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## **Chairman's Foreword**

'What doesn't get measured doesn't get done'. We decided for Comhar Sustainable Development Council's (SDC) third term (2006-08) to focus on evidence, the signals that tell us we are or are not making progress. Moving towards sustainability is a matter of stabilising and then reducing pressure on environmental endowments, keeping a close to full employment economy, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of our social life. These three strands of sustainability - environmental, economic and social – often work together and are mutually re-enforcing. For example, the most disadvantaged amongst us are also the most vulnerable to environmental degradation and economic dysfunction. But at times we face tradeoffs – providing more social infrastructure may come at the cost of less economic infrastructure and vice versa.

We also decided to focus on policy – how best to use information and education, institutions, regulation, direct investment, taxes and charges, subsidies, research and development – to promote sustainability. And so policy informed by evidence is the focus we bring to the implementation of our Work Programme. We believe in the importance of providing a forum for informed discussion, and being transparent in what we do and how we do it. All of the documents noted below are available on our web site. And we also aspire to play a unique role internationally, and to benchmark ourselves against best practise.

During our first year we made significant progress in meeting the objectives in our work programme agreed at the beginning of 2006. We have continued to advance the case for sustainable development in Ireland by offering advice to Government on key policy and implementation challenges as well as engaging with wider interests and the public to support awareness-raising and a better understanding of sustainable development issues.

Key outputs during the year included:

- Recommendations to the Department of Finance on sustainability in relation to the National Development Plan 2007-2013. The NDP represents the main vehicle determining investment priorities, so we devoted considerable effort to addressing how to ensure that sustainability was incorporated, not just in the investment programme, but also in the operation and maintenance of what we invest in. The Department of Finance remains the key engine for the development and implementation of national policy; we regard the incorporation of sustainability considerations into its decision-making processes as fundamental.

- Recommendations to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on the review of the National Climate Change Strategy. We focused on the mix of policy that need to be mobilised if we are to change the trajectory of our green house gas emissions, and adaptation to climate change; the latter means first and foremost, changing how we manage our water.
- Recommendations to the Department of the Communications, Marine and Natural Resources on the Energy Green Paper: ‘Towards a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland’. We welcomed the range and breadth of ambition, but noted that energy efficiency and conservation still do not get ‘parity of esteem’ with energy supply and renewables, in spite of the fact that the economic, environmental and energy reduction payoffs to vigorous action in this domain are manifest.
- Submission to the Environmental Protection Agency on Ireland’s Draft National Allocation Plan for emissions trading for the period 2008-2012.
- Recommendations to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government on proposals for a waste regulator.
- Submission to the Department of Finance on Budget 2007. An important focus of our submission was how to re-calibrate tax on cars to improve their environmental performance.

I’m grateful to Council members for their active participation in the work of Comhar SDC during the year. The development of Comhar SDC perspectives is initiated and guided to large extent by the efforts of the Comhar SDC Working Groups. Working groups have been established to address priority issues identified in our work programme, including climate change, sustainable development indicators, the new National Development Plan, review of the national sustainable development strategy, as well as education and awareness. It has been very helpful for us to be able co-opt on to the working groups key stakeholders beyond the Comhar SDC membership.

In addition, a new National Biodiversity Forum, under the chairmanship of Peter Wyse Jackson, was established under the auspices of Comhar SDC in early 2006 to bring a stakeholder perspective to the implementation of the National Biodiversity Plan. I am delighted that Dr. Wyse Jackson took on this demanding assignment to such excellent effect, and am particularly pleased that the all-island dimensions of biodiversity are being addressed within the Forum.

I am also grateful to Minister Roche and the officials of his department, who responded with sympathy, effectiveness and budget to our requests. I am also grateful to the many leading public servants from other government departments that have given us the benefit of their wisdom, knowledge and support.

In Comhar SDC we accept that we need to enhance our visibility if we are to be successful in promoting debate on sustainable development issues. An effective programme of outreach through conferences, workshops, publications and an up to date website are essential for this. I was particularly pleased that we were able to engage with relevant policy makers and a wide range of stakeholders in relation to *Sustainability in the National Development Plan 2007-2013*, at our first national conference in October 2006. The evidence based research commissioned by Comhar SDC for the Conference, as well as the outcome of proceedings, informed our recommendations to the Department of Finance noted above. The event itself also provided a valuable opportunity for dialogue and inter-action amongst all the relevant interests and sectors.

During the year we continued to engage with the international agenda for sustainable development. Participation on the network on European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils (EEAC) allows for exchange of ideas on good practice and mutual learning with Council similar to Comhar SDC. We were delighted that Sauli Rouhinen Director of the Finnish National Commission accepted an invitation to make a presentation on the Finnish experience to a meeting of Comhar SDC plenary in December 2006. The Finnish experience, in particular their use of indicators to drive the quality and scope of the sustainability debate, is a dimension we intend to draw upon.

I would like to thank the Comhar SDC staff – Noel Casserly, Lisa Ryan, Paschal Stephens, Ellie Corcoran and Thomas Legge for their commitment and contribution to the work of Comhar SDC. I am confident that we can continue to exert a positive influence on the future progress of the sustainable development agenda.

## 1. Introduction

Comhar SDC, was established in 1999 as the forum for national consultation and dialogue on all issues relating to sustainable development. Its terms of reference are, in brief, to advance the national agenda for sustainable development, to assist in devising suitable mechanisms and advising on their implementation, and to contribute to the formation of a national consensus in these regards. The full terms of reference for the period 2006 to 2008 are set out in Appendix 1.

Comhar SDC works in three-year cycles and began its third term on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 under the Chairmanship of Professor Frank Convery. This annual report covers the first year of Comhar SDC's third term, i.e., the twelve-month period up to the end of December 2006.

Comhar SDC's 25 members are drawn from five pillars: the State sector, economic sectors, environmental NGOs, social/community NGOs and the professional/academic sector; the Chairman of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Environment and Local Government is an ex officio member. The full list of members for the first year of Comhar SDC's third term is given in Appendix 2.

Comhar SDC (formerly the National Sustainable Development Partnership) changed its name during 2006 to Comhar Sustainable Development Council (SDC).

