



# Purpose of the DCCC Status Outlook

In this report, the Danish Council on Climate Change (DCCC) assesses the current state of Danish climate policy and provides recommendations for future climate efforts. The report also outlines the climate policy context within the EU and at the global level.

Danish climate policy has long been focused on the year 2030. However, in 2025, the Danish Parliament must set a new climate target for 2035, and therefore this Status Outlook also looks beyond 2030.

There are arguments for aiming for more than 80 percent in 2035. One of them is being a frontrunner in climate action if territorial targets are seen as important for evaluating a country's overall climate efforts.

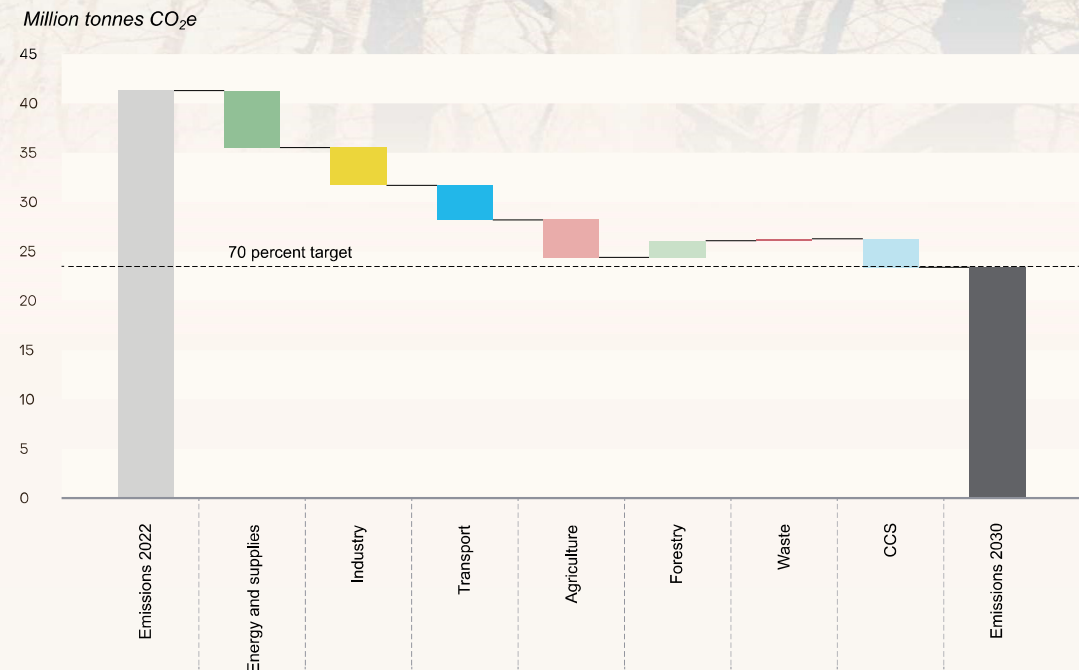


Figure 1.2 Projected development of emissions by sector towards 2030



# The Seven Chapters in the Status Outlook

Chapter 1 A summary of the other chapters

## The International Framework

Chapter 2 This chapter describes the global climate policy framework which also shapes Denmark's climate policy.

Chapter 3 This chapter outlines the latest developments in the EU and their implications for Danish climate policy.

## Danish Climate Policy Towards 2030

Chapter 4 This chapter reviews Denmark's climate targets and EU commitments leading up to 2030. The DCCC has an official role in assessing whether these targets are likely to be met.

Chapter 5 This chapter focuses specifically on the EU targets regarding energy efficiency and energy savings.

## Danish Climate Policy Beyond 2030

Chapter 6 This chapter discusses possible levels for Denmark's 2035 climate target and potential pathways to achieving it.

Chapter 7 This chapter examines how Denmark can achieve climate neutrality and the government's ambition of a 110 percent reduction by 2050 through both technological and structural transitions.



## 2 Status of Global Climate Policy

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on Climate Change.

