CAP Strategic Plan 2021 Report

CCI	2023IE06AFSP001
Title in English	Ireland- CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027
Title in national language(s)	GA
Version	1.2
First year	2023
Last year	2027
Eligible from	01-Jan-2023
Eligible until	
Commission decision number	
Commission decision date	
Fund(s) concerned	EAGF, EAFRD
Report generation date	16/08/2022 16:23

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1 Strategic Statement

Overview

Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) 2023-2027will underpin the sustainable development of Ireland's agriculture sector by:
(i) supporting viable farm incomes and enhancing competitiveness

(ii) contributing to the achievement of environmental and climate objectives at national and EU levels, and

(iii) strengthening the socio-economic fabric of rural areas .

In doing so, Ireland's CSP seeks not just to meet the three general and nine specific objectives set out in EU legislation, but also to contribute to meeting the objectives of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies.

The CSP is also a considered response to a comprehensive assessment of the current situation of Ireland's agriculture sector and the future challenges it faces. The SWOT and Needs Assessment identified, from a high-level perspective, the need to meet the twin objectives of ensuring the continued economic viability of the sector and the maximisation of its environmental sustainability. This has been reinforced by the extensive stakeholder and public consultation that has been carried out over the course of the Plan's development, which has also involved other relevant Government Departments and agencies.

The design of the proposed CSP interventions, as well as the financial allocations, has been informed by all of the above considerations. In particular, Ireland's determination to secure improvements in the area of environmental sustainability is demonstrated by a significant increase in national co-financing of the CSP compared to previous Rural Development Programmes, and by the appropriate targeting of this expenditure.

An allocation of €2.3 billion in national funding over the 2023-2027 period equates to an effective Pillar II co-financing rate of 60% given the EU Pillar II contribution of €1.56 billion, and expenditure will be targeted at environmentally ambitious interventions such as the new Agri-Environment and Climate Measure and the Organic Farming Scheme. The CSP will also be aligned with the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management Plans, the National Biodiversity Action Plan, the Birds and Habitats Directives, and the Prioritised Action Framework for Natura areas.

Pillar I and Pillar II Interventions, and the CAP Green Architecture

In addition to providing a basic income support to primary producers and achieving a higher level of environmental ambition, Pillar I (direct payments) interventions are aimed at achieving a fairer approach to the distribution of payments in Ireland. The convergence of payment entitlements will continue, so that all entitlement values reach a minimum level of 85% of the average national entitlement value by 2026. In addition, capping and reduction of payments over €60,000 in value by 85% will result in an effective cap of €66,000 per beneficiary - down from an effective cap of €150,000 under the previous RDP. Finally, redistribution of 10% of the value of the Pillar I budget (€118 million per annum) through the Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability (CRISS), which will front-load payments on the first 30 hectares of a holding, will have the effect of transferring payments from larger farms to medium- and smaller-sized farms.

Economic sustainability will also be further secured through wider measures designed to enhance market orientation and to increase competitiveness. These include support for Producer Organisations under

Pillar I (sectoral support for the fruit and veg sector),and sectoral and on-farm investment supports under Pillar II (beef, sheep and other sectors), all of which will also be characterised by a significantly increased environmental dimension.

Pillar I and Pillar II interventions are critical to the achievement of increased environmental and climate ambition. Ireland's CSP will have a particularly strong emphasis on realising this ambition, through an effective and coherent deployment of the tools available under the CAP's new Green Architecture..

Conditionality sets the baseline requirements for farmers in receipt of CAP payments. Ireland intends to implement a system of enhanced conditionality through the CSP. For example, under GAEC 8, Ireland intends to go well beyond the legislative requirement to have a minimum share of 4% of arable land devoted to non-productive areas and features by applying this threshold to all agricultural areas.

Ireland's Pillar I Eco-Scheme will strengthen the environmental and climate outcomes achieved by Pillar I payments, by building on the baseline improvements achieved through Conditionality. In the first instance, it is intended that 25% of the Pillar I budget will be used to fund the Eco-Scheme, and that the rebate mechanism will not be used, despite Ireland's high environmental expenditure in Pillar II. In terms of the agricultural practices that will be supported under the Eco-Scheme, there will be a particular focus on reducing chemical nitrogen use, which will go beyond the requirements of Conditionality. In addition, the already increased level of ambition under GAEC 8 will be further built upon by rewarding farmers who increase the agricultural area devoted to non-productive areas and features from 4% to 7%, and to 10%.

The improvements achieved through enhanced Conditionality and the Pillar I Eco-Scheme will be further built upon, and complemented, by ambitious, environmentally-focused Pillar II interventions that will deliver significant long-term gains in relation to, for example, water quality and biodiversity, as well as contributing to greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

A new flagship Agri-environment and Climate Measure (AECM) will be underpinned by a greater focus on results-based actions and on collective actions aimed at achieving landscape- and catchment-scale benefits. It will also draw directly from the experience gained from the GLAS programme and from the implementation of European Innovation Partnerships under the previous RDP. The higher level of ambition is reinforced by a 50% increase in funding, to €1.5 billion over the 2023-2027 period, compared to GLAS funding under the previous RDP.

Increased support under the Organic Farming Scheme (€256 million) aims to increase the area under organic production from 2% to 7.5%.The €260m Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme will reduce absolute emissions by improving the environmental sustainability and genetic merit of the suckler herd. The On-Farm Investment Scheme will be reoriented to support investments that contribute to environmental, farm safety and animal health/welfare objectives. The Straw Incorporation Measure will encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops and oilseed rape. And the Areas of Natural Constraints Scheme will continue to ensure that landscapes and habitats can be maintained through appropriate farmland management and the avoidance of land abandonment.

It is also important to note that the higher level of environmental ambition will be underpinned by extensive training of farmers and advisors, which will strengthen the capacity to deliver optimal climate and environment outcomes from the various measures. Dedicated environmental training for farmers will be provided under the Agri-Environment Training Programme, and will be a central component of the Continuous Professional Development Programme for Advisors, as well as the Knowledge Transfer Programme.

All of these will be complemented by a strong Agriculture Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) that will drive behavioural change by ensuring that the latest research and technologies are available to farmers and their advisors, and through EIPs that will continue to address the innovation gap between research and best practice.

Interventions under both Pillars will also contribute to the social sustainability of the agriculture sector. Generational renewal will be supported through the allocation of 3% of the direct payments envelope to the Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers (CIS-YF), as well as through the continued prioritisation of young farmers and new entrants for allocations from the National Reserve. In Pillar II, the Collaborative Farming Grant will provide support towards the professional costs of establishing farm partnerships and obtaining advice in relation to succession and/or retirement, and the On-Farm Investment Scheme will provide increased rates of aid for young farmers. Gender balance will also be addressed through higher rates of aid for women farmers, as well as through female-focused KT groups and inclusion as a theme to be addressed by EIPs.

LEADER will also continue to be an effective tool for supporting the economic and social development of rural communities, and for strengthening the socio-economic fabric of rural areas, by providing the resources necessary for communities to support their own sustainable development.

2 Assessments of needs and intervention strategy, including target plan and context indicators

2.1 Assessments of needs and intervention strategy

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	XCO
Obj1.N1	Support family farm income and address income disparities	Highest priority SO1	Yes	X									
Obj1.N2	Support farmers facing natural and other constraints	2nd Highest SO1	Yes	X									
Obj1.N3	Support coupled income support for protein crops to encourage an increase in the domestic production	3rd Highest SO1	Yes	X									
Obj1.N4	Encourage farm diversification to improve the resilience of the agri-food sector	4th Highest SO1	Yes	X									
Obj1.N5	Increase awareness of risk management tools and encourage financial planning to improve resilience	5th Highest in SO1	Partially	X									
Obj2.N1	Increase efficiency and competitiveness thru on farm investment + the adoption of new technologies	Highest for SO2	Yes		X								
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes		X								
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes			X							
Obj3.N2	Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce	2nd Highest SO3	Yes			X							
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes				X						
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes				X						
Obj4.N3	Increase the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland's forests and woodlands	3rd Highest for SO 4	No				X						
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes				X						
Obj4.N5	Increase EE thru uptake of new technologies + facilitate the production of renewable energy sources	5th Highest for SO 4	Yes				X						
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants	Highest priority SO5	Yes					X					

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	XCO
	arising from agriculture, particularly a												
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes					X					
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes					X					
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes					X					
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes						X				
Obj6.N2	Maximise the contribution of forestry incl planting native trees, safeguarding existing habitats	2nd Highest for SO	No						X				
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes							X			
Obj7.N2	Support YF in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in/develop their farm	2nd Highest SO7	Yes							X			
Obj7.N3	Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises	3rd Highest Priority	Yes							X			
Obj8.N1	Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas	Highest for SO 8	Yes								X		
Obj8.N2	Improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas including broadband	2nd Highest for SO 8	Yes								X		
Obj8.N3	Support sustainable community development in rural areas, in particular to address E+C challenges	3rd Highest for SO 8	Yes								X		
Obj8.N4	Support the further development of the tourism industry in rural Ireland	4th Highest for SO 8	Yes								X		
Obj8.N5	Improve on farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being	5th Highest for SO 8	Yes								X		
Obj8.N6	Increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development	6th Highest for SO 8	Yes								X		
Obj9.N1	Increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics	Highest priority SO9	Yes									X	
Obj9.N2	Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and	2nd Highest SO9	Yes									X	

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	XCO
	increasing awareness of AMR and ATR												
Obj9.N3	Support the efficient/environmentally responsible use of pesticides + encourage alternative practise	3rd Highest SO9	Yes									X	
Obj9.N4	Promote the consumption of safe food + increase awareness of animal health and welfare standards	4th Highest SO9	Partially									X	
Obj9.N5	Support the assessment of food loss along the food chain	5th Highest SO9	No									X	
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes										X
ObjAKIS.N2	Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition	2nd Highest for CCO	Yes										X
ObjAKIS.N3	Ensure consistency of advice by providing for CPD for advisors and for primary producers	3rd Highest for CCO	Yes										X
ObjAKIS.N4	Continue to provide support for R + I in the AF sector; + encourage the application of findings	4th Highest for CCO	Yes										X

Obj1.N1 - Support family farm income and address income disparities

Support family farm income and address income disparities between agriculture and other sectors of the economy; and between agri-food systems

According to the SWOT analysis, the Irish agricultural sector directly employed 97,900 people in 2019 and total labour productivity in this sector was high. However, despite high levels of productivity, employees in this sector have low income levels in compared to other sectors of the economy. As a result of low-income levels, farm households rely heavily on Direct Payments and off-farm income sources to remain viable. The SWOT further noted that average income levels differ significantly across agricultural systems. Dairy farms receive the highest average income; and livestock farmers (beef and sheep) earn the lowest. The gap in income between farming and other sectors of the economy; as well as the difference in income levels across farming systems present challenges in relation to ensuring the resilience of the agri-food sector. Low income levels limit the viability of many farms. In addition, low income levels act as a deterrent to new entrants and young farmers considering a career in agriculture, which impacts the overall sustainability of the agri-food sector.

Obj1.N2 - Support farmers facing natural and other constraints

Support farmers facing natural and other constraints to maintain a viable farm income, maintain the landscape and protect against the abandonment of agricultural land

The SWOT analysis found that Direct Payments are a valuable source of income support for all farmers across the agri-food sector; but noted that these payments are of particular importance to farms situated in areas of natural and other specific constraints. In Ireland, 75% of Utilised Agricultural Area were situated in areas of natural constraint in 2019, the 7th highest of all EU-27 countries. Without direct support, farming in these areas may not be viable and this could lead to the abandonment of agricultural land which would damage the rural economy and the future viability of the agri-food sector. The SWOT further noted that High Nature Value farming occurs most frequently in areas that are mountainous, or in areas where natural constraints prevent intensification; and that grazing on these agricultural areas can be an important component of maintaining certain habitats. Rewarding farmers for wider environmental services, such as carbon sequestration and biodiversity on their farms is necessary to ensure the continued viability of these farms.

Obj1.N3 - Support coupled income support for protein crops to encourage an increase in the domestic production

Support coupled income support for protein crops to encourage an increase in the domestic production

The SWOT Analysis found that Ireland has a reliance on imported feedstuffs, particularly high protein feed materials of which there is a significant national deficit. Therefore, it is important that Ireland reduces this reliance by increasing the domestic production of protein crops. The SWOT analysis also highlighted the need to support family farm income and address income disparities between agri-food systems, with dairy farms recording the highest average income levels at €66,828 in 2019, compared to €32,700 for tillage farms. Coupled income support to encourage the production of such protein crops by the tillage sector, is justified due to high variable costs and low gross margins for such protein crops. The SWOT analysis also points to the environmental credentials of the tillage sector and identifies the climate action commitment to increase the area under tillage production above the current area of 300,000 hectares by 2030, producing more native grown grains and legumes for the livestock industry. Increasing the domestic production of protein crops which make up a proportion of animal feed rations will ultimately reduce Ireland's reliance on these imported feed materials, increasing Ireland's self-sufficiency and improving the competitiveness and sustainability of the agri-food sector in Ireland.

Obj1.N4 - Encourage farm diversification to improve the resilience of the agri-food sector

Encourage farm diversification to improve the resilience of the agri-food sector

Farms in Ireland have become increasingly specialised towards livestock production (particularly beef and dairy), as a result of increases in demand for these food products. Ireland's temperate climate is particularly conducive for grass-based livestock production systems. The impact of market volatility, disease outbreak, climate change and long-term changes in consumer behaviour carry a higher risk for these specialised farmers. Diversification could mitigate against certain sector specific risks. Diversification is also seen as a climate change adaptation tool to reduce the expected impacts of severe weather events. Furthermore, diversification from specialised livestock production could also result in lower carbon intensity farming, which would be beneficial to the climate and the natural environment. Many opportunities exist to diversify farm enterprises and ensure the overall sustainability of the agri-food sector. These opportunities include diversification towards organic production, plant-based food production, protein crop production, production of bio-based products/ small scale biorefining, agro-forestry and agri-tourism. However, the SWOT analysis identified a low level of interest amongst farmers to diversify their farm enterprise. As a result, farmers may need further education and encouragement to diversify their farm enterprise.

Obj1.N5 - Increase awareness of risk management tools and encourage financial planning to improve resilience

Increase awareness of risk management tools and encourage financial planning to improve resilience

The SWOT analysis highlighted that there is insufficient adoption of risk management tools in Ireland, despite high uncertainty in the agri-food sector, with agricultural income susceptible to considerable fluctuations arising from the impact of national and international economic developments and climate change. The SWOT analysis noted that Ad-hoc schemes have been frequently used to respond to weather related crises and other crises in the sector including, for example, fodder shortages. However, the SWOT analysis also highlighted that there is low demand for risk management tools in Ireland. The current risk management framework in Ireland includes nationally funded measures, such as loan schemes and Income Averaging under the taxation system; and CAP supports, such as income supports, financial management training through the Knowledge Transfer Programme and empowerment through participation in Producer Organisations. The SWOT analysis highlighted that there is an opportunity to increase the knowledge base of farmers on risk management tools and financial planning to improve on farm resilience.

Obj2.N1 - Increase efficiency and competitiveness thru on farm investment + the adoption of new technologies

Increase efficiency and competitiveness through on farm investment and the adoption of new technologies

The SWOT analysis highlighted an overall positive investment dynamic in the agricultural sector with investments in buildings, machinery and land improvements. The SWOT analysis also highlighted that there are low levels of indebtedness on Irish farms. However, an overall decrease in lending to the agricultural sector, particularly in relation to long and medium-term loans, has limited the ability of some farmers to invest further. National initiatives, such as the Future Growth Loan Scheme, supports strategic long-term capital investment by providing competitively priced loan instruments under favourable terms. The SWOT analysis further found that Irish farmers have been slow in adopting digital technologies and that there is a need to encourage the greater use of digital technologies, such as precision farming, in order to reduce input costs and increase efficiency; as well as to support the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment (biodiversity, carbon and water). It is important to build on the gains already achieved and encourage the further uptake of new technologies on Irish farms.

