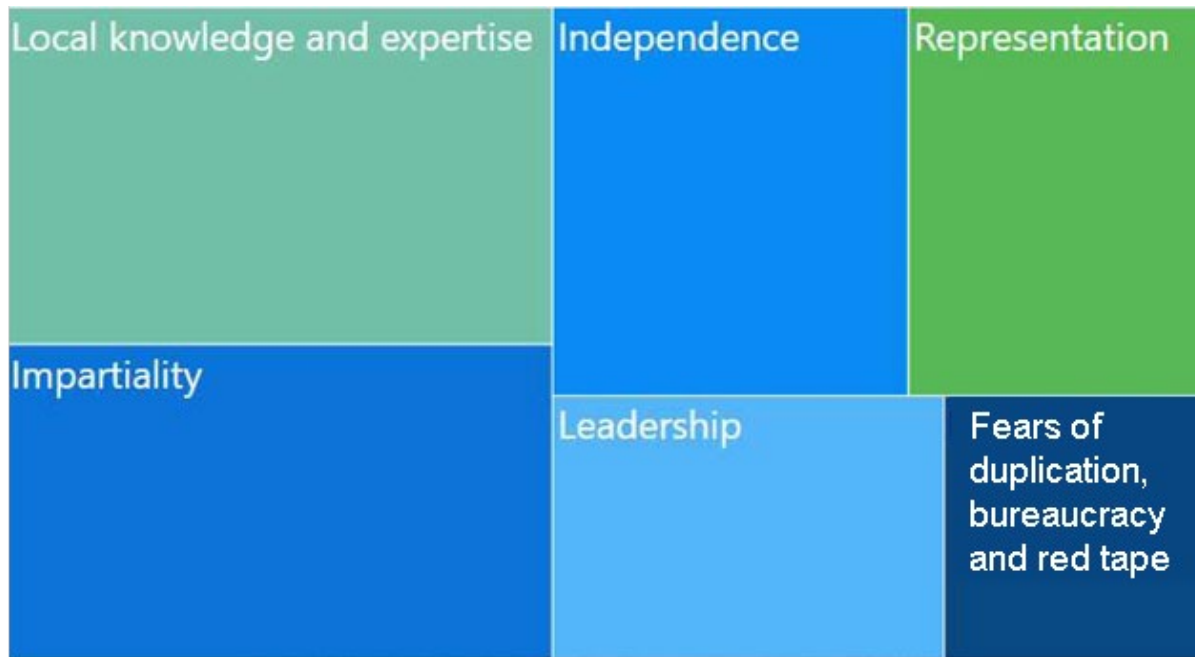
## 7.6 Independent Advisory Body

**Questions 7:** In addition to continuing to avail of the expertise of the UK Climate Change Committee, should we also include provision in the Bill, for an independent Northern Ireland advisory body on climate change?

*77% of respondents supported the provision for an independent Northern Ireland advisory body on climate change to be included in a Climate Change Bill.*

Figure 7 illustrates the key themes that emerged in support of including a provision for an independent Northern Ireland advisory body on climate change. These themes are set out in more detail below.

**Figure 7 - Key themes in response to including a provision for an independent Northern Ireland advisory body on climate change**



**Local knowledge and expertise** - A prominent theme from respondents was the benefit, for effective climate change legislation, of having knowledge which considers the local environment in Northern Ireland. Respondents noted that a Northern Ireland body would have more intimate knowledge of local conditions and issues which would affect the whole island.

To quote two examples:

*“There is plenty of expertise here in Northern Ireland and we have a very different environmental scenario from England - small place, small scattered population, large agricultural sector, small industrial sector. Add in the complications of Brexit and it seems necessary to have our own say in any regulations.”*

*“We need experts on climate change to inform us to make the best, most scientifically sound solutions and changes.”*

**Impartiality** - A prominent theme was the view that an independent Northern Ireland advisory body would provide the benefit of impartiality from government, with the necessary focus and scrutiny outside politics to monitor, advise and challenge the Northern Ireland Government. Some respondents felt an independent, and independently

appointed and funded body would have the security of tenure, and life cycle separate from electoral cycles, needed to provide the hard advice to achieve the major changes required in Northern Ireland economy and communities.

To quote an example:

*“So many in our government have vested interests. We need an independent body that stands outside these.”*

**Representation** - A common theme was the need for representation across sectors and groups in Northern Ireland to tackle climate change. Some respondents noted that a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill will impact a wide range of sectors, and it will be important to have an **industry-wide or society-wide forum** where all sectors and groups can engage, to ensure an effective approach across all of society in tackling climate change. Some had the view that an independent body could be structured to provide representation and involve a wide range of stakeholders for ownership and buy-in to the Bill.