## 2. Overview of Work

Comhar SDC's terms of reference provide a broad scope for its work programme; it has discretion to design its own agenda or it may be asked by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, or by any other Minister, to examine and report on relevant matters. Comhar SDC's *Principles for Sustainable Development* provide the overall guiding philosophy. Our work programme for the period 2006-2008 is at Appendix 3.

We have considered that the following criteria are particularly relevant in defining the context for its work:

- adding value to existing work;
- assessing the policy relevance of issues, with a view to positioning itself at the developmental end of policy;
- avoiding duplication of work being carried out by other bodies; and
- using its unique nature and the strength of its broad representation to come to informed and balanced perspectives and recommendations.

During 2006 we engaged with the national and European policy agendas as well as outreach and awareness raising activities. As in previous years, four Plenary meetings of Comhar SDC were held during the twelve month period. Comhar SDC Bureau, consisting of five members, one from each pillar, facilitated decision-making and working arrangements. Significant highlights of the year included:

- Recommendations to the Department of Finance on the National Development Plan 2007-2013.
- Recommendations to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on the review of the National Climate Change Strategy.
- Recommendations to the Department of the Marine, Communication and Natural Resources on the Towards a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland-Green Paper.
- A national conference, '*Towards Sustainability in the NDP 2007-13*' held in the Davenport Hotel in October over 2½ days.
- Recommendations on Budget 2007.
- Continued sponsorship of special awards for sustainable development at the Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition.
- Sponsorship of a sustainable development award in the Tidy Towns competition.
- Sponsorship for an event at the Convergence Festival on *Rethinking Energy Use* at the Cultivate Centre in Temple Bar.
- The publication of a Comhar SDC's calendar highlighting practical actions which can be taken by individuals or groups to foster sustainable development.
- Issue of calls for research on education for sustainable development, sustainable development indicators, and sustainable consumption and production.

### 3. Comhar SDC Working Groups

Many of our policy proposals and recommendations are initially developed within the Comhar SDC working groups. The main working group activities during the year are summarised as follows:

#### **Biodiversity Forum**

This Forum was set up in early 2006 to provide a mechanism for consultation and input from stakeholders in relation to the implementation of actions identified in the National Biodiversity Plan. The Forum is chaired by Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson Director of the National Botanic Gardens.

The Forum has an important all-island dimension with representatives from Northern Ireland.

A number of sub working groups were set up within the Biodiversity Forum to address: Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, Agricultural Biodiversity, Forest Biodiversity, Inland Waterways and Wetlands, and Education and Public Awareness. The forum also decided that a small working group be established to explore further areas for North South co operation on biodiversity issues.

The members of the Forum are Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson (Chair), Dr. Liam Lysaght, Dr. Ken Whelan, Niamh Hunt, Ruadhri Deasy, Anja Murray, Sarah Fields, Karin Dubsky, Ornagh Darcy, Kevin Codd, Prof Emer Colleran, Prof. Richard Moles, Bob Brown, Ken Bradley Louise Mc Alavey, Chris O' Grady, David Kelly & Noel Casserly.

#### **NDP/NSDS Indicators Working Group**

The working group was set up to consider and make recommendations in relation to a number of inter-related areas:

- Integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation, implementation, monitoring and review of the new NDP for the period 2007-2013;
- development and use of appropriate mechanisms for measuring progress on sustainable development including indicators and assessment methodologies; and
- priorities for the revision of Ireland's national sustainable development strategy having regard to the priority areas in the new EU Sustainable Development Strategy to published in 2006.

During 2006, Comhar SDC commissioned research on sustainable indicators for Ireland. This research has been undertaken by Enviro Centre Northern Ireland and is aimed at informing Comhar recommendations on the review of the national sustainable development strategy. The research is available at [www.comharsdc.ie](http://www.comharsdc.ie) . In the meantime, Comhar SDC has compiled a selection of data from CSO and EPA sources which indicates how Ireland is performing using 26 headline indicators – see Appendix 4.

The members of the working group are Frank Convery (Chair), Laura Burke, Donal Buckley, Ruaidhri Deasy, Aoife Cassidy, David Healy, Billy Murphy, Cathy Maguire, Richard Moles, Noel Casserly, Lisa Ryan, Pat Gilheaney, & Pat Fanning.

### **Climate Change Working Group**

The Group was set up to:

- prepare draft response to EPA consultation on 2<sup>nd</sup> National Allocation Plan (2008-2012) under the Emissions Trading Scheme.
- prepare draft response to DOEHLG consultation on the review of the National Climate Change Strategy.
- Liaise formally with Interdepartmental Climate Change Team
- Engage in education and awareness-raising with respect to Climate Change, assisting in implementing Article 6 of UNFCCC.
- Run a watching brief and update these terms of reference for the duration of this Comhar SDC.

The members of the working group are Frank Convery (Chair), Tony Larkin, Donal Buckley, Pat Finnegan, Richard Douthwaite, Ornagh Darcy, Emer Colleran, Frank Maughan, Lisa Ryan, Noel Casserly.

### **Communication, Education and Awareness Working Group**

The working group was established to consider and make recommendations on developing our outreach activities. We recognise that there is major challenge to communicate sustainable development in a manner that is more meaningful and understandable to the broader general public. The main activities included overseeing the completion of two pilot projects on sustainable development education and awareness as well as developing ideas for stakeholder involvement in the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development and the development of an action plan.

The members of the working group are Laura Burke, Niamh Hunt, Emer Dunne, Billy Murphy, Elaine Nevin, Matthew Seebach, Carmel Sheridan, Noel Casserly (Chair), Ben Whelan, Michael Mc Kenna.

