Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Irelands National Biomethane Strategy

Action Progress Report

2025

Prepared by the Department of
the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment
gov.ie/DCEE

Table of Contents

1 Introduction 1

2 Enabling Actions 2

2.1 Pillar 1: Sustainability Actions 3

2.2 Pillar 2: Demand Actions 9

2.3 Pillar 3: Bioeconomy Actions 12

2.4 Pillar 4: Support Actions 15

2.5 Pillar 5: Enabling Policy Actions 17

3 Looking Forward to 2025 Actions 25

4 Glossary of Acronyms 26

1 Introduction

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 commits Ireland to 2030 and 2050 targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and provides the governance framework to ensure emissions stay on track. Ireland is now on a legally binding path to net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of this decade.

Biomethane that satisfies the Renewable Energy Directive's life cycle sustainability criteria can be classified as "a zero-carbon rated fuel". Biomethane can therefore directly contribute to meeting Ireland's decarbonisation targets. Biomethane is already firmly established and available on the European market, with circa 52 TWh produced in 2023 and expected to exceed circa 64TWh by the end of 2024.

Biomethane has the potential to progressively replace significant quantities of fossil gas supplies at a national level as we substantially reduce our use of gas over the next 15 to 20 years. In July 2022, Government committed to supporting delivery of up to 5.7 TWh of indigenously produced biomethane by 2030, equivalent of 10% of our current national gas demand.

Biomethane production is still at an early stage of development in Ireland, with only two operational biomethane facilities injecting biomethane into the gas grid. The volume of biomethane injected into the grid in 2023 is small, equating to c. 60 GWh per annum, which is equivalent to 0.001% of Ireland's current gas demand. Biomethane volumes injected into the gas network reduced by c. 33% to 45 GWh in 2024.

Published on 28 May 2024, the National Biomethane Strategy sets out the necessary policy and regulatory measures, including 25 key strategic actions, to ensuring the necessary aid and infrastructure are in place to support the development of a sustainable biomethane sector of scale in Ireland.

Monitoring Target Delivery

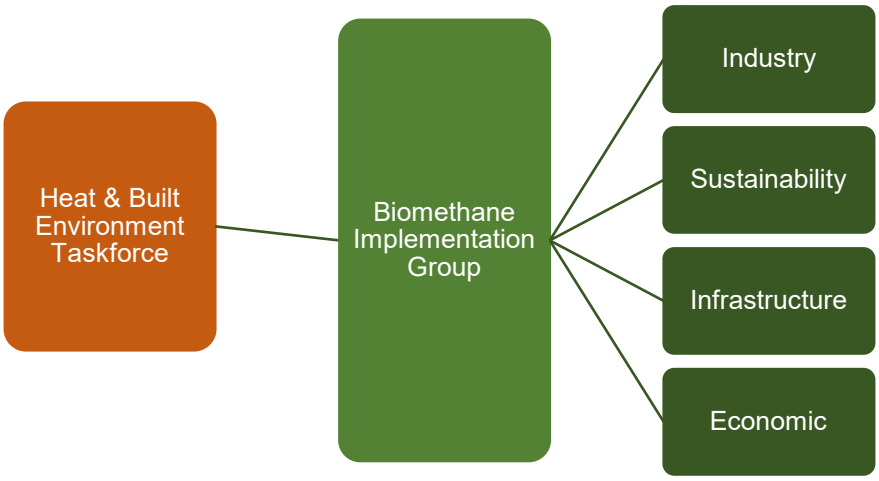
Implementation of the Strategy and action delivery requires on-going collaboration across key Government Departments and Agencies. An early action delivered under the Strategy, Action 5a, was the establishment of the Biomethane Implementation Group.

Chaired by The Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE), the Group is responsible for monitoring Strategy implementation, ensuring all State actors are co-

ordinated to support delivery of the 25 Strategic actions, and reporting on progress directly to the Heat and Built Environment Taskforce.

In addition to Government Departments and State Agencies, the Biomethane Implementation Group includes key stakeholders providing expertise aligned to the National Biomethane Strategy Framework in relation to Industry, Sustainability, Infrastructure and economic issues.

Group Structure



Prepared by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, this report details progress on the delivery of Ireland's National Biomethane Strategy actions to date.

2 Enabling Actions

Overview of delivery

Progress on the 25 actions included in the Strategy are detailed below under each Pillar. These should be read in conjunction with Irelands National Biomethane Strategy.

