CHAIR'S STATEMENT: Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Council's reaction to the publication by the Environmental Protection Agency of its State of the Environment Report 2024

The Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Council welcomes the publication today (3rd October 2024) of the EPA's State of the Environment Report 2024.

This broad ranging report, the eighth of its kind, developed by the EPA, provides important analysis and insights on the current status of climate change and other environmental pressures. It also highlights the longer-term outlook of what is required to protect and manage the environment.

Commenting on the report Council Chair, Marie Donnelly said: "This report once again confirms the need for immediate action to help us meet Ireland's National Climate objectives. We need to urgently respond to the current and projected impacts of climate change in Ireland and to the challenges and opportunities of the transition."

The report contains a wide range of findings across the different dimensions of the environment, many of which are very important in transforming Ireland into a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy by 2050. The key messages from this report that highlight the urgency of approach include:

- The need to ensure that there are clearer environmental policy objectives.
- That policy implementation has been too slow and fragmented across a range of relevant areas. In relation to climate change, the report raises a concern, aligned with the Council's sectoral reviews in 2024, that targets will not be achieved without significant additional policy development and implementation.
- Ireland's energy delivery systems, such as how we heat our buildings and how we supply electricity, need radical transformation to set us on a pathway to a sustainable society.
- This transformation will require significant levels of infrastructural investment in the economy in our heat, transport and electricity networks.
- There is a need to prioritise and address the environmental pressures Ireland faces to ensure better, healthier lives for all our citizens.

Marie Donnelly, added: "This report echoes the Council's call for a concerted effort across all sectors if we are to get on track to meet our international obligations and stay within the first and second carbon budgets. The Government has a vital role to play in ensuring that we reduce and ultimately eliminate our reliance on harmful, expensive and unsustainable imported fossil fuels. Meanwhile it is imperative to take

action to make Ireland more resilient to the impacts of climate change now, to avoid much higher damage costs in the future. To support this, there must be effective and consistent engagement with communities, ensuring there is a fair and equitable transition, while building and maintaining public support and action."

The EPA's Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024 is available HERE

ENDS

For further information please contact

Shane Finnegan (shane@aikenpr.com or 00447764534565)

Seamus Donnelly (seamus@aikenpr.com or 00447729556480)