Obj2.N2 - Expand and diversify into new markets

Expand and diversify into new markets:

In the SWOT analysis, Ireland’s reliance on the UK market, in particular for horticulture, prepared consumer foods and beef produce, was noted as a weakness, particularly in light of Brexit. It was also highlighted that the changing nature of the trading environment and any changes made to the cost or price structure will impact the competitiveness of those sectors exporting to the UK. As a result, it is important that the Irish agri-food sector expand and diversify into new and existing markets. Already there has been a significant increase in the value of exports to Africa, the EU-27 and to Asia; and this trend must continue. In addition, the Irish agri-food sector must aim to meet changing consumer demands, particularly the increase in demand for sustainably produced food and organic produce. Ireland’s grass-based livestock production system is considered highly sustainable and should be promoted as such while the market for sustainably produced food grows.

Obj3.N1 - Increase primary producers' share in the value chain

Increase primary producers' share in the value chain

Overall, the SWOT analysis found that despite the Irish agri-food sector having a strong reputation for producing high quality products sustainably, the Irish farmers' share in the value chain is low and is below the EU average. This is partly due to the fact that much of Ireland's agricultural output undergoes substantial transformation and value-added activity post farm gate. It is also partly due to the high level of consolidation in the retail and processing sectors resulting in primary producers having little bargaining power compared to large retailers in the value chain. As primary producers are directly affected by rises in input costs and the costs associated with meeting EU standards, stakeholders felt that prices should better reflect the costs of production so that farmers are sufficiently rewarded for their work and can maintain a fair standard of living. The SWOT analysis noted that there is both a low level of Producer Organisations (POs) in Ireland and a general under-utilisation of EU quality labelling, particularly Protected Geographical Indications. Therefore, there is scope to improve the farmers' position in the value chain.

Obj3.N2 - Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce

Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce

The SWOT analysis demonstrated a high level of demand for locally sourced produce by Irish consumers and a resultant growth in Food and Farmers' Markets in the last 15 years. Farmers markets allow for a shortening of the supply chain and allow for farmers to increase their return, thus improving their position in the value chain. The continued promotion of short supply chains and local markets is therefore important. The SWOT analysis further noted growth in the demand for organic food production and therefore the opportunity for Irish producers to increase production of organic produce and expand into this market. The SWOT analysis also noted that organic production tends to be more costly for the producer, but if the extra costs associated with organic production are accurately captured in sales prices and the farmers' position in the value chain is at least maintained, then Irish producers could greatly benefit from entering into this fast-growing market.

Obj4.N1 - Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture

Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture:

As is noted in the SWOT analysis, agriculture contributes the highest share of GHG emissions in Ireland; and GHG emissions from agriculture are increasing, mainly as a result of increasing livestock numbers and fertiliser use. Ireland's Climate Action Amendment Bill 2020 sets out the objective to achieve a 'climate neutral economy' by the end of 2050. This bill requires the government to set a decarbonisation target for each sector, including the agricultural sector. The Ag Climatise roadmap aims to stabilise methane emissions and significantly reduce fertiliser related nitrous oxide emissions, leading to an absolute reduction in the agricultural greenhouse gas inventory by 2030. In order to achieve a reduction in emissions in the agri-food sector, all actors must work towards meeting the ambitious targets outlined in the Climate Action Plan; and achieving the tasks and action points outlined in Ag Climatise.

Obj4.N2 - Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands

Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands:

As identified in the SWOT analysis, soils can be a carbon sink or emission source depending on changes in land use and soil management. Between 1990 and 2017, the land use, land-use change and forestry sector was identified as being a net source of emissions, due predominantly to the impact of drainage of organic soils. Ireland has the highest percentage of permanent grassland in the EU and peatlands cover a substantial proportion of the national land area. However, the ongoing drainage of organic soils and the high proportion of peatlands in Ireland considered degraded were highlighted as a weakness. Ag Climatise identifies water table manipulation and reduced management intensity as priorities to reduce emissions from these carbon rich soils.

Obj4.N3 - Increase the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland's forests and woodlands

Increase the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland's forests and woodlands:

As noted in the SWOT analysis, one of the key tasks outlined in Ag Climatise is to increase the carbon sequestration and storage potential of the land-use sector. Carbon sequestration contributes to the lowering of CO2 emissions in the atmosphere and is therefore important in the fight against climate change. Ireland's low level of forest cover is reducing our carbon sequestration potential. Therefore, there is scope to increase agro-forestry and afforestation rates in order to increase the carbon sequestration of our forests.

Obj4.N4 - Encourage climate adaptation

Encourage climate adaptation:

As noted in the SWOT analysis, climate change will result in changes in soil/air temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns, and increases in extreme weather events in Ireland. These changes could result in water stress for crops and heat stress for animals; ultimately impacting yields and productivity. The occurrence of storms, snow, heatwaves, and drought over the previous few years have highlighted the vulnerability of agriculture to climate change and have demonstrated the need for adaptation. The 2018 fodder crisis, which occurred because of persistent cold and wet weather conditions which limited grass growth, is one example of how changing weather patterns can impact yields and productivity. The overall goal of Ireland's Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan is to build resilience to the effects of climate change and weather related events in the agriculture, forest and seafood sector, reduce any negative impacts where possible and take advantage of any opportunities. The SWOT analysis noted the opportunity to enhance adaptation through nature-based solutions which seek to prepare ecosystems for climate change, such as the use of drought-resistant varieties in agriculture, and the rewetting of peatlands; and through the better management of the national forest estate, e.g. choosing tree species and forestry practices less vulnerable to storms. It should also be noted that improved management of biodiversity and water would also support climate change adaptation.

Obj4.N5 - Increase EE thru uptake of new technologies + facilitate the production of renewable energy sources

Increase energy efficiencies (EE) on farm through the uptake of new technologies and facilitate the production and use of renewable energy sources:

As noted in the SWOT analysis, one of the action points under Ag Climatise is to reduce agricultural energy use across all farm systems and deploy renewable energy technologies on farm, particularly on farms which are energy intensive. In order to achieve energy efficiencies on farm, farmers must be encouraged to uptake new energy efficient technologies, such as plate coolers, variable speed drives, solar photovoltaic and heat recovery systems. In relation to the production and use of renewable energy sources, the SWOT analysis highlighted that bio-refineries and anaerobic digestion (AD) plants can utilise a wide variety of feed stocks ranging from food wastes, to animal slurries to specifically grown energy crops such as grass silage. Ireland has a large availability of feedstock and agricultural residues for bio-based products and bio-energy production. However, it was also noted that anaerobic digester development is capital intensive and requires a range of supply and demand supports.

Obj5.N1 - Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a

Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly ammonia

The SWOT analysis identified agriculture as the primary source of ammonia emissions in Ireland, due primarily to the spreading of animal manures and nitrogen fertilisers on grasslands. Under the National Emissions Ceiling Directive, Ireland has an ammonia target of 107,500 tonnes in 2030. Ireland is currently in breach of its ammonia emissions reduction targets under the NEC Directive and this trend is projected to continue. One of the tasks outlined in Ag Climatise is to reduce ammonia emissions in line with the NEC Directive as the persistent breach of this Directive carries the prospect of enforcement proceedings from the European Commission. Other air pollutants arising from animal manure include methane and nitrous oxide. Ensuring the efficient management of animal manures is essential in order to improve air quality.

Obj5.N2 - Protect and improve water quality

Protect and improve water quality

The SWOT analysis found an overall decrease in water quality across Ireland, resulting in a large number of individual water bodies being at risk of not achieving their water quality objectives under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027 (RBMP) identifies water bodies at risk of not achieving their water quality objectives under the WFD. Agricultural activity was found to have a negative impact on water quality by being a major source of excess nutrients and sediments in water, allowing for eutrophication. These excess nutrients and sediments originate from either point sources, such as farmyards; or from diffuse sources, such as the spreading of fertilisers and manures. Poor land management was also identified as placing pressure on certain water bodies. One of the key targets outlined in Ag Climatise is to reduce nutrient losses and improve water quality; and therefore it is important that Ireland addresses pressures from rural diffuse and point sources and improves land management, in order to ensure the efficient management of our waters.

Obj5.N3 - Improve soil health

Improve soil health

As noted in the SWOT analysis, sub-optimal soil fertility is an issue for the majority of Irish farmers and as a result, Irish farmers tend to use higher levels of fertiliser in order to compensate for sub-optimal soil nutrient levels. This reduces the sustainable development of the agri-food sector because excessive fertiliser use can have negative effects on soil, air and water quality. The SWOT analysis further found that despite soil fertility management techniques being well established in Ireland, the adoption of these techniques by farmers is low. This results in inappropriate management practices being used, ultimately leading to reductions in the functionality, fertility and carbon content of Irish soil. Improving land management and increasing farmers' awareness of soil management techniques is therefore necessary to improve soil health.

Obj5.N4 - Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources

Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources

The SWOT analysis demonstrated the huge pressure that agriculture is placing on Irelands natural resources and noted that the increase in intensive farming systems in Ireland is placing increasing pressure on these resources. Sustainable farming practices, such as High Nature Value farming, organic farming and biological farming should therefore be encouraged to reduce the pressure placed on these resources and to maintain the production of agricultural products using less inputs.

Obj6.N1 - Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators

Restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes (H+L) in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators:

The SWOT analysis found that the majority of Ireland's designated habitats and landscapes under the Habitats Directive have unfavourable or declining status. These include Ireland's native woodlands, most Annex 1 grasslands habitats and most peatland and fen habitats. The SWOT analysis further found that 30% of species reported on under the Habitats Directive in Ireland are in bad status, with an ongoing declining trend reported for at least 15% of species. A large proportion of farmland birds are in significant decline and there has been a significant decline in pollinator species also. The greatest pressures impacting habitats relate to agricultural practices, such as over-/under-grazing, land abandonment and agricultural intensification. Ecologically sustainable grazing of upland habitats, including blanket bog, heaths and associated peatland habitats and sustainable land-use management is crucial for the protection of Ireland's designated habitats and protected species. Sectoral approaches to land management are inadequate and improved protection of habitats and species is required. It is essential that Ireland restore and maintain its already deteriorated habitats and landscapes in order to ensure the preservation of species and halt the further decline of biodiversity. The Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 2021-2027 (PAF) identifies a series of actions for NATURA 2000 area in Ireland pursuant to Article 8 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). Lastly the SWOT analysis highlighted that only 3.6% of agriculture area (including semi-natural grassland) and 18.1% of forest area (including transitional woodland-shrub) is under the Natura 2000 network. However, it is essential to note that Ireland's obligations under the Habitats and Birds Directives extend beyond the Natura 2000 network and the conservation status of Ireland's habitats and species is also reliant on non-designated land.

Obj6.N2 - Maximise the contribution of forestry incl planting native trees, safeguarding existing habitats

Maximise the contribution of forestry including the planting of native trees in appropriate locations, safeguarding existing biodiverse habitats:

The SWOT analysis identified Ireland as having the lowest share of forest under protection to preserve biodiversity and safeguard landscapes and specific natural elements in the EU. It further found that no Irish forest is considered free from human interference and that Ireland's native woodlands are considered to be in bad status overall due to small-scale habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive non-native species and overgrazing by deer. It is therefore necessary to ensure that afforestation – in relation to land use change, species composition and future management – is compatible with the protection and enhancement of local, regional and national biodiversity values, reversing habitat fragmentation (including woodland fragmentation) and avoiding damage to biodiversity-rich habitats and wildlife corridors in the wider landscape. An ecological assessment should be carried out as part of the application process to ensure that protected habitats and species known to be present onsite are not negatively impacted by the process.

Obj7.N1 - Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers

Effective mechanism to increase the numbers of young farmers, including through income support, encouraging land mobility and succession planning

In the SWOT analysis, acknowledgement was given to the challenge faced by Ireland and the rest of the European Union in managing an overall decline in young farmer numbers and an ageing farming population. Young farm managers and young farmers in general account for an extremely low proportion of total farmers. The SWOT analysis found that young farmers face difficulties accessing land and finance and are deterred from starting a career in agriculture due to these issues and due to lower incomes in agricultural than in other sectors of the economy.As a result, the future viability and sustainability of the agri-food sector is at risk and therefore, it is necessary to create an attractive and sustainable work environment for young farmers where they are provided with the necessary supports to begin a career in farming.

Obj7.N2 - Support YF in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in/develop their farm

Support young farmers in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in and develop their farm enterprise

One of the main barriers identified in the SWOT analysis as preventing young farmers from starting a career in agriculture, or developing a farm enterprise, was the difficulty associated with accessing finance. Young farmers in particular face difficulties when trying to access finance due to their inability to provide appropriate collateral to banks and due to their lack of credit history, making them high risk. In addition, many farmers' (particularly non-dairy farmers) repayment capacity is limited due to their low-income expectations. Without access to credit from banks, young farmers are unable to invest in the necessary factors of production to either develop their own farm enterprise or increase the productivity and profitability of their existing farm enterprise; and this hinders their overall growth potential. Although this need cannot be addressed fully under the CAP Strategic Plan, national funding mechanisms, such as the Future Growth Loan Scheme, will also contribute to addressing this important need.

Obj7.N3 - Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises

Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises

As noted in the SWOT analysis, rural towns and villages have deteriorated in recent years as more and more people have migrated to urban areas for work and other reasons. As a result, business development in these areas has declined. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the potential for people to work from home and for individuals to set up new enterprises while remote working in rural areas, provided there is adequate broadband. In addition, new opportunities exist for enterprise development in the forestry sector, the bio-economy and the rural tourism sector. It is important that Ireland continues to support entrepreneurship and business development in these sectors, while also supporting the rollout of the National Broadband Plan.

Obj8.N1 - Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas

Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas:

The SWOT analysis found that rural economies are particularly vulnerable to economic downturns, mainly due to their less diversified economic base. However, opportunities exist to develop and expand the bio-economy and circular economy in rural areas, ultimately boosting employment in these regions and halting rural decline. The SWOT analysis further noted that Ireland is in a particularly favourable position to develop its bio-economy and circular economy because of its abundance of natural advantages, including a temperate climate that is good for growing grass, a growing forestry sector and an extensive coastline. Ag Climatise includes a specific action relating to promoting the development of a sustainable circular bio-economy within the agri-food sector.

Obj8.N2 - Improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas including broadband

Improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas including broadband

In the SWOT analysis, the lack of adequate broadband infrastructure in rural Ireland was noted as significantly hindering the development of rural areas. The SWOT analysis found that the availability of ultrafast broadband in rural areas is well below the EU average and that Irelands fixed broadband is one of the most expensive across the EU. This reduces rural citizens' employment opportunities and hinders business development in rural areas. In addition to an inadequate broadband infrastructure, the SWOT analysis further found that access to basic services, such as supermarkets, pharmacies and General Practice (GP) services is also limited in rural areas as these services tend to be located far away and generally require a car to access. The lack of adequate transport options is therefore also an issue hindering the further development of rural areas.

Obj8.N3 - Support sustainable community development in rural areas, in particular to address E+C challenges

Support sustainable community development in rural areas, in particular to address environmental and climate (E+C) challenges:

The SWOT analysis found that Ireland's approach to community development is bottom-up and is delivered through a wide network of community-based organisations. It also noted that rural Ireland is becoming increasingly diverse and that it is important to embrace this diversity to ensure that future community development recognises the needs of all members of society. Providing opportunities to partake in community development through key national development programmes such as the Social Inclusion and Community Activation programme (SICAP) and the LEADER programme will ensure that all members of society are involved in community development. Building the capacity of communities to address issues such as climate change and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals will ensure greater engagement with these challenges, ultimately leading to more sustainable community development. Locally-led agri-environmental schemes, such as the Burren Programme under the current RDP, demonstrate the successful role that such locally-led initiatives can play in encouraging community development and a collective response to environmental, climate and economic challenges.

