

**National Statement by the Taoiseach, COP 27,
Sharm el-Sheikh, 8 November 2022**

Excellencies,

Across the world, we are witnessing the reality of a changing climate - record temperatures, wildfires, floods, and droughts.

What were once exceptional events are now occurring with increased frequency and ferocity.

People in the poorest parts of our planet are being driven from regions that can no longer support and sustain them.

Climate change is fuelling conflict, global instability, competition for resources and abject human misery.

If this generation doesn't step up urgently, future generations will not forgive us.

As leaders, it is our responsibility to drive the transformation necessary.

In Ireland, the Government has set legally binding emission reduction targets of 51% by 2030, and has committed Ireland to becoming climate-neutral by 2050.

We have fixed Sectoral Emissions Ceilings limiting greenhouse gas emissions for each economic sector.

Achieving these targets will be challenging, so we have enacted a legal framework to guide and underpin our efforts.

The burden of climate change globally is falling most heavily on those least responsible for our predicament.

Ireland has therefore published an International Climate Finance Roadmap, reaffirming our commitment to supporting the worlds' most vulnerable people.

We are more than doubling our finance to at least €225m a year by 2025.

We will not see the change we need without climate justice.

I am therefore pleased to announce that Ireland will contribute €10 million to the Global Shield initiative for 2023, to protect the most vulnerable from climate loss and damage.

As Leaders, we must lead.

Our citizens will become increasingly cynical, weary and hopeless if words are not urgently matched by deeds; if commitments do not generate new realities.

We can already see and feel the world around us changing.

Temperatures in Ireland have been so mild this autumn that trees are producing new growth before they have even shed their leaves.

The situation is urgent, but it is not hopeless.

As the UN report shows, we *are* bending the curve of emissions downwards.

Last year's UN projections showed emissions continuing to rise beyond 2030. This year, however, analysis shows them no longer rising after that date.

It is progress, but it is far from enough.

Our collective commitments, as notified, would still see temperatures increase by 2.5 degrees by the end of the century, with devastating consequences for the sustainability of our planet.

We need to do more.

When I spoke at COP26 last year I said I did not believe that it is now too late; that the transition will be too costly; that it is inevitable that we will leave people behind.

I believe it even more so now.

It *is* realistic for our legacy to be a sustainable planet; a world alive with an abundance of plant and animal life; with cleaner water and healthier air; with liveable cities and sustainable rural communities.

We will do everything in our power to bring it about.

This generation of Leaders cannot say that we didn't know.

The science is clear.

Every tonne of carbon warms the world.

Every delay makes our task that bit bigger.

Let us not waste a second more.

Thank you very much

ENDS