Climate change is a global problem, and 2024 marked the first calendar year that the global temperature exceeded 1.5°C. The significant increase in temperature has taken many by surprise. There is strong evidence that the climate system is reacting in ways that climate science has yet to fully explain. The world is now on track for a temperature increase of approximately 3°C above its pre-industrial level.

If global climate action is not strengthened towards 2030, it will become impossible to limit global warming to 1.5°C without overshoot, and achieving the 2-degree target will be exceedingly difficult.

The choices and actions taken by the world over the next five years will be crucial in determining whether the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement can be met.

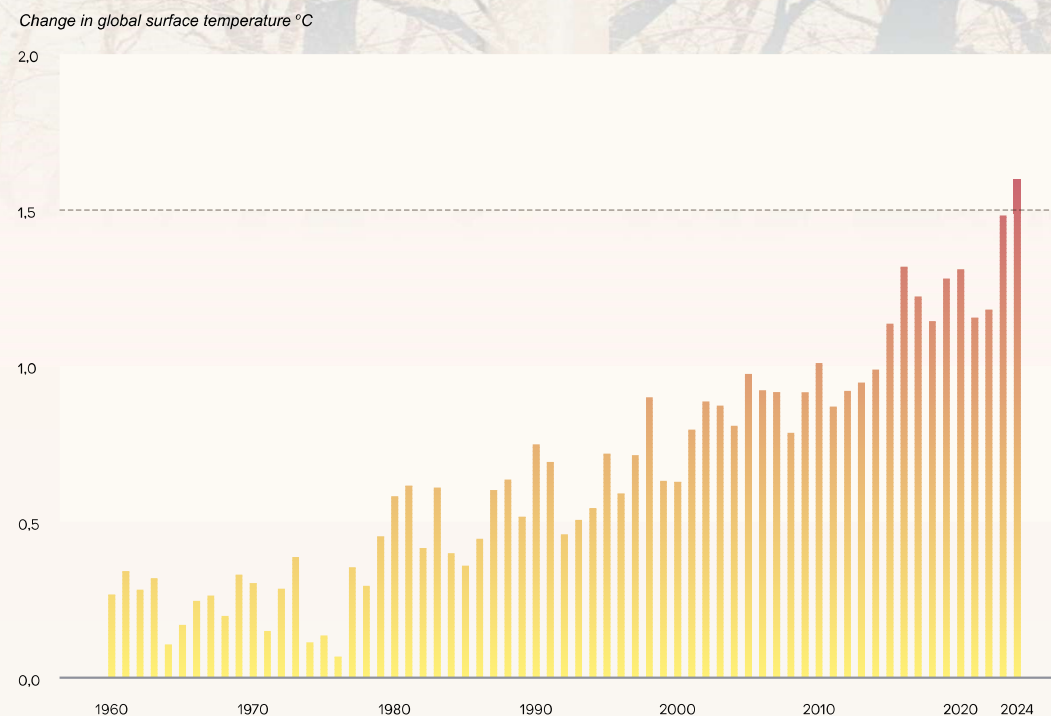


Figure 2.1 Change in global surface temperature (°C) 1960-2024

# 3 The EU Climate Regulation towards 2040

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on Climate Change.

The EU is a key player in global climate action, and EU climate policy has significant implications for Danish climate policy. The European Commission is expected to propose legislation in 2025 to set an EU target of 90 percent reduction by 2040. The new 2040 target is expected to lead to stricter climate legislation in the EU.

The new carbon trading market will play a crucial role in the regulation supporting the achievement of this target. The Commission has three elements of the market under consideration in particular: further development of the emissions trading system, a market for negative emissions, and the potential for an emissions trading system for agriculture.

