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VIEWS AND COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT CODEMA STRATEGY TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLANS FOR THE DUBLIN LOCAL AUTHORITIES

BACKGROUND

The draft Codema strategy towards developing collaborative, transboundary Dublin climate change action plans was considered at a Fingal Public Participation Network (FPPN) workshop in ITB Blanchardstown on Saturday 22nd October. Assurances had been given that views and comments arising from this workshop would be accepted by Codema, despite the published deadline of 17th October.

The comments on the following pages have been grouped into the structured Codema framework of seven focus areas (**Citizen Engagement, Planning, Energy, Transport, Water, Waste**, and **Ecosystems & Biodiversity**), and expand on the examples of possible action areas to address the interconnected challenges of climate mitigation, climate adaptation and carbon-free sustainable energy.

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FPPN Water & Environment community representatives

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

“We need to equip citizens with the right information to make informed decisions and assist and empower them to play their part in Dublin’s transition to a low-carbon, energy- smart region.”

Codema examples of possible action areas

- *Roll out regional public climate awareness programme*
- *Encourage citizens to become ‘prosumers’ of their own energy*
- *Work with existing local authority networks to engage citizens in the climate change challenge*
- *Involve citizens in more workshops and focus groups on the topic of climate change*
- *Actively reference citizens’ involvement when creating and implementing action plans and local development plans*
- *Link in with publications such as citizens’ newsletters*
- *Make use of social media to engage citizens and community groups*
- *Promote green tourism and business, e.g. Cycling tours, food co-ops and local markets*

FPPN suggestions for possible action areas

- *Encourage citizens with incentives for initiatives rather than penalties for non-compliance – home owners who presently want to retrofit their homes cannot decipher the maze of disincentives placed on such projects*
- *Provide an easy 'one stop shop' where a pre-work BER is done, with suggestions and pricings of various options to reduce the BER are provided. Every home being sold or rented needs a BER; people should be encouraged and helped to raise the BER as high as possible, and incentivised to do so*
- *A dedicated loan scheme could also be useful - if it is attractive enough it will be taken up, but people have to see what is in it for them, as well as the planet*
- *Ensure the national Public Participation Network and role of Water & Environment Linkage Groups are named in the Strategy with the role of facilitation, consultation, information dissemination and building the capacity of the community – training in Climate Change measures*
- *Promote awareness – Green School competitions for children; plant a tree for every baby born; encourage Tidy Town groups to use “good” plants and remove invasive species*
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PLANNING

“The decisions made now about land use in Dublin will have a long-term effect on the ability of citizens to live sustainable lifestyles in the future.”

Codema examples of possible action areas

- *Explore the possibility of energy masterplans for appropriate new development zones*
- *Ensure development plan design guidance and standards support climate change mitigation/adaptation*
- *Use planning policy to promote near zero energy buildings for new developments*
- *Use planning policy to promote optimal connection to new low- carbon district heating networks*
- *Promote and integrate green infrastructure strategies into all regional and local planning policies*
- *Develop strategic interconnecting regional and local SuDS plans and ensure integration into all regional and local plans*
- *Ensure that appropriate engineering and environmental sections are involved at planning stage*
- *Develop a regional emissions inventory*
- *Ensure new developments are located close to public transport and are well-served by walking and cycling facilities*

FPPN suggestions for possible action areas

- *Create interesting / attractive cycle and walking lanes: a Fingal “Balscadden to Balbriggan” North Coast route; alongside rivers i.e. Ballyboughal River Eastwards to Turvey Allotments, etc.*
- *Introduce a policy to separate treated water from grey water in all buildings*
- *Limit the use of advertising boards in industrial estates e.g. Coolmine*
- *Prioritise rainwater soakage in residential areas – reduce concrete and tarmac in favour of cobblelock, gravel and permeable ground cover*
- *Firmly enforce planning laws during construction, with financial disincentives for non-compliance - Priory Hall comes to mind*
- *Provide for maximum pedestrian & cycle “permeability” (gaps between blocks of buildings/gardens) through residential areas, to facilitate access to main roads & public transport, discouraging unnecessary use of cars*

ENERGY

“Energy use accounts for the vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions in Dublin and, as such, is central to this strategy.”