## **4. Recommendations and Advice**

A summary of the main recommendations and advice is set out in the flowing paragraphs. The full text of the Comhar SDC recommendations and advice can be found on our website [www.Comhar SDCsdc.ie](http://www.Comhar SDCsdc.ie)



**Comhar SDC submissions on sustainability in NDP 2007-2013** (21<sup>st</sup> September 2006 & 16 October 2006)

Comhar SDC submitted recommendations on ‘Sustainability in the National Development Plan 2007-13’ to the Department of Finance in two parts. The first strand of the recommendations followed the template proposed by the Department of Finance (DOF) - Broad Content, Preparation Process and Reporting Arrangements of the next NDP and were approved by the Comhar SDC council on 20<sup>th</sup> September. Following the Comhar SDC Conference “Sustainability in the National Development Plan 2007-2013” on 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> October we submitted a second strand of recommendations addressing the key sectoral issues (industry, energy, transport, agriculture, forestry, tourism, marine, and households) as well as process issues such as the need for appropriate indicators and measurement tools, investment in research and technological development and capacity building. A key recommendation was the establishment of a ‘Sustainability Fund’ – to invest in enterprise and community activity within and across sectors that achieve demonstrated improvement in environmental performance, while also advancing competitiveness and social cohesion. The new NDP can assist in increasing competitiveness by reducing costs in some areas, such as transport, communication etc, while improving quality in others for example education, labour skills, RD&D, infrastructure. In the coming years there is a need to continue to improve environmental quality in Ireland. The recommendations advocate incorporating sustainability into the next NDP across all sectors so that the goal becomes quality of life.

**Comhar SDC recommendations on the review of the National Climate Change Strategy** (30<sup>th</sup> September 2006)

We welcomed the publication of the document *Ireland’s Pathway to Kyoto Compliance – Review of the National Climate Change Strategy (IPKC)* and was pleased to provide some feedback on it. This analysis was carried out as follows: The Climate Change Group of the Council reviewed the report, and fed back critiques and proposals – both individually and in group - to the Comhar SDC SDC Executive. Draft Recommendations were then compiled, based on the Group’s feedback and on evidence accessed from various government and academic sources. This draft was considered and approved by the full Council at its meeting on September 20, 2006, at which further feedback was provided. The Comhar SDC response was then re-drafted and circulated again to Council for comment, before being finalised. We are very committed to evidence based analysis, and tried in the short time available to support all findings with credible evidence and analysis. Our response provided some feedback on the overall substance and style of the draft document, while the second section gave specific comments on the individual chapters in the sectoral analysis. In each section, a brief analysis was provided, and the response concluded with some proposals.

We considered that the Department's consultation document provided a well laid out and argued analysis of the issues and options. A missing item however, was the general lack of structured quantitative analysis, both of the policy measures that have been put in place, and the future measures to be included in the next NCCS. We proposed a template to assist in evaluating the costs and effectiveness associated with each policy measure. Generally we noted that a few key themes and approaches were either not addressed, or not adequately so, including:

- An *annual review* of the progress made in reducing Ireland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- Discussion of the Post-Kyoto (2012) period – the expected GHG emissions and mitigation measures that will be required.
- Key role of Information and Research and Development in mitigating emissions and adapting to climate change.
- Linkage between climate change policy and other policy areas.
- The importance of addressing cross-sectoral consumption
- Education as a policy measure
- More detail and urgency be given to further measures to manage the effects of *adaptation*. We propose that the Strategy should support the setting up of climate change adaptation projects in the developing world.

The second part of our comments referred to the sectoral analyses. Overall it was found that a clear distinction was not made in the IPCC paper between the policy measures that are *likely* to be implemented in the revised NCCS and those that are only *under consideration* as additional measures and their associated mitigation potential. We recommended that more quantitative analysis of the costs and benefits associated with individual policy measures should be presented in the revised NCCS in order to be able to compare policy instruments.

### **Comhar SDC response to 'Towards A Sustainable Energy Future For Ireland' – Energy Green Paper (1<sup>st</sup> December 2006)**

We welcomed the publication of the Energy Green Paper - 'Towards a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland' and appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions on its content. This Paper set out the energy issues, challenges and tradeoffs faced by Ireland and identified the key issues on which decisions must be made. The Paper requested responses to certain questions on a wide range of energy issues and these were addressed with specific feedback in our response. In addition, some general recommendations were made on the importance of setting priorities, since government time and other resources are scarce. We recommended identification of priorities, using payoff in terms of competitiveness, security of supply and sustainability relative to cost as the way of establishing these, and recognizing that in most instances it is not possible to advance all these objectives

simultaneously. We believe that the application of considerable evidence-based analytical resources is necessary. Having regard to existing evidence and access to international experience it would be possible to make qualitative judgments on priorities for investment and our submission recommended the following priorities in energy policy for the foreseeable future:

1. Target Gains in energy efficiency;
2. Support Grid Enhancement including distributed generation;
3. Support Grid Interconnection;
4. Use Public Sector as model by example;
5. Carbon-proof all Policy;
6. Support expanded indigenous renewables development;
7. Support commercial indigenous fossil fuel discovery and development;
8. Ensure that fuel poverty does not prevail;
9. Identify the key delivery agents, and resource them to do the job;
10. Focus on incentives and on R&D.

#### **Comhar SDC submission to Budget 2007 (13<sup>th</sup> November 2006)**

We made specific proposals to the Department of Finance on the national budget for 2007. This re-emphasised the importance of ensuring that our quality of life in Ireland in general, and in regard to environmental and social domains in particular, is protected and enhanced. We recognise that if we achieve sustained quality of life, broadly defined, we will also achieve a competitive economy. Since fiscal decisions are the key shapers of economic, social and environmental performance, if the signals at this level do not actively promote sustainable behaviour, no amount of rhetoric or programmes in other areas will be effective. Our recommendations for Budget 2007 were framed in the context of advancing quality of life and in giving shape to the medium term quality of life objectives in the National Development Plan; they support the view stated by Minister Cowen that enhanced support for those most vulnerable should be a particular focus of this budget. The main recommendations therefore were the following:

- Carbon proof all new fiscal measures to ensure that they do not incentivise a rise in greenhouse gas emissions and other pressures on the environment, and ideally encourage reduction.
- Change the growth trajectory of fuel use and carbon emissions in the transport sector – adjusting vehicle taxes to move towards a fuel and carbon efficient car fleet.
- Any reduction in stamp duty of housing should be contingent on meeting the highest energy efficiency standard, as validated by independently validated labelling via the implementation of the *Energy Performance in Buildings Directive (EPBD)*.
- All government investments and other purchases should encourage sustainability objectives.

- Increased support for innovation and the Knowledge Society.