Obj8.N4 - Support the further development of the tourism industry in rural Ireland

Support the further development of the tourism industry in rural Ireland:

As noted in the SWOT analysis, Ireland has a strong tourism industry that contributes significantly to the rural economy by bringing much needed economic and employment opportunities to rural communities. It is therefore essential that Ireland continues to develop its tourism sector in a sustainable way. There are significant opportunities in rural areas to capitalise on Ireland's natural scenery and environment and its built heritage; and to support tourism development. Potential exists to grow the outdoor recreation sector and to promote outdoor activity tourism; as well as to develop Irish food-related experiences. In addition, opportunities exist to develop agri-tourism by providing on-farm accommodation and allowing for educational on-farm visits to see and experience working farms. As a result of the emergence of COVID-19 in Ireland, restrictions were imposed on many businesses in the tourism sector and as a result, both the tourism sector and rural economies in general were adversely impacted. Therefore, there is a strong need to support the tourism industry and assist in its recovery

Obj8.N5 - Improve on farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being

Improve on farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being:

The SWOT analysis found that overall, farmers are less likely to have intimate social relationships compared to others in similar rural settings; and that social isolation is associated with older age and rurality, which is concerning given Ireland's ageing farming population. In relation to physical health, farmers are at high-risk of heart disease and other ailments, indicating the importance of bringing awareness to farmer wellbeing. The SWOT analysis also identified farm safety as an issue on Irish farms and noted that fatalities on farm were higher than in any other occupation and that young and older age categories were most vulnerable, indicating the importance of bringing awareness to farm safety also. There is a strong need to improve farm safety and increase awareness around farmer well-being.

Obj8.N6 - Increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development

Increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development:

The SWOT analysis found that the share of female workers working in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors in Ireland is extremely low; and that females in this sector are faced with significant challenges in relation to gender equality. In the Irish agricultural sector, females are significantly underrepresented in management roles and this has a marked effect on female participation in agriculture at all levels. It also creates a perception that farming is a male occupation, and this reduces the likelihood of young females starting a career in agriculture, ultimately limiting the sustainable growth of the agri-food sector. The SWOT analysis also highlighted the opportunities arising from providing supports to rural female entrepreneurs at start up and at an early stage of their business development through the ACORNS Programme and encouraging peer to peer learning for example through Knowledge Transfer groups.

Obj9.N1 - Increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics

Increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics

The SWOT analysis identified low levels of organic farming in Ireland, despite the area of land under organic production having expanded significantly in recent years. Currently, Ireland has the third lowest level of agricultural land allocated to organic farming across the EU-27. Although the market for organic produce in Ireland is small, it is expanding; and therefore, opportunities exist for the organic farming sector to expand too. The Review of the Organic Food Sector and Strategy for its Development 2019 – 2025 recognises the opportunities that exist for the Irish Organic Food Sector and provides clear direction for its further development up to 2025. Globally, demand for high quality, safe and sustainable food, including organic produce is increasing. During stakeholder consultations, it was highlighted that any future organic farming scheme would need to be cognisant of latest market demands and environmental benefits of organic production systems.

Obj9.N2 - Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and increasing awareness of AMR and ATR

Continue improving animal health and welfare standards and increasing awareness of antimicrobial (AMR) and anthelmintic resistance

As noted in the SWOT analysis, a number of animal welfare issues prevail in Ireland, such as the tail docking of pigs, the welfare of male dairy calves and lameness in sheep. It is therefore important to improve animal welfare standards in order to ensure that farmed animals are treated appropriately throughout the course of their life. Ensuring high animal health and welfare standards increases overall farm efficiency, contributes to farm sustainability and lowers the environmental impact of agriculture. In relation to AMR, the SWOT analysis identified low levels of understanding of AMR in Ireland and a lack of appropriate on-farm data relating to antibiotic usage. In relation to anthelmintic resistance, the SWOT analysis noted that this type of resistance was widespread on sampled dairy and beef farms. AMR is a very significant risk to human health, and it is essential that this issue is prioritised. Anthelmintic resistance is a very challenging animal health issue, particularly for Ireland’s pasture-based livestock production system.

Obj9.N3 - Support the efficient/environmentally responsible use of pesticides + encourage alternative practise

Support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practises

The SWOT analysis noted that sales of Plant Protection Products in Ireland have declined overall since 2011, and that Ireland has been successful in decreasing the risks associated with the use of pesticides. It is therefore essential that Ireland’s progress continues; and that Ireland continues to provide support for the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides. The 2nd National Action Plan 2019-2024 for the Sustainable use of Pesticides (2019) has five main areas in which it aims to make improvements:

·Training, Education, Information Exchange and Data Gathering;

·Controls on Application Equipment;

·Controls on Storage, Supply and Disposal of Plant Protection Products;

·Controls on use of Plant Protection Products in Specified Areas;

·Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Obj9.N4 - Promote the consumption of safe food + increase awareness of animal health and welfare standards

Promote the consumption of safe, nutritious, sustainable food, (including organics); and increase consumer awareness in relation to the high animal health and welfare standards

In the SWOT analysis it was noted that consumer preferences are changing in relation to how their food is produced, with consumers now taking into account factors relating to the environment and their health, as well as animal welfare. It is also noted that, in Ireland, no system exists to measure farmers' efforts to meet consumer demands in relation to food safety and animal health and welfare, and there is no labelling system in place to inform consumers of these higher standards. Therefore, there is scope to more effectively promote the consumption of these products and to increase consumer awareness of the efforts made by producers to meet consumer demands.

Obj9.N5 - Support the assessment of food loss along the food chain

Support the assessment of food loss along the food chain

As noted in the SWOT analysis, producing food that goes uneaten is wasteful and leads to the generation of GHG emissions at every stage of the production process. Therefore, reducing food loss and food waste is important in the fight against climate change. However, the SWOT analysis found that in Ireland, data relating to food waste/loss at all levels of the food chain is limited or not available. This is an issue because under the new Waste Framework Directive, Member States are obliged to meet waste reduction targets and to report on food waste at all levels of the food chain. Currently, Ireland is gathering the data required for the first reporting year (2020), to be reported to the Commission in mid-2021, but it is important that a data capturing system is put in place in order to continue monitoring the situation. This need will not be directly addressed through the CAP Strategic Plan. DAFM will continue to collaborate with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Central Statistics Office to support the assessment of food loss along the food chain.

ObjAKIS.N1 - Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges

Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change (CC), air quality (AQ), water quality (WQ), soil health (SH), animal health and welfare (AH+W) and biodiversity (BD) related challenges and opportunities at farm level:

The SWOT analysis identified a number of challenges and opportunities facing the Irish agri-food sector and noted the need to increase the knowledge base of primary producers in order to assist them in managing these challenges and opportunities. As the future sustainability of the agri-food sector is dependent on the capacity of farmers to adapt to climate change, it is therefore necessary to increase farmers' understanding of climate change, natural resource depletion and biodiversity loss at farm level so that they can begin implementing sustainable farming practices that will reduce the negative effects associated with these issues. The SWOT analysis noted that there has been very positive feedback in relation to this bottom up approach to addressing environmental issues locally and in collaboration with farmers, advisors, scientists, communities. The SWOT analysis also highlighted the important role that advisors have to play in assisting farmers to address environmental and climatic challenges. Although Ireland has an overall strong AKIS, there is scope to improve the relationship between public and private advisors. During stakeholder consultation, the role of the advisory services and the introduction of a system of Continuous Professional Development for all advisors on issues relating to climate change and the environment (biodiversity, air, soil and water quality) was highlighted.

ObjAKIS.N2 - Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition

Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition:

As noted in the SWOT analysis, an extensive range of further education, adult and continuing education and higher-level education courses are available for farmers. It is important that these education and training programmes are continuously reviewed in order to ensure the provision of the most up-to-date information; and to ensure that they adequately reflect the needs of farmers. The SWOT analysis noted a need to improve training supports to farmers in relation to digital technologies. In addition, all farm advisory services should be regularly reviewed to ensure that advisors are providing farmers with the most up to date technological and scientific information developed by research and innovation projects.

ObjAKIS.N3 - Ensure consistency of advice by providing for CPD for advisors and for primary producers

Ensure consistency of advice across the advisory services by providing for CPD for advisors and for primary producers:

The SWOT analysis acknowledged the importance of enabling equal access to training for both public & private advisors. All advisors must undergo training on an ongoing basis to ensure they provide consistent advice to farmers on economic, environmental and social issues. In addition, ensuring all advisors are continuously and appropriately trained will ensure that farmers are better equipped to deal with the changes associated with climate change and digitalisation. Encouraging continuous professional development amongst advisors will ensure consistency of high-quality advice.

ObjAKIS.N4 - Continue to provide support for R + I in the AF sector; + encourage the application of findings

Continue to provide support for research and innovation in the agri-food (AF) sector; and encourage the application of findings at farm level:

The SWOT analysis acknowledged that in Ireland, national investment in agricultural research is significant, with a wide range of national supports available for research and innovation in the agri-food sector. As a result, Ireland plays a leading role in innovation and research on climate related support tools. However, potential exists to increase the level of research and innovation across the agri-food sector in order to ease the transition towards a circular, low carbon and resource-efficient bio-economy. The SWOT analysis further noted that, despite high levels of investment in agricultural research and innovation, there is, overall, an insufficient application of agricultural research at farm level. The transfer of agricultural knowledge into practice is difficult to assess due to the limited availability of metrics and this discourages researchers in

Need assessment to specific geographical areas, such as the outermost regions, mountainous and island areas.

N/A

Methodology and criteria used for prioritisation

As part of the development of Ireland’s CAP Strategic Plan, both a SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment of the Irish agri-food sector was undertaken. The assessment of needs was based on the information provided in the SWOT Analysis, which in turn was based on quantitative and qualitative analysis undertaken at both a national and international level. This information was then collated, reviewed and analysed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and where appropriate, divided into Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

The purpose of the Needs Assessment is to review the information provided in the SWOT Analysis and to identify the areas where support is most needed in the agri-food sector. Following a review of the SWOT Analysis, a number of common issues emerged. For example, it was evident when reviewing the SWOT Analysis of Specific Objective 4 that there was a need to reduce GHG emissions arising from agriculture (Obj4.N1). This need became evident when considering the detailed information included in the SWOT Analysis which highlighted that in Ireland, the agricultural sector emits the highest share of GHG emissions nationally, GHG emissions are rising as a result of increased. livestock production and increased fertiliser use, and Irelands potential for carbon sequestration is reduced as a result of the

ongoing drainage of organic soils and the overall low level of forest cover nationally. Considering that multiple weaknesses indicated negative GHG emission trends in the agri-food sector, it became clear that there was a need to combat this and to reduce GHG emissions overall.

Following the identification of a number of common issues across the nine specific objectives and one cross-cutting objective, a list of potential needs was drafted. This list was then provided to stakeholders and the competent authorities (EPA, NPWS) for their review, who were then asked to submit their own list of potential needs. Stakeholders were further consulted through the CAP Consultative Committee (CCC).

In June 2020, the CCC held an open focus group discussion to identify the needs to be addressed by the CAP post-2020. This was a discussion exercise which provided stakeholders the opportunity to identify needs to be included in the Needs Assessment. The discussion was based on the stakeholder's submissions received to date, which had been grouped into several discussion themes. Themes included: Generational Renewal, Climate Change, Water Quality, Wetlands, Biodiversity, Organics and Income. Stakeholders were invited to share their views on each topic and to send in any further written comments should they arise post discussion. A follow up meeting was held at the end of June to further discuss the feedback provided and submissions received. At this point, the feedback had been distilled down to a draft working document containing 40 needs. Committee members were asked to provide comments. Topics included: diversification, imports of animal feed, fruit and vegetables, the potential of women as farmers, the protection of water, reduction of antimicrobial use, farm safety, farm advisory services, 3rd level courses, risk management tools and farm income.

Following this meeting, a consolidated list of needs was prepared and was subsequently circulated to members of the CCC. A further meeting was held in July 2020, in which stakeholders were asked to begin a process of prioritisation, whereby they were asked to identify their top three needs. Following their prioritisation, the needs most commonly identified as being of high priority were cross checked with the information provided in the SWOT Analysis to ensure the accurate capturing of the issues emerging from both the analysis and stakeholder consultation. A final list of prioritised needs was drawn up and again circulated to stakeholders for their review before a draft version was agreed and published.

Justification for the decision to not address the identified needs in the CAP Strategic Plan or address them partially

The following needs are only partially addressed, or not addressed at all by the CSP. Each description outlines supports and initiatives that exist outside of the CSP that go towards addressing the respective needs.

Specific Objective 1

Obj1.N5: Increase awareness of risk management tools and encourage financial planning to improve resilience,

This need is only partially addressed by the CSP.

In addition to the support provided under the CAP, Teagasc also offers advisory services to farmers, whereby advisors provide advice on business and financial planning, assist with DAFM scheme applications, future planning options, enterprise development and general farm management advice. These services are available to any Teagasc member.

Furthermore, the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) offers farmers the chance to opt into the Future Growth Loan Scheme (FGLS) . The Future Growth Loan Scheme is a long-term loan (7-10 years) that is offered by the SBCI with the support of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and

Employment, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund (EIF). The loan is intended for long term investments for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Loan amounts from €25,000 to a maximum of €3,000,000 per eligible applicant. This scheme gives farmers greater access to financial loans and encourages financial planning.

The initial €300 million FGLS was delivered to the market by the SBCI in April 2019 and the capacity of the FGLS was subsequently increased to €800m at the end of July 2020. Lending through the Scheme is made available to SMEs and small mid-caps, including farmers and fishers, through a number of financial providers. This is a financial product that was previously unavailable in Ireland. The unique characteristic of the Scheme is that loans up to €500,000 are unsecured, making it a viable source of finance for young and new entrant farmers, especially the cohort who do not have high levels of security. It also serves smaller-scale farmers, who often do not have the leverage to negotiate for more favourable terms with their banking institution. Importantly, it may be combined with grant support such as that provided through the Targeted Agriculture Modernisation Scheme (TAMS), ensuring farmers have access to funding for investment projects, promoting the competitiveness and viability of Irish farms. As stated above, such cross-Governmental schemes can cater for the sector's needs in a relatively small market such as Ireland, while offering administrative synergies.

Farmers are also provided with the opportunity to average their tax liabilities over a period of five years through income averaging. Income averaging assists farmers dealing with income volatility associated with the farming industry. Income averaging is a risk management mechanism that gives farmers an option to average their tax liability over a period of five years, with the aim of reducing overall volatility. Lastly, farmers have the opportunity to opt into Teagasc's' Farm Options Programme. The programme facilitates farm households exploring on- and off-farm opportunities to exploit the full potential of their farm resources and financial positions. The programme is implemented through a series of nationwide Farm Options workshops, which allow participants to examine their household situation and provides them with new thinking and ideas on a variety of diversification, financial and training opportunities.

Farmers are also provided with the opportunity to average their tax liabilities over a period of five years through income averaging. Income averaging assists farmers dealing with income volatility associated with the farming industry. Income averaging is a risk management mechanism that gives farmers an option to average their tax liability over a period of five years, with the aim of reducing overall volatility.

Lastly, farmers have the opportunity to opt into Teagasc's Farm Options Programme. The programme facilitates farm households exploring on- and off-farm opportunities to exploit the full potential of their farm resources and financial positions. The programme is implemented through a series of nationwide Farm Options workshops, which allow participants to examine their household situation and provides them with new thinking and ideas on a variety of diversification, financial and training opportunities.

Specific Objective 4

Obj4.N3: Increasing the Carbon Sequestration Potential of Ireland's Forests Woodlands

This need is not addressed at all by the CSP. There are however a number of existing supports and initiatives that exist outside the CSP.

The *Afforestation Grant and Premium Scheme* provides grant payments to encourage afforestation. A 'First Grant' is provided to allow for the establishment of a forest and a 'Second Grant' is provided to assist in its maintenance for four years. The scheme further provides an Afforestation Premium, which is an annual payment based on the type of tree planted and the size of the area planted, that is usually paid for a period of 15 years. The scheme incorporates 12 separate Grant and Premium Categories (GPCs),

which provide support to many tree types, including productive conifers, broadleaf species, native woodland initiatives and to agroforestry and forestry-for-fibre.

The *Native Woodland Conservation Scheme* promotes the preservation and enhancement of existing native woodlands, as well as the conversion of coniferous forests to native woodlands when appropriate. The programme focuses on significant native forest types and habitat connection opportunities, as well as ecologically vulnerable regions, in order to achieve broader eco-system functions.

