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XR Cymru Political Circle

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Thank you for your letter of 8 February, regarding our 3 February meeting.

On the 9th of February, I laid regulations in the Senedd which will formally commit Wales, for the first time, to legally binding targets to deliver the goal of net-zero emissions. We have chosen to front-load action in the next 15 years. Subject to the regulations becoming law, Ministers will be required to meet the ambitious targets of a 37% average reduction in territorial emissions between 2025 and 2030 and a 58% average reduction between 2026 and 2030, resulting in an interim target of reducing emissions by 63% by 2030. The new targets will be extraordinarily challenging to meet and are a significant raising of ambition from our existing targets.

Emissions data suggests we are on track to achieve our first carbon budget and the 2020 target but future budgets and targets will be even more demanding. We all need to redouble our efforts if Wales is going to make its fair contribution to tackling the climate emergency.

The challenge of climate change requires everyone to act. There are many types of involvement and engagement on climate change across the globe and we are committed to involving citizens in the issues which affect them. In this context, I welcome the news last month that Blaenau Gwent will host Wales' first Citizen's Assembly on Climate, an initiative which has received Welsh Government support as part of our drive to support the creation of exemplar low carbon communities in the course of expanding the provision of high quality social housing. Reaching more ambitious climate goals will require many more such local initiatives, which are meaningful and accessible to citizens, as part of our national effort.

Last summer we published an engagement plan explaining our approach to collaboration and involvement throughout 2020 and 2021¹. The plan describes how we see every public

¹ <https://gov.wales/low-carbon-delivery-plan-2-engagement-plan>

body, business and citizen in Wales playing their part in determining how we will meet increasingly ambitious climate goals. Together, we will set out how we will meet the second carbon budget and pivot to the net-zero ambition in our second statutory 'All Wales' decarbonisation plan, which we will publish in November in advance of the United Nations climate summit, COP26, being held in Glasgow.

I fully appreciate the need to accept our full ecological footprint, taking into account the goods we buy, the food we eat, and the supply chains we use. I am also acutely aware of the risk of exporting our emissions. This is why the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 mandates Ministers, in reporting on performance in meeting each carbon budget, must also report on consumption emissions. Due to the lag in data, we cannot yet report on progress in meeting our first carbon budget. Welsh Government will publish this report in 2022.

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Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
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