## **5. ‘Towards Sustainability in the National Development Plan’**

### **Comhar SDC Annual Conference 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

We hosted the conference ‘Towards Sustainability in the National Development Plan’ over three days in the Davenport Hotel October 4-6<sup>th</sup> 2006. It addressed how specific sectors within Ireland – industry, energy, transport, agriculture, forestry, tourism, marine, and households, and quality of life – have performed economically, socially and environmentally to date, and the options available for enhancing performance over the life of NDP 2007-2013. The objective of the conference was to facilitate an open discussion on how best to reflect the sustainability agenda in the new NDP and to gather input from a wide range of stakeholders in order to better inform us with recommendations for the Department of Finance on improving the sustainability of the NDP 2007-2013. Experts in the particular sectors prepared briefing papers in advance and these provided a framework for the Conference discussion on each sector and have been published in a summary of the proceedings of the conference.

Government departments were strongly represented at the conference; each session was chaired by the responsible Assistant Secretary Generals. The format consisted of a presentation by the briefing paper authors, followed by a discussion of the investment priorities for the next NDP with a selected panel of stakeholders and the audience. It was found that the overriding principles of the NDP 2007-2013 should be to improve economic competitiveness, environmental quality and social cohesion. We believe that economic growth is compatible with environmental and social advancement and therefore that sustainability must be a fundamental principle in the preparation and implementation of the new NDP. The “Sustainability and NDP” conference provided significant contributions from stakeholders and these were reflected in the recommendations made by us on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2006 to the Department of Finance.

## **6. Comhar SDC Sponsorship**

Comhar SDC continued its programme of sponsorship for special sustainable development in the Tidy Towns, Young Scientist and the Young Environmentalist competitions.

### *Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition*

Comhar SDC sponsors a number of special awards in the Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition each year. The awards are made for projects which best

demonstrate sustainable development. The sponsorship, which began in 2000, is a means of both raising awareness of Comhar SDC and its purposes and also encouraging greater involvement/interest by young students in sustainable development issues.

The winners in 2006 were:

Philip Rooney, Robert Murray, and Paul Quinn from Patrician College, Finglas West, Dublin for their project ‘The Health Effects of Living Close to a Landfill Site’

#### *Award in Tidy Towns Competition*

Since 2004 Comhar SDC has sponsored an award in the Tidy Towns competition. The award was for the town or village where a building, group of buildings or space has been improved in a manner consistent with Comhar SDC’s Principles for Sustainable Development.

The winner was Carrickmacross Workhouse

#### *Young Environmentalist Award*

The winners were Graham Murphy, Peadar Byrne, Patrick Walshe, Niall O’ Brien, John Lawlor, and James O’ Regan from St. Mary’s, Knockbeg College, Co. Carlow and their project title was ‘Environmentally Efficient HGV’s and Alternative Fuels’

*Rethinking Energy Use* event, at Convergence Festival at the Cultivate Centre in Dublin

Comhar SDC made a contribution of €2,000 to the Sustainable Ireland for the event *Rethinking Energy Use* event, at Convergence Festival at the Cultivate Centre in Dublin. The Convergence Festival brings together leading thinkers in the area of sustainable living and demonstrates innovative best practices.

## **7. International Dimension of Comhar SDC’s Work**

#### *EEAC Network*

During the year, we participated actively in the European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils (EEAC) network and strengthened links to similar councils in other European countries.

Noel Casserly represented us on the EEAC’s Sustainable Development Working Group, Lisa Ryan represented us on the Energy Working Group, and Karin Dubsy represented us on the EEAC’s Biodiversity Working Group.

Further information on the EEAC is available at [www.eeac-network.org](http://www.eeac-network.org)

## 8. Quality Customer Service

We are committed to the provision of high quality service to all its customers. During the year under review we developed and published its customer Charter, which is available on our web site.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Comhar SDC's Terms of Reference (2006 – 2008)**

- (1) The Terms of Reference of Comhar SDC are to advance the national agenda for sustainable development, to evaluate progress in this regard, to assist in devising suitable mechanisms and advising on their implementation, and to contribute to the formation of a national consensus in these regards.

We will:

- (A) Have a specific focus on:-
- Consideration of policy proposals and issues relating to the environment and sustainable development, and advice to Government on them;
  - Researching and making recommendations, tailored to national conditions, on specific approaches to, or instruments for, environmental management and protection, employment creation in the environmental sector, environmental performance in economic sectors;
  - Reviewing the implementation in Ireland of Agenda 21 and the other Rio Agreements, and contributing to annual national reports to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development;
  - Reviewing/responding to national data on environmental quality trends;
  - Recommending mechanisms for greater integration of environmental and sustainable development considerations into the development and implementation of all Government policies;
  - Promoting information exchange, dialogue and consultation on environmental policy and sustainable development among the social partners and non-governmental organisations;
  - Advising on means of raising public awareness of sustainable development and environmental issues, and encouraging positive behaviour at individual, community and sectoral levels.
- (B) Examine and make recommendations on other issues related to environment and sustainable development.

- (C) Review and monitor the implementation of our recommendations and if necessary make further recommendations; and
  - (D) Examine and report on relevant matters referred to it by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government or any other Minister.
- (2) We may consider sustainable development issues on its own initiative or at the request of a Minister of the Government.
  - (3) We will work in three year cycles and will inform Government, through the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, of its programme of work within three months of the beginning of each cycle.
  - (4) In drawing up its work programme, we will take account of the role and functions of other bodies in areas related to sustainable development (environmental, social and economic) such as the NESC, the NESF, the EPA and the Heritage Council to ensure complementarity.
  - (5) We may be invited/designated by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to attend relevant international fora, including the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.
  - (6) We may invite Ministers, Public Officials, Comhar SDC members, and outside experts to make presentations and to assist us in our work. We may also constitute appropriate subsidiary, consultative fora to assist in our work.
  - (7) We will publish and submit all its reports (which shall include annual reports on progress) to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, who shall bring them to Government; to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Environment and Local Government; and to such Government Departments and bodies as may be appropriate.
  - (8) The Partnership will be drawn from five broad pillars:
    - state/public sector;
    - economic sectors;
    - environmental NGOs;
    - social/community NGOs;
    - professional/academic sector.



