



CLIMATE ACTION ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Local Authorities Supporting Enterprise



Virtual Conference
October 12 and 13, 2021

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About the Conference

Climate change brings many significant challenges across environmental, political, societal, economical and technological dimensions. The scale and urgency of the challenges ahead cannot be underestimated, and it is clear that this global challenge will require fundamental transformations.

The Irish government, along with governments across the world, have worked to tailor policies specifically designed to adapt to the impacts of climate change and mitigate against its causes. These responses to tackling climate change bring with them, unique economic and business opportunities. Conversely, there are increasing demands on businesses to do their part to respond to the threat of climate change based on their influential position within the economy.

Building on the success of the inaugural conference in October 2019, this event facilitates sharing of the latest research undertaken by the local government sector to explore how local authorities can, through their economic remit, support, encourage and nurture new and existing business and enterprise as they transition to a net-zero economy through innovation, digitalisation and the adoption of more sustainable practices.

The conference will showcase examples of how businesses are pivoting to capitalise on new opportunities and in doing so are becoming green economy pioneers, with the support of local authorities in areas such as:

- Renewable energy
- Circular economy
- Research and innovation
- Rural working hubs
- New technologies
- Bio-economy
- SMART cities

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Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you all to the Economic Opportunities arising from Climate Action Conference 2021. This conference is second to the event held in Tullamore in 2019. In that time, we have seen a strengthening of climate policy responses aimed at identifying urgent solutions to both reducing carbon emissions (mitigation) and planning for and addressing the inevitable consequences of climate action.

In that time, we have also experienced the Covid-19 pandemic. This period has demonstrated that we can take swift and decisive action to respond to a crisis and adjust how we operate accordingly. Beyond Covid -19 however, climate change remains an unprecedented and immense crisis to which we must respond and adjust.

The roadmap out of this crisis requires transformative solutions that are now necessary to the goal of climate neutrality. Economic development now and into the future is based on the need for decarbonisation and to preserve our natural environment. With this shift to low carbon economy, there are opportunities for new growth, for new jobs, new products and innovation and to bring everyone along in a just and fair way. The role of local government in this is significant.

The speakers in the programme are uniquely placed to highlight emerging trends and opportunities in this new era of transformation. They will highlight real world examples to illustrate how the pursuit of initiatives that seek to address and respond to climate change can be a powerful tool and a source of competitive advantage that can transform business and uncover opportunities.

I want to thank all of our speakers for their contribution to this event. This conference is part of the work of the Climate Action and Economic Opportunities project steering and working groups convened under the Business, Enterprise, Innovation and Urban/Town Economic Renewal (BEIUR) Committee of the County and City Management Association (CCMA). I wish to also express my appreciation to the committee and the steering and working groups for their work on this event and the overall project.

I sincerely hope you will enjoy the event and thank you for your participation.

Anna Marie Delaney,
Chief Executive, Offaly County Council

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

SESSION 1		Driving the Change, Realising the Opportunities
9:30	Opening and Welcome	Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive, Offaly County Council
9:35		AILG Welcome
9:40	Introduction and Conference Overview	Jonathan Healy, Healy Communciations, MC
9:45	Keynote Address	Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Leo Varadkar TD
10:00	Local Authorities Working with Local Business on Climate Action: Business Models for a Sustainable Future	Dr. John Cullen, Associate Professor, Maynooth University, School of Business
10:20	Catalysing Green Investment and Sustainable Finance	Cormac Murphy, Head of the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group Office for Ireland
10:45	Supporting Ireland's Move to a Circular Economy	Mary Frances Rochford, Programme Manager, Climate Change and Circular Economy Programme, EPA.
11:00 – 11:15	BREAK	
SESSION 2		Real World Examples of Business Realising the Opportunities in Transition
11:15	Green Generation – Empowering Ireland with Secure and Stable Renewable Energy	Teresa Patton, Programme Manager, Green Generation
11:30	Rural Working Hubs – Opportunities for Changing How and Where we Work	Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council
11:45	Irish Manufacturing Research - Enabling Ireland as a Global Leader in Advanced Manufacturing	Dr. Shirley Gallagher, Senior Technologist, IMR
12:00	Dublin SMART Region: Scaling Innovative Solutions to Local Challenges	Alan Murphy, All Ireland SMART Cities Forum
SESSION 3		PANEL DISCUSSION
12:15	Panel Discussion:	Presenters will explore further insights and perspectives on economic opportunities arising from climate action during the panel discussion.
12:45	Close of Conference, Day 1	

