

# The role of independent bodies in climate governance

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# Overview

- The main components of the UK Climate Change Act
- Background on the CCC
- The role in the parliamentary debates
- Lessons learnt



# Long-term target to 2050

## What and how?

Reduce emissions by at least 80% on 1990 levels

Covers the whole economy and all greenhouse gases

## Outcomes

Long-term direction of travel

Defines the UK's contribution to solving climate change

8



Scientifically informed, long-term approach to policymaking

# Carbon budgets

## What and how?

Sequence of 5-year targets

Recommended by Committee on Climate Change (CCC)

Debated and legislated by Parliament

Set 12 years ahead

## Outcomes

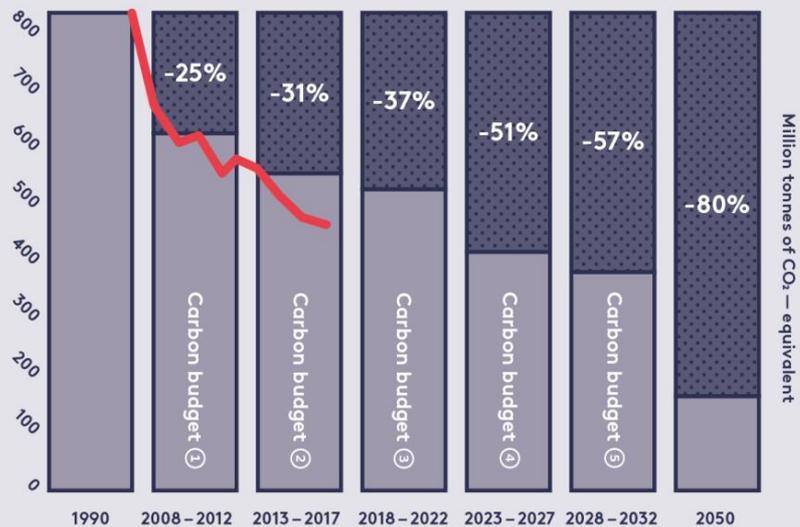
Basis for concrete policy

Long-term target translated into near-term actions

Flexibility built in

Progressive, ratcheted emissions cuts

Actual emissions



Million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> — equivalent

## Rolling set of medium-term targets

# Continual adaptation planning

## What and how?

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5-year cycles of adaptation programmes and risk assessments

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Scrutinised by CCC

## Outcomes

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Introduced climate change risk into public and private sector decision-making

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Prepares for the now unavoidable impacts



Year 1



Year 5



Year 10



Year 15



Year 20

# Duties and powers to deliver

## What and how?

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Government is accountable to Parliament to deliver

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Government obliged to produce plans to meet budgets

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CCC provides annual progress reports to

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Parliament  
Judicial review if non-compliant

## Outcomes

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Assigns clear responsibilities

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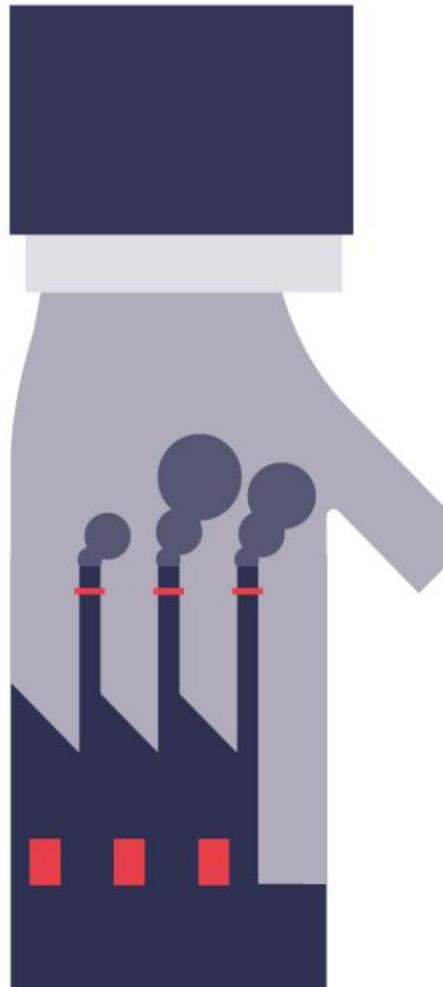
Holds government accountable