- (9) Bodies designated by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under these five pillars shall nominate candidates for Comhar SDC, and the Minister shall appoint no less than three of the nominees from each pillar to Comhar SDC. Where a nominated person is appointed to Comhar SDC, the second nominee from the same body will be designated as the alternate and may substitute for the member from time to time.
- (10) We will have an independent Chairperson appointed by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The Chairperson's term of office shall be five years, and may be extended by the Minister.
- (11) The term of office of members will be three years, with the exception of 10 members (two from each pillar) appointed in 2002, who will serve a four-year term, at the end of which the term of office of all members will revert to three years. The 10 members concerned shall be chosen by lottery within each pillar at the first meeting of Comhar SDC in 2002. Casual vacancies will be filled by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government from among the original nominees within the relevant pillar and members so appointed shall hold office until the expiry of the current term of office of the vacating member(s). The size of the membership may be varied by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government on the approval of the Government.
- (12) The Chairperson of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Environment and Local Government shall be an ex-officio member of Comhar SDC.
- (13) We are under the aegis of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and is funded through a Grant from that Department. This Grant is part of the overall estimate for the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

## APPENDIX 2

### **Membership of Comhar SDC 2006**

#### **Chairman:**

**Prof. Frank Convery**

#### **Pillar 1 – State/Public Sector**

**Cllr. Aileen Pyne \***

Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland

**Tony Larkin**

County and City Managers' Association

**Tom O'Mahony**

Environmental Network of Government Departments

**Laura Burke**

Environmental Protection Agency

**Cllr. Therese Ridge**

General Council of County Councils

#### **Pillar 2 – Economic Sectors**

**Niamh Hunt**

Chambers of Commerce of Ireland

**Donal Buckley \***

Irish Business and Employers' Confederation

**Paula Carey**

Irish Congress of Trades Unions

**Emer Dunne**

Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association

**Ruaidhrí Deasy**

Irish Farmers' Association

\* Four year appointment for second term expiring on 31st December 2006

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### **Pillar 3 – Environmental NGOs**

**Elaine Nevin**  
ECO UNESCO

**Aoife Cassidy**  
Keep Ireland Open

**Pat Finnegan**  
EENGO CF2

**David Healy \***  
EENGO CF

**Richard Douthwaite**  
EENGO CF

### **Pillar 4 – Social / Community NGOs**

**Bernie Walsh \***  
Community Platform

**Br. Kevin Codd \***  
Conference of Religious in Ireland (CORI)

**Ornagh Darcy**  
Irish Rural Dwellers Association

**Matthew Seebach**  
National Youth Council of Ireland

**Billy Murphy**  
PLANET

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<sup>2</sup> *Environmental NGO Core Funding Group* comprising An Taisce; Coastwatch Ireland; Conservation Volunteers Ireland; Earthwatch; Feasta – Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability; Friends of the Irish Environment; Irish Doctors Environmental Association; Irish Peatland Conservation Council; Irish Wildlife Trust; Irish Women’s Environmental Network; Keep Ireland Open; VOICE

\* Four year appointment for second term expiring on 31st December 2006

**Pillar 5 – Professional / Academic Sector**

**Richard Moles \***

Environmental Sciences Association of Ireland

**Caitriona Maguire**

EnviroCentre Belfast

**John Hammond \***

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)

**Carmel Sheridan**

Royal Dublin Society

**Emer Colleran**

Royal Irish Academy

\* Four year appointment for second term expiring on 31st December 2006

## **Appendix 3**

### **Comhar SDC Work programme for the period 2006-2008**

#### **1. Introduction**

We were established in 1999 and completed our second term in May 2005. Our third term will run from January 2006 to December 2008.

This work programme covers period 2006-2008 and takes account of the outcomes of our review session held in Kilkenny in April 2005 and the priority areas outlined in the Minister's address at the launch of our third term on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

Our terms of reference are to advance the national agenda for sustainable development, evaluate progress in this regard, to assist in devising suitable mechanisms and advising on their implementation, and to contribute to the formation of a national consensus in these regards.

These terms of reference provide a broad scope our work programme and allow a reasonable amount of discretion for us to design its own agenda. We may also be invited by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, or by any other Minister, to examine and report on relevant matters.

The work programme sets out the broad parameters with a degree of flexibility to allow for adjustment, if necessary, in the light of experience or to take account of new issues arising over the three-year period.

The following criteria are particularly relevant in defining the work programme:

- adding value to existing work;
- assessing the policy relevance of issues, with a view to positioning itself at the developmental end of policy;
- avoiding duplication of work being carried out by other bodies; and
- using its unique nature and the strength of its broad representation to come to informed and balanced perspectives and recommendations.

In delivering on its work programme, we will give careful consideration to the most appropriate vehicles to disseminate its message. In this regard, our work and outputs may take a number of forms, as appropriate to particular issues, including:

- advice to Ministers, to specific sectors, or to the general public;
- opinions on critical issues in relation to the environment and sustainable development;
- recommendations on policy development;
- research and preparation of reports; and
- sponsorship, conferences/seminars or other means to raise awareness.

We publish our reports, opinions, and other products, using a range of relevant means for their dissemination, including electronic media. We also submit our reports to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, for appropriate referral to Government, to the Oireachtas Committee on the Environment and Local Government, and to relevant Government Departments and other bodies.

## **2. Communication and Engagement with Key Stakeholders**

### **2.1 Objective**

The objective is to engage effectively with key sectoral commercial and political interests and the general public so that there is widespread understanding of the issues involved, and how to make progress most effectively.

### **2.2 Key Elements**

- *Web site*: Interesting, engaging and up-to-date on issues, options and links.
- *Annual Conference*: Focused on key sustainability challenges and the need to engage key stakeholders in devising appropriate policy responses and actions across the various sectors. This will involve key leaders in politics, community, environmental and commercial interests, informed by state of the art paper, and focus on future. The relevant State agencies and government departments will be involved.
- *Periodic Workshops*: These will address on an opportunistic basis emerging specialist issues.
- *Chairman's Weekly Commentary*: This will focus attention on the sustainability dimension of emerging issues.
- *Periodic Newsletter* (biannual) to synthesise developments and forthcoming events.
- *Sustainable Development Awards*: Annual event recognising exceptional achievement in sustainability.
- *Occasional studies and submissions* on: indicators, analysis of policy instruments, input to budget and Oireachtas committees.
- *Support for national sustainability events*, not organised by Comhar SDC, but consistent with our overall objectives.

