



***FFF IRELAND STATEMENT ON CLIMATE ACTION AND LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT
(AMENDMENT) ACT 2020***

FFF Ireland welcomes the release of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2020, in particular as an improvement on previous policies such as its 2015 equivalent. Though the plan is a marked step forward, there are several areas of concern particularly with regards to climate justice, ambition, and accountability.

This Bill has been framed as a binding commitment, however this is not true. The government is required to 'pursue' this target, rather than being bound to it. Accountability is required if we are to have any hope of reducing the impact of the climate crisis, yet this is considerably lacking in the Bill. The government must provide a framework to hold itself accountable for meeting the international targets for climate justice, and commit rather than pursue.

All climate policy must have climate justice at its core. Our government must deliver a Just Transition, that places the burden on those responsible for the climate crisis, and leaves no one behind. Climate justice is mentioned just once in the 54 pages of this Bill. We cannot take climate action without also ensuring social justice, and a fair approach that does not damage people's livelihoods, does not hurt the most vulnerable in our society, and this approach must tackle the roots of this crisis. This Bill must be amended to include a just approach, to incorporate climate justice throughout, or it will never and can never deliver on what is required.

The science is abundantly clear, carbon neutrality by 2050 is far too late. The scenes of flooding in Skibbereen and across the country a few months ago are testament to the fact that the climate crisis is here now. The impacts of the crisis are not far-off in the distant future, they are the here and now. In order to avert worse, catastrophic climate change, we need more ambitious action. Relying simply on carbon removal technology is not enough with the current rate of scientific progression. We must protect biodiversity and wetlands that are crucial to storing greenhouse gases in order to take effective action. The plan outlined carbon budgets that enable us to emit a certain amount each year, with 'allowances' carrying over from previous years. This is frankly a childish concept, and blatantly goes against the aim of reducing emissions. We need to seek to lower emissions as much as possible every single year, and celebrate our gains, rather than increasing the problem again in 12 months time.

We are entering the final decade in which concrete climate action is possible. We are rapidly running out of time. This Bill must commit to binding concrete action that is faster and fairer than the 2050 target. In the coming days, an amended Bill which delivers climate justice, necessary change and above all a sustainable and just society must be delivered. See you on the streets or through a screen.