

Caring Climate Action - A Feminist Climate Justice Election Manifesto

Climate instability is increasing vulnerabilities throughout Ireland, particularly among women and marginalised communities. Reducing these vulnerabilities is an essential part of meeting our emissions targets because the scale of change required will only be possible if everyone is included. We must move away from supporting the extractive activities and polluting industries that have created the climate crisis but that so much of our economic development has depended on. Moving toward regenerative practices that prioritise community needs and care work is essential for a climate just future. The climate crisis does not impact everyone equally, and to date many climate policies in Ireland have exacerbated social and class inequality, leaving many people and communities behind.

But it's not too late. We have an opportunity to get this right: in the upcoming General Election, the National Network within the Feminist Communities for Climate Justice project between the National Women's Council and Community Work Ireland want to see clear commitments from political parties to develop climate policy that puts the health of people and planet first. We must reduce social inequalities while reducing carbon emissions.

We want to see caring climate actions which have the potential to be transformative in creating a fairer, cleaner, more prosperous and more equal future in which all women, communities, workers, and counties are lifted up.

Protecting Nature

- Convene a referendum on the right to a healthy environment as recommended by the Citizens Assembly on Biodiversity Loss and the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Environment and Climate Action
- Have Ireland endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and set a phase-out date for fossil fuels Commit to removing action 17 from the Government's recent energy security package calling for an LNG terminal under strategic gas infrastructure, and impose a permanent ban on LNG infrastructure and all new fossil fuel infrastructure
- Ensure that all climate policies detail and quantify how reductions in emissions will be delivered
- Strengthen and enforce consequences/penalties for illegal dumping by businesses and general public
- Bring waste management out of the private sector and into public ownership under local authorities.
- Mandate that all development plans include provisions for access to quality green spaces, integrating this requirement into both development and health impact assessments
- Expand approaches and incentives for climate and biodiversity-friendly land use, farm practices and food production
- Increase the agency of women in agriculture to fully participate through increased funding and equal access to resources and schemes
- Invest in supporting farmers and local producers committed to chemical-free agriculture to show the advantages in transitioning to this sector

No Woman or Community Left Behind

- Proof just transition supports/actions from the perspective of class, socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity, age, citizenship status and disability
- Ensure equal representation of women and marginalised communities in all decision-making spaces and within the Just Transition Commission
- Building on recent initiatives such as the Community Development Programme, strengthen the infrastructure of the autonomous community sector in the areas of climate change, climate injustice and inequality, including supports to achieve a just transition in marginalised communities
- Ensure that just transition is a key feature of all government strategies
- Mandate employers to identify and address skills gaps that arise in the green transition, ensuring social dialogue mechanisms are in place for this process
- Create a framework to ensure the rights and responsibilities of employers are upheld in regard to addressing skills gaps and employment dislocation incurred during the green transition
- Monitor the implementation of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive to ensure that employers are meeting their responsibilities and commitments to tackling the climate crisis
- Recognise care work, formal and informal, as green work and key to our Just Transition, ensuring it meets the markers of Decent Work as set out by the International Labour Organisation and is meaningfully included in Irish climate policy

Eliminate energy poverty

- Develop a comprehensive measurement for energy poverty that goes beyond expenditure. This should include factors like reducing or eliminating energy use due to cost, as well as other barriers to accessing adequate energy
- Introduce an Energy Poverty Act that comprehensively defines energy poverty, has legally binding targets and is based on Ministerial duties; ensure an intersectional gender analysis & approach informs the development and implementation of the Act
- Establish an Independent Energy Poverty Advisory Council to oversee the implementation of the Act
- Monitor energy poverty impact on renters with no agency to improve efficiency of their homes, putting in place initiatives to ensure they have access to warm affordable homes
- Introduce energy efficiency schemes for Travellers and others living in trailers, caravans and/or mobile homes that are not eligible for energy grants and schemes such as retrofitting
- Target and increase investment and eligibility in retrofitting schemes and measures, prioritising marginalised communities and those most affected by energy poverty Include tackling energy poverty as a policy area for city and county councils

Education & Climate Literacy

- Develop robust fact-based tools to counter the threat of climate disinformation and political polarisation, highlighting how climate action and policy benefit society
- Mainstream climate action and climate literacy as a core school subject from primary school onwards
- Provide supports and resources to teachers, both at preservice and inservice training, in climate literacy to ensure that educators feel confident in delivering climate-based content
- Co-develop a public education campaign around climate change targeted at all those outside the formal education system; co-produce and implement this in partnership with groups based in the community, including older people, young people, women's groups and community groups

Public and Active Transport for All

- Continue the expansion of Ireland's public transport system, particularly for those living in rural areas. Ensure that timetabling caters to a variety of needs beyond the typical work-home commute, making public transport a viable option for all journeys.
- Roll out an awareness-raising campaign of how to identify, tackle and report cases of sexual harassment/assault on public transport to create and advance a zero-tolerance approach
- Broaden existing schemes to increase access to transport: Retain the 20% reduction in public transport fares; continue making the School Transport Scheme free to use; and extend the Free Travel Scheme to people in the international protection process
- Employ turn-up-and-go staff to assist disabled passengers so they do not need to book assistance 24 - 48 hours in advance for rail services
- Continue development of active transport infrastructure, including cycling and pedestrianisation, in all parts of the country

Health

- Adopt World Health Organisation air quality guidelines as legally binding targets by 2035 Include eco-anxiety as a recognised concern in Ireland's mental health policy, *Sharing the Vision*
- Ensure that climate-related health concerns, such as air quality and extreme temperatures, are incorporated into the Women's Health Action Plan
- Develop and implement a public communications campaign to educate the public and key decision-makers on the climate crisis, emphasising its status as a critical public health issue

For more information, contact the Feminist Communities for Climate Justice National Network at vanessac@nwci.ie



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