- *Other Activities* where it is clear that there will be a substantial payoff to effort in promoting the concept and achieving the reality of sustainable development

### **2.3 Management and Delivery**

- The Comhar SDC Secretariat will manage and support implementation of the programme.
- The Post Doctoral Fellow in Sustainable Development will provide for in-house research capability and support in the delivery of the programme
- International links and benchmarking to ensure that programme is implemented to highest international standard (e.g., having regard to the experience of other sustainable development councils participating on the EEAC network).

### **2.4 Annual Sustainable Development Conference and Workshops**

#### ***Annual Conference***

The Annual Conference will meet over 2 days, and focus on the key sustainability challenges and identify priority policy measures and actions that would improve performance across the various sectors. It will be characterised by the following:

- Engagement with economic, social, environmental and policy stakeholders
- Involvement of key political leadership
- A brief summarising the current situation as regards sustainability performance and opportunities for action, prepared before the conference and circulated to delegates
- Mobilising latest research findings
- Focus on the future
- International expertise that will benchmark best international performance
- Linked to European Union activity and activity globally
- Free attendance by up to 50 delegates
- Identification of points of consensus
- Publication and dissemination of papers and key findings.

#### ***Workshops***

These will be organised from time to time to quickly address emerging of specialist issues where bringing together key stakeholders and experts could help clarify issues or identify a way forward. These will typically be

- Of half or one day duration
- Mobilise key expertise and stakeholders
- Conclude with short and longer term choices and implications

## **2.5 Annual Sustainable Development Awards**

It is important to recognise exceptional achievement in sustainable development by key economic, social and environmental actors. This will be achieved by making a number of awards annually which recognise exceptional performance and constitute best-practice models of sustainable development. The awards will be linked to the Annual Conference. The Comhar SDC membership will be invited to advise on the formulation of the awards scheme; it is envisaged that the process will involve:

- Identifying the criteria
- Identifying and selecting partners to co-sponsor
- Selecting judging panel
- Soliciting entries
- Evaluating entries
- Presenting the award
- Disseminating lessons and implications

The opportunity for sourcing additional funding through joint sponsorship will be explored. The awardees will be recognised at an event associated with the Annual Conference.

## **2.6 Occasional Studies and Events**

There will be a need to commission occasional studies and events which support the delivery of our work programme e.g.:

- Supporting national sustainability focused events not organised by Comhar SDC.
- Evaluating progress towards sustainability, addressed via indicators and otherwise.
- Analysing policy instruments and other mechanisms addressed to advancing sustainability objectives.
- Informing Comhar SDC policy advice to Government, e.g.: advice to the Department of Finance on the annual budget, advice to Oireachtas Committees, etc.

## **2.7 Website and Communications Media**

During the first year our third term, an evaluation of existing website and other communications media will be undertaken to determine the most effective and resource efficient means of developing our communications strategy and performance



### **3. National Sustainable Development Strategy**

*Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland* (NSDS) was endorsed by Government in 1997, five years after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the adoption of *Agenda 21*. A review<sup>1</sup> of the NSDS was undertaken in 2002 in the run up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in September of that year. The NSDS has also been developed and built upon through supporting and complementary policy documents, e.g., National Anti-Poverty Strategy, National Climate Change Strategy, National Spatial Strategy and National Biodiversity Plan.

As part of its new work programme for the period 2005 to 2008 we will prepare recommendations on the review and update of the NSDS. This is timely for a number of reasons; if a five-year review cycle is adhered to, an updated NSDS could be expected in 2007. The EU is committed to review its own sustainable development strategy (EU SDS) by mid 2006 and will take account of the need to strengthen links and promote greater coherence with national strategies. It is also timely because the next National Development Plan (2007-13) will establish medium term priorities for infrastructure and other investment; it is crucial that this portfolio be consistent with the tenets of sustainable development.

The priority issues in the current EU SDS are: climate change, public health, poverty & social exclusion, ageing society, management of natural resources, and mobility & transport. A Comhar SDC submission on the proposed revision of the EU SDS was forwarded to the Commission in October 2004. A revised NSDS should have regard to the priority issues in the new EU SDS and identify objectives and policy measures to help achieve these objectives.

A recent study<sup>2</sup> of national sustainable development strategies undertaken by the network of European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils (EEAC), in which we participated, can help inform our analysis and recommendations.

Consideration could be given to engaging external expertise or consultancy to prepare a more detailed analysis of the implementation of the NSDS if this was considered helpful to informing our deliberations and recommendations.

### **4. Priority areas**

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<sup>1</sup> Making Ireland's Development Sustainable: Review, Assessment and Future Action (2002)

<sup>2</sup> Sustaining Sustainability: A benchmark study on national strategies towards sustainable development and the impact of councils in nine EU member states (2005)

Key issues and activities for the new term will include:

- **Biodiversity** : The Interim Review of the Implementation of the National Biodiversity Plan<sup>3</sup> commits to the establishment of a Biodiversity Forum, comprising a broad range of representatives reflecting the scope of the Plan. The earlier Comhar SDC report<sup>4</sup> had recommended the setting up of representative stakeholder forum under the auspices of Comhar SDC. There were also recommendations on the prioritisation of targets and timescales for species and habitat protection and conservation, development of indicators to measure progress of conservation measures, and establishment of a Biodiversity Fund (€1 million per annum) to support local site conservation and management, and for the production of biodiversity awareness and educational material<sup>5</sup>.
- **Climate Change**: Comhar SDC should continue to bring a broad stakeholder perspective to the review and implementation of the National Climate Change Strategy and the associated challenge of meeting Kyoto commitments and more ambitious EU targets for post-Kyoto period. Appropriate policy and programme measures are also needed to achieve greater energy efficiency and increased generation of electricity from renewable sources (the EU target is 13.2% electricity from renewable sources by 2010).
- **Awareness, Education and Communicating Sustainable Development**: There is a significant challenge to promote sustainable development in a more accessible way. Work undertaken during the second term included collaboration with ENFO on a schools pilot project and a programme of awareness raising amongst civil society organisations in the south-east. During its third term Comhar SDC will oversee the development of materials or tool-kits to take forward this work. This could also include the development of key messages and “Quality of Life” indicators based on Comhar SDC’s Principles for Sustainable Development. Work undertaken in the UK on redefining prosperity<sup>6</sup> can provide a useful model here. The UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which commenced in 2005, provides an opportunity for developing a framework for integrating sustainability into all levels of the formal education system. In 2005, Comhar SDC sponsored two stakeholder consultations<sup>7</sup> on the UN Decade for ESD at the Convergence Festival in Dublin and this can provide a context for taking this work forward.
- **Sustainable Communities**: During its second term Comhar SDC submitted recommendations to the Department on sustainable rural housing, and on the proposed reform of local government finance. Comhar SDC also gave consideration to processes and structures at local

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<sup>3</sup> Published by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2005

<sup>4</sup> *Comhar SDC Recommendations on the Implementation and Review of the National Biodiversity Plan* – Nov. 2004

<sup>5</sup> This Fund has now been established and will be administered by the Heritage Council.