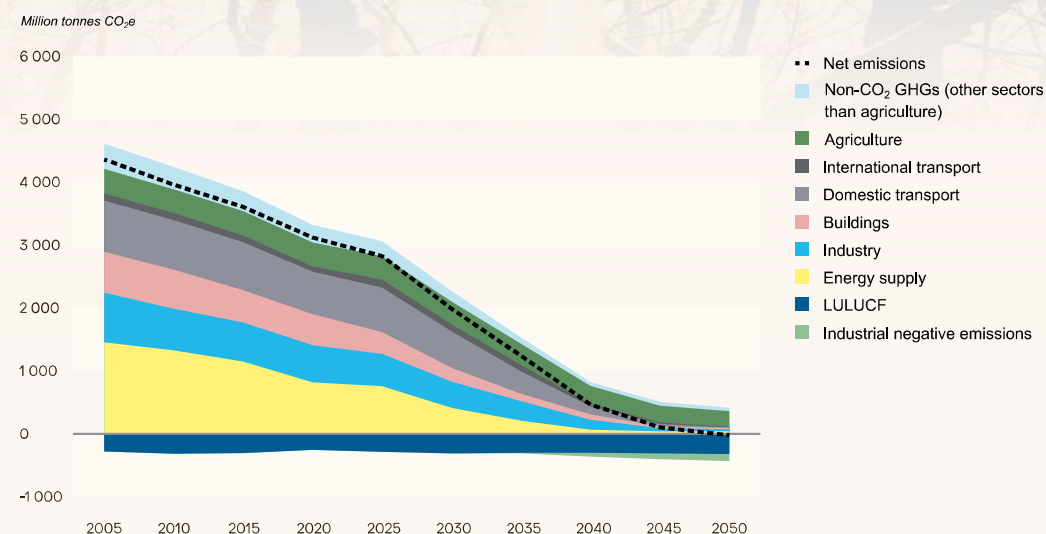


Figure 3.2 Projection of the EU's emissions by sector in a scenario with a 90 percent reduction target for 2040



# 4

## Denmark's Climate Target towards 2030

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Towards 2030, Denmark must meet a range of climate targets and obligations. According to the Climate Act, the DCCC must annually assess the status of these targets and obligations.

Denmark will most likely meet the lower limit of the 2025 target of 50 percent reduction.

As of February 2025, the DCCC assesses that the government's climate efforts demonstrate that the 2030 target can be achieved. However, there is considerable uncertainty regarding emissions in 2030, and a significant implementation effort is still required to reach the target. Therefore, the government should maintain a strong focus on implementing the adopted policies, and clarifying current plans regarding the revisit of political agreements.

With the current policies, Denmark appears on track to meet most, but not all, of its EU commitments.