To quote two examples:

*“We need a committee that is not only made up of experts but others that represent society including young people”*

*“It would allow greater consideration of Northern Ireland's unique characteristics. An independent body could facilitate a cross border element and representative from ROI as environmentally we align more with ROI than the UK.”*

**Independence** - A common theme from respondents was the need for independence of such an advisory body. Some respondents supported the creation of a Northern Ireland Climate Office with a Northern Ireland Climate Commissioner, with the power to review the adequacy and effectiveness of any future Northern Ireland Climate Change Act and to prepare review and progress reports on the working of the Act for the Assembly.

Some respondents noted that many key sectors involved in climate change are partially or mostly under devolved powers in Northern Ireland, and those respondents were of the view that an independent advisory body in Northern Ireland would therefore be essential. Some of the respondents felt that a Northern Ireland independent advisory body would be able to work closely with the CCC and the Ireland Climate Change Advisory Council, to enable joined-up decision making and address border specific issues.

To quote an example:

*“It would set up the Northern Ireland Climate Change Act and complement the information provided by the CCC ensuring scenarios are developed using local data, knowledge and expertise that ensure we can meet a Net Zero target by 2045.”*

**Leadership** - A common theme was the need of leadership to tackle climate change and the role an independent Northern Ireland advisory body could play. Some respondents felt that the profile of such a body should be high with the power to obtain information for monitoring and reporting, to implement effective action.

To quote an example:

*“We need a point to coordinate input, to keep the public informed, to engage across the Public Service and Assembly Committees and to maintain liaison with UN process, British and Irish authorities, local councils and the public.”*

Some respondents felt that this body should be responsible for enforcement and be able to ‘name and shame’, thereby holding both companies and departments to account.

**Fears of duplication, bureaucracy and red tape** - Some respondents voiced concerns about setting up another body that may cause unnecessary duplication and costs. These respondents noted that the CCC already has significant and high quality expertise in the setting of targets for the UK at large and in other Devolved Administrations.

To quote an example:

*“Utilising the UK CCC is advantageous for Northern Ireland in providing significant credibility to our approach. A local advisory body will only create another layer of obstruction and excuse to do nothing.”*

## 7.7 Issues not covered

**Question 8 & 9:** Do you have any other comments in respect of the issues raised in this Discussion Document? Are there any important issues you feel have not been adequately covered at this early stage?

Respondents were asked if they had any other comments and/or whether they felt that there were issues that had not been adequately covered in the consultation's Discussion Document. Some responses provided direct feedback on the consultation itself, while some other comments discussed the absence of information relating to a number of issues including an Energy Strategy and roles of various institutions etc. Some respondents made other comments, with some of those relating to 'Waterways'.

Below is a list of issues raised:

### Consultation/Documentation



- difficult to locate
- format and questions off-putting

To quote a few examples:

*"I am concerned that the document as a whole has **not been circulated widely.**"*

*"You are sending this out in the **middle of a serious pandemic.**"*

*"Questions **too technical and difficult** for general public to understand."*

*"This is an incredibly **unfriendly document** to the ordinary lay person who wants their human right of clean air, water and soil."*

- no option to disagree with both approaches
- relative impacts from each of the four UK regions (Northern Ireland, Scotland, England & Wales), not discussed.

To quote a few examples:

*"Northern Ireland has the smallest population, 2 million but equals Wales in having the largest GHG emissions per person, 13tCO<sub>2</sub>e compared to a UK average of only 8."*

*“Actual ways/proposals for mitigation and adaptation – some examples of how it will work in day-to-day actions.”*

- lack of ambition
- no discussion on how the targets will be achieved

## Energy Strategy

To quote an example:



*“The Climate Change Bill should be more married up with the Energy Strategy – this plays a major part in helping achieving net zero and the consumer may be confused by the two separate remits.”*

## Roles and Responsibilities of various institutions



- Local Citizens Assembly
- Environmental Champions
- New Renewable Heating Bill
- Homeshare schemes

To quote two examples:

*“Central government should consider the amalgamation of climate change and energy into one department, similar to the creation of joint central government departments in England (Dept. of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and in Ireland (Dept. of Environment, Climate and Communications) four years ago. This would simplify the current complex energy decision making, encourage leadership and enhance accountability.”*

*“There needs to be a provision that climate change targets and reductions are included in all government and council delivery plans.”*

## Waterways

- water pollution / protection

- unsustainable fishing practices
- impact coastal communities

### Other

- environmental degradation
- biomass rehabilitation
- mining resources
- fuller explanation required for different gases/origins/lifespans
- test vehicle emissions properly through MOT
- greater focus on carbon capture methods
- links with health and well-being

## 8. Next Steps

The responses received during the public consultation stage have been considered, and the outcome of the analysis of the consultation responses have been used by DAERA to part-inform the policy for the Executive's Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland. The Executive-agreed Climate Change Bill has been developed by the DAERA and the Office of Legislative Council on the basis of this policy, and the Bill has been brought forward by DAERA Minister Edwin Poots MLA and introduced to the Assembly on 5th July 2021.

