

*These notes refer to the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland)
2022 (c.31) which received Royal Assent on 6 June 2022*

Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Part 1 - Emissions Targets

Section 1: The emissions targets for 2050

This section imposes a duty on all Northern Ireland departments to ensure that the net Northern Ireland emissions account for the year 2050 is at least 100% lower than the baseline. Subsection (3) clarifies that this duty does not require the net Northern Ireland emissions account for methane for the year 2050 to be more than 46% lower than the baseline for methane. In addition, the section imposes a duty on all Northern Ireland departments to ensure that the net Northern Ireland emissions account for carbon dioxide for the year 2050 is 100% lower than the baseline for carbon dioxide.

The baseline is defined in section 7 as the aggregate amount of net Northern Ireland emissions of certain listed greenhouse gases for the baseline years of those gases (either 1990 or 1995 for each gas). The target for 2050 is set by reference to baseline years rather than a particular quantum of emissions because the baseline years are subject to revision, as understanding of historic emissions improves. Using a baseline for this calculation is consistent with the methodology employed for the purposes of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 1998, an international agreement to limit emissions of greenhouse gases, to which the UK is party. The baseline for carbon dioxide is the amount of net Northern Ireland emissions of carbon dioxide in 1990 and similarly the baseline for methane is the amount of net Northern Ireland emissions of methane in 1990.

The term “net Northern Ireland emissions account” is defined in section 8.