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From:

Sent:

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Thursday 20 October 2022 22:40

To:

Energy Consultation

Subject:

My submission to the consultation on energy security

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Dear Dept of Environment,

Please find below my submission to the your consultation "Review of the security of energy supply of Ireland's electricity and natural gas systems". It is essential the Ireland makes a fast, rapid and just transition to a fossil free energy system as this is the best way to ensure our energy security and tackle the climate and energy poverty crises. I include more specific detail on how I believe Ireland should address energy security issues below.

ISSUE ONE: There's no energy security without climate security

Any planned energy security infrastructure must align with Ireland's climate obligations. This means proposed infrastructure must include:

- An assessment of emissions associated with the project and how it aligns with Ireland's first two carbon budgets to 2030 and associated sectoral emissions ceilings.
- Full information on how it will support full decarbonisation of the energy system by the 2030s in accordance with Ireland's target of net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest.
- An examination of health and environmental impacts
- Full information on how the infrastructure will be used (e.g. only in an emergency) and how it will be phased out (e.g. in order to prevent undue reliance on backup infrastructure).

ISSUE TWO: Say YES to Liquefied Natural Gas:

Abandon the current moratorium on LNG and gas imports.

An expert report makes clear that commercially-operated or state-owned LNG import terminal on land, such as Shannon LNG, should be supported as it would like result in the importation of gas, it would have reduced emissions and would help guarantee energy supply.

ISSUE THREE: Issue new licences for fossil fuel exploration.

The independent expert report makes clear that additional gas reserves from existing exploration licences, such as from Providence or Corrib should be supported. Unknown volume of additional natural gas remain to be discovered.

ISSUE FOUR: Introduce a moratorium on new data centres connecting to the electricity grid until electricity system pressures are transparently addressed.

The UCC MaREI research centre has highlighted a pause in the connection of new data centres as the most impactful single action the Government can take to reduce electricity demand.

ISSUE FIVE: Plan for a zero carbon electricity system by 2035

The independent expert report clarifies the positive contribution that can be made from energy efficiency, offshore wind, Nuclear, solar, battery storage and further interconnection. These must be prioritised instead of continuing dependence on dirty, expensive and unreliable fossil fuels.

The state has the technologies and the resources to protect and decarbonise our electricity system. The Government must choose to use them and not fall back into old ways of thinking.

ISSUE SIX: Support energy security at household level

A) Energy efficiency is energy security:

The Government must focus on energy efficiency solutions as they will permanently enhance our security, reduce emissions and protect households from rising energy costs. As the International Energy Agency has highlighted, the most secure gas molecule is the one you do not need.

Households and communities must be supported. The Government should insulate 100,000 homes in 2023, prioritising cheaper measures that save energy and money quickly. The focus must be on reaching those most at risk, particularly those who rely on coal and turf. Don't wait for them to apply to SEAI for a grant, sit down with anti-poverty and community groups to plan a coordinated outreach campaign.

B) Phase out polluting boilers and the gas distribution network:

Installing fossil fuel boilers into the homes of low-income families risks locking them into fossil fuel heating for many years, leaving them vulnerable to global shocks like the current energy crisis. The SEAI have also noted 'a timeline and plan for fossil-fuel phase-out must urgently be put in place if we are to reach net zero by 2050'.

- Ban the further expansion of the gas distribution network from 2023 through legislation.
- Ban fossil fuel boilers in new buildings in 2023. Ban the sale of new fossil gas boilers for any building by 2028. Phase out fossil fuel boilers in existing buildings, prioritising residential homes by 2033. These measures must be backed by improved access to energy efficiency measures and alternative zero-carbon heating options.

C) Lead the solar transformation:

Government should prioritise the rollout of solar PV on the rooftop of 1 million homes by 2030 and on the rooftop of every school by 2025.

UCC MaREI research indicates that more than 1 million homes in Ireland have roof space and orientation suitable for 10 solar panels. This action would produce 25% of all residential electricity demand and would contribute to a culture change around the energy transition where citizens are at the heart of climate action.

(D) Invest in Clean Nuclear power plants at least 5. If these are commissioned immediately then they will be up and running at full capacity by 2026. Eliminating our use of fossil fuels.

Yours Sincerely



Yours sincerely,