The Biomethane Implementation group will continue its work in overseeing implementation of the Strategy, measure the impact of the 25 Strategy actions and monitor 5.7TWh target delivery.

Key achievements to date include

- Establishment of the Biomethane Implementation Group
- Publication of the Biomethane Sustainability Charter
- DAFM grant launch where grant agreements were signed with 18 applicants.

- The publication of ESB Networks Expression of Interest for Large Energy Users Biomethane Lighthouse.
- The awarding of the successful research project 'Policy options for facilitating the adoption of biobased fertilisers from digestate in an Irish context'

2.1 Pillar 1: Sustainability Actions

Action 1a Biomethane Sustainability Charter	Develop a Biomethane Sustainability Charter to support the delivery of environmentally sustainable biomethane in Ireland
Owner	DAFM, DCEE
Stakeholder	NPWS, EPA, IFI, LAWPRO, DHLGH

Progress Update

Ensuring sustainable production of biomethane is critical as we look to develop an Agri-led industry of scale in Ireland. Careful management of feedstocks & digestate, and protection against unintended negative consequences of production will maximise the benefits of anaerobic digestion, while minimizing its environmental impact to land use, water quality, and biodiversity.

A priority deliverable under the National Biomethane Strategy was the development of a Biomethane Sustainability Charter. Using feedback received through the Strategy consultation process, a draft charter was developed in collaboration with policy makers, industry representatives, and key societal stakeholders. Development was led by DAFM and DCEE, in consultation with the Biomethane Implementation Group.

Published on 23 October 2025, the Biomethane Sustainability Charter sets out best practices that participants in the biomethane industry should adhere to, including requirements in RED III, as well as key commitments to high environmental standards, water quality protection and biodiversity loss prevention.

Overseen by DCEE, it is intended that biomethane projects, plant operators, and developers in receipt of any form of Government support in Ireland will adopt the Charter.

It is recommended that this charter be reviewed every 18 months by the Biomethane Implementation Group, and upon review, future revisions of the charter should be presented to the Heat & Built Environment Taskforce.

Action 1b Feedstocks	Assess current and future schemes to mobilise the development of sustainable feedstocks such as Multi Species Swards and Red Clover.
Owner	DAFM
Stakeholder	Teagasc

Progress Update

A successful sustainable biomethane industry in Ireland will be significantly assisted by a wider adoption of Multi-Species Swards (MSS) & Red Clover. Through the adoption of MSS/ Red Clover, soil health of land can be restored due to a reduced use of pesticides / chemical fertilisers.

For biomethane from AD plants to be classified as a zero-carbon renewable fuel, plants must be able to achieve increasingly strict sustainability criteria as outlined within the EU Renewable Energy Directive criteria. This strict criterion sets out requirements for feedstocks used in the AD plant. The incorporation of legumes, such as white or red clover, into perennial ryegrass or multi-species pastures is required to ensure compliance with all RED criteria.

DAFM operates an MSS measure and a Red Clover Silage measure to incentivise farmers for sowing the crops. The scheme helps to reduce the reliance on nitrogen fertilisers and promote a more sustainable method of farming.

The 2024 payment for the scheme was €300 per hectare, to a maximum area of 20 hectares for the establishment of Multi Species Swards mix/ Red Clover silage mix sown between 16 July 2023 and 15 July 2024. The overall budget in 2024 was €2.5 million (The same amount as assigned for the scheme in 2023). The budget for 2025 has been increased to €2.75 million.

A breakdown of the past and current scheme is provided in the table below:

Year	2023		2024		2025
Measure	Applicants	Area (ha)	Applicants	Area (ha)	
MSSM	683	2,943	831	3,651	
RCSM	684	3,749	1,130	7,200	
Overall Budget (M)	€2.5m		€2.5m		€2.75m

Action 1c Non-grid certification	Develop a process to certify the end use of non-grid injected biomethane
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholder	SEAI, GNI

Progress Update

Potential Scenario: a biomethane producer decides not to inject to the gas grid, but instead fills a tanker with gas and delivers directly to an off-grid consumer via truck and trailer.

Production

- Biomethane Producer must be certified by an EU Voluntary Scheme[1] to verify the fuel has been produced in accordance with sustainability and GHG reduction criteria set out in the Renewable Energy Directive.
- Once the Producer has obtained a Certificate of Sustainability from an EU Voluntary Scheme, the biomethane qualifies as being a Renewable Gas and can be counted towards Member State targets.

