

Minutes of CCC Meeting, 25/05/2018

Present were John Deben, Julia Brown, Rebecca Heaton (from item 2), Corinne Le Quéré, Paul Johnson, Jim Skea (item 3), Chris Stark

Conflicts of interest

Committee members were reminded of the need to declare any conflicts of interest (also recorded in the register of interest: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/about/transparency/>)

1. Bioenergy update

The Committee was updated on the approach being adopted, in the bioenergy review, for bioenergy supply scenarios. Four scenarios had been developed, ranging from low supplies where global governance was assumed poor, to higher supplies where governance and innovation were strong. A fifth scenario where the UK was a hub for bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) was also being developed.

Many assumptions were embedded in each scenario. The need to show as clear a basis as possible to justify these assumptions was agreed.

The role of 1st generation food crops was discussed. The Committee agreed that a cautious approach to their use should remain.

The potential role for wood in construction was considered. Currently around 28% of new housing starts in the UK are timber frame. Ongoing work suggests that new techniques are expanding the potential for use of wood. It was agreed that this should be explored further in stakeholder workshops. Discussion with the modular construction industry could also be helpful.

2. Progress report - industry

Recent changes in industry emissions (up 1% in 2017, largely reflecting increases in refineries and fossil fuel production) were considered in the context of longer term trends.

The importance of a clear pathway for CCS deployment and for an industrial energy efficiency scheme was agreed. There were also gaps in relation to policy for low-carbon heat. More generally, it was agreed to emphasise the lack of details in current Government proposals and need for urgency in fleshing these out.

3. Progress report – economy wide

The Committee picked up on discussion from the previous meeting on presentation of the policy gap chart. An assessment updated to reflect latest BEIS projections would show the Committee's cost-effective path running below the level of the legislated 4th and 5th carbon budgets.

It was agreed that this should be the basis for presentation in the progress report, with the case clearly explained for filling each element of the projected gap to the cost-effective path.

4. Progress report - waste

The Committee considered recent changes in emissions from waste and related policy.

Estimated emissions in the inventory rose by 5% in 2016, apparently reversing a long-term trend decline. This reflected a sharp reduction in methane being flared (with less methane flared, the amount of methane emitted from landfill increased; the methane is more damaging than the CO₂ that is emitted after flaring). This was being investigated further, but we did not currently have an explanation for this change.

Currently key indicators were not on track to the Committee's assessment of what was needed to contribute to meeting future carbon budgets.

In relation to policy, Government plans to publish a new Resources and Waste Strategy, later in 2018, were noted, and the urgency of progress on this agreed.

The Committee agreed that its previous recommendation to ban bio-degradable waste to landfill by 2025 should be re-stated in the progress report. This was already being pursued in Wales, and was required more generally by 2025 at latest.