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Enables public scrutiny

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Provides basis for policy implementation



# Independent advisory body

## What and how?

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Committee on  
Climate Change:  
experts and  
secretariat

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Recommends  
carbon budgets

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Monitors progress  
on emissions  
reduction and  
climate resilience

## Outcomes

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Independent,  
objective analysis

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Long-term  
consistency in  
approach across  
government

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Transparency and  
legitimacy

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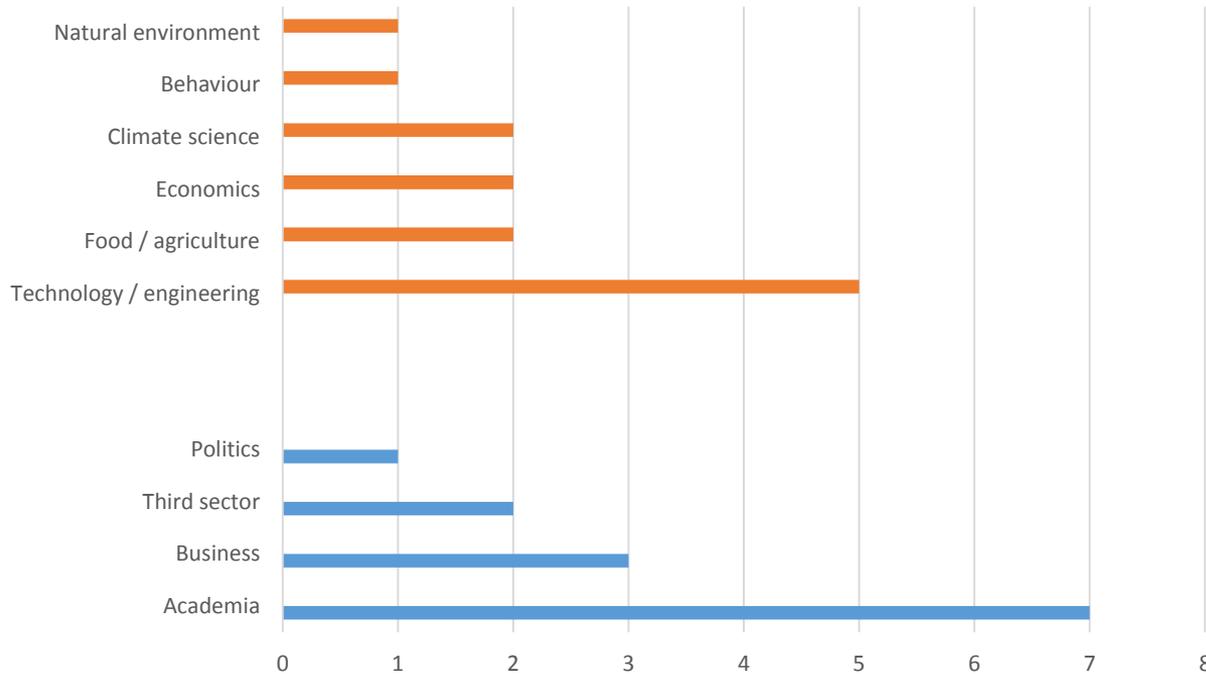
More informed  
decision-making



# Roles and responsibilities

- **Recommend to Parliament** appropriate emissions reduction targets (carbon budgets levels).
- **Advise the Government** on the risks and opportunities from climate change and evaluate its National Adaptation Programme (through the ASC).
- **Monitor and assess progress on reducing emissions and on climate resilience.** Annual progress report to Parliament, to which the Government has a statutory obligation to respond.
- **Provide on-demand advice to the UK Government and the devolved administrations** of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales on specific questions of climate policy (e.g. aviation emissions, renewable energy, the climate impact of shale gas extraction and devolved climate policy).