The *Irish Forestry Board Forestry Programme* is a project that aims to increase Ireland's forest cover on a permanent basis, in order to capture carbon, produce wood and assist climate change mitigation. Another objective is to optimise the environmental and social benefits of new and existing forests. The Programme is designed to contribute to climate action, biodiversity and water quality. Coillte, a state owned commercial forestry business manages approximately 7% of Ireland's land area, helping to provide public access to nature, health and wellbeing. In addition to mitigating climate change effects, forests help achieve national biodiversity and nature conservation targets as well contributing to water quality. However, it is accepted that inappropriate afforestation/forest management can have a negative impact on water quality and/or biodiversity. Through the *Forestry Board Forestry Programme*, over €100m of grants and premiums have been made available for forestry development, including afforestation, since 2014. Currently, up to €6,220 per hectare is available to cover the cost of forest establishment, followed by premiums of up to €680 each year for 15 years.

The 'Fit Forests' Project is a research based project that aims to assist in the selection of suitable planting materials that will be used to establish new forests and determine the response and resilience of Irish Forests to future climate change. It does so by identifying the key tree species in Irish forestry and obtaining information on the best provenance and seed origins that can be adapted for future Irish climactic conditions. This research aims to safeguard and improve the quality of Ireland's forests whilst maintaining their carbon sequestration potential.

Irelands afforestation policy is addressed through a national programme of measures outside of CAP. These measures are targeted at increasing the removals of CO2 from the atmosphere by sequestration and the forestry programme will incentivise land owners to carry out these activities. In addition, forest protection measures will be targeted at maintaining the existing forest estate to protect existing carbon stocks and stores. Ireland also places importance on the increased storage of CO2 in harvested wood products and will support policies for timber promotion, marketing, research and innovation. Irelands next forestry programme and the development of a new Forest Strategy will focus on measures aimed at protecting biodiversity and climate. These are currently under preparation (see below) and will be submitted to the Commission this year for approval.

The Farm Carbon project conducted by Teagasc, is researching the carbon sequestration trends of hedgerows. This includes determining the overall quantity of carbon stored in the hedgerows and the soils underneath them as well as the rate at which carbon is sequestered each year. Learning from this research project will inform practices going forward and will contribute to increasing the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland's forests and woodlands.

Specific Objective 6

Obj6.N2: Maximising the contribution of forestry including the planting of native trees in appropriate locations, safeguarding existing biodiverse habitats

This need is not addressed at all by the CSP. The following initiatives and schemes contribute to addressing this need however.

An inclusive and extensive public consultation is taking place on a shared national vision for a new Forest Strategy for Ireland. This consultation includes a public attitudes survey and community engagement

survey which have already been completed while bilateral engagement with key stakeholders is well under way. An online public consultation opened on 16th March 2021 for a period of 6 weeks and to date over 2,800 responses have been submitted. Feedback to date has emphasised the high value that is placed on forests in Ireland, particularly the contribution of forestry to biodiversity and forest ecosystem services. The new Strategy will recognise the multi-functionality of forests as yielding social, economic and environmental benefits guided by an overarching commitment to Sustainable Forest Management.

The new Forest Strategy will underpin a new Forestry Programme in the form of an Implementation Plan for the Strategy for the period 2023 - 2027. This new Plan will focus on the importance of climate smart forestry and new afforestation will be encouraged in pursuit of commercial, climate, water, and biodiversity objectives.The new Plan will be funded nationally and will be subject to State Aid approval by the European Commission.

It is expected that the Plan may include interventions that address Forest Creation including Agroforestry, Sustainable Forest Management, Reconstitution, Technology, Skills Development and Reforestation. These will build on the wide variety of schemes currently delivered which are specifically focussed on the establishment and management of forests that deliver significant biodiversity benefits. The Afforestation Grant and Premium Scheme provides 100% of establishment grants with annual premiums for up to 15 years, depending on the species chosen. In 2021, 41% of all trees planted under the Scheme were broadleaf. The Native Woodland Conservation Scheme aims to conserve existing native woodland and the Woodland Environmental Fund, encourages businesses to get involved by encouraging private landowners to plant a native forest by providing a ‘top up’ payment of €1,000/ha to the landowner.

Support measures for the sustainable management of forests, with the added benefit of increasing biodiversity and enhancing ecosystem services, are also currently funded and the expansion of these is being considered. The Continuous Cover Forestry Scheme redirects plantations away from the 'normal' clear fell / reforestation model and into continuous cover forestry. As trees are felled singly or in small groups (typically with smaller machinery) and the gaps left are planted up or fill in with natural regeneration, the overall canopy cover is left intact, protecting the soil and the forest ecosystem.

The Woodland Improvement Thinning and Tending Scheme for broadleaves aims to improve the quality and value of retained trees by removing poorer quality stems and redirecting growth onto better quality ones. This delivers a biodiversity benefit as it will open up the canopy and allow increased levels of light infiltration onto the forest floor, encouraging ground vegetation and the scrub understory. This increase in habitat biodiversity leads to more insects and birds in these more diverse habitats. Protection of this grounded vegetation and scrub layer is further supported by the Deer Fencing Scheme. Excluding deer also allows the natural regeneration of trees and scrubs, as seed falling onto the site can germinate and become established, which increases the forest biodiversity generally.

Forestry Knowledge Transfer Groups aim to complement these measures by increasing the level of forest management activity amongst participating forest owners. The target group are those forest owners that require additional knowledge to help them undertake one or more management activities in their forests. KTGs provide the mechanism for gaining this expertise and empower them to manage their own forest over its rotation while educating participants about the ecosystem services and biodiversity benefits that their forests can provide. Such supports will be reviewed and enhanced where appropriate while new elements and schemes will be developed once the Strategy has been finalised.

The *Afforestation Grant and Premium Scheme* provides grant payments to encourage afforestation. A ‘First Grant’ is provided to allow for the establishment of a forest and a ‘Second Grant’ is provided to assist in its maintenance for four years. The scheme further provides an Afforestation Premium, which is an annual payment based on the type of tree planted and the size of the area planted, that is usually paid for a period of 15 years. The scheme incorporates 12 separate Grant and Premium Categories (GPCs),

which provide support to many tree types, including productive conifers, broadleaf species, native woodland initiatives and to agroforestry and forestry-for-fibre.

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Tree planting actions have been included in both Pillar 1 and Pillar 2. The new Eco-Scheme (Pillar 1) includes a tree planting option as part of the menu of options that farmers can choose from. The Pillar II Agri-Environment Climate Measure (AECM) includes under the general option various tree planting actions to benefit specific objectives, such as water quality, biodiversity and climate. These actions will facilitate smaller scale tree planting on farms to complement the national Forestry Programme.

Furthermore, the planting of trees or participation on agroforestry or native woodland establishment schemes will qualify the applicant for higher status in ranking and selection thereby giving the applicant a greater chance of being awarded an AECM contract. In addition, the AECM also provides for the preparation of a farm sustainability plan. In the preparation of this plan, farmers can discuss the appropriate actions for their farm with their Agricultural Advisor, including the identification of areas suitable for tree planting actions.

We fully recognise the need for afforestation to be complementary to CAP. Newly planted forestry will continue to qualify for the new Basic Income Support Payment, subject to the underlying rules for eligibility for the afforestation Single Payment Scheme (SPS). It will also be eligible for an Eco-scheme per hectare payment subject to compliance with that schemes Terms and Conditions.

Specific Objective 8

All of the needs in Specific Objective 8 are addressed but due to their varied nature, and the fact that the LEADER CLLDs that will address many of these needs are not yet in place, some of the additional supports outside the CSP that address these needs are listed below.

Obj8.N2 - Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas

Circular Bioeconomy Cluster:

This initiative is supported to Enterprise Ireland's Regional Technology Clustering Fund and aims to improve collaboration between researchers, technology providers and industry to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon and circular bioeconomy.

Bio-Connect Innovation Centre:

This initiative is supported to Enterprise Ireland's Regional Economic Development Fund. The centre will encourage and assist research activities undertaken by firms that use the centre's resources by forming partnerships with academic institutions. The ultimate objective is to encourage the development and retention of highly skilled jobs in the region by conducting innovative bioeconomy research.

Obj8.N2 - Improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas including broadband

Town and Village and Renewal Scheme 2021:

This is part of 'Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025'. This policy places an emphasis on initiatives that enable distant working and improve town centre life. The lowest award offered is €20,000, with a maximum grant of €500,000. The Scheme will help to by encouraging more people to return to town and village centres to work, shop, and socialise with confidence.

Obj8.N3 - Support sustainable community development in rural areas, in particular to address environmental and climate challenges

Just Transition Fund

The Just Transition Fund seeks to support the transition to a low carbon economy and to support individuals, businesses or the local community.It has the potential to create economic opportunities driven through climate action while meeting Ireland's just transition objectives. This fund is initially being targeted at the Midlands area, which the Government deem worst affected by the Bord na Móna plant (peat burning facility) closures. The Fund will support local projects with a just transition focus in three areas: Employment and Enterprise Supports, Training Supports and Community Transitioning Supports.

Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS)

This scheme provides support for renewable electricity projects in Ireland. The primary focus is on cost effectiveness, but the scheme also delivers on a range of other policy objectives too, including providing support to communities to participate in renewable energy projects through the delivery of an Enabling Framework for Community Participation. In September 2020, the Government announced the results of the first RESS auction. A total of seven community based renewable energy projects are set to go underway, five of which relate to solar energy and two of which focus on onshore wind.

Obj8.4 - Support the further development of the tourism industry in rural

Agri-Tourism under the Rural Innovation and Development Fund

A total of €275,000 is being made available for projects relating to agri-food tourism, with the max payment per project being €25,000 (including VAT). Funding will be distributed based on a competitive process.

Obj8.N5 - Improve on farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being

Accelerated Capital Allowance Programme

The Accelerated Capital Allowance (ACA) is a tax credit that encourages the purchase of energy-efficient goods and equipment. The ACA is based on the long-standing 'Wear and Tear Allowance' for capital plant and machinery investment, which compensates capital depreciation by lowering an organization's tax obligation. In 2020, it was announced that the ACA will include accelerated allowances for farm safety equipment. The measure is in response to the high rate of fatalities on farm and in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector in general. The new measure also supports the provision of adaptive equipment for farmers with disabilities. There is a ceiling of 5 million euro per annum, excluding VAT.

Obj8.N6 - Increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development

ACORNS Programme

ACORNS is supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine's Rural Innovation and Development Fund. The programme is a development initiative that provides support to early-stage female entrepreneurs living in rural Ireland, looking to develop a new business, or who have recently started a venture. The ACORNS project revolves around interactive round table sessions led by female entrepreneurs known as "Lead Entrepreneurs" who have successfully launched and expanded enterprises in rural Ireland.

Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs)

Additional supports are also available for female entrepreneurs through Ireland's network of Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs). They are located throughout the country with 31 dedicated teams across the Local Authority network. The LEOs are the first-stop shop for anyone seeking information and support on starting or growing a business in Ireland.

Our Rural Future Policy - 2021 - 2025

This policy will also contribute to addressing all of the needs of specific objective 8. The policy sets out to deliver on a range of actions for our rural communities over the lifetime of the policy. A series of new and targeted funding schemes have been implemented such as the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, CLÁR, the Walks Scheme and the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme, all of which are administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD).

These schemes are funded outside of the CAP and contribute to employment in the tourism industry, tackling social inclusion and the bio-economy. A significantly increased capital budget from €88m in 2018 to €205m in 2025 is proposed under Ireland's National Development Plan (NDP).

Specific Objective 9

Obj9.N4: Promote the consumption of safe, nutritious, sustainable food, (including organics); and increase consumer awareness in relation to the high animal health and welfare standards.

This need is only partially addressed by the CSP. The following initiatives and schemes contribute to addressing this need however.

At farm level, *Bord Bia Quality Assurance **S**chemes* like the Sustainable Beef and Lamb Assurance Scheme provide environmental benefits through their regular on-farm inspections which strongly align with compliance and conditionality requirements for Direct Payments. This improves overall farmer compliance with conditionality and strengthens the overall contribution of food production to the mitigation of agriculture's impact on Biodiversity, Climate Action and Water Quality. There are sustainable assurance schemes for the following products:

- Beef and Lamb
- Dairy
- Eggs and Poultry
- Horticulture

At industry level, *Origin Green* promotes Ireland's national food and drink sustainability programme and enables industry to set and achieve measurable sustainability targets that respect the environment and serve local communities more effectively. It is the only one in the world which operates at a national level and which includes farmers and primary producers, processors and retailers. Over a five-year period under *Origin Green*, over 260,000 carbon assessments took place on beef and dairy farms. Farms that joined the Sustainable Beef and Lamb Assurance Schemes in 2014 saw an average of 5% reduction in CO2 per unit of beef produced by year end 2018. Farms that joined the Sustainable Dairy Assurance Schemes in 2014 saw an average of 9% reduction in CO2 per unit of milk produced to year end 2018. In the same 5-year period, food manufacturers delivered on average an 11% reduction in energy use per unit of output and a 17% reduction in water use per unit of output.

Bord Bia is responsible for the Market Identification and Activation Target Area for the *Organic Strategy 2019-2025*. Actions in this area are designed to promote organic food to the consumer and broader food industry. The actions include:

- A multi-annual marketing strategy plan to target specific opportunities for organic products on domestic and international markets.
- Assisting the industry to co-ordinate any co-funding proposals and applications under the EU Co-Funding for the Promotion of Agricultural Products Scheme.
- Promoting activities to increase consumer understanding of organic products, awareness of organic product availability and seasonality.
- Exploring the potential for an annual National Organic Week or a focused national campaign to be run in conjunction with the organic industry.
- Communicating any specific market interest for organic products to Industry.
- Biennial purchasing of market data to share with producers.
- Communicating relevant upcoming events to certification bodies to ensure producers are aware of Bord Bia's capability building activities.

The 'Food Dudes' programme encourages children to try fruits and vegetables through tasting days and class challenges in joint initiatives with schools. Additionally in schools, the School Milk Scheme subsidises daily servings of milk at affordable prices for children in primary, secondary and Montessori level.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland has a number of initiatives that also increase the awareness of healthy foods in Ireland. For example, by providing technical guidance to restaurants on how to accurately report the number of calories per meal on their menus, and publishing the 'Healthy eating, food safety, and food regulation' document, the Food Safety Authority facilitates the dissemination of knowledge to businesses and citizens as to how to eat healthier diets.

In addition, Ireland's Health Service Executive (HSE) implements the Healthy Ireland Framework 2013-2025 which supports the Government's response to Ireland's changing health and wellbeing profile. The Framework draws on existing policies but also proposes new arrangements to ensure effective cooperation and collaboration to implement evidence-based policies at Government, sectoral, community and local levels. There are four goals of the Healthy Ireland Framework including 'Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life', which will focus amongst other things, on the increasing awareness of healthy diets to all age cohorts of Irish society.

Obj9.N5: Support the assessment of food loos along the food chain

This need is not addressed at all in the CSP. There are schemes and initiatives existing outside the CSP however that contribute to addressing the need. They include the following.

The *Origin Green FoodCloud Partnership* is a partnership between FoodCloud, a social enterprise that focuses on the reduction of food waste and *Origin Green* members. FoodCloud distributes surplus food from Origin Green members to charities across the UK and Ireland. Surplus food is collected from retail outlets like Tesco, Lidl and Aldi but there are also new pilot projects to collect surplus food from the farming and manufacturing level. Information and data from FoodCloud supports the assessment of food loss along the food chain (Obj9.N5).

The *Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Food Waste Charter* is a public commitment by companies and organisations in Ireland to fundamentally change how they think and respond to food waste. The EPA is leading the programme to support businesses in the food supply chain to reduce food waste, encouraging food waste prevention in line with the principles of the food waste hierarchy. Signatories to the charter pledge to take positive actions – through measuring; reducing; and reporting their food waste. Companies commit to the monitoring and tracking of their food waste and report on progress and achievements. The charter aims to work with people, businesses and communities all along the supply chain towards meeting a number of food waste objectives.

2.1.SO1 Support viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector across the Union in order to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the Union

2.1.SO1.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO1.1.1 Strengths

Obj1.S1: The agri-food sector is Ireland's largest indigenous industry
Obj1.S2: The agri-food sector continuously demonstrates resilience
Obj1.S3: Productivity in the agri-food sector is high
Obj1.S4: Agricultural factor income in Ireland is greater than the EU-27 average
Obj1.S5: Increasing Gross Value Added at basic costs in agriculture
Obj1.S6 Prevalence of family farms committed to maintaining their farm enterprise
Obj1.S7 Temperate climate conducive for our grass-based livestock production systems
Obj1.S8: Positive investment dynamic in the agricultural sector
Obj1.S9: Low level of indebtedness on Irish farms
Obj1.S10: Strong economic viability of some sectors
Obj1.S11: Off-farm income sources provide support to maintain farm enterprises
Obj1.S12: Effective development and delivery of schemes supporting family farm income

2.1.SO1.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj1.W1: Low income in agri-food sector compared to other sectors of the economy
Obj1.W2: Farm viability varies across farming systems
Obj1.W3: High percentage of Utilised Agricultural Area in areas facing natural constraint
Obj1.W4: High reliance on Direct Payments
Obj1.W5: Decrease in lending to the agricultural sector
Obj1.W6: GDP per capita is unevenly dispersed across regions in Ireland
Obj1.W7: Changing demographics and decline in young farmer numbers
Obj1.W8: Low uptake of digital technologies
Obj1.W9: Low levels of farm diversification to mitigate viability risk
Obj1.W10: Insufficient adoption of risk management tools
Obj1.W11: Ad hoc schemes required to respond to weather related and other crises in the sector

2.1.SO1.1.3 Opportunities

Obj1.O1: Improve access to finance
Obj1.O2: Encourage the use of new digital technologies to reduce input costs and increase efficiency
Obj1.O3: Development of the circular and bio-economy
Obj1.O4: Capitalise on changing diets and changing consumer and societal demands
Obj1.O5: Reduce reliance on imported feed materials
Obj1.O6: Continue to increase exports of agri-food produce to new markets
Obj1.O7: Promote the development of short supply chains
Obj1.O8: Increase value added at farm level
Obj1.O9: Increase knowledge base of farmers on risk management tools and financial planning.

2.1.SO1.1.4 Threats

Obj1.T1: Ongoing price volatility in global markets

Obj1.T2: Reduced CAP budget and changes made to the provision of Direct Payments in the next CAP period Obj1.T3: Increasing costs associated with compliance with EU legislation on the environment, food safety and animal welfare Obj1.T4: Changing geo-political climate Obj1.T5: Potential effect of Brexit on farm incomes, especially certain vulnerable sectors Obj1.T6: Effects of climate change Obj1.T7: Reduced numbers of young farmers

2.1.SO1.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO1.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj1.N1	Support family farm income and address income disparities	Highest priority SO1	Yes
Obj1.N2	Support farmers facing natural and other constraints	2nd Highest SO1	Yes
Obj1.N3	Support coupled income support for protein crops to encourage an increase in the domestic production	3rd Highest SO1	Yes
Obj1.N4	Encourage farm diversification to improve the resilience of the agri-food sector	4th Highest SO1	Yes
Obj1.N5	Increase awareness of risk management tools and encourage financial planning to improve resilience	5th Highest in SO1	Partially

2.1.SO1.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
DPdecoupled	BISS(21) - Basic income support for sustainability	51BISS - BISS	O.4. Number of hectares benefitting from for basic income support
DPdecoupled	CRISS(29) - Complementary redistributive income support for sustainability	51CRISS - Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability	O.7. Number of hectares benefitting from complementary redistributive income support
DPdecoupled	CIS-YF(30) - Complementary income support for young farmers	51CISYF - Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers	O.6. Number of hectares benefitting from complementary income support for young farmers
DPdecoupled	Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare	51ECO - Eco-Scheme	O.8. Number of hectares or of livestock units benefitting from eco-schemes
DPcoupled	CIS(32) - Coupled income support	51VCS - Protein Aid	O.10. Number of hectares benefitting from coupled income support
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
RD	ANC(71) - Natural or other area-specific constraints	53ANC - ANC	O.12. Number of hectares benefitting from support for areas facing natural or specific constraints, including a breakdown per type of areas

Overview

As noted in the SWOT analysis, the average agricultural entrepreneurial income in Ireland was 39.2% of the national average income in 2019 (based on €/hour worked); with income levels varying considerably across different farm systems. The need to support family farm income and address income disparities both within agricultural sectors and between agriculture and other sectors of the economy (*Obj1.N1)* is addressed by virtue of the varying income support interventions included in Ireland's CSP. The *BISS* is the most basic and general of these measures as the eligibility criteria captures the widest group of farmers. The *CRISS,CIS-YF, Protein Aid* and *ANC* schemes are more targeted and therefore focus more specifically on groups identified to require greater levels of support.

The *CRISS* allows for the transfer of funds from large farms to medium/small sized farms, thus increasing the proportional support they receive and reducing income disparities between farms within the sector. In anticipating CAP 2023-2027, it is evident that the trend to support farmers and provide a more equitable payment model will continue. Predicative modelling carried out for the year 2023, shows that average Direct Payments for farms between 5-50 hectares will increase and outlines a fairer distribution amongst the majority of farms below the average farm size. (Refer to Section 3.4 for further detail).

The *CIS-YF* scheme encourages young farmers to continue or to start farming by providing extra support to farmers under the age of 40. This income support decreases the disparity between agricultural incomes and incomes from other sectors of the economy and therefore increases the likelihood that young farmers will remain in the agricultural sector, thus improving the resilience of the agricultural sector overall. *Coupled Income Support for Protein Aid* provides additional direct financial support to Irish farmers growing eligible protein crops, which are historically underproduced in Ireland. This reduces income disparities between those who grow protein crops and those who do not. The *ANC* scheme supports farmers to continue farming in designated areas. These particular areas face significant hardships from factors such as remoteness, difficult topography, climatic problems and poor soil conditions. Considering that the SWOT Analysis found that in 2019, 76.9% of Utilised Agricultural Area in Ireland was situated in areas of natural constraint; support provided under *ANC* is necessary to protect against the abandonment of agricultural land (Obj1.N2) and to increase the resilience of the agricultural sector.

The SWOT Analysis identified a reliance of Ireland on imported feedstuffs, particularly high protein feed materials of which there is a significant national deficit. This means that an increase in the domestic production of protein crops is necessary (*Obj1.N3*). *Protein Aid* thus provides the necessary income support to incentivise farmers to grow protein crops, decreasing the reliance on imports.

The SWOT Analysis further notes that Irish agriculture is becoming increasingly specialised in livestock production, particularly beef and dairy farming which brings increased risk to farm enterprises in cases of market volatility, disease outbreak and long-term changes in consumer behaviours. Therefore, there is a need to encourage farm diversification and improve resilience in the agri-food sector (Obj1.N4). This need is addressed through the implementation of a number of schemes. In Ireland, livestock production is the most profitable and therefore, farmers tend to produce livestock rather than crops. *Coupled Income Support for Protein Aid* aims to encourage farmers to produce protein crops and thus encourages diversification into this sector, the outcome being a reduced reliance on livestock production and therefore greater resilience within the agricultural sector overall.

Also addressing the need to encourage farm diversification (Obj1.N4) is the *Organic Farming Scheme (OFS).* Organic farming requires that farmers undertake agricultural practices not related to intensive livestock production. The *OFS* supports farmers looking to diversify from conventional farming practices to organic farming practices, increasing diversity and resilience in the sector as a result. Lastly, the *LEADER Programme* addresses Obj1.N4. The *LEADER programme* provides support for community-led local development. One of the indicative LEADER themes for which funding will be provided under is 'Economic Development and Job Creation'; and both 'Agricultural Diversification' and 'Rural Tourism

and Recreation' will be important elements of this. Therefore, the *LEADER Programme* will encourage farm diversification and improve the resilience of the agri-food sector (Obj1.N4).

The above interventions directly address the first three needs identified under SO1. In addition, a number of schemes have the potential to address the needs identified including: the *AECM (both General and Cooperation measures), Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Veg sector* and the *Knowledge Transfer Programme*.

The need to support farmers facing natural constraints, and to maintain the landscape and protect against the abandonment of agricultural land (Obj1.N2*)* may also be addressed through the *AECM.* The *AECM General measure* provides support to farmers who implement certain actions beneficial to the climate, environment (natural resources) and biodiversity, through payments based on the cost incurred for maintaining landscapes or income forgone. This means farmers are supported to maintain the landscape in a non-productive fashion. The *AECM Cooperation Measure*, provides similar support to that of the *General AECM measure* but in addition provides support for bespoke farm, land and catchment measures for farms in predefined geographical areas, determined as being of high priority from an environmental and climate perspective. Support is provided to farmers implementing bespoke farm, land and catchment measures by way of local cooperation project teams in accordance with Article 77 of the CSP Regulation. The *AECM* may also encourage farm diversification *(*Obj1.N4*).* Actions under the *AECM* include, inter alia, actions that encourage the maintenance of landscapes, such as peatlands; and the planting of catch crops.

Finally, the SWOT analysis identified the insufficient adoption of risk management tools as a weakness, therefore resulting in the need to increase awareness of risk management tools and to encourage financial planning to improve resilience (Obj1.N5). This need will be addressed using supports provided for outside of the CAP but will also potentially be addressed through *Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Veg Sector.* This intervention supports the creation of Operational Programmes which can provide support to primary producers in the F&V sector in terms of financial planning and risk management. In addition, the *Knowledge Transfer Programme,* which intends to deliver targeted knowledge and skills training on topics including risk management and financial planning, may also potentially address Obj1.N4. Both of these interventions will generally improve resilience in the agri-food sector.

2.1.SO1.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO1.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.4 - Linking income support to standards and good practices Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality	97.41 %
R.6 PR - Redistribution to smaller farms Percentage of additional direct payments per hectare for eligible farms below average farm size (compared to average)	105.42 %
R.7 PR - Enhancing support for farms in areas with specific needs Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)	104.25 %
R.8 - Targeting farms in specific sectors Share of farms benefitting from coupled income support for improving competitiveness, sustainability or quality	0.87 %
R.29 PR - Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	7.46 %
R.36 CU PR - Generational renewal Number of young farmers benefitting from setting up with support from the CAP, including a gender breakdown	7,000.00

R.37 CU - Growth and jobs in rural areas New jobs supported in CAP projects	7,000.00
R.38 CU - LEADER coverage Share of rural population covered by local development strategies	81.93 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.4: Linking income support to standards and good practices

Within SO1, multiple interventions address Obj1.N1 (Support family income and address income disparities between agriculture and other sectors of the economy; and between agri-food system), including the Basic Income Support for Sustainability, Protein Aid, CIS-YF, CRISS, Eco-Scheme and ANC. All of these interventions are accounted for in the total target value set for R.4. The total target value for R.4 is 97.41%. See below a table (Table SO1.2) showing the total number of hectares accounted for by each scheme. The total area included under each intervention is already accounted for under the BISS area, and therefore, the total area under BISS is the total numerator value included in the calculation of R.4. As all the direct payment interventions must be paid out after the 16th of October (Article 44 of 2116/2021), the target values are programmed from financial year 2024 *except* for Areas of Natural Constraints, which is a Rural Development intervention. See table SO1.1 for a breakdown.

Table SO1.1

R.4	BISS	0	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042
	Eco Scheme	0	3,838,634	3,838,634	3,838,634	3,838,634	3,838,634
	Protein Aid	0	14,000	18,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
	CIS-YF	0	181,500	190,575	200,145	210,210	220,770
	CRISS	0	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000
	ANC	1,894,836	2,229,219	2,229,219	2,229,219	2,229,219	334,383
	Total hectares without double counting	1,894,836	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**41.88%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**

R.6: Redistribution to smaller farms

Within SO1, multiple interventions address Obj1.N1 and are accounted for in the target value set for R.6. The total target value for R.6 is 105.32%. The average farm size in Ireland is taken as 38.02 hectares and milestone and target values are based on the average Direct Payment/ha those farming land below 36.02 hectares as per the model population compared to the average DP/ha of all farmers (see table SO1.2).

Table SO1.2:

R6: Year & Type	Total Determined Area	DP	DP/ha	Below Average Farm Size
2023				
Total in 2023	-	-	-	-
Below Average 2023	-	-	-	-
2024				
Total in 2024	4,638,668.17	€1,145,398,358.49	€246.92	
Below Average 2024	1,479,330.03	€380,602,045.62	€257.28	104.19%
2025				
Total in 2025	4,638,668.17	€1,143,951,603.75	€246.61	
Below Average 2025	1,479,330.03	€381,445,998.86	€257.85	104.56%
2026				
Total in 2026	4,638,668.17	€1,142,451,962.99	€246.29	
Below Average 2026	1,479,330.03	€382,290,000.40	€258.42	104.93%
2027				
Total in 2027	4,638,668.17	€1,140,897,892.97	€245.95	
Below Average 2027	1,479,330.03	€383,136,955.31	€258.99	105.30%
2028				
Total in 2028	4,638,668.17	€1,139,565,505.45	€245.67	
Below Average 2028	1,479,330.03	€382,754,022.83	€258.73	105.32%

R.7: Enhancing support to farms in areas with specific needs

Within SO1, ANC addresses Obj1.N2 entirely. The total target value set for R.7 is 104.18%. Anyone who received an ANC payment was included in the numerator population. Table SO1.3 shows that milestone and target values were based on the average income support per hectare for beneficiaries who received an ANC payment compared to the average income support per hectare to all farmers. Eco-Schemes are included in the calculations of the target for R.7.

Table SO1.3

R7: Year & Type	Total Determined Area	Total Support	Support/ha	In area with Spe Needs
2023				
Total in 2023	-	-	-	-
In area Specific Need 2023	-	-	-	-
2024				
Total in 2024	4,638,668.17	€1,385,100,681.53	€298.60	
In area Specific Need 2024	3,495,057.39	€1,078,552,047.14	€308.59	103.35%
2025				
Total in 2025	4,638,668.17	€1,383,653,926.79	€298.29	
In area Specific Need 2025	3,495,057.39	€1,080,213,830.73	€309.07	103.61%
2026				
Total in 2026	4,638,668.17	€1,382,154,286.03	€297.96	
In area Specific Need 2026	3,495,057.39	€1,081,840,021.84	€309.53	103.88%
2027				
Total in 2027	4,638,668.17	€1,380,600,216.01	€297.63	
In area Specific Need 2027	3,495,057.39	€1,083,423,985.00	€309.99	104.15%
2028				
Total in 2028	4,638,668.17	€1,379,267,828.49	€297.34	
In area specific Need 2028	3,495,057.39	€1,082,635,495.40	€309.76	104.18%

R.8: Targeting farms in specific sectors

Within SO1, support provided for under Protein Aid directly contributes to the achievement of Obj1.N4 (Support coupled income support for protein crops to encourage_an increase in the domestic production of protein crops) and Obj1.N4 (Encourage farm diversification to improve resilience of the agri-food sector). Protein Aid is the single intervention contributing to R.8. The total target value set for R.8 is 0.87%. The target value represents the expected number of beneficiaries under the Protein Aid scheme as a proportion of total farms in Ireland and is based on experience with the current Protein Aid Scheme under the previous CAP period (2014-2020). See table SO1.4 below

Table SO1.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.8	Protein Aid	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	0	0
	Total annual	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	Total cumulated	**0.87%**	**0.87%**	**0.87%**	**0.87%**	**0.87%**	**0.00%**	**0.00%**

R.29: Development of organic agriculture

Within SO1, the Organic Farming Scheme directly contributes to the achievement of Obj1.N4 (Encourage farm diversification to improve resilience of the agri-food sector). The Organic Farming

Scheme is the single intervention contributing to R.29. The total target value set for R.29 is 7.45%. This target is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming and is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming. See table SO1.5 for total hectares 'in conversion' and 'in maintenance'.

