



Committee on  
Climate Change

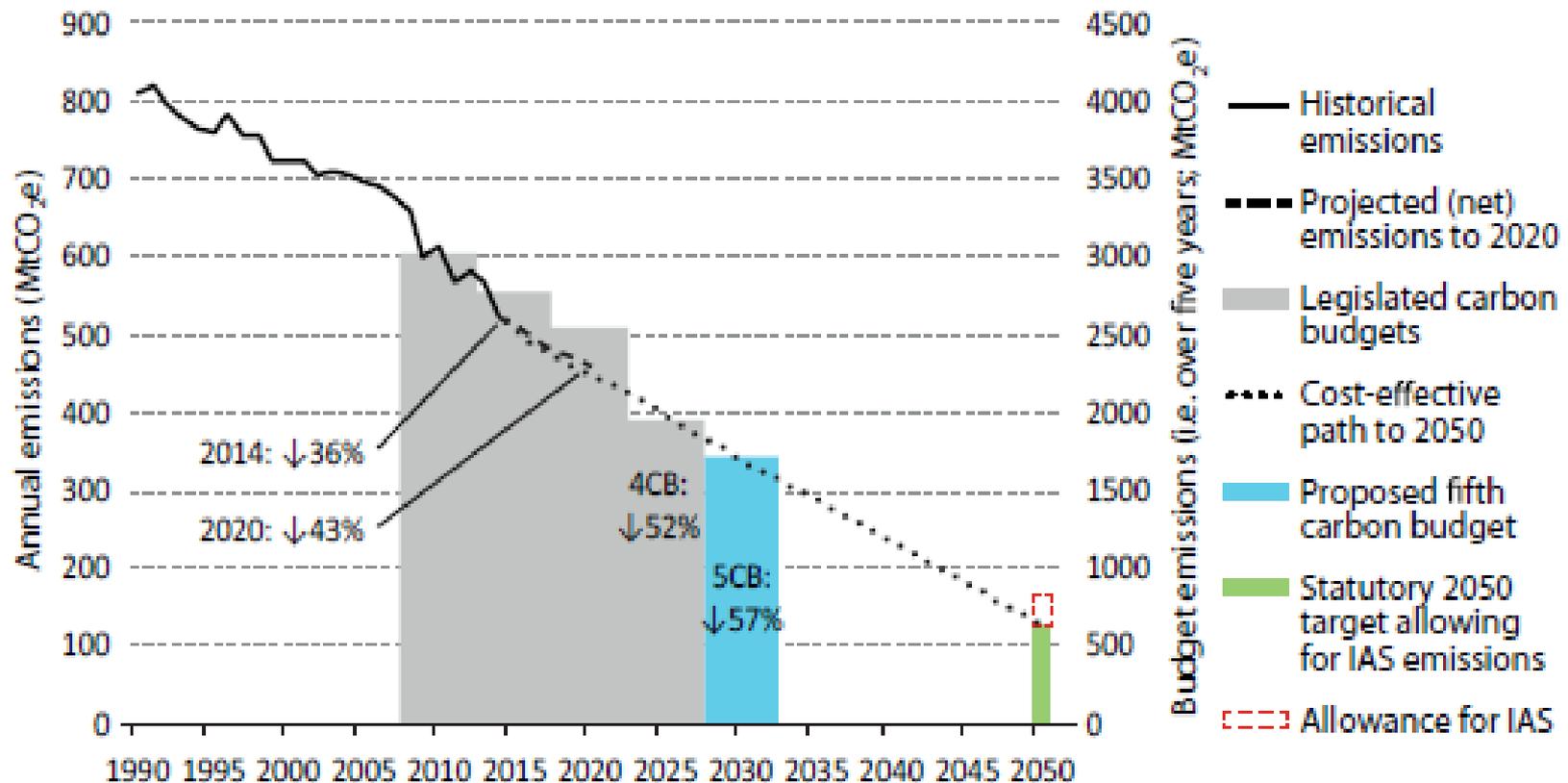
**Independent** advice to government  
on building a low-carbon economy  
and preparing for climate change

