

Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics

Proposed method for evaluating emissions reduction against statutory targets.

Purpose of this paper

The following paper is intended to provide users with a simulation of a proposed replacement to section C in the Scottish Greenhouse Gas Emissions statistics publication. The current section C concerns the adjustment of source emissions to include trading in the EU Emissions Trading System (EU-ETS), and the evaluation of emissions reduction progress on that basis against the statutory annual emissions reduction targets as set under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Under the terms of the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, progress to Scotland's emissions reduction targets will no longer be measured based on emissions adjusted for trading in the EU-ETS.

Instead, this example replacement section replicates the method to establish the "GHG Account" recommended by the Committee on Climate Change and now implemented by the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019.

One aim of this new method of evaluating emissions reductions is to provide a simple, consistent, and transparent measure. As a result, the proposed replacement section is substantially shorter than the current section in the statistics publication; we would welcome the views of users to ensure that their needs are met by this presentation.

The EU-ETS adjusted figures will no longer be included in the main statistics publication but will continue to be made available as separate downloadable file.

While the statistics included in this paper are based on actual published statistics, they should be considered illustrative as they relate to a year (2017) for which Scotland's target progress has already been reported under the terms of legislation in force at the time. They are included to give users an example of the proposed calculation in order to receive feedback on the presentation of the information, They should be classed as experimental statistics.

Please send feedback by 4 May 2020 to:

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Section C. Scotland's GHG Account

Introduction

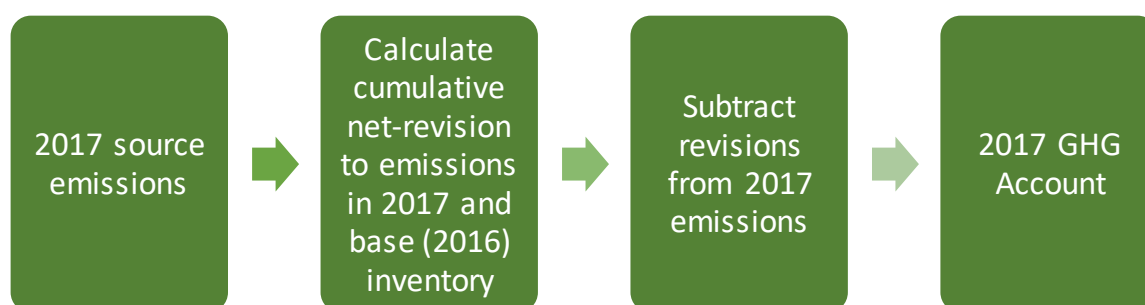
In December 2017 the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) provided advice on the future measurement and accounting of emissions against Scotland's climate change targets¹.

The CCC used the term "GHG Account" to refer to their recommended manner of accounting for emissions, which is intended to better separate the impacts on targets of scientific and methodological improvements to the GHG inventory, from those of 'on-the-ground' policy actions.

At the heart of this method is the freezing of inventory methods (the scientific methods used for the measurement and estimation of emissions levels) between the time that target levels are set (or reviewed through independent advice from the CCC) and the time when target outcomes come to be reported. To ensure that the inventory methods used for the purpose of reporting target outcomes do not become too far separated from the best science and evidence, the base inventory will be re-aligned to the most up to date inventory methods at least every 5 years.

Calculating the GHG Account

The calculation of the GHG account for the latest year can be summarised as follows:



¹ <https://www.thecc.org.uk/publication/letter-lord-deben-roseanna-cunningham-msp-advising-scottish-climate-target-framework/>

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Example: A 2017 GHG Account Calculation

In this illustrative example, the calendar year 2016 (for which emissions data was first published in June 2018) has been selected as the base inventory.

Table 1: Calculation of the Scottish GHG Account for 2017

	Baseline Period ¹	2016	2017
June 2019 source emissions data (1990-2017 inventory)	76.3	41.9	40.5
Base Inventory source emissions data (June 2018 data (1990-2016))	75.7	38.6	N/A
Revision to base inventory		3.3	3.3 ²
GHG Account	75.7	38.6	37.2
GHG Account figures, expressed as a percentage reduction from the baseline period.	0%	-49.0%	-50.9%

1. The Baseline period uses a 1995 base-year for F-Gas emissions, and 1990 for all other greenhouse gases.

2. The cumulative revision for the latest year is carried over from the previous year

Under the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, annual targets are set for the years from 2018 onwards. A full list of these target levels is available on the Scottish Government website (<https://www.gov.scot/policies/climate-change/reducing-emissions/>), with the 2018 annual target being for a 54.0% reduction from baseline levels.

Reporting on these targets will use the GHG Account method, with the initial base inventory being that for 1990-2016 (this will update when the CCC next provide advice on targets under the terms of the Act). The example above shows that, as of 2017, a 50.9% reduction had been achieved on this basis. Emission statistics for 2018, including an assessment of the annual target outcome based on the new GHG Account, are due to be published in June 2020.