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Irish Academics call for Political Leaders to prioritise the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency in the Election Campaign

As the [29th international Conference of the Parties under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) opens in Baku, Azerbaijan, four senior Irish academics have published an [open letter](#) calling urgently on all Irish political leaders to centre and prioritize the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency in the current election campaign – including by participating in a TV/livestream leaders’ debate dedicated solely to this topic.

The four academics are all active in research on various aspects of this crisis. John Sweeney is an emeritus professor of geography at Maynooth University, and is well known for his public commentary as one of Ireland’s foremost climatologists. Hannah Daly is Professor of sustainable energy systems at University College Cork. Barry McMullin is an emeritus professor of Dublin City University, with a research focus on energy system decarbonisation, and the use of carbon budgets in national climate policies. Clare Kelly is an associate professor and Principal Investigator at Trinity College Institute of Neuroscience in Trinity College Dublin, working specifically on the role of psychology in the climate emergency.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Prof. McMullin said:

“As evidenced most recently by the [horrendous flooding in the Valencia region of Spain](#), the climate emergency is unequivocally upon us. It dwarfs conventional political issues: there can be no meaningful, enduring, solutions to housing, healthcare, education, emigration, economic development, peace or justice unless there is a successful response to the climate and biodiversity emergency. And for Ireland to play even its minimal fair share in such a global response would now require fundamental and disruptive changes in current political priorities. Such changes are inconceivable without clear and explicit political leadership and the widest possible societal understanding and engagement. It is time for leaders to lead!”

The academics have launched a public petition urging the case for a full leaders’ debate devoted exclusively to the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency. They have invited all citizens who support their call to sign at:

[ge2024.postcarbonireland.org](https://www.postcarbonireland.org/ge2024)

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