**EEAC Workshop on Energy and Climate  
Change, Monday 19 June 2017**

# UK climate law – where do things stand?

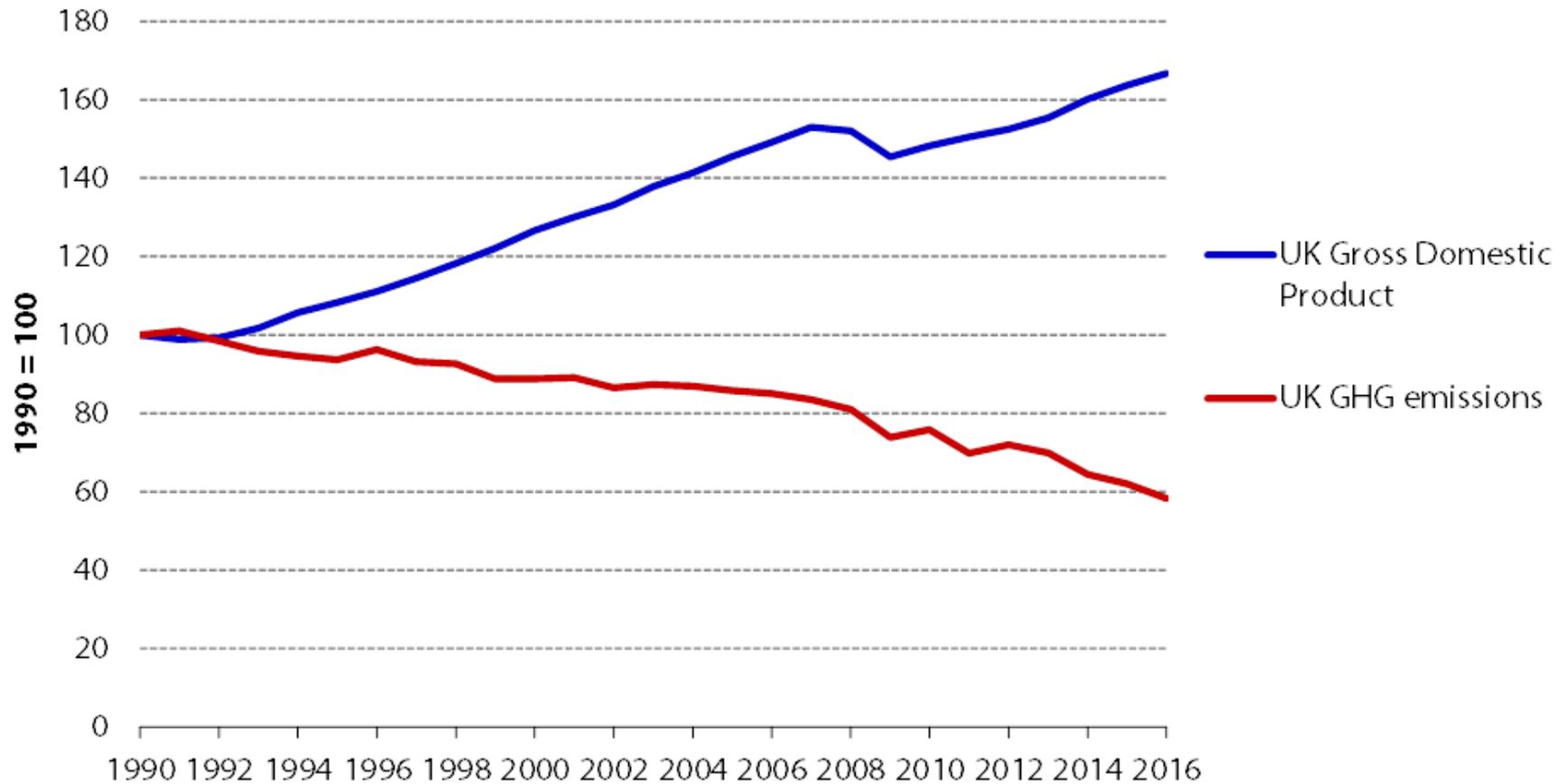
Adrian Gault

# In July 2016, the Government legislated the fifth carbon budget (covering 2028-2032)



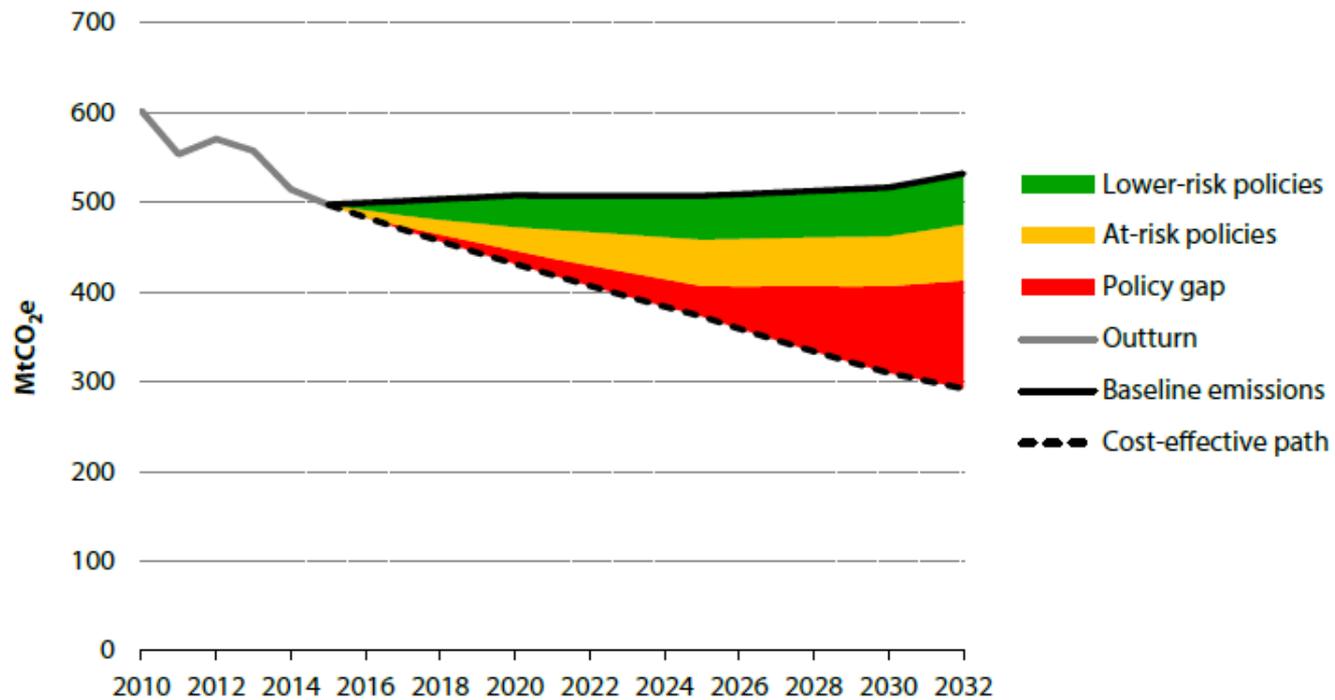
- The fifth carbon budget requires a reduction of 57% in 2030 emissions as against 1990. It was set at the level recommended by the Committee.

Since 1990 emissions have fallen  
by 42% while the economy has  
grown by over 60%