# Background of CCC and ASC members (no. of members)



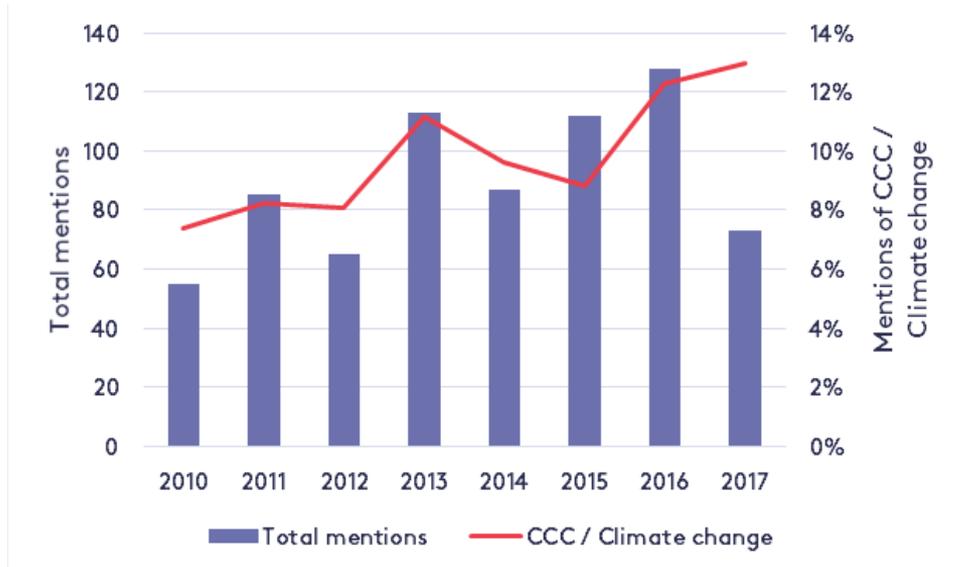
- CCC: 8 members
- ASC: 6 members
- Some have expertise across several areas

## The CCC's statutory advice on carbon targets has generally been followed

Issue	CCC recommendation	Parliamentary decision	Advice implemented...
2050 target (2008)	Reduce all greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 1990 level by 2050	Legislated the 2050 target as recommended	Fully
1st, 2nd, carbon budgets (2009)	Set <i>interim budgets</i> that result in a emissions by 2020. Replace them with <i>budgets</i> equivalent to a 42% cut deal	Legislated the interim recommended level. The global deal did not	Fully
4th carbon budget	Set a <i>domestic action</i> budget equivalent by 2025. Change the earlier budgets to previously recommended <i>intended</i> level. tighter <i>global offer</i> budget after a	Legislated the <i>domestic</i> subject to a review in the evolving circumstances. were not changed	Partially
4th carbon budget (2014)	There is no legal or economic basis for the 4th carbon budget	Confirmed the 4th carbon originally set	Fully
5th carbon budget	Set a budget that is equivalent to a emissions by 2030, including emissions international shipping	Legislated a budget requiring cut, but without bringing shipping into the framework	Partially

Source: Averchenkova A, Fankhauser S, and Finnegan J (2018) *The role of independent bodies in climate governance: the UK's Committee on Climate Change*. London: Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment and Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy, London School of Economics and Political Science.

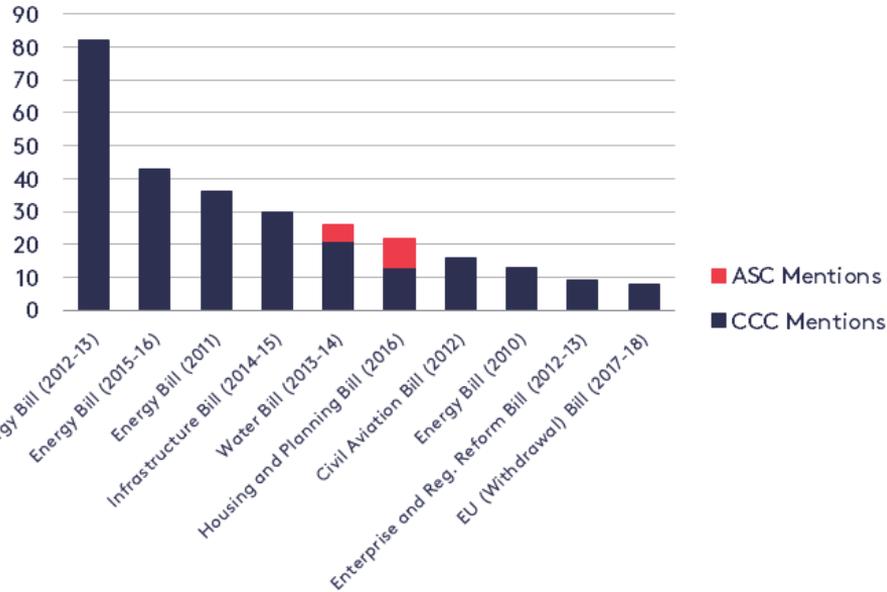
# Number of times parliamentarians mention the CCC