1 Voluntary schemes

- The Producer will issue a Proof of Sustainability (PoS) for each batch/consignment of Renewable Gas sold.
    - The Producer may issue a PoS for each tanker load of gas delivered.
    - The PoS contains details of the total volume (MWh), the feedstocks used to produce the gas and the GHG value of the gas.
        - Specifically, the results of the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) calculation (as prescribed in the Renewable Energy Directive) will be included in the PoS.
    - The emissions associated with the delivery of the gas from the Producer to the Consumer must also be accounted for in the LCA calculation.
        - Producers can use a CNG truck, powered by Renewable Gas, to claim zero-emissions for this step.

Consumption

- Off-Grid Consumers of biomethane/renewable gas could be:
    - A privately operated CNG refilling station: either the Producer, Supplier or Consumer may claim a Renewable Transport Fuel Certificate (RTFC) from NORA.
        - NORA currently issue RTFC's for renewable gas supplied via the gas grid as a transport fuel as public and private refilling stations.
        - NORA also issue RTFC's for renewable gas supplied directly into trucks at the Producers site (i.e. Green Generation in Nurney) and used by the Producer to collect feedstocks for the AD process.
            - This allows the Producer to keep the CO2 value from the LCA calculation low, produce their own fuel, generate revenue from the sale of RTFC's and have these volumes counted towards national targets.

○ A large industrial user who is within the scope of the EU-ETS could consume renewable gas and make a claim to the EPA that they consumed a 'zero-emissions' fuel and do not need to surrender allowances. Guarantee of Origin • Currently, some Member States are discussing the issuance of Guarantees of Origin for off-grid biomethane production, but none are currently doing so. • Article 19 of RED II does state that a Member State must issue a GO for renewable energy at the request of a Producer. There remain several aspects to be addressed including the following: Metering • Quantity of production verification • Quantity of consumption verification Safety • Safety case for production site • Safety of consumption site • Safety in transport Existing Regulations • EPA

Action 1d Methane Leakage	Assess the development of best practice guidelines on methane leakage during the development of the Biomethane Sustainability Charter
Owner	Biomethane Implementation Group
Stakeholder	DCEE, Teagasc, SEAI, EPA

Progress Update

A key factor necessary in developing and implementing best practice guidelines on methane leakage will be researching the industry standard in this area outside of Ireland. DCEE will undertake an evidence-based review of the policy and supports in place across European countries.

One option, for example, is to introduce a voluntary system that includes an obligation for regular self-inspection. Regular checks from external measurement providers can also be part of such a system. Such a voluntary system was successfully implemented in Denmark and Sweden.

Other key areas of consideration include the following:

1 Implementation of mitigating measures such as
   - Seal leaks
   - Regular renewal of gas storage membrane
   - Monitoring of over pressure safety devices
   - Correct dimensioning of gas pipes
   - Installation of a thermal afterburning system
   - Gastight covering of containers

2 Implementation of Organisational measures such as
   - Leak detection/emission measurements after renewing plant components
   - Adaptation of feeding regime
   - Regular maintenance of cable grommet
   - Regular maintenance of the CHP unit
   - Analysis of residual gas potential

3 Develop best practice guidelines to provide plant owners help and knowledge about leakage detection and emission size.

DCEE will continue to engage with key stakeholders and industry representatives

in assessing the development of best practice guidelines on methane leakage.

2.2 Pillar 2: Demand Actions

Action 2a **EU ETS**	Engage with the EU ETS sector to ensure knowledge of eligibility of biomethane in the ETS sector
Owner	EPA
Stakeholder	
Progress Update EPA is responsible for implementation of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) in Ireland. The ETS team in the EPA's Climate Programme continues to engage with Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) on the ETS rules which allow for the "zero-rating" of biomethane where it meets the requirements of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II). In addition to EPA's periodic meetings with GNI they issue regular updates to the obligated parties under the EU ETS on how to meet the monitoring and reporting requirements, including those relating to biomethane.	

Action 2c **Renewable Heat Obligation**	Publish a high-level scheme design
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholder	SEAI
Progress Update Identified in the National Biomethane Strategy as a key demand side incentive, the design and development of the Renewable Heat Obligation Scheme (RHO) has been a priority for Government to ensure long-term support to a newly developing market. DCEE carried out an initial scoping exercise and public consultation to determine an obligation structure which would support delivery of our climate and energy targets and provide adequate support to indigenous biomethane production. Further refinement and	

design continued with extensive examination of the likely economic and social impact of a proposed scheme.

Stakeholder input has been an integral part of the RHO Scheme design process. DCEE carried out a number of engagement activities including workshops and industry discussion to validate data, refine assumptions and ensure any decisions taken in relation to the final scheme were robust and evidence based.