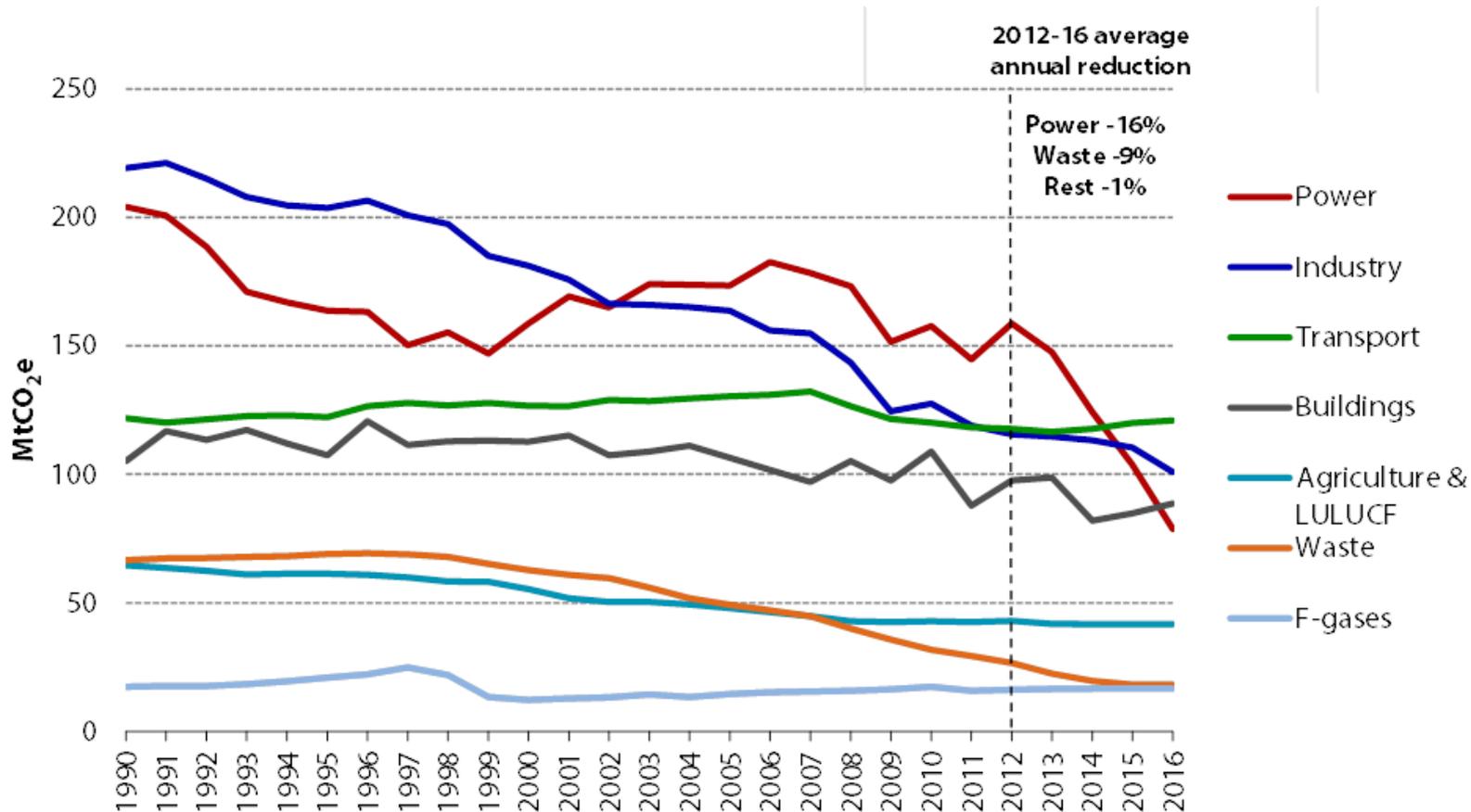
# There is a policy gap to meeting the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> carbon budgets and preparing for 2050 target

**Figure 2. Assessment of current policies against the cost-effective path to meet carbon budgets and the 2050 target**



The Committee will publish an updated version of this chart in its annual progress report to Parliament on 29 June. But UK policy has not advanced much over the past year.