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

SESSION 1		Local Government Supporting Climate Enterprise
9:30	Opening and Welcome	Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive, Offaly County Council
9:35	Introduction and Day Two Overview	Jonathan Healy, Healy Communciations, MC
9:45	Climate Action Policy – National Climate Ambition	Marie Donnelly, Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Council
10:05	LGIU Research: International Local Government Mechanisms Supporting Transition	Andy Johnston, Director, Local Government Information Unit
10:25	Enterprise Ireland: Promoting Enterprise and Creating Opportunity in a Transitioning Economy	Mark Christal, Manager, Regions and Entrepreneurship Division, Enterprise Ireland
10:45	Local Enterprise Offices – Supporting Change Locally	Padraic McElwee, Chair of the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Network
11:00 – 11:15	BREAK	
SESSION 2		Real World Examples of Business Realising the Opportunities in Transition
11:15	Green Rebel and EI-H2 – Helping Ireland take Leadership in Tackling Climate Change	John Wallace, Chief Executive Officer, Green Rebel
11:30	Grant Engineering – Business Transition in Climate Transition	Niall Fay, Director, Grant Engineering
11:45	Bio-connect Innovation Centre, Monaghan – Innovation in Practice	Paul Clifford, Director of Services, Monaghan County Council Peter Corcoran, CEO, MBio
12:00	Galetech Energy – Forging a Greater Path in the Green Energy Transition	Darren Sherry, Director, Galetech Energy Services
SESSION 3		PANEL DISCUSSION
12:15	Panel Discussion	Presenters will explore further insights and perspectives on economic opportunities arising from climate action during the panel discussion.
CLOSING ADDRESS		
12:45	Closing Address	Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan TD
1.10	Conference Close	



Jonathan Healy

Jonathan Healy has worked in radio, television and online media for over two decades. He has been a presenter with Newstalk 106-108fm and a correspondent with Sky News, with his work featuring prominently on both stations. Jonathan also has experience working with TV3, RTE, FM104, and Cork's RedFM.

Having conducted thousands of interviews with people from all works of Irish life, he is a skilled interviewer and proven cross-platform content creator. He now bring this experience to PR and media training through his own company, Healy Communications.



John Cullen

John Cullen is an Associate Professor at the School of Business in Maynooth University. He is also Associate Dean of the Faculty of Social Science and his research is concerned with the practical ways in which managers and organisations learn responsible management, ethical leadership and sustainable change practices to help their businesses grow, while contributing to environmental and social sustainability.



Cormac Murphy

Cormac Murphy was appointed in early 2017 as the Head of the EIB Group Office for Ireland, following the opening by the EIB group of an office in Dublin. In this role Mr. Murphy is responsible for enhancing EIB's engagement with national stakeholders while coordinating the efforts to broaden and expand the impact of EIB financing across the country.

Mr. Murphy brings extensive experience gained over the last 27 years with EIB to this role. Prior to taking up this position in Dublin, Mr. Murphy was Head of Division for Infrastructure New Products and Special Transactions in the EIB, with responsibility for high risk/subordinated/mezzanine debt activity. In this capacity, he also led the implementation of the flagship European credit enhancement (Project Bond) initiative for infrastructure and development of new EIB products, such as hybrid debt, as part of the Investment Plan for Europe (Juncker Plan). Prior to this, Mr Murphy was responsible for regional lending operations in several EU member states and for corporate credit risk management.

He joined the EIB in 1994 from EDC, the national export credit agency of Canada, where he was responsible for project financing in Latin America; having previously worked in financial services and corporate treasury in Luxembourg, the UK and Ireland. Mr Murphy is an Irish national and a citizen of Canada and holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Economics from Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin.



Mary Frances Rochford

Mary Frances Rochford is the Programme Manager of the Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Change and Circular Economy Programme. Her area of responsibility includes the National Waste Prevention Programme, which plays an important role in fostering the circular economy in Ireland through supporting innovation and partnering with other organisations and the production of Ireland's National Waste and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Statistics.



Teresa Patton

Teresa Patton is the Programme Manager at Green Generation, where her role involves communicating the organisation's circular economy and innovation message. She is a recent graduate of the Technological University Dublin MBA and has a demonstrated history in leading teams across industry.



Pat Dowling

Pat Dowling is a native of west Limerick and a graduate of UL. He now resides in West Clare. He was appointed to the post of Chief Executive, Clare County Council in September 2016. Prior to his appointment in Clare, he was Deputy Chief Executive in Limerick City and County Council. He has worked in local government for the past 22 years and had responsibility for the merger of Limerick City and County Councils as part of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. He worked in a number of areas in local government including having responsibility for housing and regeneration programmes in the Limerick city area. At national level he is Chair of the Age Friendly Alliances. Prior to joining local government he worked with Clare Youth Service, the National Youth Council of Ireland, Macra na Feirme and Kildare LEADER Programme.



Dr Shirley Gallagher

Dr Gallagher is a Senior Technologist with IMR and is currently working in the circular economy. Her role supports Irish industry, who are in the national circular economy innovation network, CIRCULÉIRE. This includes harnessing the skillset of the team to establish circular opportunities to reduce industries use of energy, water and materials whilst maintaining current production levels. She is working with industry to measuring and verifying these values to ensure their voluntary targets of waste and carbon reduction are achieved.



Alan Murphy

Alan Murphy is passionate about doing things differently using new technology. He is the Smart Dublin Regional Manager working across all four Dublin local authorities to explore emerging technology to provide better public services in areas such as sustainable mobility, environmental controls, energy efficiency and citizen sensing.