All feedback received informed a final draft RHO High-Level Scheme which was then further analysed to ensure all scheme objectives would be achieved. Results from this analysis outlined a requirement for additional scheme parameters which require approval at EU level to ensure compliance with EU single market trade.

Work is now underway to develop the necessary legislation to underpin introduction of the scheme in 2026, with an expectation to submit the RHO Heads of Bill to Government shortly.

Action 2d **Extra Large Energy Users**	Assess ESB Networks Lighthouse Project with Data Centre
Owner	SEAI
Stakeholder	ESB Networks, CRU, SEAI

Progress Update

ESB Networks published it's Expression of Interest for Large Energy Users as part of its Biomethane Lighthouse Project. This EOI remains open, and ESB is actively seeking a Large Energy User to work with to maximise the potential to abate cardon by participating in flexible demand. This flexible demand would be replaced by onsite generation using biomethane at times of network congestion. Flexibility payments will be designed to offset any increased operational costs for the customer during the period of the Lighthouse Project.

The following eligibility criteria will apply:

- Distribution-connected at 38kV or above.
- Installed back-up, grid-connected gas generation.
- At least 5 MW grid connection (Maximum Import Capacity).
- Located in a constrained area of the network (current or future congestion).
- Willingness to participate in the Lighthouse for up to two years

It is anticipated that 10-15% of the customer's demand will be made available at times network congestion. This will aid in creating a demand for biomethane in line with the SEAI's forecast for indigenous production.

Action 2e **Shrinkage Gas**	Engage with GNI on plans for procuring biomethane for shrinkage gas
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholder	CRU, GNI

Progress Update

On 26 July 2024 Gas Networks Ireland issued a Prior Information Notice (PIN) and Request for Information (RFI) to commence pre-market engagement. The deadline for RFI submissions was 28 August 2024. Gas Networks Ireland received a considerable number of RFI submissions from a cross-section of potential AD developers, Suppliers, and Shippers. Gas Networks Ireland hosted a series of bilateral meetings with a cross-section of domestic and international AD developers, shippers / suppliers as part of the pre-market engagement stage for the procurement of biomethane for shrinkage. These discussions provided valuable insights into the market dynamics, the key contractual requirements, and potential challenges. Following the bilateral meetings, it was clear that the potential challenges will require a revaluation of the approach. This Action will also be reevaluated in the context of the recently approved Renewable Heat Obligation Bill 2025, to consider how the RHO interacts with the public procurement process and what would

represent a ‘fair price’ for gas consumers for the biomethane procured for shrinkage purposes. This will be undertaken in the coming months.

2.3 Pillar 3: Bioeconomy Actions

Action 3a **Bioeconomy Pilot Programme**	Examine the potential for a pilot programme to improve the maturity of AD projects, providing links to key research, innovation funding opportunities, sustainability assessments, integration of technologies alongside AD such as biorefining and support cooperative developments.
Owner	DAFM
Stakeholder	DCEE

Progress Update

Demonstration and pilot projects will be key to growing the biomethane sector in Ireland. DAFM has directed funding to a number of pilot projects to address the key outputs of this action.

One project funded through DAFM is the EIP Small Biogas Demonstration Programme, which through engagement with farmers aims to design and test economic and environmental sustainability of a small scale, on-farm anaerobic digestion plant installed on a number of participation farms and act as a blueprint for future rollout of the system. The project is currently at its final stages with the pilot AD facility fully commissioned and operating.

DAFM have also met with a research centre in the south of the country in relation to a proposed AD facility they have plans to develop. A feasibility study on a proposed AD facility has been carried out. Funding is now required to develop the masterplan for the facility. DAFM continues to fund other research in this area and in the area of biorefining.

Action 3b **Biobased Fertiliser**	Assess relevant policy and supports required to ensure the opportunity for biobased fertiliser from digestate is achieved.
Owner	DAFM
Stakeholder	Teagasc, EPA

Progress Update

Transforming digestate into valuable biobased fertiliser can shift digestate into a potential revenue stream for plant operators. AD offers an opportunity to add value to animal slurry by processing it into a safe and valuable product (biobased fertiliser) and removing the need for slurries to be spread in the immediate vicinity of farms.

The policy landscape surrounding digestate is critical in shaping its role in the EU's green transition. Key regulations, include the Fertilising Products Regulation (FPR) and the Nitrates Directive, which govern the production and use of digestate as a biobased fertiliser. DAFM are currently undertaking an evidence-based summary of the policy and supports in place across European countries that support opportunities for biobased fertiliser.

