Irish Times

Thursday, 16 October 2008

Page: 8

Circulation: 119 051

Area of Clip: 11053.00mm

Clip ID: 212944

State bodies urged to get behind 'renewable' electricity target

MARIE O'HALLORAN

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS and State agencies have been warned they must "row in" behind a new target that by 2020 some 40 per cent of all electricity will be from renewable sources rather than fossil fuels.

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources **Eamon Ryan** said "it behoves all State agencies, the regulator, the sustainable energy office and other departments to row in on a co-ordinated approach to meet those targets".

Mr Ryan had made the recommendation to Cabinet, and Minister for the Environment **John Gormley** confirmed to the Dáil that the Government had accepted the increase from the previous 30 per cent target by the 2020 deadline.

Mr Ryan also said his department had taken on extra responsibilities previously held by the Taoiseach's department.

"That accounts for the slight increase in the Budget, but it is a decrease in real terms."

He was losing about €366 million in current expenditure and €134 million on the capital side, so his department would have to deliver "real efficiencies".

Mr Gormley said carbon emissions were 1 per cent lower last year than in 2006, but the baseline trend continued to rise.

He said the most striking revision related to transport emissions where there were two million tonnes a year more than projected last year.

Agriculture emissions were also increasing as livestock numbers had begun to rise again.

The Minister said the gap was projected at five million tonnes before new measures, and "this must be bridged by a combination of further measures and purchasing credits under the flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol".