

# A low carbon economy?

The drive for green growth is also encouraging NI Water to think about how it can help other sectors of the Northern Ireland economy benefit from the transition to low carbon by building on our traditional strengths of engineering and agriculture.

The need for electrolyzers at scale opens at least the possibility of constructing them in Northern Ireland, using both our early engagement and history of engineering excellence as a platform to launch our involvement in what is going to be a significant global market.

There would also seem to be major opportunities in agriculture.

Northern Ireland can be rightly proud of its agriculture sector and the quality of food it produces. But that success has come at a price to the environment. It is carbon intensive. In 2019, 26% of Northern Ireland's carbon emissions came from agriculture compared to 10% in the UK as a whole.

Vertical, multi-layered greenhouse farming is one possible solution. It requires a combination of water, heat and land - all which NI Water has at its wastewater plants.

Wastewater effluent has an ambient temperature of 15 degrees which is currently not harnessed. Vertical farming would allow that surplus heat to be harnessed and used at our wastewater treatment works turning them, in effect, into renewable resource hubs, a key ingredient of the circular economy.

This is already beginning to happen elsewhere in the UK.