Action 3c **Biobased Fertiliser research call**	Hold a competitive call to assess research opportunities for digestate end use.
Owner	DAFM
Stakeholder	

Progress Update

The critical role of digestate management is a key focus of a successful biomethane industry. Support and research are needed to develop a biobased fertiliser sector utilising digestate in Ireland.

The Policy and Strategic Studies Research Call (PSSRC) is a policy-orientated research call that aims to initiate short-term projects that are specific to topics identified by relevant Divisions of DAFM. A critical enabler is close interactions between researchers and policymakers to facilitate greater transfer into action at the policy level to deliver outcomes and impact for the agri-food sector.

Through planning and negotiations with the research division in DAFM, the following research titled was included as last year's research call: 'Identify the policy options, for application in Ireland, to facilitate the adoption of biobased fertilisers from digestate as a substation for chemical fertilisers.'

A Competitive Call was run in 2024 and the successful research project for funding through the 2024 DAFM Policy and Strategic Studies Research Call (PSSRC) was awarded to JJ Leahy, University of Limerick (UL) for the title 'Policy options for facilitating the adoption of biobased fertilisers from digestate in an Irish context'.

Action 3d **Bioeconomy**	Explore the options available for the integration of processed manures from the Anaerobic Digestion Industry back into the circular economy to maximise nutrient recycling and integration into primary production systems in line with current and future requirements of the Nitrates Directive.
Owner	DHLGH, DAFM
Stakeholder	Biomethane Implementation Group

Progress Update

In 2024, the European Commission published a draft amendment regarding the use of certain fertilising materials from livestock manure. Using Recovered Nitrogen from manure (ReNure) as a replacement to chemical fertiliser is a proposed amendment to

the Nitrates Directive that seeks to facilitate the reuse of organic nutrients in the form of processed digestate. Farms would be allowed to import an additional 80kg N/ha of ReNure, i.e. processed digestate from an AD plant, as a replacement for chemical fertiliser.

DAFM consulted the proposed amendment internally along with external experts and upon review submitted a response to the consultation. Ireland's submission outlined the need for the amendment to include technology that would allow for digestate from AD to be included in the proposal. Engagement with the commission has been ongoing.

Discussions took place at the December Nitrates Committee Meeting where the commission presented further amendments and asked for MS feedback which can be submitted in writing after the meeting. A vote will be required in this Committee to get MS agreement to the proposed amendment following which the adoption of the amendment by the commission can take place. This is anticipated to take place in 2025.

2.4 Pillar 4: Support Actions

Action 4a **Capital Grant Support**	Open the first competitive Grant Funding Call to contribute up to 1 TWh.
Owner	DAFM
Stakeholder	DCEE, SEAI, Teagasc
Progress Update DAFM, through the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform secured funding for a capital grant for biomethane production facilities, within Ireland's REPowerEU chapter. The chapter sets out that DAFM is to receive funding of €40 million.	

The scheme is confined to new investments specifically related to biomethane. There are two eligible investments:

(a) Upgrade of existing biogas plant to biomethane

(b) Development of new biomethane Anaerobic Digestion plant facility.

An Expression of Interest was run with 46 EOI's received. Following on from this, applications opened for the scheme and 23 applications were received. These applications were then evaluated by a steering group. As a result, 18 applications met the required eligibility and grant agreements were signed with all 18 applicants. As per the grant T&C's all plants are to have been constructed to a level of installed capacity by 31/12/2025.

Action 4b **Small Scale Finance**	Assess the potential for an appropriate smaller scale finance scheme.
Owner	DAFM
Stakeholder	Biomethane Implementation Group, ISIF, SBCI

Progress Update

DAFM have engaged with Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) over a potential funding model for smaller scale AD. As a result of these discussions, it was agreed that research should be first conducted to demonstrate the viability of smaller on-farm AD plants – this research has been funded by DAFM though Carbon Tax Funds and is currently underway by Teagasc. A potential funding model will then be explored via ISIF if the research demonstrates that certain technological solutions are feasible at farm level.

DAFM have also engaged with the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) regarding the inclusion of eligible investments in Anaerobic Digestion (AD) under the Government backed Growth and Sustainability Loan Scheme (GSLS). The SBCI have confirmed that the GSLS Green Checker included investment in anaerobic digestion.