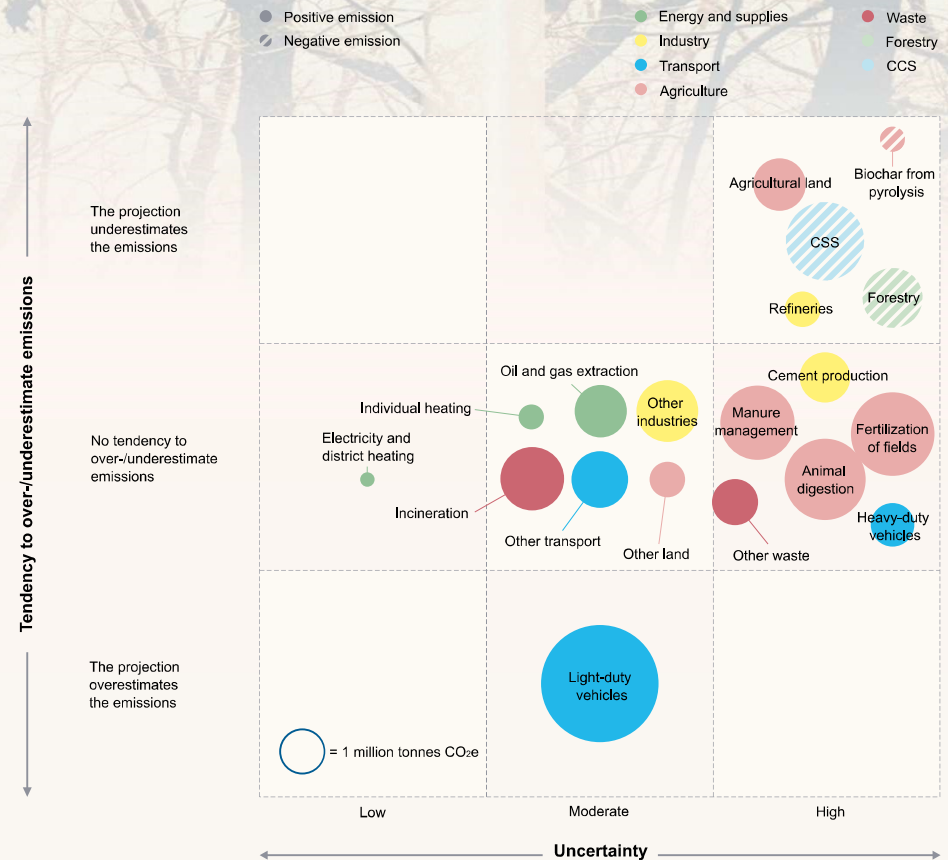


Figure 4.6 Trends in over-/underestimation and uncertainty regarding emissions by 2030

# 5 The EU Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving Obligations

The EU sets several requirements for Denmark's energy consumption. These obligations are part of the EU's Energy Efficiency Directive and Buildings Directive.

Denmark does not fully comply with all obligations under the Energy Efficiency Directive. The DCCC assesses that the two overall requirements for energy efficiency and savings are met under current policies. However, Denmark is not expected to fulfill the obligation regarding public sector energy consumption in 2029 and 2030 without additional measures. Additionally, the requirement for renovating public buildings is unlikely to be met under existing policies.

Denmark only partially meets its commitments under the Buildings Directive. Approximately one third of the non-residential buildings covered by the obligation must undergo further energy efficiency improvements for Denmark to achieve full compliance.

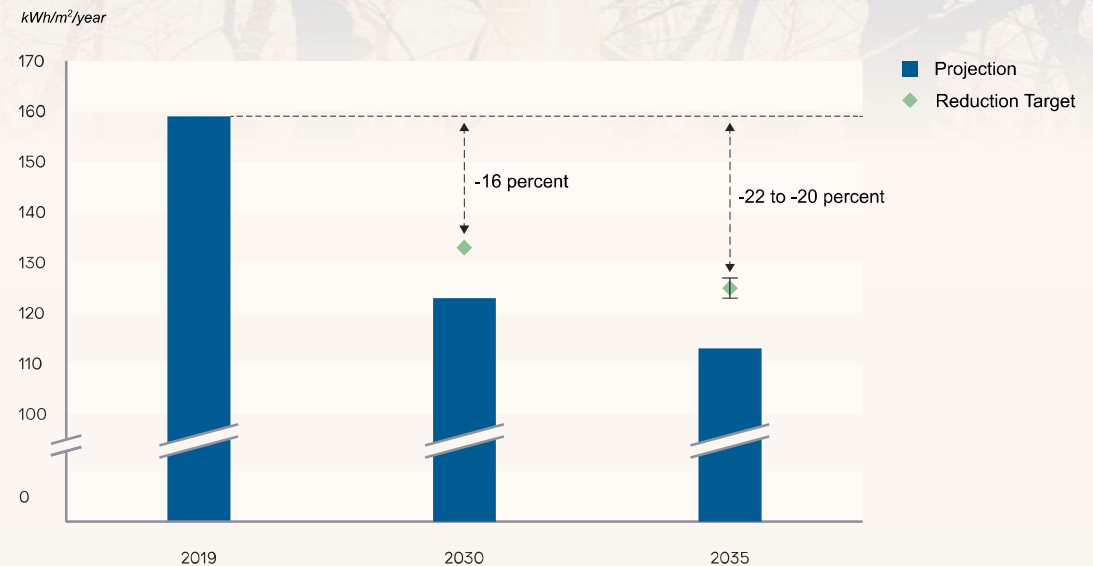


Figure 5.5 Development in the average energy efficiency of the housing stock (kWh/m²)

# 6 Denmark's 2035 Climate Target

By the end of this year, Denmark must set a new climate target for 2035, which is to be incorporated into the Climate Act. Using scenario outlines, the DCCC has analyzed possible targets of 80, 85, and 90 percent reductions by 2035.