Table SO1.5

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.29	OFS - Conversion	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS - Maintenance	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	Total annual	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**2.27%**	**2.93%**	**3.87%**	**5.21%**	**7.45%**	**0.00%**

R.36: Generational Renewal

Within SO1, Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers (CIS-YF) directly contributes to the achievement of Obj1.N1 (Support family farm income and address income disparities between agriculture and other sectors of the economy, and between agri-food systems). CIS-YF partly contributes to the target value of R.36 (alongside the Collaborative Farming Scheme). The total cumulated target value for R.36 is 7,000 young farmers. The proportion of the target value attributed to CIS-YF is estimated by projecting the potential number of beneficiaries in 2023 based on the actual number of beneficiaries under the scheme in 2020 and 2021, taking into account the anticipated increase in enrolment in agricultural education courses; and then applying a 5% increase each year from 2024-2027. The total cumulated target value for R.36 is 7,000 young farmers. The target value established considers double counting and assumes that the total number of farmers benefiting from the Collaborative Farming Grant (170 farmers each year between 2024-2028) will also receive support under the CIS-YF. Therefore, total target values are calculated based only on those receiving support under the CIS-YF. See table SO1.6 below.

Table SO1.6

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.36	CIS-YF		1,300	1,350	1,400	1,450	1,500	
	Collaborative farming	0	170	170	170	170	170	
	Total annual (without double counting)	**0**	**1,300**	**1,350**	**1,400**	**1,450**	**1,500**	
	Totals cumulative	**0**	**1,300**	**2,650**	**4,050**	**5,500**	**7,000**	**7,00**

R.37: Growth and Jobs in rural areas

The target values for R.37 are identical to R.36 as the supporting of young farmers concurrently supports new jobs. See justification for R.36

R.38: LEADER Coverage

Within SO1, the LEADER Programme contributes to Obj1.N4 (Encourage farm diversification to improve the resilience of the agri-food sector). The LEADER Programme is the single intervention contributing to R.38. The target value set for R.38 is 81.93%. This is based on the fact that Ireland has a much higher percentage of its territory and population living in rural areas relative to the EU27 average. The significance of rural areas in Ireland is confirmed in published Commission data. However, because

there is no single agreed definition of 'rural' as a concept, different definitions are used by different bodies. The Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) defined rural Ireland as 'all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities' - therefore the term 'rural areas' was used to encompass open countryside, as well as small, medium and large towns. This definition is consistent with Our Rural Future's requirement to adopt a holistic and place-based approach to rural development. The figure of 3,082,317 ha is based on LDS for the 2014-2020 programme and may be amended after the creation/selection of LEADER LDS' for the 2023-2027 programme and Census 2022.

It is worth noting that once Local Development Strategies (LDS) are created/selected, the CSP will be amended based on the content of the strategies, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included. In this regard, potential RIs relevant to SO1 include: R.37 (Growth and jobs in rural areas) and R.39 (Developing the rural economy). See table SO1.7 below

Table SO1.7

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.38	LEADER	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317
	Total rural population	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043
	%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%

2.1.SO1.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will directly contribute to achieving the needs identified under Specific Objective 1.

- Obj1.N1 will be directly addressed through BISS, CRISS, CIS-YF and ANC.
- Obj1.N2 will be directly addressed through ANC;
- Obj1.N3 will be directly addressed through Protein Aid;
- Obj1.N4 will be directly addressed by the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme, Protein Aid and the Organic Farming Scheme;

Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS):

The total financial allocation for the BISS is €3.64 billion for the period 2023-2027. Support is based on the number and value of entitlements held. The planned average unit amount under this intervention is €158.68 per Payment per activated entitlement. Taking the number of expected activated Payment Entitlements as 4,407,042 at an average planned unit amount of €158.68, this would lead to an annual financial allocation of €728m (including an allocation of €35 million to the National Reserve annually). Support under BISS goes directly towards addressing the need to support family farm income and address income disparities both within agricultural sectors and between agriculture and other sectors of the economy (Obj1.N1) and the total financial allocation of €3.64 billion is adequate to achieve the targeted 97.41% of total UAA as per table SO1.2.

Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability (CRISS):

It is proposed to ringfence 10% of the direct payments ceiling for CRISS, which corresponds to a total indicative financial allocation of €593 million for the period 2023-2027. Based on historical information in relation to farm sizes, it is expected that the number of hectares planned to be supported will be 2,750,000 hectares. Support under CRISS partly addresses the need to support family farm income and directly addresses the need to reduce income disparities within agricultural sectors (Obj1.N1). The total

financial allocation of €593 million is adequate to achieve the target hectares outlined in table SO1.2 above which will contribute to the total 97.41% target value for R.4.

Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers (CIS-YF):

The total financial allocation for the CIS-YF is €178 million for the period 2023-2027. Support provided under this intervention will help to address the issue of an ageing farming population in Ireland by attracting young farmers into the sector. The proposed support of €196 per eligible hectare in 2024, reducing each year to a rate of €161 in 2028, subject to a maximum of 50 hectares, will provide young farmers with a total of €178m under Pillar I payments from 2024-2028. In addition, Ireland proposes to grant support under the CIS-YF to eligible farmers under the Young Farmers Scheme who need support for the remainder of the period of eligibility under that scheme. The payment amount will build on the significant progress made since 2015 under the Young Farmers Scheme (YFS). Under CIS-YF, direct income support is provided to young farmers. Therefore, this scheme addresses the need to support family farm income by specifically supporting young farmers' family farm income. (Obj1.N1). The total financial allocation of €178m is adequate to achieve the target hectares outlined under the CIS-YF in table SO1.2 above, which will contribute to the total 97.41% target value for R.4; and the target farmers outlined under the CIS-YF in Table SO1.6 above, which will contribute to the total 7,000 target value for R.36 and R.37.

Areas of Specific and Natural Constraints (ANC):

The annual indicative financial allocation for this intervention is €250m, amounting to a total indicative financial allocation of €1.25 billion for the period 2023-2027. Support under ANC is provided to farmers to assist them in farming in areas of land that have specific/natural constraints. Support is provided to four different categories of land, each qualifying for different payment rates per hectare, based on a combination of the type of land as well as the type of farming that takes place on the land. For example, category 1 is characterised by extensive farming practices focused on livestock management on higher ground, whereas category 2 land is characterised by extensive livestock grazing practices on lower ground.

As such, the least productive areas (excluding any provision of support) were placed in category 1, the second least productive areas were placed in category 2, and the third least productive areas were placed in category three. Islands are the most constrained areas and thus receive the highest level of support.

The financial allocation is justified on the basis of total number of hectares designated as subject to a natural or specific constraint (as per the 2019 redesignation process), and the proposed payment rates (which provide partial compensation to farmers for the costs incurred and income foregone for continuing to farm the land). Support under ANC addresses the need to support family farm income, specifically those farmers farming in areas of natural/specific constraints (Obj1.N1); and the need to maintain a viable farm income, maintain the landscape and protect against the abandonment of agricultural land (Obj1.N2) The annual financial allocation of €250 million is adequate to achieve the target hectares outlined for ANC in table SO1.2 (R.4 at 97.41%) and table SO1.4 (R.7 at 104.18%) above.

Coupled Income Support for Protein Aid:

The annual indicative allocation for this intervention is proposed at €7m, amounting to a total indicative financial allocation of €35m for the period 2023-2027. Support provided under the Protein Aid scheme will increase the domestic production of protein crops encouraging diversification, therefore directly addressing Obj1.N3 (the need to Support coupled income support for protein crops to encourage an increase in the domestic production of protein crops) and Obj1.N4 (the need to encourage farm diversification to improve the resilience of the agri-food sector). The total financial allocation of €35 million is adequate to achieve the target hectares outlined for Protein Aid in table SO1.5 (R.8 at 0.87%) specifically, and tables SO1.1- SO1.3 above too.

Organic Farming Scheme (OFS):

The total indicative financial allocation for this intervention is €256 million. Support under this intervention is provided based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer farming on a similar land area. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred. Supports vary based on whether beneficiaries are converting to organic practices or maintaining organic practices. It also varies based on whether the farming is dry stock, dairy, tillage, or horticulture. Support under this scheme will encourage diversification to organic farming and will therefore directly address Obj1.N3. The total financial allocation of €256 million is adequate to achieve the target of 7.45% of total UAA under organics by 2027 (R.29, See table SO1.6).

LEADER Programme:

The total indicative allocation of this scheme is €180m for the period 2023-2027. There are three different pathways by which funding under the LEADER programme will be delivered. Funding will be granted for the implementation of operations under the Community Led Development Strategy; for the preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action; and for running costs and animation. The LEADER programme will directly address Obj1.N3 by encouraging farm diversification. The total financial allocation for the LEADER programme is adequate to achieve the target of 29 Local Development Strategies (LDS) across the programming period – some of which are likely to promote the development of local markets; and is adequate to achieve the target value for R.38 of 81.93%.

2.1.SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation

2.1.SO2.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO2.1.1 Strengths

Obj2.S1: National strategy for the agri-food sector is focused on increasing competitiveness and enhancing market orientation
Obj2.S2: Irish agri-food exports are reliant in a period of unprecedented change and challenge
Obj2.S3: Temperate climate provides competitive advantage for grass-based livestock production systems
Obj2.S4: Overall increase in investments in the agri-food sector
Obj2.S5: Agriculture productivity is increasing and approaching the EU average
Obj2.S6: Ireland has a reputation for sustainably producing high quality food, supported by recognised Quality Assurance Schemes
Obj2.S7: Strong animal health and disease control standards
Obj2.S8: Wide range of support provided for research and innovation in the agri-food sector
Obj2.S9: Targeted application of genomic technologies contributing to gains in national herd efficiency and sustainability
Obj2.S10: Supportive Knowledge Transfer Programmes
Obj2.S11: Online digital tools provided to assist farmers in accessing new markets
Obj2.S12: Ireland ranks highly in the Digital Economy and Society Index 2020

2.1.SO2.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj2.W1: Wide variation in the level of productivity and efficiency in agriculture
Obj2.W2: Wide variation in levels of innovation and adoption of new technologies
Obj2.W3: Lack of access to high speed broadband in rural areas
Obj2.W4: Low level of Producer Organisations
Obj2.W5: High reliance on the UK market
Obj2.W6: Costs of compliance with EU's higher environmental and sanitary production standards
Obj2.W7: Low income levels in drystock farming leading to low competitiveness
Obj2.W8: Decline in young farmer numbers

2.1.SO2.1.3 Opportunities

Obj2.O1: Increasing demand for high quality, safe and sustainable food, including organic produce
Obj2.O2: Reduce difficulties associated with accessing finance
Obj2.O3: Reduce reliance on imported feed materials
Obj2.O4: Use of new technologies to reduce input costs, increase efficiency and add value
Obj2.O5: Diversification including further development of the circular and bio-economy
Obj2.O6: Open access to new markets and expand access to existing markets
Obj2.O7: Potential for greater synergy between dairy and beef systems

2.1.SO2.1.4 Threats

Obj2.T1: Effects of climate change on primary production
Obj2.T2: Capability and capacity of sector to adjust to new demands/challenges
Obj2.T3: Labour shortages along the agri-food sector
Obj2.T4: Increasing costs of compliance to meet new obligations

Obj2.T5: Potential effect of Brexit on markets and competitiveness, especially vulnerable sectors.

2.1.SO2.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO2.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj2.N1	Increase efficiency and competitiveness thru on farm investment + the adoption of new technologies	Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes

2.1.SO2.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	INVRE(47(1)(a)) - investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and other actions	52FVPO01 - Investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and analysis/forecasting/coordination	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ADVI1(47(1)(b)) - advisory services and technical assistance, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the conditions of employment, employer obligations and occupational health and safety	52FVPO02 - Advisory Services and Technical Assistance	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRAINCO(47(1)(c)) - training including coaching and exchange of best practices, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as the use of organised trading platforms and commodity exchanges on the spot and futures market	52FVPO03 - Training; Including Personalised Advice and Best Practices	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ORGAN(47(1)(d)) - organic or integrated production	52FVPO04 - Organic or Integrated Production	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRANS(47(1)(e)) - actions to increase the sustainability and efficiency of transport and of storage of products	52FVPO05 - Increase sustainability and efficiency of transport and storage of products	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	PROMO(47(1)(f)) - promotion, communication and marketing including actions and activities aimed in particular at raising consumer awareness about the Union quality schemes and the importance of healthy diets, and at diversification and consolidation of markets	52FVPO06 - Promotion, Communication and Marketing	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	QUAL(47(1)(g)) - implementation of Union and national quality schemes	52FVPO07 - Implementing Union and national quality schemes	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	3COUN(47(2)(k)) - implementation and management of third-country sanitary and phytosanitary requirements in the territory of the Union to facilitate access to third-country markets	52FVPO15 - Phytosanitary and sanitary requirements	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	COMM(47(2)(l)) - communication actions aiming at raising awareness and informing consumers	52FVPO16 - Communication Actions	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53ESSPO - Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations	O.28. Number of supported producer groups and producer organisations

Overview

The need to increase efficiency and competitiveness on farms (Obj2.N1*)* will be addressed primarily through the provision of financial support under the *On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS).* The OFCIS will provide farmers with the capital needed to invest in precision farming equipment and technologies, which will lead to efficiency gains and will reduce inputs (energy, labour and machinery). In turn, this will increase the productivity of farms, leading to higher output and increased competitiveness on the market. This complements the Food Wise 2025 strategy outlined in the SWOT analysis (Obj2.S1). Food Wise 2025 is a ten-year strategy conceived of outside of the CAP that aims to strategically develop the Irish agri-food sector, particularly through encouraging sustainable production and high-quality produce.

Producer Organisations (POs), which are officially recognised bodies set up by primary producers, increase the collective bargaining power of its members and ultimately improve the farmers position in the value chain. *Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector,* and *Early-Stage support for Producer Organisations* both intend to increase the overall number of POs in Ireland and to increase producer membership within POs. POs provide advice and expertise within the context of PO activities to allow PO members to capitalise on their collective bargaining power. As such, both of these interventions increase farmers competitiveness (Obj2.N1*)*, as well their capacity to expand and diversify into new markets (Obj2.N2). Whilst these needs are addressed by the supporting of Producer Organisations, farmers will require further regulatory support, for example in the form of trade deals with other countries in order to maximise the possibilities of engaging with existing markets abroad.

Lastly, the *Organic Farming Scheme* provides support to farmers for transitioning to or maintaining organic food production, as an alternative to conventional agricultural practices. Consumer demand for high quality, sustainably produced products is increasing due to the increased health and environmental benefits associated with them and as a result the market share for organic products is increasing too. Therefore, additional support to farmers who produce organic products provides them with the opportunity to expand and diversify into the growing organic market, both in Ireland and abroad, which has the potential to address to Obj2.N2.

2.1.SO2.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO2.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.3 CU - Digitalising agriculture Share of farms benefitting from support for digital farming technology through CAP	0.91 %
R.9 CU PR - Farm modernisation Share of farmers receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency	3.63 %
R.10 CU PR - Better supply chain organisation Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP	0.76 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.3 Digitalising Agriculture

The On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS) is the only intervention that contributes to this result indicator. Within Obj2.N1, the intention of OFCIS is to provide farmers with the capacity to invest in digital farming technology such as EID tag readers, computer information systems, heat detection systems and ear tags/pedometers. The target of this result indicator is 0.91% which quantifies the number of farms receiving support under this measure as a percentage of all farms in Ireland. This target assumes there will be a total of 1,250 investment across the programming period, an estimate based on the uptake of comparative investment in TAMS II (the equivalent scheme in the previous programming period). For the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme, the first three years of the programming period are financed via the previous RDP, apart from items available at the increased rate for women farmers. Overall, the OFCIS will contribute to the need to increase efficiencies on the farm through the adoption of new technologies as identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment. See table SO2.1 for the number of farmers receiving relevant support.

Table SO2.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.3	On-farm Capital Investment Scheme	15	75	100	535	525		
	Total annual	**15**	**75**	**100**	**535**	**525**	**0**	**0**
	Total cumulated	**15**	**90**	**190**	**725**	**1,250**	**1,250**	**1,250**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.00%**	**0.00%**	**0.00%**	**0.53%**	**0.91%**	**0.91%**	**0.91%**

R.9 Farm Modernisation

Within SO2 the On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS) is the only intervention that contributes to this result indicator. In the context of Obj2.N1, the intention of OFCIS is to provide farmers with the capacity to invest in resources that contribute to restructuring and modernising their farms, thereby increasing efficiencies. The target of this result indicator is 3.63% which quantifies the number of farms receiving support under this measure expressed as a percentage of all farms in Ireland. This target is based on comparative investment in TAMS II (the equivalent scheme in the previous programming

period). Overall, this will contribute to the need to increase efficiencies on the farm through the adoption of new technologies. See table SO2.2 for the number of farms receiving relevant support.

