# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Publication of Emissions Data for 2021**  |
| **DATE**  | **22 June 2023** |
| **BY** | **Julie James, Minister for Climate Change** |

This statement updates the Senedd on the latest greenhouse gas emissions data for Wales.

The territorial [**emissions data released** this week by the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (Reports - NAEI, UK (beis.gov.uk) (external link)](https://naei.beis.gov.uk/reports/reports?report_id=1110) shows in 2021, it was estimated that greenhouse gas emissions totalled 36.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) equivalent, a fall of 35% compared to base year[[1]](#footnote-1) emissions and an increase of 7% compared to 2020. Despite the increase between 2020 and 2021, Welsh emissions in 2021 were 6% below the 2019 pre-pandemic levels. Most of the increase in 2021 is due to increases in emissions from power stations, iron and steel production, and road transport, consistent with economic rebound following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The raw data published this week provides the first evidence of performance against Wales’ second carbon (2021-25). The second carbon budget is set at an average reduction in emissions of 37% over the five year period, with an ambition to exceed this target. The Welsh carbon budget system looks across 5-year periods to assess performance against the overall trend in emissions. The full Net Welsh Emissions Account, upon which our legal targets are based will be published in our legislative Final Statement, at the end of the Carbon Budget 2 Delivery period.

Climate change requires everyone to act. Now the focus is on the delivery of Net Zero Wales and maximising the benefits for communities and nature in the actions we take. The Welsh Government will shortly publish our final Public Engagement Strategy on Climate, which we consulted upon in late 2022. This will set out a positive vision for a greener way of living which is fair, inclusive, and driven by the guiding principle of ‘leaving no-one behind’. We will engage people in how to tackle climate change and in the part the public can play.

Last year the Welsh Government also issued a Just Transition Call for Evidence and received over 100 responses from a range of stakeholders. We will be publishing a summary report in Autumn and looking to develop a framework to coordinate action later in the year.

Wales faces different challenges and opportunities to the rest of the UK. In the UK the traded sector accounts for around 25% of emissions, whilst in Wales nearly half of Welsh emissions are in the traded sector (46%). This results in significant variability in our emissions, due in particular to the importance and high share of UK industry and manufacturing in our economy and the fact that we are a net exporter of energy products to other areas of the UK. This year’s data shows that the energy supply sector and business sector made up half of our emissions in 2021. The particularly high volatility in these sectors coupled with the sectors being mostly reserved to the UK Government, means that performance against our targets is unpredictable. This is an important point the CCC also highlighted in their latest Progress Report. I hope the UK Government are ready to play their part, just as we are.

The challenge of climate change requires us to work together. This week I am in Brussels, as a Steering Group member of the Under 2 Coalition. Wales was a founding member of the network, which has now grown to 167 individual states, totalling more than 50% of global GDP. In advance of COP28 and as highlighted by the Glasgow Climate Pact and the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plans, urgent multilevel action is needed. We believe the actions that Wales and other members of these networks take can create pressure to bring about change at the global level, demonstrating what is possible. Through the international coalitions of which we are a part we have drawn inspiration and encouragement, and we have seen real interest in the actions being taken in Wales, to oppose the extraction of fossil fuels, shift infrastructure investment and pursue recovery of our natural carbon stores.  Collectively the wealth of knowledge and expertise throughout these states and regions is huge and gives me hope we can fight against climate change and set the global path to net zero emissions by 2050.

1. Base years for UK greenhouse gas emissions are: 1990 for carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide; 1995 for the fluorinated gases. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)