Established by Parliament in 2008 to “advise the UK Government . . . on emissions targets and report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for climate change.”
Committee on Climate Change: Influence on Policy

The Committee on Climate Change’s advice on carbon budgets and targets is directly reflected in legislation and the Government’s carbon strategy. In advising on setting and meeting carbon budgets, the Committee undertakes detailed sectoral analysis, and as a result has made a number of key recommendations which are reflected in areas of energy and climate policy including:

Carbon budgets and targets
- 2050 target to reduce emissions by 80% on 1990 levels November 2008 letter
- 2012 statement that international aviation and shipping emissions are included in 2050 target – see International Aviation and Shipping Review
- Carbon budgets 1-3, resulting in an emissions reduction of at least 34% on 1990 levels in 2020
- The fourth carbon budget, requiring emissions reduction of 50% on 1990 levels by 2025

Power sector
- Focus on early power sector decarbonisation; fundamental reform of the electricity market; long-term contracts for low-carbon generation; 2030 carbon-intensity target.
- New coal fired power generation to be fitted with CCS; gas CCS to be included in the demonstration programme
- Focus on biomass conversion of existing coal plant rather than investment in new dedicated biomass
- Ambition for renewable power generation.
- 2020 funding under the levy control framework

Buildings
- New focus on solid wall insulation in the supplier obligation while still allowing some loft and cavity wall insulation
- Simplification of the Carbon Reduction Commitment
- Heat strategy focused on heat pumps and district heating

Transport
- Focus on and financial support for development of electric vehicle markets

Agriculture
- Ambition for agriculture emissions reductions and industry action plan

Bioenergy
- Plan for around 10% bioenergy in 2050, and tighten sustainability limits for use of biomass. Following our recommendation, government tightened sustainability limits for the use of biomass to 200gCO2/kWh in 2020 and moving towards 180gCO2/kWh in 2025.
Devolved administrations
- Scottish annual targets and cumulative emissions budget
- Approaches to emission reduction reflected in Scottish and Welsh Government Climate Change Strategy Refresh
- Development of legislation in Northern Ireland and Wales

Adaptation
A number of recent announcements by the Government have incorporated the advice of the Adaptation Sub Committee including:

- Government Water White Paper on how to make better use of water resources Chapter 4 2011 report; Chapter 3 2012 report
- Defra consultation on its strategic policy statement to Ofwat emphasis on need for water companies to focus on demand reduction Chapter 4 2011 report; Chapter 3 2012 report
- £120 million boost to flood defences to protect up to 60,000 homes and businesses Chapter 2 2012 report
- Rise in capital spending on flood defences in 2015/16 announced in the 2013 Spending Round, with a long term commitment to maintain this level of spending in real terms until 2020/21 Chapter 2 2012 report
- Revised national planning policy framework approach to development in the floodplain Chapter 3 2011 report; Chapter 2 2012 report
- Environment Agency methodology on designating areas at risk of water stress Chapter 3 2011 report
CCC Communications Responsibilities

Tackling climate change

There is good scientific evidence to show climate is changing because of emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from human activity.

The bulk of emissions derive from our demand for energy. The largest contributor is carbon dioxide (CO2), emitted when fossil fuels are burnt to meet those demands. There are also other emissions attached to industrial processes and agriculture.

The science of climate change

Human activity is affecting the earth’s climate with long term consequences. Look at the case for action.

Read more

Mitigation: reducing carbon emissions

The majority of the UK’s emissions can be lowered by becoming energy efficient and by switching to low carbon fuels.

Read more

Legal context

International, EU & UK legislation exists to tackle climate change. Find out more.

Read more

Adapting to climate change

Limiting our carbon emissions is not enough. We need to learn how to adapt to a possibly irreversible changing climate.

Read more

Blog

The industry of decarbonisation

Matthew Bell
6 September

Our natural land: part of the solution to tackling climate change

Ewa Kmieciówka
5 August

The UK’s approach to tackling climate change

Lord Deben, Chairman of the Committee on Climate Change
19 July