# There has been little progress recently outside the power and waste sectors

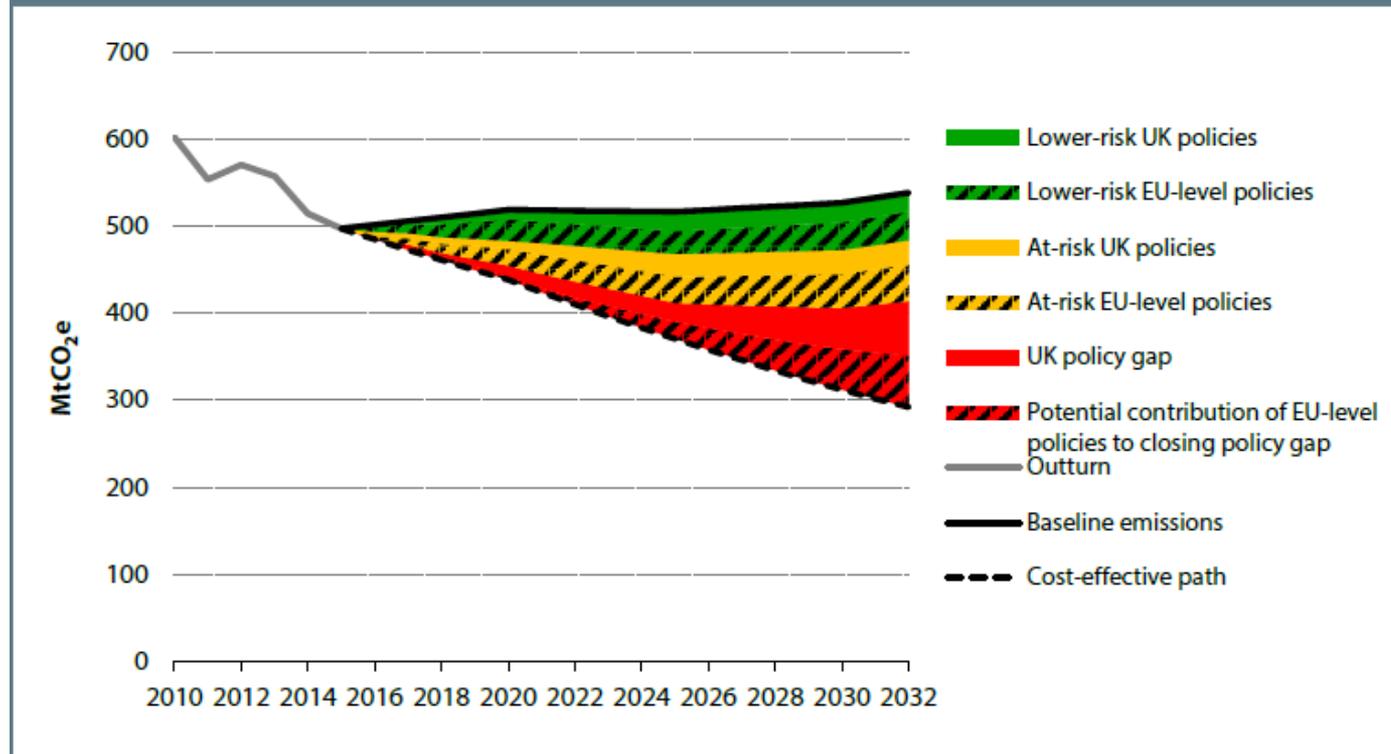


# Having set a carbon budget, the Government must set out plans for how it will be met

- Under the Climate Change Act (2008) these plans must be published “as soon as is reasonably practicable”
- In 2008 and 2010 plans were published within 6 months
- The plan for meeting the 5<sup>th</sup> carbon budget is still awaited
- The need for this plan is now urgent

# Brexit does not change the targets – but many aspects of EU policy will need to be preserved or replicated at the UK level