Table SO2.2

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.9	OFCIS	75	300	375	2,125	2,125		
	Total annual	**75**	**300**	**375**	**2,125**	**2,125**	**0**	**0**
	Total cumulated	**75**	**375**	**750**	**2,875**	**5,000**	**5,000**	**5,000**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**1.5%**	**3.1%**	**3.6%**	**3.6%**

R.10 Better Supply Chain Organisation

Within SO2, Sectoral intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector and Early-Stage support for Producer Organisations contribute to achieve the target of 0.76% set for this result indicator. This target reflects the number of beneficiaries receiving support expressed as a percentage of the total number of farms.

For Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector, the target is 46 producers supported per year between 2023-2027. Currently there are four recognised POs in Ireland, and a fifth is expected to be recognised in 2023. Despite the additional PO expected to be recognised in 2023, DAFM is not forecasting a percentage growth in farmers supported under this scheme due to an expected decrease in the overall number of fruit and vegetable producers over the course of the next CAP programming period. As the number of producers is reducing, the observed effect of potential increases in PO membership is mitigated. Nonetheless, maintaining the financial support of the existing POs contributes to the need to increase efficiencies on the farm (Obj2.N1), as well as the need to expand and diversify into new markets (Obj2.N2).

The target values for Early-Stage support for Producer Organisations is 275 beneficiaries in 2023, 270 beneficiaries in 2024 and 265 beneficiaries in 2025 being supported across the programming period. This figure is based on projections following detailed stakeholder engagement. Early-stage financial support across these various sectors contributes to the need to increase efficiencies on the farm (Obj2.N1), as well as the need to expand and diversify into new markets (Obj2.N2). See table SO2.3 for the percentage of farms receiving relevant support per intervention.

Table SO2.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.10	F&V PO	46	46	46	46	46	0	0
	Early-stage Support for Pos (Beef Sheep)	15	10	5	0	0	0	0
	Early-stage Support for Pos (Other sectors)	260	260	260	0	0	0	0
	Total cumulated	**321**	**637**	**948**	**994**	**1040**	**1040**	**1040**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.23%**	**0.46%**	**0.69%**	**0.72%**	**0.76%**	**0.76%**	**0.76%**

2.1.SO2.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will directly contribute to achieving the needs identified under SO2.

- Obj2.N1 will be addressed by OFCIS, Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector and Early-Stage support for Producer Organisations in Various Sectors.
- Obj2.N2 will be addressed by Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector.

On Farm Capital Investment Scheme (CIS)

The total financial allocation for the scheme is €100m and funding will be provided on a case-by-case basis where applicants meet the criteria to be eligible for support. The goal of the scheme is to provide support for farmers to invest in productive equipment for their farms.

The standard grant rate that is provided is 40% of the original investment whereas for organic farmers the grant rate is 50% of the original investment. The highest grant rate (60%) is attributed to investments made by young farmers and female farmers. Obj2.N1, the need to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of farms through the adoption of new technologies, is addressed by the provision of this financial support which affords farmers access to subsidised investments. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €100m is sufficient to achieve the targets of:

- 0.91% of farms benefitting from support to digital farming technology through CAP (R.3)
- 3.63% of farms receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency (R.9)

Sectoral Intervention Fruit and Vegetable Sector

The total amount of €44m is justified on the basis that the existing 4 POs remain in the scheme with 1 new entrant. Investments by POs in tangible and intangible assets, as well research into experimental and innovative production methods will contribute to members increasing their efficiency and competitiveness, thus addressing Obj2.N1. PO membership also affords farmers the possibility to expand into new markets, addressing Obj2.N2. The financial allocation is adequate to support the targets of 0.76% of farms participating in Producer Groups, Producer Organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP (R.10). See table SO2.3 for a breakdown of contributions to R.10 per intervention.

Early-Stage support for Producer Organisations

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €1.49m for the period 2023-2027. Support under this scheme is provided to groups of producers in the beef, sheep and other sectors who are interested in becoming Producer Organisations (POs). The total amount of €1.49m is justified on the basis that total planned allocation over the course of the programme to each organisation is €33,000 to be paid over three years. The support provided under this intervention will directly address Obj2.N1, by increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of members and will address Obj2.N2 through facilitating the entry into new markets. The proportion of R.10 attributed to Early-stage support for Producer Organisations is 275 beneficiaries in 2023, 270 beneficiaries in 2024 and 265 beneficiaries in 2025. The financial allocation is adequate to support this and the achievement of the target value of 0.76%. See table SO2.3 for a breakdown of contributions to R.10 per intervention

2.1.SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain

2.1.SO3.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO3.1.1 Strengths

Obj3.S1: Several Quality Assurance Schemes in place to support Ireland's reputation for producing high quality agri-food products sustainably
Obj3.S2: Well-established POs in the fruit and vegetables sector
Obj3.S3: Cooperative structure in the dairy sector
Obj3.S4: Fixed price contracting is a strong feature of the dairy sector
Obj3.S5: Regulations introduced at EU level ensure greater transparency and sustainability throughout the food supply chain
Obj3.S6: National initiatives in place to boost beef farmers' position in the value chain

2.1.SO3.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj3.W1: The primary producers share in the value chain is low
Obj3.W2: EU quality label schemes are underutilised in Ireland
Obj3.W3: Lack of accurate data on value chain in Ireland
Obj3.W4: Low number of Producer Organisations

2.1.SO3.1.3 Opportunities

Obj3.O1: Promote Ireland's grass-based production system
Obj3.O2: Continue to meet consumer demand for locally sourced produce
Obj3.O3: Potential expansion of organic farming sector
Obj3.O4: Encourage the establishment of more Producer Organisations
Obj3.O5: Encourage the greater uptake of animal and crop breeding technologies
Obj3.O6: Encourage the development of contractual arrangements between the different actors in the value chain.
Obj3.O7: Encourage the continued production of breed-specific premium beef

2.1.SO3.1.4 Threats

Obj3.T1: The effects of increasing input costs
Obj3.T2: Increasing costs associated with compliance with EU standards
Obj3.T3: Increased consolidation in the processing and retail sector

2.1.SO3.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO3.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
Obj3.N2	Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce	2nd Highest SO3	Yes

2.1.SO3.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	INVRE(47(1)(a)) - investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and other actions	52FVPO01 - Investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and analysis/forecasting/coordination	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ADVI1(47(1)(b)) - advisory services and technical assistance, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the conditions of employment, employer obligations and occupational health and safety	52FVPO02 - Advisory Services and Technical Assistance	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRAINCO(47(1)(c)) - training including coaching and exchange of best practices, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as the use of organised trading platforms and commodity exchanges on the spot and futures market	52FVPO03 - Training; Including Personalised Advice and Best Practices	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ORGAN(47(1)(d)) - organic or integrated production	52FVPO04 - Organic or Integrated Production	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRANS(47(1)(e)) - actions to increase the sustainability and efficiency of transport and of storage of products	52FVPO05 - Increase sustainability and efficiency of transport and storage of products	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	PROMO(47(1)(f)) - promotion, communication and marketing including actions and activities aimed in particular at raising consumer awareness about the Union quality schemes and the importance of healthy diets, and at diversification and consolidation of markets	52FVPO06 - Promotion, Communication and Marketing	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	QUAL(47(1)(g)) - implementation of Union and national quality schemes	52FVPO07 - Implementing Union and national quality schemes	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRACE(47(1)(h)) - implementation of traceability and certification systems, in particular the monitoring of the quality of products sold to final consumers	52FVPO08 - Implementation of traceability and certification systems	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	CLIMA(47(1)(i)) - actions to mitigate and to adapt to climate change	52FVPO09 - Climate change mitigation	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	SETUP(47(2)(a)) - setting up, filling and refilling of mutual funds by producer organisations and by associations of producer organisations recognised under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, or under Article 67(7) of this Regulation	52FVPO10 - Mutual Funds	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ORCHA(47(2)(d)) - replanting of orchards or olive groves where that is necessary following mandatory grubbing up for health or phytosanitary reasons on the instruction of the	52FVPO11 - Replanting Orchards	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

	Member State competent authority or to adapt to climate change		
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	WITHD(47(2)(f)) - market withdrawal for free-distribution or other destinations, including where necessary processing to facilitate such withdrawal	52FVPO12 - Free Distribution	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	HARIN(47(2)(i)) - harvest and production insurance that contributes to safeguarding producers' incomes where there are losses as a consequence of natural disasters, adverse climatic events, diseases or pest infestations while ensuring that beneficiaries take necessary risk prevention measures	52FVPO13 - Harvest and Production Insurance	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	COACH(47(2)(j)) - coaching to other producer organisations and associations of producer organisations recognised under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 or under Article 67(7) of this Regulation, or to individual producers	52FVPO14 - Coaching For Risk Management	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	COMM(47(2)(l)) - communication actions aiming at raising awareness and informing consumers	52FVPO16 - Communication Actions	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53ESSPO - Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations	O.28. Number of supported producer groups and producer organisations
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53LEADER - LEADER	O.31. Number of supported local development strategies (LEADER) or preparatory actions

Overview

According to Ireland’s SWOT analysis, Ireland’s primary producers’ share in the value chain in 2017 was below the EU average at just 22%. In order to increase primary producers’ share in the value chain (Obj3.N1*)*, Ireland’s CSP intends to provide support to Producer Organisations (POs) which are officially recognised bodies, set up by groups of primary producers. In Ireland, there are currently four recognised POs in the F&V sector. These POs provide support to agri-food businesses in the F&V sector which are producer owned and controlled; and which engage in collective activities. They ultimately strengthen the collective bargaining power of F&V producers. Sectoral support provided to POs in the F&V sector is intended to increase the overall number of POs in Ireland, to increase producer membership within POs and to provide advice and expertise within the context of PO activities to allow PO members to capitalise on their collective bargaining power, ultimately improving their position in the value chain. (Obj3.N1).

Ireland's CSP also intends to offer support to groups of producers in the beef, sheep and other sectors to assist them in forming POs. *Early-stage support for Producer Organisations* aims to encourage the adoption and development of producer organisations in the beef, sheep and other sectors so that producer groups in these sectors can take advantages of what producer organisations (POs) can offer with regards strengthening their position in the supply chain and ultimately positively impacting on their profitability (Obj3.N1*)*. Encouraging producers to actively join Producer Groups and POs will facilitate greater cooperation between primary producers.

As noted in the SWOT Analysis, 70% of adults considered buying local produce to be important when shopping for food. Therefore, Ireland intends to develop and promote local markets selling locally produced food, including organic produce (Obj3.N2). *Early-stage support for Producer Organisations* will ensure the supply of locally produced food from the beef, sheep and other sectors to local markets. Additionally, support provided under the *Organic Farming Scheme (OFS)*, which encourages conversion to, or the maintenance of, organic farmland, will also ensure the supply of organic produce to local markets (Obj3.N2). Lastly, the *LEADER programme*, which provides support for community-led local development, will also address this need. One of the indicative LEADER themes in which funding will be provided under is 'Economic Development and Job Creation' with 'Rural Food Production' being an important element of this. Therefore, the *LEADER Programme* will assist in the development and promotion of local markets too (Obj3.N2).

2.1.SO3.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO3.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.5 - Risk management Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools	0.01 %
R.10 CU PR - Better supply chain organisation Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP	0.76 %
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables - Concentration of supply Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors	72.18 %
R.29 PR - Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	7.46 %
R.38 CU - LEADER coverage Share of rural population covered by local development strategies	81.93 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.5: Risk Management

Article 47(2) Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector will contribute to this result indicator. An updated target value will be set once Producer Organisations establish Operational Programmes however it is anticipated that at least 20 farms will avail of actions related to risk management over the programme period.

R.10: Better supply chain organisation

Within SO3, both Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector and Early-Stage support for POs contribute to the target established for R.10. The total target value set for R.10 is 0.76%. The achievement of this target will go towards both increasing primary producers' share in the value chain (Obj3.N1) and developing and promoting local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce (Obj3.N2).

When calculating the proportion of R.10 attributed to Sectoral interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector, the number of active members of all Irish fruit and vegetable POs was set as a percentage of the total number of farms in Ireland. The target is 46 producers supported per year across each year of the programming period. Currently, there are four recognised POs in the Fruit and Veg sector in Ireland, with a fifth expected to be recognised in 2023. Ireland does not forecast a percentage growth in PO numbers after 2023 (when it is anticipated that the new PO will become recognised), as the number of fruit and

vegetable producers is likely to reduce rather than increase over the life of the next CAP, thus mitigating the effect of any possible increase in membership in individual PO's.

When calculating the proportion of R.10 attributed to Early-stage Support for POs, target participant rates were based on projections from stakeholder consultation on potential beef, sheep, fruit and vegetable, tillage, potato and amenity applicants based on existing producer groups. The number of producers supported in the beef and sheep sectors is targeted at 15 producers in 2023, with this figure dropping to 10 producers in 2024 and 5 producers in 2025. The number of producers supported in other sectors is targeted at 260 producers each year between 2023 and 2025. See table SO3.1 below.

Table SO3.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.10	F&V PO	46	46	46	46	46	0	0
	Early-stage Support for Pos (Beef Sheep)	15	10	5	0	0	0	0
	Early-stage Support for Pos (Other sectors)	260	260	260	0	0	0	0
	Total cumulated	**321**	**637**	**948**	**994**	**1040**	**1040**	**1040**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.23%**	**0.46%**	**0.69%**	**0.72%**	**0.76%**	**0.76%**	**0.76%**

R.11: Concentration of supply

Within SO3, Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector directly contributes to the achievement of Obj3.N1 (Increase primary producers' share in the value chain). Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector is the single intervention contributing to R.11. The total target value set for R.11 is 72.18%. In calculating 72.18%, it is anticipated that the combined VMP of all Irish fruit and vegetable POs will stay flat after 2023, against a fruit and vegetable sector forecast at 2% growth year on year. See table SO3.2 below.

Table SO3.2

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
R.11	Total value of marketed production	221,424,934	225,853,433	230,370,501	234,977,912	239,677,470
	Total value of production of the sectors concerned	306,777,192	312,912,736	319,170,991	325,554,411	332,065,499
	Totals annual values	**72%**	**72%**	**72%**	**72%**	**72%**

R.29: Development of organic agriculture

Within SO3, the Organic Farming Scheme has the potential to contribute to the achievement of Obj3.N2 (Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce). The Organic Farming Scheme is the single intervention contributing to R.29. The total target value set for R.29 is 7.45%. This target is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming and is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming. See table SO3.3 for total hectares 'in conversion' and 'in maintenance'.

Table SO3.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.29	OFS - Conversion	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS - Maintenance	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	Total annual	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**2.27%**	**2.93%**	**3.87%**	**5.21%**	**7.45%**	**0.00%**

R.38: LEADER Coverage

Within SO3, the LEADER Programme contributes to Obj3.N2 (Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce in rural areas). The LEADER Programme is the single intervention contributing to R.38. The target value set for R.38 is 81.93%. This is based on the fact that Ireland has a much higher percentage of its territory and population living in rural areas relative to the EU27 average. The significance of rural areas in Ireland is confirmed in published Commission data. However, because there is no single agreed definition of 'rural' as a concept, different definitions are used by different bodies. The Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) defined rural Ireland as 'all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities' - therefore the term 'rural areas' was used to encompass open countryside, as well as small, medium and large towns. This definition is consistent with Our Rural Future's requirement to adopt a holistic and place-based approach to rural development. The figure of 3,082,317 ha is based on LDS for the 2014-2020 programme and may be amended after the creation/selection of LEADER LDS's for the 2023-2027 programme and Census 2022. See table SO3.4.

It is worth noting that once Local Development Strategies (LDS) are created/selected, the CSP will be amended based on the content of the strategies, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included. In this regard, potential RIs relevant to SO3 include: R.37 (Growth and jobs in rural areas) and R.39 (Developing the rural economy).