All scenario outlines involve a significant conversion of agricultural land to forests and natural areas beyond the scope of the agreement of the Agricultural Green Transition. To achieve more ambitious targets, further reduction measures are required. In the scenario outlines for 85 and 90 percent targets, livestock production is transformed through both technical measures and structural adjustments, such as a reduction in livestock production. Additionally, carbon capture and storage (CCS) plays a central role.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to setting higher targets. The DCCC highlights three arguments for aiming beyond 80 percent. These relate to the state of the climate, the transition to climate neutrality, and Denmark's role as a frontrunner.

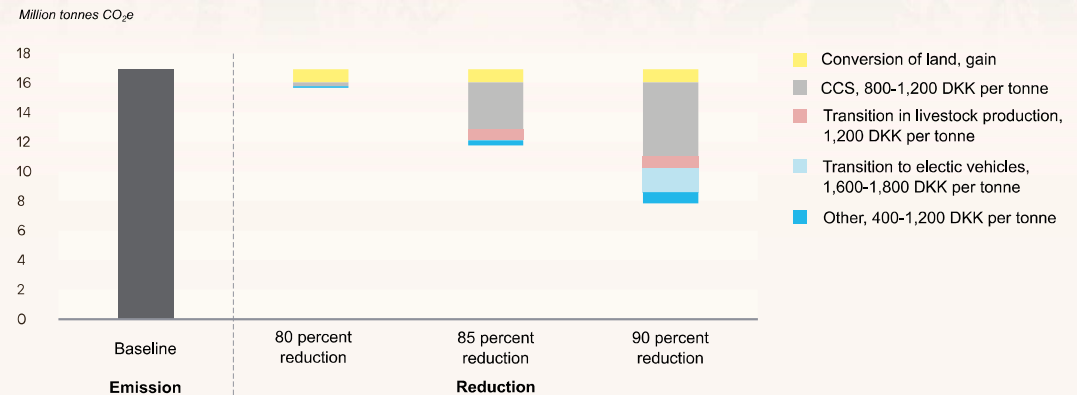


Figure 6.2 Scenario sketches of reductions in 2035 and cost per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>e reduction



# 7

## Denmark's Long-term Climate Targets

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on Climate Change.

The government wants to increase the Danish Climate Act's 2050 target from 100 to 110 percent.

The DCCC demonstrates that a target of either 100 percent or 110 percent can be reached through behavioral and structural changes as well as new technology, with the pathway to 2050 drawing on all types of transitions.

Negative emissions will be crucial for achieving the 2050 climate target. These will come from, among other things, afforestation, storage of biochar, and capture and storage of CO<sub>2</sub> from biomass consumption or directly from the air.

Land use will become an important issue in climate policy from now towards 2050.

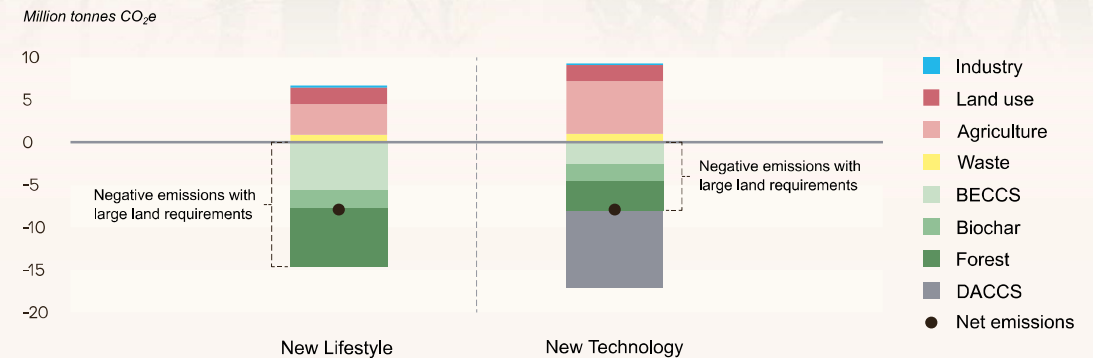


Figure 7.4 Emissions and negative emissions for a 110 percent reduction by 2050 in two scenarios.

