

IRELAND

1. Official Position

In January 1990 the Government announced a new, comprehensive national environmental action programme. This programme, described in a White Paper, proposes the establishment of an Environmental Protection Agency, and the expansion of activities by other government bodies with responsibilities impinging on the environment.

While the Government's programme does not state any particular target for CO₂ — its main emphasis is on reducing conventional pollutants — many of its policies will have the effect of slowing the rise in emissions of this gas. In particular, the programme stresses the importance of energy conservation and provides additional funds for that purpose. Reductions from the industrial, commercial and residential sectors will come about through improvements in the efficiency of energy use, and greater recycling of municipal solid waste. Demonstration projects and information campaigns will play an important part in disseminating new energy-saving techniques and technologies.

The Government supports the concept of sustainable development and participates in international initiatives to avert global climate change, especially those coordinated within the European Community.

The Department of Environment is now working to develop, in association with other responsible Departments (e.g., Energy, Agriculture and Transport), specific measures for meeting this challenge. It is expected to have this work finalised around mid-1991.