

Welsh Environment Minister welcomes CCC's calls for a step change in the pace of emissions reduction to meet carbon budgets

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Dr Samuel Frankhauser, member of the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) and Principal Research Fellow at the Grantham Research Institute was today joined by Wales Environment Minister, Jane Davidson at the Welsh launch of the Committee's first annual report to Parliament.

The Climate Change Act requires the CCC to report to the UK Parliament each year on emissions reductions relative to the UK's carbon budgets. The CCC's first report to Parliament concludes that a step change is needed in the pace of UK emissions reduction to meet carbon budgets, and that this will require new policy approaches in key areas.

The CCC's report found that over the past five years UK emissions have fallen each year by around 0.5%. However, between 2003 - 2007 CO₂ emissions in Wales rose by 0.3%. Going forward emissions reductions of 2-3% per annum will be required and the UK and Wales will need to contribute to this reduction.

The report sets out opportunities and policy recommendations for emissions reduction through energy efficiency improvement in homes, more carbon efficient cars, and clean power generation.

The Welsh Assembly Government has an important role to play addressing these opportunities given its control over a number of key policy levers. These include powers over planning for infrastructure investments, promoting energy efficiency and setting building standards.

Dr Samuel Frankhauser said:

"It is essential that much more effort is made in reducing emissions. This will require leadership at UK and national levels. The Welsh Assembly Government has an important role to play in unlocking the significant opportunities for emissions

reductions in our buildings, on our roads and in the generation of electricity. Progress has been made but further progress is needed if emissions are to be reduced as required.“

Speaking at the event today in Cardiff the Minister said:

“Climate change is the biggest threat facing the world. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to playing its part in meeting that challenge with our commitment to cutting carbon emissions in areas we control by 3% a year from 2011, enabling an 80% reduction before 2050. There is a lot of work to do but we have made a good start and are determined to do more to address the causes and consequences of climate change.”

Carbon budgets can be achieved by;

- Using cleaner forms of generating electricity such as wind generation, nuclear and clean coal (Carbon Capture and Storage).
- Improving energy efficiency in homes and buildings
- Improving fuel-efficiency of new cars and ensuring widespread roll-out of electric cars in the UK by 2020.

Implementation of the required measures to achieve budgets would in some instances save people and businesses money and in total cost less than 1% of GDP. In a world where carbon budgets are achieved the typical person will meet more of their energy needs from low carbon power, live in well insulated homes with energy efficient boilers and appliances, we will also work in energy efficient offices and drive more carbon efficient cars including hybrids and electric vehicles. Taking action could also improve the security of energy supply and air quality.

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Notes to Editors

Committee on Climate Change (CCC)

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) is an independent body established under the Climate Change Act to advise the UK Government on setting carbon budgets, and to report to Parliament on the progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Dr Samuel Fankhauser is a Principal Research Fellow at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change at the London School of Economics. He is a former Deputy Chief Economist of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and former Managing Director (Strategic Advice) at IDEACarbon.

- The launch of the Committee on Climate Change report took place in Cardiff today.
- The CCC are supporting the Welsh Assembly Government in developing their climate change strategy and have responded to the Welsh Assembly Government's climate change strategy consultation
- The report "Meeting carbon budgets – the need for a step change" was published in London on 12 October. It is the CCC's first annual report to Parliament on the progress made by Government in reducing emissions and can be viewed by visiting www.theccc.org.uk/reports
- The UK government and devolved administrations published its "UK Low Carbon Transition Plan" in July 2009 to identify actions to meet the UK carbon budgets. To access a copy, please visit: http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/publications/lc_trans_plan/lc_trans_plan.aspx
- In June 2009 the Welsh Assembly Government published its Climate Change Strategy – Programme of Action Consultation. The consultation sets out in more detail the actions the WAG are proposing to deliver the climate change objectives. The final strategy will be developed following the consultation and is expected to be published March 2010.
- The Welsh Assembly Government has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 3% every year from 2011.

For further information/ media bids please contact:

Emily Towers, emily.towers@theccc.gsi.gov.uk, 0207 592 1554/ 07766 366 577

Mark Bainbridge, mark.bainbridge@theccc.gsi.gov.uk, 0207 592 1553

Nick Spears, nicholas.spears@theccc.gsi.gov.uk 0207 592 1558 / 07548 994 709