# Recommendations for Climate Policy Before and After 2030

## Path towards the 2030 target



**Focus on implementation.** The government should maintain a strong focus on implementing political agreements to ensure the necessary emission reductions.



**Clarification of the plan for revisits.** The government should clarify its plan for revisiting political agreements. This includes preparing analyses of measures that can be used after each revisit, clearly outlining which concrete measures can be implemented and their expected effects.



**Consider additional reduction measures.** The government should consider whether the current plan, which only just meets the 70 percent target, provides the desired political certainty for achieving the goal or if further reductions should be implemented towards 2030.

## Strategic planning towards the targets after 2030



**Examples and benchmarks in the climate action plan.** In its legally binding climate action plan towards 2035, the government should outline exactly how the 2035 target will be achieved. This may include examples of how target fulfillment can occur and establishing benchmarks for selected sectors.



**Long-term climate strategy.** The government should develop a long-term climate strategy pointing towards 2050, aligned with the climate action plan leading up to 2035. The strategy should account for the uncertainty of long-term projections while addressing key issues such as expanding known climate initiatives, land-use planning, energy infrastructure, research and innovation, a skilled workforce, the public sector's role, Denmark's responsibility in international transport, and a strengthened public dialogue on the 2050 pathway. This long-term strategy could support short-term decisions, including enhancing target fulfillment, if needed.



**Focus on biogenic carbon.** Denmark's fulfillment of climate targets should account for the fact that biogenic carbon is a scarce global resource. Therefore, meeting the territorial target in 2050 should consider the balance between biogenic carbon imports and exports, including imports and exports of food, materials, and energy containing biogenic carbon.



# Recommendations for the Revision of the Danish Climate Act



**Carbon budget targets.** After 2030, Denmark should transition to five-year carbon budget targets, starting with the period 2031–2035.



**Clarity on calculation methods.** The Climate Act should clearly state how targets are to be calculated, regardless of whether five-year carbon budget targets are adopted or the current reduction target type is maintained.



**Strengthening global climate action.** The Climate Act's provisions on global climate action should be strengthened without compromising national targets. The Act should specify benchmarks for consumption-based carbon footprints and the carbon footprint of public procurement. Furthermore, the Climate Act should emphasize that all significant global focus areas should be included in a long-term global climate strategy.



**Targets for international transport.** As part of global climate action, Denmark should take responsibility for the Danish share of emissions from international shipping and aviation. The Climate Act should include a 2050 target ensuring that fuels used by ships and planes on international routes refueled in Denmark do not burden the climate. Such a target can be formulated in various ways, either as a separate goal, a goal integrated with the territorial target, or as a production target for green fuels.



**Consideration of biodiversity, nature, and the environment.** The climate challenges cannot be addressed in isolation. The Climate Act should consider that meeting climate targets must also take biodiversity, nature, and the environment into account. This can be incorporated together with the Act's other guiding principles.



**Clarity on long-term targets.** When revising the Climate Act, long-term climate targets should be clarified. The government should ensure that the Climate Act's and the government's targets for 2045 and 2050 are aligned. Including these targets in the Act will provide clearer frameworks for all stakeholders.

# 70

## Recommendations for Policy Tools

Based on previous analyses, the DCCC provides an overview of its climate policy recommendations to date through the policy toolbox. In this toolbox, the DCCC considers the current state of society. The policy tools are defined as measures that are action-oriented and contribute to ensuring that climate efforts are carried out in an appropriate manner. The policy toolbox was last updated in September 2024.

Have the recommendations been followed?

→ 42

recommendations have been fully or partially followed

Are the recommendations still valid?

→ 55

Recommendations have not yet been fully implemented and are still valid\*



Explore the policy toolbox on the  
[DCCC's website](#)

*\* A number of recommendations for policy tools have been modified in light of new knowledge or societal developments. An overview of all current recommendations and modifications is available on the DCCC's website.*