**Figure 2.** Contribution of EU policies to the cost-effective path for meeting carbon budgets and the 2050 target

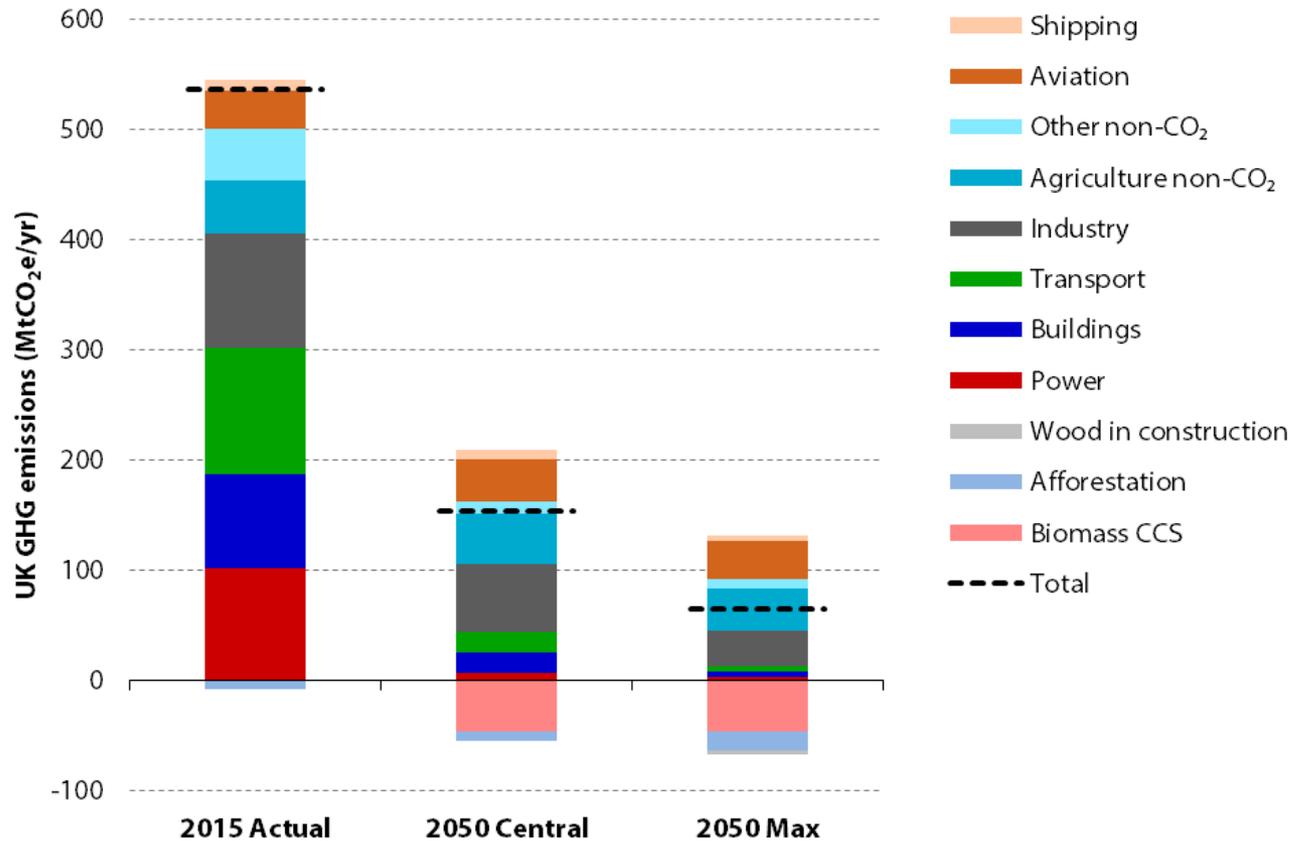


Our assessment is that EU-policies could have contributed around half of the required emissions reduction to 2030

# To meet Paris aims, UK may need to go further than currently legislated 5<sup>th</sup> carbon budget

- The UK target (at least 80% reduction in emissions in 2050 against 1990) was derived as a contribution to a global emissions path keeping global average temperature rise to around 2°C above preindustrial levels
- Paris Agreement aims for “well below” 2°C; to “pursue efforts” for 1.5°C; and sets target of net zero global emissions in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of this century

# But we currently have no scenarios for how the UK can achieve net zero emissions



# UK climate action following Paris: Committee on Climate Change recommendations

- Do not set a new UK emissions reduction target now, but vigorously pursue measures to achieve the existing commitments, and maintain flexibility to go further
- Keep target for reducing emissions to net zero under review. The five yearly cycle of pledges and review created by Paris Agreement provides regular opportunities to consider increasing UK ambition
- Set out a strategy for developing options to remove greenhouse gases from the air (but these are not a substitute for widespread decarbonisation through emission reduction)



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