<sup>6</sup> *Redefining Prosperity: resource productivity, economic growth and sustainable development* – UK Sustainable Development Commission, 2003

<sup>7</sup> Organised by the Sustainable Ireland Co-operative and Eco-Unesco in June and October 2005.

level which support local sustainability. There is an opportunity to bring forward policies and programmes to re-energise implementation of Local Agenda 21 and Comhar SDC may wish to advise on this following the review of operation City and County Development Boards and other partnership structures.<sup>8</sup>

- ***Sustainable Consumption and Production:*** Specific commitments arise in the context of World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg) outcomes calling for a 10-year framework programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). There have been calls for the revised EU SDS and national strategies<sup>9</sup> to address these targets more explicitly. The revised NSDS should provide a coherent strategic framework for SCP through a judicious policy mix of legally binding as well as economic and voluntary instruments, and education and information. A national policy statement on sustainable consumption and production could be integrated into a revised NSDS. A multi-sectoral approach is required with dialogue between stakeholders; Comhar SDC could play an important role in this.

## 5. Measuring sustainability

At our review meeting, held in April 2005, there was discussion on the need to establish targets and indicators for the priority sustainability issues. This will be particularly important in the context of a new National Development Plan (NDP) for the post-2006 period.

The NESC and CSO have already done work<sup>10</sup> on indicators. The CSO intends to annually update the data on *Measuring Ireland's Progress* and we could consider the adequacy of this data for measuring progress on the sustainability agenda. Our Principles for Sustainable Development could provide the appropriate framework and work done elsewhere in Europe provides a useful reference point, e.g., the UK<sup>11</sup> and Finland; the EU<sup>12</sup> is to publish a communication on sustainable development indicators in late 2005.

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<sup>8</sup> DOEHLG is undertaking a review of the operation of CDBs in 2005; UCC has received funding from the EPA's R&D Programme to undertake a review the role of CDBs in advocating LA 21. Review of other structures such as Leader and City and County partnerships are also underway.

<sup>9</sup> For example, the new UK SD Strategy published on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2005 commits to tackle damaging production and consumption patterns with emphasis on sustainable public procurement and improving environmental performance of products and increasing resource use efficiency. <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/uk-strategy/uk-strategy-2005.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> In 2002, the NESC published a set of *National Progress Indicators for Sustainable Economic, Social and Environmental Development* and in March 2005, the CSO a report with social, economic and environmental data on *Measuring Ireland's Progress*.

<sup>11</sup> The UK has published a new set of sustainable development indicators Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2005 available at [www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/indicators/](http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/indicators/)

<sup>12</sup> The Commission has already published a communication to members of the Commission – Feb 2005.

Elsewhere in Europe and within the EU efforts are also being made to further improve the policy-making process through the introduction of ex-ante sustainability assessment of major policies and programmes.

In Ireland, the Government has already introduced a system of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) for new regulatory and legislative proposals. The Department of the Taoiseach has published guidelines on the new RIA system, which aims to promote the quantification of impacts on society, marginalised groups, consumers, as well as quantification of the environmental costs, and the compliance cost to business.

We could engage with other agencies, such as EPA and NESF, and advise on research needs and pilot SD assessment methodologies to build on our Principles for Sustainable Development as well as experience and best-practice elsewhere.

## **6. Working groups**

Many of the work programme objectives can be delivered through the mechanism of working groups. The working groups will develop more detailed terms of reference in each area, which will define and guide the work and establish more specific timetables and targets for each issue. Experience during the first two terms suggests that focusing on a few major tasks a year is the most efficient way of working with task-based working groups, rather than standing groups. During the first year of the third term it is proposed to establish the following working groups:

- Biodiversity – in the light of the Government Decision on the Biodiversity Forum,
- Awareness, Education and Communication of Sustainable Development,
- Climate Change, and
- National Development Plan, National Sustainable Development Strategy and Indicators.

Other ad-hoc working groups may be established over the course of the third term; these would exist for the period of the task, and then disband. Potential benefits of this approach would include:

- A fixed duration commitment for members joining the group, which might help to keep them involved/active in the group;
- The opportunity for members to participate in a number of working groups over our term of office, without duplicating the time commitments involved. This might also increase the number of members contributing to each area of our work.

- Task-based, fixed term groups with clear work plans can be better supported/resourced.

## **7. Annual Budget**

The overall projected budget for Comhar SDC's first year of its third term is estimated at €320,000 (excluding the staffing costs of the Comhar SDC Secretariat).

## **8. Review and Annual Report**

The Work Programme aims to provide a flexible framework for the three-year period, enabling, where appropriate, an annual review of work priorities under the direction of the Comhar SDC Bureau.

We are required to report annually on its progress and activities. Our work will therefore include the preparation and publication of an annual report, which will, *inter alia*, include an update on the work programme.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Measuring Ireland's Progress Towards Sustainability**

In 2006, Comhar SDC commissioned research on sustainable indicators for Ireland. This research has been undertaken by Enviro Centre Northern Ireland and is aimed at informing Comhar recommendations on the review of the national sustainable development strategy. The research is available at [www.comharsdc.ie](http://www.comharsdc.ie). In the meantime, Comhar SDC has compiled a selection of data from CSO and EPA sources which indicates how Ireland is performing using 26 headline indicators.

