



Submission to Irish Aid's White Paper Review

Climate change is a particularly threatening symptom of the failure of existing development models from which food, energy and economic crises have emerged in recent years. Deep reductions in global GHG emissions and significant scaling up of support for adaptation and low carbon development are critical and urgent in order to tackle climate change. Current levels of political commitment and action remain wholly inadequate to meet the scale of the challenge presented by current impacts and projections by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and must be stepped up urgently. In order to be just and effective, all countries must act according to their responsibility and capacity, with a focus on protecting and promoting the human rights of the most vulnerable people. Furthermore, effective action on climate change is inherently linked to and dependant on a shift in both developed and developing countries to development models which are socially, environmentally and economically sustainable.

In 2011, the Tánaiste's speech at the UN General Assembly spoke of 'a compelling case for climate justice', and the need for 'developmental fairness' in responses to climate change. In recent months the Department of Foreign Affairs supported an event on the margins of the UN Human Rights Council exploring the relationship between climate change and human rights. Both events indicate a potential evolution in the Government's understanding and analysis of the global climate challenge.

In January 2012 the Minister for the Environment issued a 'Roadmap' for climate policy development and the introduction of a national climate law. An effective law should establish a robust policy cycle and political accountability that will ensure Ireland's emission reduction commitments are met and a national transition to low carbon development progressed. The establishment of a national climate law, Ireland's upcoming Presidency of the EU, and the Irish Aid White Paper Review should provide a catalyst for a more concerted and proactive national engagement in climate action nationally, and at EU and international levels.

In the context of the new White Paper the Irish Government should:

Advocate and pursue a justice approach to climate action, recognising the implications this has across Government policy and action, including the need for;

- Effective GHG emission reductions in Ireland and support for stronger emission reductions within the EU, recognising the implications of current low levels of ambition for vulnerable people in developing countries.
- Advocating national policy coherence by committing to work with other Governments Departments to ensure domestic action on climate change is both ambitious and effective. This should include the full implementation of the '*Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland*'¹.
- Fulfilling Ireland's commitment to provide €100mn in new and additional finance between 2010-2012, and scaling up Ireland's contribution to the mobilisation of long-

The draft Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland is available at <http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/Environment/Miscellaneous/FileDownload.29081.en.pdf>

term, secure, new and additional public finance for climate action in developing countries, with a continued focus on adaptation which remains underfunded.

- Advocating and pursuing a rights-based, people-centred approach to climate action to ensure investment at all levels is responsive, builds capacity and developmental co-benefits such as empowerment, food security and sustainable livelihoods. Identify and act on responses which threaten to exacerbate vulnerabilities or threaten human rights.
- Investing in small-scale women farmers given the disproportionate impacts they face from climate change, as well as their potential as a catalyst for promoting sustainable livelihoods practices.
- Promoting the effective participation of a diversity of civil society and community level organisations in decision making on climate change action.
- Promoting transparent, standardised, regular accounting and reporting on the sources and spending of climate finance flows, including whether finance is new, whether it is additional to existing ODA commitments, the share of loans versus grants, and the distribution of climate finance between adaptation and mitigation.
- Promote the inclusion of human rights and social and environmental safeguards in the principles, policies, reporting and evaluation of climate finance flows, and the establishment of independent national and international level grievance and recourse mechanisms to ensure compliance.