

Response submitted via email

Committee.AgrEnvRural@niassembly.gov.uk

24th September 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below our response on the following consultation.

- Call for evidence and views on The Climate Change (No. 2) Bill

EAUC – The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education:

Response on behalf of our Members (United Kingdom and Ireland)

About the EAUC

Our passion is to create a world with sustainability at its heart. That's our vision. We exist to lead and empower the post-16 education sector to make sustainability 'just good business'.

The membership of the EAUC comprises higher and further educational institutions, with a combined budget of some £43 billion, responsible for educating over 4.5 million students supported by over half a million staff.

We have regional and country chapters, with member institutions connected deeply with business, industry, health and civic bodies at local levels, with reach internationally via their research, innovation and student mobility.

We believe

- That UK and Irish education should be a global leader in sustainability
- That educational institutions have a responsibility as anchors in their communities to be agents of change
- That education has a unique opportunity to transform lives and communities
- That education is at the heart of global sustainability
- That every student should have access to sustainability education
- That education should reflect best practice in operational sustainability
- In being flexible and adaptable to find solutions for a resilient future
- In the value of international collaboration

Our values

- Pioneering - driving sustainability through innovation
- Independence - our own unique voice
- Collaboration - together we go further
- Role Model - leading by example
- Empowering - supporting and inspiring our members

Get in touch!

Response to the consultation:

Call for evidence and views on The Climate Change (No. 2) Bill

We submitted responses to the Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland (February 2020), the Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill (January 2021) and the call for evidence and views on the Climate Change Bill (July 2021) and would encourage you to read our responses.

While we are not able to respond to all the proposals individually we have provided feedback on those we feel most relevant.

Emissions Targets and Carbon Budgets

We are incredibly supportive of a Climate Change Bill and it is imperative that Northern Ireland's carbon and GHG emissions targets are credible and evidence-based. In our earlier consultation response, we stated we were in favour of the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) recommendation that Northern Ireland should set their carbon emissions Net Zero target for 2050 (at the latest), and a GHG emissions target for 82% by 2050. We are pleased to see that Clause 1 to 3 of the Bill have net emissions targets for 2050, 2040 and 2030 based on the CCC's recommendation as outlined by the CCC for Northern Ireland in their Sixth Carbon Budget.

Progress Reporting

There needs to be transparency with how these policy objectives are to be met, for example the financial contribution required, the role of the Further and Higher Education sector and offsetting. We believe monitoring and evaluation is critical and therefore progress reports need to be public and transparent. We are supportive of interim reports, final statements and compliance statements but we ask for further clarification on accountability and what measures can be enforced by the Assembly should the carbon budgets and targets not be met.

Responsibilities on Government Departments and Public Bodies

There needs to be a discussion with a wide range of public bodies on how various sectors can be enabled and encouraged to effectively play their vital role in the transition to a low carbon economy. The Higher and Further Education sectors will be a key player here.

We remain unclear as to whether the Higher and Further education sector will be required (voluntary or mandatory) to report. We are in favour of mandatory reporting and The Public Bodies Climate Change Duties in Scotland is an example of best practice.

Post-16 education plays a crucial role in driving environmental changes. Emissions reduction targets and the decarbonisation of Northern Ireland must be accompanied by education and skills. Many people in the current workforce will need to be upskilled or retrained for a low carbon world, and those in education institutions must receive an education that equips them with the viable skills and knowledge needed to gain employment. We would urge the Northern Ireland Assembly to work closely with its universities and colleges.

We hope you find this information useful and we would be keen to discuss the role of Higher and Further Education moving forward.

Get in touch!

Yours sincerely



Iain Patton

CEO

Get in touch!

 01242 714 321

 info@eauc.org.uk

 www.eauc.org.uk