#### **1. Economic Development**

- In 2005 Ireland had the second highest GDP per capita in the EU 27 at almost 39% above the EU 25 average. However, based on Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, Ireland was in fifth place at 18.6% above the EU 25 average.<sup>i</sup>
- The employment rate in Ireland rose from 56% in 1997 to 68% in 2006. The rate for women increased by over 14 percentage points over that period, while the rate for men rose by around 10 percentage points. Productivity in Ireland, measured as GDP per person employed, was the second highest in the EU 27 in 2005.<sup>ii</sup>
- The unemployment rate in Ireland increased from a low point of 3.6% in 2001 to 4.3% in 2006. Ireland had the third lowest unemployment rate in the EU 27 in 2006 at just over half of the EU 27 average of 8%. The long-term unemployment rate in Ireland was 1.4% in 2005, which was lower than the EU27 average of 4%.<sup>iii</sup>

#### **2. Poverty and Social Exclusion**

- The proportion of Irish people at risk of poverty, after pensions and social transfer payments were taken into account, was 20% in 2005. This was one of the highest rates in the EU 27. The effect of pensions and social transfers on reducing the at-risk-of-poverty rate was low in Ireland compared with other EU 27 countries.<sup>iv</sup>
- In 2005, 7% of the population were living in consistent poverty<sup>13</sup> compared to 8.8% in 2003.<sup>v</sup>
- Social protection expenditure as a proportion of GDP was lower in Ireland over the period 1995-2004 than in EU 15 and EU 25 member states. Expenditure in Ireland decreased from 19% of GDP in 1995 to 14% in 2000 but increased again to 17% in 2004.<sup>vi</sup>

#### **3. Aging Society**

- Ireland has the second lowest proportion of persons aged 65 and over (16.4%) in the EU (Slovakia has the lowest)<sup>vii</sup>.
- Almost one third of persons aged 65 and over were living alone in 2006<sup>viii</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Consistent poverty rate is the percentage of persons below 60% median

- The employment rate of persons aged 55-64 at 51.7% was higher than the EU 27 average of 42.3% in 2005. However only 37.4% of women in Ireland in this age group were in employment compared to 65.7% of men.<sup>ix</sup>

#### **4. Public Health**

- Life expectancy at birth in Ireland increased from under 58 years in 1925-1927 to 75 years for males and 80 for females in 2001-2003.<sup>x</sup>
- In 2005, the estimated life expectancy at birth for males was 1.3 years higher than the EU 25 average (75.8) year while that of females was slightly lower than the EU 25 average.<sup>xi</sup>

#### **5. Climate change and energy**

- Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions increased by almost 2% in 2005. Total emissions in 2005 were 69.6 million tonnes which were 25% higher than in 1990 (the base year for calculating Ireland's Kyoto commitment)<sup>xii</sup>.
- Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion accounted for 66% of total greenhouse gas emissions in 2005 compared to 55% in 1990.
- The total contribution from renewable energy to gross electricity consumption in 2004 was 5.2%<sup>xiii</sup>.
- Imported oil and gas accounted for 73% of our energy requirement in 2004 compared with 45% in 1990<sup>xiv</sup>.

#### **6. Production and consumption patterns**

- The percentage of waste landfilled in Ireland decreased from 71.6% in 2003 to 65.4% in 2005<sup>xv</sup>. Glass and ferrous, aluminium and other metals were the materials most likely to be recycled with 64.4% of glass waste and 53.8% of metal waste recycled in 2005.
- Cattle numbers have remained steady since 1999 at just under 7 million, however the proportion of dairy cattle has dropped. Sheep number have declined from just under 9 million in 1992 to 6 million in 2005<sup>xvi</sup>.

#### **7. Management of Natural Resources**

- Ireland lags behind the rest of Europe in the land area designated as Special Areas of Protection (SPAs) under the Birds Directive. The total areas already designated or awaiting designation as SPAs (292,728 hectares) is approaching 4% of the national territory compared to the EU average at 8%.<sup>xvii</sup>
- In 2005 approximately 13% of forest cover was predominantly broadleaf with the remainder broadly coniferous. The target of 30% broadleaf as a proportion of all new afforestation has been reached<sup>xviii</sup>.
- Forty-seven out of sixty-two commercially targeted marine fish stocks in Irish waters are overexploited. The stocks of cod and sole declined by 60% and 36% respectively in the period 1999-2003.<sup>xix</sup>

## 8. Transport

- The transport sector is the largest energy-consuming sector in Ireland, accounting for 40% of total final energy consumption in 2004 up from 28% in 1990<sup>xx</sup>.
- Greenhouse gas emissions from transport increased by 7% in 2005 over 2004 (road transport accounts for 96% of this total. Between 1990 and 2005, transport shows the greatest share of increase in emissions at 160%<sup>xxi</sup>.
- In the period 1990 to 2004 there was a 250% increase in the volume of freight transported by road.<sup>xxii</sup>
- The number of private cars and goods vehicles on our roads more than doubled between 1990 and 2005<sup>xxiii</sup>.

## 9. Good Governance

- Voter turnout at Dail elections has declined from over 75% in the 1970s to 67% in 2007.<sup>xxiv</sup>

## 10. Global partnership

In 2006 Ireland devoted 0.53% of gross national income on ODA and remains on course to meet the UN target of 0.7%. Only five countries currently reach or exceed this target: Sweden, Luxemburg, Norway, the Netherlands and Denmark. Ireland aims to reach the target by 2012.<sup>xxv</sup>

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### *Sources of Data*

- <sup>i</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 14.
- <sup>ii</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 14.
- <sup>iii</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 14.
- <sup>iv</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 43
- <sup>v</sup> National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 – Stationary Office 2007 page 88
- <sup>vi</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 40
- <sup>vii</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 57
- <sup>viii</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 60
- <sup>ix</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 54
- <sup>x</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 54
- <sup>xi</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 54
- <sup>xii</sup> EPA News , May 2007, page 3
- <sup>xiii</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 71
- <sup>xiv</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 73
- <sup>xv</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 70
- <sup>xvi</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 81
- <sup>xvii</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 49
- <sup>xviii</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 49
- <sup>xix</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 99
- <sup>xx</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 74
- <sup>xxi</sup> European Environment Agency , 2007, "Transport and environment: on the way to a new common transport policy", page 17
- <sup>xxii</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 95
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Environment in Focus 2006 – EPA , page 56
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Measuring Ireland's Progress 2006 – Central Statistics Office, 2007, page 45
- <sup>xxv</sup> Development Aid from OECD Countries in 2006 – OECD 2007