Codema examples of possible action areas

- *Become leaders in the use of energy efficiency design at project development stage*
- *Take an exemplar role in the use of green public procurement*
- *Support and facilitate low-carbon district heating networks*
- *Move towards near-zero-energy in council new-build buildings, in line with EU policy*
- *Engage with utility and regulatory bodies to help citizens generate, use and sell their own energy*
- *Evaluate the use of energy performance contracts in council buildings*
- *Assess potential for council-led renewable energy projects*
- *Make Dublin’s energy supply more secure through increased use of local resources*
- *Ensure new energy infrastructure is climate resilient*

FPPN suggestions for possible action areas

- *Encourage investment in local generation of energy: e.g. district heating; using waste heat from data centres; use of waste treatment for large area heating; generating gas from animal manure for farm energy use; solar panels on houses*
- *Incentivise the installation of solar panels, for both water heating and electricity generation. Each industrial estate should have solar panels and perhaps wind turbines on all buildings. Manufacture of these in Ireland would provide jobs. Every South-facing roof should have solar panels - the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) needs to come on board with a feed-in tariff to the grid, encouraging generation in towns and cities where the energy is being used*
- *Reduce present 'waste' of energy by retrofitting house insulation, and reducing water heating by using under sink water heaters (as in Holland) or solar water heating*
- *Council policies and action plans emphasise what is being done for council properties: engaging and encouraging citizens to follow suit is essential if the national targets are to be achieved*

TRANSPORT

“A move towards sustainable transport will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but will also lead to a cleaner and more connected region.”

Codema examples of possible action areas

- *Promote high-density development along public transport corridors through close collaboration with our planning departments*
- *Upgrade the councils’ fleets to more sustainable and energy efficient vehicles*
- *Work with ESB ecars to help facilitate a network of electrical charge points*
- *Continue to develop efficient traffic management systems*
- *Place walking and cycling at the top of the transport hierarchy*
- *Expand walking and cycle networks, such as the Dublin bikes scheme, through close collaboration with our planning departments*

FPPN suggestions for possible action areas

- *Encourage people to take public transport by offering discounts / free transportation*
- *Improve efficiency of bus service. Not all busses need to be 70 seaters. Some routes could be effectively served by 20/30-seater*
- *Provided integrated transport, going to where people need to go, which is not necessarily Dublin city centre. Orbital busses, free transfers within a time limit, remove cars from pinch points, provide affordable or free park and ride facilities. People are already parking on roadsides beside Motorway entrances, make it easier. (e.g. Lisburn park and ride on the M1 in NI)*
- *Delay promoting high density development along public transport links corridor (PTC) until it is efficient and effective – “don’t put the cart before the horse!”*
- *Incentivise car-pooling. Social media should make it easier.*
- *Promote the benefits of ESB ecars by a campaign including demonstrations and rapid roll-out of electrical charge points*
- *Create interesting / attractive cycle and walking lanes: a Fingal “Balscadden to Balbriggan” North Coast route; alongside rivers i.e. Ballyboughal River Eastwards to Turvey Allotments, etc. Complete the Royal Canal Greenway for pedestrian and cycle use*
- *Promote walking children to school – introduce legislation to reduce the weight of schoolbooks children can carry, proportional to their age, similar to limitations on weights which can be carried by industrial workers*
- *Promote use of Canals for tourism*
- *Evaluate the use of drones to deliver parcels*

WATER

“Climate change appears to be playing a central role in the increased risk of all these types of flooding in Dublin.”

Codema examples of possible action areas

- *Plan for flood adaptation for the next 50-100 years using the natural environment, including using natural ecosystems to attenuate water*
- *Increase flood awareness in Dublin work closely with Irish Water*
- *Advise the public on how to best protect their properties from flooding*
- *Liaise with Irish Water in order to plan for impacts on drinking water supplies*
- *Create flood partnerships with residents' associations in the areas most at risk of flooding*
- *Ensure appropriate engineering input for drainage solutions at the pre-planning stage*
- *Promote the inclusion of SuDS in existing and new developments*

