

1. EPA GHG Projections

https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/air-emissions/EPA-GHG-Projections-2022-2040_Finalv2.pdf

Summary:

The EPA has recently published Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2022-2040 report. The report highlights the challenge both Ireland and the agriculture sector, faces in meeting its climate commitments. For the agriculture sector, the report does suggest that the sector could make significant progress in achieving its sectoral target by 2030, provided that additional measures already identified are implemented.

In summary:

Ireland is not on track to meet the 51 per cent emissions reduction target (by 2030 compared to 2018) based on these projections which include most 2023 Climate Action Plan measures. Further measures still need to be identified and implemented to achieve this goal.

Agriculture:

Total emissions from the Agriculture sector are projected to decrease by between 4 and 20 per cent over the period 2021 to 2030. Savings are projected from a variety of measures including switching to different fertilisers, limits on nitrogen fertiliser usage and bovine feed additives.

Land use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF):

Emissions from the LULUCF sector are projected to increase over the period 2021 to 2030 as our forestry reaches harvesting age and changes from a carbon sink to a carbon source. Planned policies and measures for the sector, such as increased afforestation, water table management on agricultural organic soils and peatland rehabilitation, are projected to reduce the extent of the emissions increase.

With Existing Measures (WEM) and With Additional Measure (WAM)

The EPA has produced GHG projections using two scenarios or levels of ambition. The first scenario, With Existing Measures (WEM), forecasts Ireland's emissions including all national policies and measures implemented by the end of 2021. Policies and measures still considered to be planned rather than implemented are not in the WEM.

The second scenario With Additional Measures (WAM) has a higher level of ambition and includes government policies and measures to reduce emissions such as those in Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2023. This was published in December 2022 and the included policies and measures have not yet moved into implementation phase. As implementation happens the policies and measures will be migrated into the With Existing Measures scenario. Specifically relating to the WAM projections for the Agriculture sector, the diversification measures identified in Climate Action Plan 2023 are not included in the WAM projections; if included these are projected to lead to further annual GHG savings by 2030 of 1.5 Mt CO₂ eq.

The WEM and WAM projections lead to the projected decrease of between 4 (WEM) and 20 (WAM) per cent for the sector.