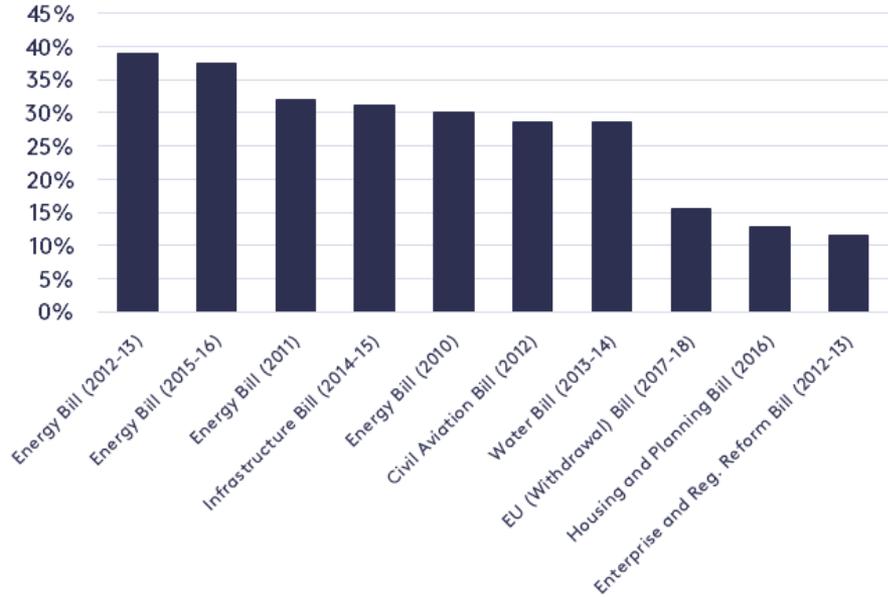
- December 2008 to May 2018: the CCC referenced 5 times more than the IPCC
- Opposition politicians mentioned the CCC more often