FPPN suggestions for possible action areas

- *The emphasis in the action areas is on flood prevention – promote storage and reuse of rainwater and encourage filtration by reducing areas of concrete, reducing runoff. Prioritise rainwater soakage in residential areas – promote cobblelock, gravel and permeable ground cover*
- *Encourage recording / reporting of all flood incidents, to identify causes and facilitate actions to prevent re-occurrence*
- *Increase frequency and thoroughness of drain clearing – flood prevention is better and more cost-effective than remedial action after an event*
- *Encourage recording / reporting of all drain and watercourse blockage due to macropollution, e.g. plastics, metal, rubber tyres etc. to identify causes and facilitate actions to prevent re-occurrence*
- *Promote use of rainwater collection, with water butts on all public buildings and incentives for installation of domestic water butts for watering gardens*
- *Change policy regarding separation of grey water from drinking water*
- *Reduce water consumption by promoting and incentivising under-sink water heating (Holland does this)*
- *Take soft actions to prevent coastal erosion and marine flooding*

WASTE

“Moving to a more sustainable model of waste prevention and material use has strong potential to transform Dublin’s waste sector from a minor cause of climate change to a major solution in preventing the creation of greenhouse gases”

Codema examples of possible action areas

- *Move towards a circular waste economy model*
- *Encourage collaborative methods of consumption (e.g. Leasing, allotments and the use of the internet of things)*
- *Increase public awareness of recycling and collaborative consumption options (i.e. by engaging with green schools and community groups)*
- *Work with relevant organisations and the clean-tech sector to develop a vibrant secondary materials market*
- *Collaborate with the business community to integrate resource efficiency and eco-design considerations into their operations*
- *Participate in the annual ‘National Reuse Month’ initiative each October organised by the Regional Waste Offices*

FPPN suggestions for possible action areas

- *Local conversion of waste to energy – collect and liquefy methane gas at the new Clonshaugh Sewage Treatment Plant to power the fleet of buses and other vehicles operating at Dublin Airport. Use waste heat from Ringsend incinerator, data centres etc. for district heating; generate gas from animal manure for farm energy use; collect methane from municipal dumps for re-use*
- *Incentivise re-use and recycling: “A Bulb for a Bulb” scheme; create more general waste recycling areas; ensure no charges are applied for recycling cans, plastic and paper etc.; keep Green and Brown waste for re-use in Fingal Co. Council area*
- *Consider anaerobically digesting food waste from the city to provide energy instead of composting it and allowing the gasses to escape to the atmosphere. Consider co-digestion of food waste with sewage to provide more energy*

ECOSYSTEMS & BIODIVERSITY

“The vision for 2030 is that ecosystems and green infrastructure across the region will have been protected, and that their sustainable management and development will be ongoing.”

Codema examples of possible action areas

- *Create effective strategies for controlling climate-related invasive alien species (IAS) and work in partnership with other stakeholders to control IAS throughout the Dublin area*
- *Explore the use of ecosystem services assessments to inform future policies and decisions*
- *Facilitate, develop and implement green infrastructure strategies to promote adaptation and mitigation*
- *Implement the biodiversity conservation and research programme of the Dublin Bay Biosphere Partnership*
- *Build resilience in natural ecosystems by retaining and rehabilitating key biodiversity elements as part of local biodiversity action plans*
- *Increase tree and hedgerow planting to increase carbon storage potential, reduce urban heating effect, and increase soil water retention*
- *Review, update and implement biodiversity action plans across the Dublin region*
- *Promote green agricultural processes and engage with farmers through education/training programmes*
- *Promote the development of carbon sequestration systems in land use/planning*

FPPN suggestions for possible action areas

- *Monitor ecosystems at all levels to alert for changes and inform future policies and decisions – measure populations of indicator species (e.g. micro and macro invertebrates, egrets in wetlands / salt marches, marine jellyfish, sea horses, fresh water crayfish in watercourses etc.)*
- *Promote awareness of climate-related invasive alien species (IAS) – public information via “Wanted” posters, websites, social media to encourage public to report infested areas*
- *Promote conservation of all hedges for drainage, including in Industrial estates and urban scenarios - Swords to Ashbourne Road*

GENERAL COMMENTS

Members of the FPPN Water & Environment Linkage Group are enthusiastic about close collaboration between the Dublin Local Authorities, all relevant stakeholders and the citizens of Dublin, and wish to be involved in future stages of this project.