



29 January 2014

Environmental Pillar Statement on a National Energy Policy

There is a clear and urgent need for a sense of direction and understanding as to how Ireland will power its communities and enable a successful economy, whilst responding to the imminent threat of climate change. In this context, the Environmental Pillar calls on the Government to initiate an inclusive participatory process to develop a comprehensive national strategy on energy.

This strategy must consider energy consumption, energy needs and energy production, and be guided by ecosystem-based management principles. The process of developing the national strategy should include extensive, meaningful public participation from the outset and be administered by an independent body or collaborative forum.

The strategy must clearly outline how the energy requirements of future generations can be met in the face of climate change, and how energy usage can be reduced through a range of actions including increased energy efficiency and massive improvements in building insulation. The strategy must set out the pathway to achieve zero or near zero carbon emissions from energy by 2050, including milestones for 2030 and 2040. The Strategy must be subjected to a full participative public review every 3 years.

Once developed the national strategy must be the basis for any decisions that are made on proposed energy infrastructure projects, and provide a context for all future national budgets. Furthermore, the Environmental Pillar reminds the Government of its responsibility to ensure that all planning decisions must be made in accordance with environmental law.

It is essential then that the forthcoming Green Paper on Energy addresses all these issues and that it proffers an inclusive participatory pathway to the development of a widely accepted energy strategy for Ireland