 Committee: UNEP(United Nations Environment Programme)

Agenda Item: 1. Assessing the Current State of the Climate Crisis

2. Environmental Problems Regarding Cities

Country: Ireland

Delegation: Defne Demirel

Ireland, is a country in north-western Europe.The capital and largest city is Dublin. The [republic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sovereign_state" \o "Sovereign state) shares its only land border with [Northern Ireland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Ireland" \o "Northern Ireland), which is [part of the United Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Countries_of_the_United_Kingdom" \o "Countries of the United Kingdom). The island of Ireland is the third largest island in Europe.Ireland’s population is around 5 million.The Republic of Ireland is a sovereign, independent and democratic state. The Irish Free State was created with Dominion status in 1922. In 1937, state was named “Ireland”. It was officially declared a republic in 1949. Ireland became a member of the United Nations in 1955. It joined the European Communities , the predecessor of the European Union, in 1973. It is a founding member of the Council of Europe and the OECD. The country did not join NATO due to its neutrality decision just before World War II. The state had no formal relations with Northern Ireland for most of the 20th century. Ireland is a advanced country with a quality of life that ranks amongst the highest in the World. The Irish economy is equally dependent on agriculture and industry. One of Europe's major financial hubs being centred around Dublin. It ranks among the top ten wealthiest countries in the World within the ranks high in health care, economic freedom and freedom of the press. Between the ages of 6-14, education is compulsory and free of charge. Secondary education institutions are private, often run by religious institutions also they are funded by the state.

According to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), Ireland did meet its 2020 European Union renewable energy target for electricity, but we did not meet our targets for transport and the built environment. This means we failed to meet our overall target of 16% of all energy coming from renewable sources by 2020, and we ranked second-last out of 28 European countries for renewable energy targets. Ireland is ranked among the worst-performing developed countries for climate action both in the EU and globally. In 2023, the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) ranked Ireland 37th out of 59 countries and the European Union. The taoiseach (prime minister) attended the COP26 U.N. Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in October–November 2021. He stated that “climate change is real – we are seeing its serious impacts already. The IPCC Report in August confirmed to us that it is widespread, it is rapid, and it is intensifying.” Moreover, the taoiseach acknowledged that to achieve the goals of the 2016 Paris Agreement “immediate, large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are essential.”

Over the last number of years, the Irish Government has made promises surrounding climate action and introduced new policies and legislation. In 2019, Ireland became the second country in the world to declare a ‘climate emergency’.In 2021, Ireland signed its Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 into law. This law aims to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, and a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The government hopes to generate 80% of electricity from renewable sources, while phasing out coal- and peat-fired plants by 2030. The Climate Action Plan sets out how Ireland will reduce our emissions in line with our carbon budgets and what actions can be taken. The government has been sharing progress reports every three months. So far, 74% of the actions set out in the 2023 Climate Action Plan have been completed. Ireland has also been involved in climate talks at an international and EU level, and has signed up to a number of climate agreements such as international 2015 UN Paris Agreement. Agriculture accounts for 35.3% of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions, 95% of which come from livestock farming. But the country is a leader in carbon-efficient agriculture.

Despite the fact that Ireland is a small country with a small population, our carbon emissions have been rising, mostly because of activities like intensive agriculture, transport, and energy. Our greenhouse gas emissions per person are among the highest of any country in the world, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). With the aim of solving specified problems, we need to act now and cut our greenhouse gas emissions. To prevent greenhouse gas emissions from rising further, we need to stop burning fossil fuels and start turning towards renewable energy sources, move towards more sustainable travel and make changes to our food systems. A European Commission assessment of Ireland’s National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) states that potential funding from EU sources to Ireland between 2021 and 2027 amounts to up to €13.3 billion, much of which can help with the country’s transition to a low-carbon economy. Around 35% of NextGenerationEU funds will be spent on climate-related activities such as fuel poverty relief and green agriculture incentives. Grants are available to encourage reforestation. The reforms and investment in Ireland’s plan approved by Council is helping it become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities offered by the green and digital transitions. Firstly, key green investments relate to energy efficiency and renewable energy investments in private and public buildings, sustainable mobility with an important project in the area of Cork, smart and sustainable water management, and protecting biodiversity through the rehabilitation of peatlands. Secondly, key digital investments relate to the digital transformation of Irish enterprises, the digitalisation of public administration services, the funding for connectivity and ICT devices to schools, and the development of a shared Government data centre. The transformative impact of Ireland's plan will be the result of reforms and investments that address the country's unique challenges.