Alan has extensive experience in developing new business models and delivering change via technology in many areas such as the energy, healthcare, manufacturing and humanitarian sectors. He has previously worked for PwC, IBM and HCL Axon, among others. Alan's qualifications include a Business Studies Degree and Postgraduate Diploma in Computing from the University of Limerick.



Marie Donnelly

Marie Donnelly is the Chairperson of the Climate Change Advisory Council. She spent 30 years with the European Commission, where she was Director for Renewables, Energy Efficiency and Innovation. Marie collaborates with MaREI in UCC and the UCD Energy Institute and was previously the first Chairperson of Renewable Energy Ireland and a Non-Executive Director of Tipperary Energy Agency.



Andy Johnston

Andy Johnston is the Chief Operating Officer of the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) and is responsible for finance, HR and membership support. Andy also leads on the international expansion of the LGiU and is the Director of LGiU Scotland and LGiU Ireland.

Andy has a background in local sustainability and has run programmes on mitigation and adaptation to climate change, including two EU projects – Raingain and Floodcitisense - which look at flooding across the Netherlands, Belgium and France. He is also convenor of the Local Government Flood Forum.

In the past Andy has led programmes on sustainability in higher education for Forum for the Future and the OECD. He ran the ground-breaking Masters in Leadership for Sustainable Development and was a lecturer in Business for Sustainable Development at the University of Hertfordshire. For eight years he was a councillor, chairing planning, highways and waste committees.



Mark Christal

Mark Christal is the Manager of the Regions and Entrepreneurship division in Enterprise Ireland responsible for working with Irish-owned companies to support them in key business areas including competitiveness, innovation, leadership and management development. His responsibilities include leading Enterprise Ireland's engagement with the Local Enterprise Offices within the local authorities. Prior to this role, Mark managed the Primary Meats and Food Technology Department in Enterprise Ireland, responsible for working with client companies in the sector and also led the Client Management Development & Client Skills Department within Enterprise Ireland, responsible for driving the leadership and management capabilities within Irish-owned companies, to help them compete for, and win, global sales.

Mark previously had responsibility for eight years for Human Resource Management within Enterprise Ireland. In this role, in addition to his HR responsibilities, Mark led the review and development of several major change programmes within Enterprise Ireland. Mark is a member of the Enterprise Ireland Senior Leadership Executive team. Mark is a Master's graduate of University College Dublin and also holds an MBS in Human Resource Management from the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School.



Padraic McElwee

Padraic McElwee is currently Chair of the Network of Local Enterprise Offices and Head of Enterprise with Local Enterprise Office, Clare. He is a qualified Chartered Global Management Accountant and holds a Master's in Business Administration from The Open University, a Bachelor of Financial Services from University College Dublin, a Diploma on Service Delivery from the Scandinavian International Management Institute and is a Qualified Financial Advisor. Padraic has over 34 year's experience in financial services, 22 of which were in senior manager roles.

In 2015 Padraic was appointed to lead the Local Enterprise Office team in Clare County Council. The Local Enterprise Offices serve as a "first-stop shop" to provide support and services to start, grow and develop micro and small businesses in each local authority area. They are strategically charged with stimulating economic activity through the development of indigenous enterprise. This is pursued through harnessing the collective effort of a wide range of local stakeholders, with a focus on building local economies of real strength and permanence which enables the creation of sustainable employment.



John Wallace

John Wallace is the Chief Executive Officer with Green Rebel. John has more than 30 years of experience collecting marine data and managing project teams that deliver. John has a Master's in Environmental Engineering, worked as a researcher and set up and led the National Oceanographic Data Centre. He then held several positions on various international working groups and expert panels focused on oceanographic data collection and its management with the EU, UN, and others. In 1996 John established Marine Informatics which became IDS Monitoring. Earlier this year IDS became part of Green Rebel Group.



Niall Fay

Niall Fay has over 25 years' experience in manufacturing of industrial products, in particular automotive parts, general engineering, heating and plumbing products. He is Director of Grant Group of Companies (a heating solutions provider), responsible for commercial and operations of the group employing over 400 people in Ireland, UK and France. Niall is also Chairman of the board of Turmec (a recycling engineering solutions provider) and was a previous chairman of the board of OFTEC (a heating trade association for UK and Ireland).

Currently, Niall is a Director of the Heat Pump Association of Ireland and a committee member of the IBEC Midlands Regional Executive Committee and of the IMR's Robotics Executive Committee. He is also a member of the Steering Group for Advanced Manufacturing under the Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan.

Niall holds a BBS (Finance) from Trinity College Dublin and a MSc. In Manufacturing Systems Engineering from Queens University Belfast. He has also completed executive education programmes with IMD (Switzerland) and IMI (Dublin).



Darren Sherry

Darren Sherry is founder and director of the Galetech Group, the group has a renewable energy focus having developed wind energy projects for the past two decades, together with providing consultancy support to wide variety of energy clients worldwide, ranging from South and East Africa through to Kazakhstan.

More recently the Galetech Group is diversifying towards developing sustainable building solutions to help solve social and affordable housing needs using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC).