2.5 Pillar 5: Enabling Policy Actions

Action 5a Biomethane Implementation Group	Establish a Biomethane Implementation Group to develop and deliver a strategy Implementation Plan under auspices of the Heat and Built Environment Taskforce.
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholders	DAFM, DETE, D/Transport, D/Finance, DPENDPDR, DHLGH, EPA, LAs, Teagasc, GNI, CRU, SEAI, NPWS

Progress Update

An increase in indigenous biomethane production and its use in our energy system will have multiple cross-sectoral benefits for Ireland's economy, energy security and emissions profile. As such, development of the industry will require a coherent, and collaborative approach to policy development and implementation across all sectors including Energy, Climate, Agriculture and Enterprise.

Following publication of the National Biomethane Strategy, the Terms of Reference and membership of the Biomethane Working Group were reviewed, and the Biomethane Implementation Group was established. The purpose of the Group is to oversee implementation of the Strategy, measure the impact of the 25 Strategy actions and monitor 5.7TWh target delivery.

Chaired by the DCEE, with the close support of the DAFM, the Group reports directly to the Heat and Built Environment Taskforce and is comprised of a number of focused sub-groups namely - Industry, Sustainability, Infrastructure and economic issues. The Group meets quarterly, and membership includes key Government Departments & Agencies, and industry representatives.

The Biomethane Implementation Group will remain in effect throughout the lifetime of the Strategy to ensure the necessary supports and infrastructure are in place to support development of an indigenous biomethane industry of scale.

More information on the Biomethane Implementation Group including progress updates on action delivery will be published on the Biomethane Information Hub.

Action 5b Grid Connection	Engage with GNI and CRU to review and finalise the biomethane grid connection policy and economic test including the need for financial bonds and costs for grid connections.
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholder	CRU GNI
Progress Update GNI has submitted to the CRU proposals relating to biomethane projects seeking to use the natural gas network. Those proposals relate to the regulatory, commercial and financial requirements for connecting to the gas network. They also consider the regulatory and commercial treatment of centralised grid injection (CGIs) facilities – an injection facility shared by multiple parties. This work will further build on regulatory policy already carried out, to ensure that those polices are best tailored to the developing biomethane market and Ireland's achievement of its biomethane targets. The CRU will publish a consultation on proposals in the coming months – likely by the end of Q2. GNI is also developing proposals on reverse compression. Reverse compression can provide benefits in terms of balancing demand and supply and ultimately allowing the gas network to be more efficiently used; accommodating more biomethane at less cost. Once received, the CRU will consider the proposals in detail.	

Action 5c Communication Strategy	Develop a communications strategy to engage and inform stakeholders and support target delivery.
Owner	DCEE/DAFM

Stakeholder	Teagasc

Progress Update

A sustainable biomethane sector in Ireland can have multiple benefits across several important environmental areas such as biodiversity, water and air quality and development of an environmentally sustainable industry. Effective communication with our local communities where AD and biomethane plants are to be located is a vital element of the Strategy.

The Development of a Communications Strategy to help inform the public on delivery of the National Biomethane Strategy and educate on the benefits of biomethane, and measures taken to ensure sustainable production is now underway. Engagement with key stakeholders and industry representatives has started and will be ongoing throughout 2025 to determine appropriate and effective outreach and engagement tools to ensure alignment of the National Biomethane Strategy goals with community needs.

DCEE is developing a number of engagement activities including hosting workshops for key stakeholders, to be carried out across 2025 which will inform the final Communications Strategy to engaging with local communities, AD developers and feedstock producers for roll out in 2026. More details and information will be made available on the Biomethane Information Hub.

Action 5d Online Information Hub	Develop an online Information Hub to provide AD project development assistance including information on technical, environmental, and financial advisory supports available.
Owner	DCEE/DAFM
Stakeholder	EPA, GNI, ISIF, DHLGH

Progress Update

Biomethane production and application incorporates a wide range of stakeholders and sectoral areas. Consolidation and communication of information will be key to ensuring stakeholders have access to resources as needed. DCEE has now examined the types of communication tools available and has taken a two phased approach to developing the Biomethane Information Hub. Initially consisting of a dedicated biomethane policy information page on Gov.ie, the Hub will host all current publications including the Biomethane Sustainability Charter, Implementation Group details and the latest implementation progress report. The second phase of development, due for launch in late 2025, will see this information Hub expanded further to cater for a variety of stakeholders including: Community & Engagement area – providing informative material on AD and biomethane production, case studies of successful community projects and opportunities for engagement. AD developer area – providing access to best practice guidelines, details on supports and financing options available, and helpful industry tips. Feedstock producer area – providing details on diversification opportunities and supports and financing options available DCEE will continue to engage with its internal communications team to ensure a positive and effective communications strategy will be in place.