# Mentions of CCC and ASC

## In the debates on bills (left)

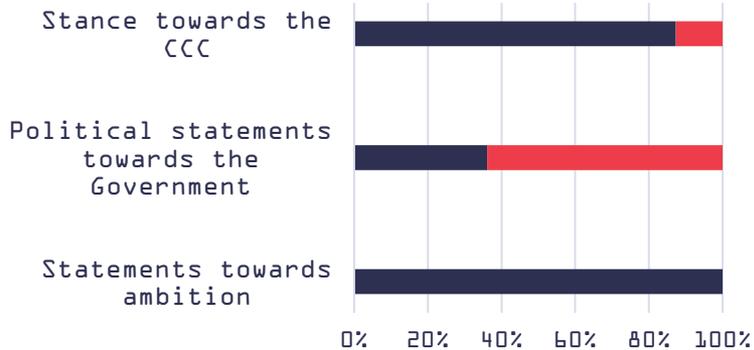


## Share of sittings where the CCC or ASC was mentioned (right)

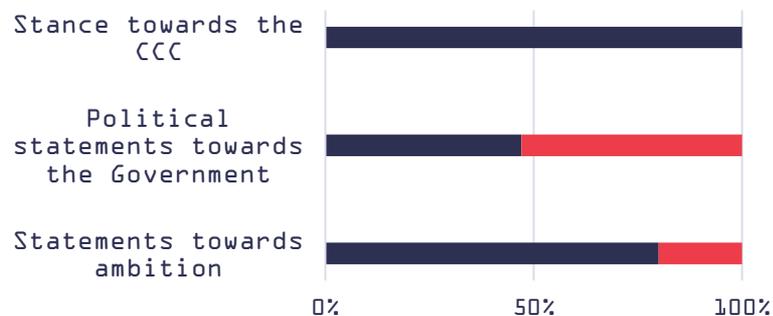


# CCC analysis is used in Parliament to push for greater ambition

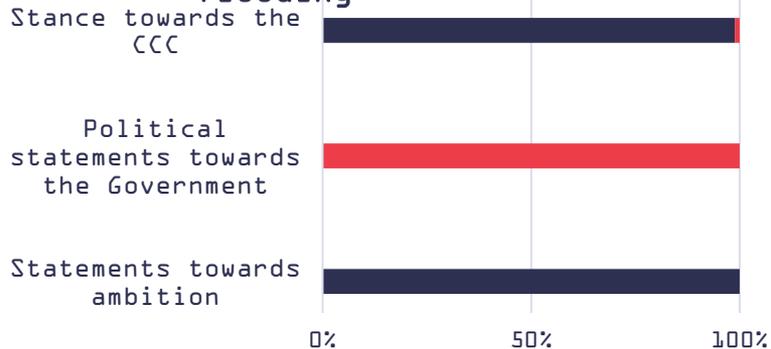
## The debates on carbon budgets



## The debates on the Energy Bill 2015-2016



## CCC/ASC in the debates on flooding



■ Supportive  
■ Critical

*References to the CCC:*

*(i) whether speakers are critical or supportive of the CCC/its analysis;*

*(ii) where speakers adopt a stance towards Government policy whether CCC evidence is used to support or criticise Government*

*(iii) where speakers call for action whether CCC evidence is used to advocate increased action (labelled 'supportive') or reduced action (labelled 'critical').*

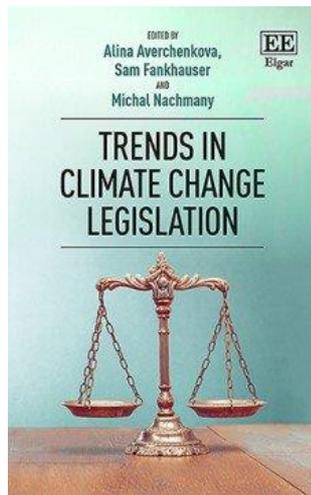
*Source: Averchenkova A, Fankhauser S, and Finnegan J (2018) The role of independent bodies in climate governance: the UK's Committee on Climate Change.*

# Key Learnings

- **CCC has had a strong influence on UK climate policy.** Its analysis is used and trusted by stakeholders on all sides of the debate, its statutory advice has generally been followed.
- **The CCC has made a material difference to climate policy** in terms of objectives (the statutory carbon targets), process (impact on parliamentary debate) and substance (e.g. influencing new laws on energy, infrastructure, housing and water).
- **CCC analysis is used in Parliament to push for greater ambition.**
- CCC analysis often provides a technical **justification to political arguments** for greater accountability and more ambitious action.
- **The CCC has gained a reputation as an authoritative advisor** not only on matters of climate policy, but on climate-smart public policy more generally.

Key elements of the legal framework	Qualitative assessment
<p><b>Institutional system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of implementation</li> <li>• Independent advice</li> <li>• Devolution</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement</li> </ul>	Level of complexity
<p><b>Targets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term-target</li> <li>• Near and mid-term targets</li> <li>• Sectoral targets</li> <li>• Ratchet mechanism</li> <li>• Consistency with the NDC targets</li> </ul>	Coverage of key governance functions
<p><b>Policy instruments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processes for developing and adopting policies</li> <li>• Concrete instruments embedded in laws</li> </ul>	Clarity of institutional mandates
<p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification of budgets</li> <li>• Financial instruments</li> </ul>	Level of flexibility vs. prescription
<p><b>Monitoring, accountability and enforcement</b></p>	Overall consistency with the Paris agreement

# For more information see:



The Governance and Legislation research programme:  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/research-theme/governance-and-legislation/>

Thank you!