

# Climate change

## Challenges & opportunities for rural communities in NI

Workshop at Irish Rural Link AGM & Conference 24.06.21

Aidan Campbell Policy Officer Rural Community Network

# Rural Community Network NI

- Established 1991
- 250 member groups across NI
- Promoting excellence in rural Community Development
- Providing a voice for rural communities
- Employ 5FT and 2PT staff
- Details here <http://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org/>

# A Climate Change Bill for NI?

- Private Members' Climate change bill at second stage
- Awaiting AERA Minister's Climate change bill
- Private Members' Bill proposing net zero carbon target for NI by 2050
- Minister's Bill will propose an 82% target for cut in carbon emissions by 2050
- Either target will lead to massive changes across society

# PMB Climate Change Bill

- Declares a Climate Emergency
- Sets a target for net zero carbon by 2050
- Establishes independent Climate Commissioner's Office
- Establishes concept of Climate Action Plans
- Calls for sectoral plans developed to address impacts
- Underpinned by Just Transition principle

Proposed climate change legislation is 'Disneyworld Bill' says  
Poots  
Belfast Telegraph 22.06.21

# Climate change: Unrealistic NI emissions target 'morally wrong'

By **Conor Macauley**  
BBC NI Agriculture & Environment Correspondent

10 June

HOME » AGRI-BUSINESS » NO 'SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS' FOR AGRICULTURE IN EITHER OF NI'S CLIMATE CHANGE BILLS



## No 'special arrangements' for agriculture in either of NI's Climate Change Bills



Rachel Martin | Jun 9, 2021, 4:42pm



# Challenges v opportunities beyond farming

- De-carbonisation of heating/cooling v. retro fitting& tackling fuel poverty
- Clean electricity production v. community ownership models
- De carbonisation of transport v. linking people to public transport and reducing need to travel (broadband for remote work and small business development)
- Changing tastes or displacement v. Reducing intensity of livestock farming, reducing pollution and biodiversity recovering

# Community Empowerment

- Community development/empowerment approaches
- Urban communities talking about 15-minute city
- What is the rural equivalent to 15-minute city?
- Need a lot more thinking about just transition in rural communities – farming& food, transport, heating/fuel poverty
- Growing awareness of climate/environment issues e.g.
  - Gorse fires in the Mourne
  - Peatland habitat conservation efforts around Lough Neagh
  - Greencastle People's Office campaign against gold mining

# Peace PLUS opportunities

Theme 4 Healthy & Inclusive Communities

## **€50M Rural Regeneration & Social Inclusion**

Theme 5 Supporting a Sustainable & Better- Connected Future

### **• €15M Biodiversity, nature recovery and resilience**

- €12M Marine and Coastal Management
- €21M Water Quality & Catchment Management
- €32M Water Quality Improvement programme
- €20M Geothermal Energy Demonstration Programme
- €165 Enhanced Sustainable Travel Connectivity

Theme 6 Building & Embedding Partnership and Collaboration

- €20M Maintaining and Forging Relationships between Citizens



# Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership – Peatlands & Curlew

- A Lough Neagh Partnership project with RSPB
- Manage, conserve and enhance the Lough Neagh Wetlands environment
- Curlew as one of the key species – only 300 breeding pairs in Ireland
- Worked with GAA clubs, local community groups, farmers and schools
- Culture and history of the area – used storytelling, song and music to reconnect people to the peatlands.
- Ramparts raised awareness of illegal extraction.

In Conclusion... @mackaycartoons