Action 5e Capacity Building	Carry out a skills gap assessment to build capacity and skills required for an indigenous biomethane sector.
Owner	Biomethane Implementation Group
Stakeholder	DFHERIS, DCEE, DAFM

Progress Update
Development of an anaerobic digestion industry is at a nascent stage in Ireland. Currently, Ireland has two operational biomethane facilities, and 43 biogas facilities. A suite of landmark Government strategies highlights the major demands to be met from Ireland's construction workforce to meet Government priorities in housing, climate action – in particular off-shore wind and retrofit – and infrastructural developments. The realisation of national ambition in these areas is singularly dependent on progress in creating and mobilising a construction workforce of a scale and skills level that is equipped to meet the challenging targets set out in these strategies. DFHERIS has commissioned research to examine the totality of known construction targets and associated workforce and skills requirements. It is intended that a final report on the research will be available late this year and will be used to inform the prioritisation of national initiatives to meet construction and climate goals. In its role, the Biomethane Implementation Group will continue to monitor and engage with industry specialists as the Biomethane industry progresses.

Action 5f Resourcing Requirements	Review resourcing requirements of key government agencies to support development of the biomethane industry including EPA licencing, ABP licencing and Planning.
Owner	Biomethane Implementation Group
Stakeholder	DAFM, D/Finance, DHLGH, EPA, CRU, DPENDPDR
Progress Update To meeting Ireland's target of 5.7 TWh of biomethane by 2030, AD developers and related infrastructure will be subject to consent, including but not limited to planning permissions, licences and permits approved by DAFM, the EPA, Local Authority or An Bord Pleanála as applicable.	

DHLGH is currently working on a number of measures to increase staffing levels in the planning sector. In this regard, DHLGH is collaborating with the Local Government Management Agency on the delivery of a programme of supports to planning authorities. These supports include the provision of staffing resources and expertise to enable planning authorities to perform their functions efficiently and effectively.

On 11 June 2024, the Government approved the General Scheme of the Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024 which is intended to streamline the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) licencing system by providing for timeframes to be set for EPA licencing decisions and more options for the Agency to efficiently regulate lower risk activities and minor changes to licences. It also ensures that appropriate and proportionate environmental protections are firmly in place.

The Bill aims to provide more certainty around the timeframe for decisions on applications for EPA licences for the energy, food, pharma, chemicals, waste and other industrial sectors and will complement the statutory timelines being introduced under the Planning and Development Act 2024.

The Biomethane Implementation Group will continue to engage with the relevant agencies to ensure there are relevant systems and resources in place to support development and progression of the sector.

Action 5g Guidance	Develop guidelines to support local authorities when assessing AD and biorefinery planning applications.
Owner	Biomethane Implementation Group
Stakeholder	DAFM, DHLGH, Teagasc, SEAI

Progress Update

AD, although a very well-established technology in Europe with over 20,000 plants in operation, is a relatively new and unknown technology in Ireland. Anaerobic Digestion and biorefinery facilities can be significant constructions, with impacts on the environment, biospheres, and the local communities in the area which they are located. AD and other integrated assets are required to undergo a planning process to ensure

proper consideration of a range of factors, including location, visual impact, land-zoning plans, and ecology.

Initial exploratory work has started in this area and the Biomethane Implementation Group will continue to engage with other Departments throughout 2026.

Action 5h Feedstock Advisory	Assess how best to advise feedstock suppliers on best practices around sustainably produced AD feedstock supply whilst ensuring best environmental practices.
Owner	DAFM
Stakeholder	Teagasc, SEAI

Progress Update

The main feedstocks utilised across Europe for AD are agriculture feedstocks (64%), organic wastes (11%) and industrial wastes (11%). While food waste may be considered the optimal feedstock for AD, there is insufficient resource available to meet the required scale. Ireland is recognised as having one of the largest potentials for biomethane production in Europe per capita, due to Ireland's substantial agricultural sector. Feedstocks used for the production of biomethane must be sustainably produced while also ensuring best environmental practices are maintained.

In 2024, Teagasc held nationwide events at Teagasc Grange and Teagasc Johnstown. At the Grange open day demonstrations were held that relate to producing sustainable feedstock. These included best practices on sowing clover, strategies to reduce chemical nitrogen, grass clover and multi species swards, production of high-quality silage and feedstocks for anaerobic digestion. At the Johnstown open day demonstrations included discussions on multi species swards production, clover-based swards and anaerobic digestion as a future income for farming. These open days are an effective way of delivering key messages to farmers with thousands from the farming community attending and booklets provided to attendees with information.