A short description of the Executive's Climate Change Bill for Northern Ireland is as follows:

The Bill sets a target which aligns with the preferred Option 2 of the consultation, by setting a target of **at least** 82% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland (compared to baseline) by 2050, along with 'interim' emissions reduction targets, set for the years of 2030 and 2040. These targets align with the advice and evidence from the statutory independent expert UK CCC, as providing an appropriate and fair contribution from Northern Ireland, to the balanced pathway for achieving UK net zero by 2050 (and to the UK's commitment to the Paris Agreement).

The Bill also sets (among other things) requirements for setting five yearly carbon budgets, and has built-in flexibility to amend these targets according to certain stated conditions, such as updates in science and understanding etc. It requires reporting from government departments, with enabling powers to bring forward future legislation which will be consulted on, and which when enacted, will require public bodies (non-departmental organisations providing public services) to report on climate change.

The emissions reduction targets set within the Bill are at a level which the CCC have advised is achievable and can be delivered through a just transition. When the Bill is enacted, all Northern Ireland Departments will have a duty to exercise their functions in a manner consistent with meeting the targets in the Bill, targets which can be made more ambitious in line with updated evidence and advice. Processes are already in place to ensure that key policies and future legislation to deliver on the Bill's objectives and targets are developed in line with just transition principles. It was therefore deemed not necessary, nor good practice in drafting legislation to list the just transition principles themselves, as the Bill by default, will require and deliver these principles anyway if objectives and the targets of the Bill are met.

An independent Advisory Body for Northern Ireland was considered, however, after careful analysis of existing sources of information and advice from other UK counterparts it was concluded that the overall costs of establishing a new independent body would be considerable. An independent Advisory Body for Northern Ireland was therefore considered not to be an effective use of the public purse, so it was not included in the Executive Climate Change Bill. This decisive approach was also informed by the fact that the CCC is an independent expert advisory body established under the UK Climate Act 2008 which advises the UK government and UK Devolved Administrations on climate change, and therefore already fulfils and continues to fulfil this advisory role to Northern Ireland on climate change matters and actions. In addition, the CCC are long established, vastly experienced, world leading and respected in providing advice and evidence in relation to the key aspects of climate change policy and legislation. The advice they provide to the four UK administrations considers national, regional and global factors, giving context to a wide ranging analysis of the UK situation as a whole, as well as having engagement with Republic of Ireland and consideration of their emissions' levels. The Bill sets a variety of Northern Ireland advisory functions for the CCC, including their independent reviews of progress on meeting Northern Ireland GHG emissions reduction targets, of carbon budgets and of the implementation of climate change adaptation



programmes. If the Bill is enacted as currently drafted, it will require both the CCC's independent reviews of Northern Ireland's progress, and the Northern Ireland government's response to the CCC's progress reviews, to be laid in the Northern Ireland Assembly and being available to the public.

A copy of the Bill, and tracking of its progress through the legislative process can be obtained on the Northern Ireland Assembly website at the following web link -

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/2017-2022-mandate/primary-legislation---bills-2017---2022-mandate/climate-change-bill/>

## Appendix 1

**List of Respondents (Alphabetical)**

Acre Project

Action Renewables

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)

Arc21 (Waste Management Group for 6 Local Councils in the eastern part of Northern Ireland)

AVRIO (Environmental Consultants)

Balcas (“dedicated to the sustainable use of timber in a range of products and in renewable heat generation.”)

British Heart Foundation

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)

Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM)

Climate Coalition

Climate Northern Ireland

Coca-Cola HBC Ireland and Northern Ireland

Local Councils:

- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council;
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council;
- Derry City and Strabane District Council;
- Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council;
- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Dalradian Gold

Electricity Association of Ireland (EAI)

Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC -The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education)

Extinction Rebellion

Federation of Small Businesses

Friends of the Earth

Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI)

Heart Foundation

National Trust

Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)

Northern Ireland Electricity Networks (NIE)

Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association (NIFDA)

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)

Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

Northern Ireland Water (NI Water)

Northstone (NI) Ltd

Queens University of Belfast (QUB)

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

St Columbs Park House

ScottishPower Renewables (SPR)

Sustainable NI

System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI)

UK Environmental Law Association (UKELA)

Ulster Wildlife Trust

Women's Policy Group

Woodland Trust

Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)

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