# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Welsh Government declares Climate Emergency** |
| **DATE** | **30 April 2019** |
| **BY** | **Lesley Griffiths, Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs** |

On behalf of Welsh Government, yesterday I declared a climate emergency in Wales following a meeting with UK and Scottish Environmental Ministers in Cardiff.

The declaration sends a clear signal the Welsh Government will not allow the process of leaving the EU to distract us from the challenge of climate change, which threatens our health, economy, infrastructure and our natural environment.

The announcement draws attention to the magnitude and significance of the latest evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and highlights the recent climate protests across the UK. Welsh Government is due to receive advice this week from the UK Committee on Climate Change as to the options we have for setting net zero targets for carbon emissions and other greenhouse gases.

This advice will establish the maximum technical potential for reductions across the economy based on independent assessment of the best available scientific evidence. It is our view that we cannot afford to simply accept that advice as the limit of our ambition but to see it as a starting point that we are required to make every effort to exceed.

I believe we have the determination and ingenuity in Wales to deliver a low carbon economy at the same time as making our society fairer and healthier.

We hope the declaration by Welsh Government can help to trigger a wave of action at home and internationally, from our own communities, businesses and organisations to parliaments and governments around the world.

Tackling climate change is not an issue which can be left to individuals or to the free market. It requires collective action and the government has a central role to making collective action possible.

No nation in the world has yet fully grasped this challenge but just as Wales played a leading role in the first industrial revolution, I believe Wales can provide an example to others of what it means to achieve environmental growth.

Wales’ sustainable development and environmental legislation is already recognised as world leading and we must use that legislation to set a new pace of change.

The Welsh Government has committed to achieving a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and to coordinating action to help other areas of the economy to make a decisive shift away from fossil fuels.

Last month, we published Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales, which sets out 100 policies and proposals to meet the 2020 carbon emissions targets. Our next plan setting our measures to meet emissions reduction targets for 2021-26 is already being prepared and must go further and faster.

It is essential the next plan is not simply a Welsh Government effort but is an all-Wales plan. As well as including measures that directly reduce carbon emissions, our present plan places a strong emphasis on bringing together communities, workers, businesses and government to develop new solutions and ways of working to make that all-Wales action possible.

Our Welsh Government Energy Service is providing funding and practical support to community-led renewable energy projects. We are supporting the establishment of the Centre for Climate Change Transformations at Cardiff University to increase our understanding of how we can better support organisations and individuals to reduce the carbon emissions they create. We are establishing an Industry-led Decarbonisation group to focus on those sectors where the shift to reduce carbon emissions will be the most challenging. We are creating a Climate Just Advisory Group bringing together workers and industry to ensure that we protect the interests of those communities where many people are currently employed in carbon-intensive industries.

These are just a small selection of the measures we are taking. Our decision to declare a climate emergency signals the commitment of Welsh Government to continue to raise our ambition and to do even more to provide the basis for collective action on climate change across our economy and society.

There is a role to play for every community, every business, and every public service in Wales. This is not the usual approach but this is no ordinary challenge. We must all play a part in building a Wales truly fit for future generations.