Teagasc have also collaborated with University of Galway on the following research title "Improvement of biomethane yields from agricultural feedstock". The project will

commence in January 2025 and run for 4 years. This project will provide solutions for maximising methane production and reducing methane losses in anaerobic digestion (AD) plants to promote the application of AD as a source of bioenergy from grass silage and animal slurry. In the long term, this project should contribute to a thriving, sustainable and circular bioeconomy, and to the creation of wealth and quality jobs in rural areas.

Action 5i Governance Structure	Establish governance structure to support strategy delivery including identification of appropriate KPIs, and target monitoring and reporting process.
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholder	GNI, EPA, DAFM, Heat & Built Environment Taskforce

Progress Update

Achieving the objectives of the National Biomethane Strategy will require concerted action and collaboration across key Government Departments and Agencies. To ensure Strategy implementation and action delivery is effectively monitored, strong governance is required.

DCEE has now developed a governance structure and identified appropriate KPIs to track progress, measure the impact of the Strategies objectives, and allow for clear sight of the status of each deliverable. KPIs are focused on planning & permitting, facilities in operation, volumes produced, and the level of target delivery achieved.

Progress updates are provided directly to the Heat & Built Environment Taskforce outlining measures that are on track, and areas where progress might be stalled.

It is envisioned that updates will be made available on the Biomethane Implementation Group section on the Biomethane Information Hub on Gov.ie.

3 Looking Forward to 2025 Actions

Action 4c Capital Grant Support	Finalise the bid for Capital Grant support from 2026 onwards, to be announced in 2025.
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholder	DAFM, SEAI, Teagasc

Progress Achieved to Date

Government is committed to supporting an indigenous biomethane industry and the target up to 5.7TWh by 2030. As energy policy lead, DCEE is responsible for delivery of the second phase of market support from 2026 to 2030. This second phase of support will provide tailored investment to further the development of an indigenous biomethane sector in keeping with the objectives of the National Biomethane Strategy, namely an agri-centric, sustainable biomethane industry. Biomethane produced using agricultural, sustainable feedstocks and directed to priority end-use will be fundamental to the achievement of our binding carbon targets.

As part of the requirements under the Infrastructure Guidelines, every capital project in receipt of exchequer funding with an estimated cost of €20 million or more must be appraised and considered. The range of options available are based on suitability for Government funding, strategic relevance, projected demand and affordability.

As part of the National Biomethane Strategy development process, a long list of options was identified that would provide market support and achieve target delivery. These options have now been refined and a Preliminary Business Case (PBC) has been developed with the aim of carrying out the necessary financial and economic appraisal for the support programme.

Using a multi-criteria assessment, shortlisted options were scored using the following key criteria:

- Environmental Impact (inc. GHG emissions)
- Economic Viability (inc. cost per TWh)

- Rural Development (inc. farmer income diversification)
- Energy Security (inc. reduction in gas imports)
- Policy (inc. policy and regulatory alignment

Once the PBC process is complete, DCEE will begin development and design of the second grant programme with the intention to launch an open call for applications in late 2025.

Action 2b **Renewable Heat Obligation**	Throughout scheme lifetime, ensure alignment of strategy target (5.7 TWh) with RHO obligation rate increases
Owner	DCEE
Stakeholder	RHO Scheme Administrator

Progress Achieved to date

As part of the RHO development and design, consideration to the cost and availability of renewable fuels to meet the obligation post introduction out to 2030 have been examined. To ensure end user demand continues to incentivise market development and an increase in biomethane production, further analysis will be carried out throughout the lifetime of the scheme. It is envisaged that scheme parameters will be reviewed periodically to assess the schemes performance and resulting market developments.

4 Glossary of Acronyms

AD	Anaerobic Digestion
APBs	Animal by Products

CRU	The Commission for Regulation of Utilities
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
D/Finance	Department of Finance
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DPENDPDR	Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform
D/Transport	Department of Transport
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
ETS	Emissions Trading System
EU	European Union
GNI	Gas Networks Ireland
ISIF	Ireland Strategic Investment Fund
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LAs	Local Authorities
LAWPRO	The Local Authority Waters Programme
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
Pos	Proof of Sustainability

RHO	Renewable Heat Obligation
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
TWh	Terawatt hours