Table SO3.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.38	LEADER	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317
	Total rural population	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043
	%	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**

2.1.SO3.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will contribute to achieving the needs identified under Specific Objective 3.

- Sectoral interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable sector and Early-stage support for Producer Organisations will directly address Obj3.N1;
- Early-stage support for Producer Organisations, the Organic Framing Scheme and the LEADER programme will all directly address Obj3.N2.

Sectoral Intervention Fruit and Veg Sector:

The total indicative allocation of €44m between 2023-2027 is justified on the basis that the existing 4 POs remain in the scheme with 1 new entrant. Support provided under this scheme will directly address the need to increase primary producers' share in the value chain (Obj3.N1) and the need to develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce (Obj3.N2) by establishing a supply of local fruit and vegetable produce which can be sold at local markets. The proportion of R.10 attributed to Sectoral Interventions in the F&V sector is 46 beneficiaries per annum. The financial allocation is adequate to support the achievement of the target value of 0.76% for R.10 as per Table SO3.1. In addition, the financial allocation is adequate to support 72.18% of the value of marketed production by sectoral Producer Organisations or Producer Groups with operational programmes (R.11), as per Table SO3.2.

Early- stage support for Producer Organisations

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €1.5m for the period 2023-2027. Support under this scheme is provided to groups of producers in the beef, sheep and other sectors who are interested in becoming Producer Organisations (POs). The total amount of €1.5m is justified on the basis that total planned allocation over the course of the programme to each organisation is €33,000 to be paid over three years. The support provided under this intervention will directly address Obj3.N1, by ensuring farmers' share in the value chain increases; and will address Obj3.N2, by establishing a supply of local produce which can be sold at local markets. The proportion of R.10 attributed to Early-stage support for Producer Organisations is 275 beneficiaries in 2023, 270 beneficiaries in 2024 and 265 beneficiaries in 2025, as per Table SO3.1 above. The financial allocation is adequate to support the achievement of the target value of 0.76% for R.10 as per Table SO3.1

Organic Farming scheme (OFS):

The total financial allocation for this intervention is €256 million for the period 2023-2027. Support under this scheme is provided based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer farming on a similar land area. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred. Supports vary based on whether beneficiaries are converting to organic practices or maintaining organic practices. It also varies based on whether the farming is dry stock, dairy, tillage, or horticulture. The OFS will address the need to develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organics (Obj3.N2). The total financial allocation of €256 million is adequate to achieve the target of 7.45% of total UAA under organics in 2027 (R.29, as per Table SO3.3), therefore ensuring that an adequate supply of organic produce will be available to be sold at local markets.

LEADER Programme:

The total financial allocation of this scheme is €180m for the period 2023-2027. There are three different pathways by which funding under the LEADER programme will be delivered. Funding will be granted for the implementation of operations under the Community Led Development Strategy; for the preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action; and for running costs and animation. The LEADER programme will directly address Obj3.N2 by providing support to communities to enable them to develop and promote local markets from the bottom up. The total financial allocation for the LEADER programme is adequate to achieve the target of 29 Local Development Strategies (LDS) across the programming period – some of which are likely to promote the development of local markets; and is adequate to achieve the target value of 81.93% under R.38, as per Table SO3.4.

2.1.SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy

2.1.SO4.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO4.1.1 Strengths

Obj4.S1: National objective of an approach to carbon neutrality and resilience in the agriculture and land use sector underpinned by a strong policy and governance framework
Obj4.S2: Grass based livestock production system with low carbon footprint
Obj4.S3: High % Utilised Agricultural Area in Ireland is permanent grassland
Obj4.S4: Significant national cover of hedgerows and individual trees
Obj4.S5: Highest mean organic carbon of arable land in Europe
Obj4.S6: High % of land under agri-environment-climate commitments
Obj4.S7: Low % of sealed soils (built environment)
Obj4.S8: Leading innovation and research on climate related support tools
Obj4.S9: Established beef, dairy and sheep breeding programmes
Obj4.S10: High level of carbon auditing on beef and dairy farms
Obj4.S11: Robust ensemble of regional climate model projections for Ireland in place
Obj4.S12: Carbon efficient protected crop sector
Obj4.S13: Low levels of direct use of energy in primary agriculture and forestry sector
Obj4.S14: Ireland has a large availability of feedstock and agricultural residues for bio-based product and bio-energy production
Obj4.S15: Well established co-operatives and rural/community networks with potential to deliver on agriculturally based renewable energy products
Obj4.S16: Farm Advisory System which can quickly disseminate new innovations

2.1.SO4.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj4.W1: Highest share of GHG emissions comes from agriculture
Obj4.W2: Agricultural GHG emissions are increasing
Obj4.W3: Ammonia emissions in breach of targets set
Obj4.W4: Dairy herd expansion is faster than mitigation capacity
Obj4.W5: Ireland has one of the lowest levels of forest cover in Europe
Obj4.W6: Ongoing drainage of organic soils (grasslands and wetlands)
Obj4.W7: High % of non-CO2 emissions in Ireland due to agriculture
Obj4.W8: Nitrates derogation farms have become a very significant intensive farming cohort over recent years.
Obj4.W9: Sub-optimal soil fertility
Obj4.W10: Limited investment in sectoral research (horticulture)
Obj4.W11: Reliance on peat in horticultural sector
Obj4.W12: Increasing annual supply gap for forestry biomass in Ireland
Obj4.W13: Some forests are not managed to their productive potential
Obj4.W14: Economics of anaerobic digestion (AD) plants are challenging
Obj4.W15: Difficulties in accessing the national grid
Obj4.W16: Production of renewable energy at farm level and from forestry is quite low
Obj4.W17: Enterprise specialisation which makes Irish farms more vulnerable to climate events
Obj4.W18: Polluter Pays Principle (PPP) not applied to agricultural systems
Obj4.W19: Perceived inconsistent enforcement of policy and governance framework

2.1.SO4.1.3 Opportunities

Obj4.O1: Introduce the measures outlined in Ag Climatise to achieve the targets outlined in the Climate Action Plan
Obj4.O2: Reduce nitrogen emissions
Obj4.O3: Improve animal breeding and animal health
Obj4.O4: Improve livestock and grassland management
Obj4.O5: Improve on-farm slurry storage and management; including energy production
Obj4.O6: Reduce the crude protein content of animal feeding stuffs and support research into diet quality and the use of novel feed additives
Obj4.O7: Better manage peatlands to allow for rehabilitation
Obj4.O8: Improve soil management and fertility
Obj4.O9: Increase relatively low level of forest cover, including native and/or broadleaf species
Obj4.O10: Support opportunities for on-farm diversification to lower carbon intensity farming and to meet bio-energy demands
Obj4.O11: Increase the use of forest products and biomass
Obj4.O12: Increase efficiency through the roll-out of agri-digitalisation, smart farming and precision farming technology
Obj4.O13: Increase the area under tillage production
Obj4.O14: Advance crop breeding and plant genetics
Obj4.O15: Reduce energy consumption on farms through energy efficiency and deployment of renewables, including through uptake of capital investments
Obj4.O16: Continue the development of a sustainable circular bio-economy within the agri-food sector
Obj4.O17: Use renewable biological resources to create value added bio-based products
Obj4.O18: Utilise the Network of Agricultural Colleges to educate the next generation of farmers in environmentally efficient farming methods
Obj4.O19: Plant multi species swards (including legumes)
Obj4.O20: Improve fertiliser blending
Obj4.O21: Encourage straw incorporation by tillage farmers in order to increase the carbon sequestration potential of the Irish tillage sector
Obj4.O22: Increase productivity and resilience of the national forest estate
Obj4.O23: Introduce a database for farm carbon measurement / trading
Obj4.O24: Improve hedgerow management and increase the number of hedgerows on farm
Obj4.O25: Enhance adaptation to climate change through nature-based solutions

2.1.SO4.1.4 Threats

Obj4.T1: Continued increase in agriculture emissions
Obj4.T2: Livestock production and emissions of GHG's remain strongly coupled
Obj4.T3: Continuing failure to meet Ammonia emissions targets
Obj4.T4: Inappropriate land-use/soil management
Obj4.T5: Lack of awareness among farmers in relation to climate change could reduce the adoption of climate appropriate practices
Obj4.T6: Slowdown in generational renewal could affect uptake of climate appropriate practices
Obj4.T7: Increased frequency and intensity of some extreme climatic events
Obj4.T8: Increased disease and pest pressures
Obj4.T9: Risk of "carbon leakage" if production in Ireland declines
Obj4.T10: Difficulty in ensuring security of supply for biomass feedstocks
Obj4.T11: Capital investment costs for Anaerobic Digestors could be prohibitive to uptake

2.1.SO4.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO4.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N3	Increase the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland's forests and woodlands	3rd Highest for SO 4	No
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N5	Increase EE thru uptake of new technologies + facilitate the production of renewable energy sources	5th Highest for SO 4	Yes

2.1.SO4.3 Identification of the relevant (elements of) national plans emanating from the legislative instruments referred to in Annex XI of the CAP plan Regulation that have been taken into account in the CAP plans' needs assessment for this specific objective

Legislative instruments referred to in Annex XI

Regulation (EU) 2018/841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry in the 2030 climate and energy framework and amending Regulation No 525/2013 and Decision No 529/2013/EU

Regulation (EU) 2018/842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement and amending Regulation (EU) No 525/2013

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

The Climate Action Plan 2021 sets out 2030 targets for each sector to meet the greenhouse gas emission targets under Regulation (EU) 2018/842. It also incorporates LULUCF emissions targets as provided for in Regulation 2018/841.

Relationship between the needs identified under this Specific Objective and what appears in the environmental/climate plans

This environmental/climate plan is linked to Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2 and Obj4.N4.

Obj4.N1 of Ireland's CSP aims to reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture. Obj4.N2 aims to improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands. Finally Obj4.N4 encourages climate adaptation. All of these needs are related to elements within the Regulation (EU) 2018/842, Regulation (EU) 2018/842 and the higher level of ambition set in Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021.

Under Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 the national target is a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions economy wide compared to 2018 levels. This goes beyond Ireland's requirements set out under Regulation (EU) 2018/842.

Under the Climate Action Plan 2021, the agriculture sector is committed to reducing its emissions by 22-30%. This requires agriculture emissions to reduce to between 16 and 18 MT by 2030 – an absolute

reduction of 5-7 MT CO_2 eq. The lower target for the agriculture sector compared to the economy wide target is reflective of the biological nature of food production, particularly for Ireland's livestock based agricultural sector. Measures under the CSP are expected to facilitate a reduction of up to 1.3 MT in agriculture's emissions. These will be complemented by other measures outside the CSP to achieve the overall target reduction of 5-7 MT CO_2 eq by 2030.

There is also a commitment to contribute towards the 4.8MT LULUCF emissions reduction target. Agriculture is expected to deliver a contribution of approximately 2MT towards the achievement of this total, by 2030. Of this 2MT contribution by 2030, the CSP is expected to deliver approximately 1.2MT over the 5-year programme from 2023-2027.

The following actions are contained within Ireland's Climate Action Plan, to be achieved by 2030:

- Increasing our annual afforestation rate consistent with realizing this ambition and achieving carbon neutrality no later than 2050, including promoting forest management initiatives to increase carbon sinks and stores.
- 80,000 ha. of reduced management intensity (water table management) of grasslands on drained organic soils.
- Improving our management for carbon sequestration of at least 450,000 hectares of grasslands on mineral soils.
- Increasing the inclusion of cover crops in tillage to at least 50,000 hectares by 2030.
- Increasing the incorporation of straw to at least 10% of the tillage (cereal) area.

Interventions that contribute to this need and environmental/climate plan include Eco-scheme, the AECM, the Organic Farming Scheme, Protein Aid, the Straw Incorporation Measure, the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Measure and the Capital Investment Scheme. As Obj4.N3 is not addressed in the CSP, actions within the CSP will be complemented by actions outside the CSP.

Legislative instruments referred to in Annex XIII

Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources

Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Ireland's National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030 was prepared in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action to incorporate all planned policies and measures that were identified up to the end of 2019 and which collectively deliver a 30% reduction by 2030 in non-ETS greenhouse gas emissions (from 2005 levels). With Additional Measures (WAM) the NECP commits to a 34.1% share of renewables by 2030.

Ireland's NECP 2021-2030 set its national contribution for energy efficiency in primary energy savings by 2030. According to the WAM scenario trajectories, primary energy consumption equals 13.7 Mtoe and final energy consumption equals 11.2 Mtoe in 2030.

Relationship between the needs identified under this Specific Objective and what appears in the environmental/climate plans

This environmental/climate plan is linked to Obj4.N5.

Obj4.N5 of Ireland's CSP aims to increase energy efficiencies on farm through the uptake of new technologies and facilitate the production and use of renewable energy sources. This need is related to elements within the Directive2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999, Directive 2012/27/EU and Ireland's National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030.

Within Directive (EU) 2018/2001 at least 40% renewables by 2030 at EU level. It is expected that Member States will be asked to propose an indicative national RES target which will contribute to the overall EU RES target in the context of the update of the Member States' National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) in 2023. Ireland's indicative 2030 renewable energy target, as outlined in the NECP, is 34.1%. Although, based on the RES share allocation formula used during the NECP process, the REDIII impact assessment itself suggests an indicative 40% share for Ireland. Furthermore, given Ireland's commitment under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 to reduce GHG emissions by 51% over 2018 – 2030 it is likely that Ireland will need to deliver on a RES share in excess of 40% in order to meet the carbon budgets and sector emissions ceilings that are expected to be established in Irish law in early 2022.

The recently published Climate Action Plan 2021 commits to increasing the share of renewable electricity up to 80% with specific targets as follows:

·1.5 - 2.5GW of grid scale solar capacity

·Up to 8GW of onshore wind capacity

·At least 5GW of offshore wind capacity

Within the Directive 2012/27/EU the specific target is 32.5 % improvement in energy efficiency by 2030 at EU level. Ireland's National Contribution to this target is set out in the NECP and in the Long-Term Renovation Strategy (LTRS).The new National Residential Retrofit Plan was published as part of Climate Action Plan 2021. This is Ireland's plan to retrofit 500,000 homes by 2030, with unprecedented levels of resource commitment. Home retrofits will make an important contribution to meeting Ireland's LTRS, NECP and Energy Efficiency Directive goals.

The Capital Investment Scheme is the only intervention that contributes to this need and environmental/climate plans.

2.1.SO4.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
DPdecoupled	Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare	51ECO - Eco-Scheme	O.8. Number of hectares or of livestock units benefitting from eco-schemes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	INVRE(47(1)(a)) - investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and other actions	52FVPO01 - Investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and analysis/forecasting/coordination	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRANS(47(1)(e)) - actions to increase the sustainability and efficiency of transport and of storage of products	52FVPO05 - Increase sustainability and efficiency of transport and storage of products	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	CLIMA(47(1)(i)) - actions to mitigate and to adapt to climate change	52FVPO09 - Climate change mitigation	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ORCHA(47(2)(d)) - replanting of orchards or olive groves where that is necessary following mandatory grubbing up for health or phytosanitary reasons on the instruction of the Member State competent authority or to adapt to climate change	52FVPO11 - Replanting Orchards	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMCP70 - Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMGEN - AECM General	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53SCEP - Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53SIM - Straw Incorporation Measure	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53AECMNPI - Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure	O.21. Number of supported on-farm non-productive investment operations or units
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53AECMCP77 - AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77	O.32. Number of supported other cooperation operations or units (excluding EIP reported under O.1)
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational group projects

Overview

As referenced in the SWOT analysis, Obj4.W1 states that in Ireland, the highest share of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions comes from agriculture. According to the European Environmental Agency (EEA),

in 2019 agriculture contributed to 40.2% of Ireland's GHG emissions in comparison to 12.7% for the EU-27. As such, the need to reduce GHG emissions receives the highest priority in SO4 and is the main target area of a number of different interventions. On top of all the measures contained within the CSP, Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 is significant piece of legislation that sets out a detailed plan to achieve a 51% reduction in overall GHG emissions by 2030. Contained within this plan are targets for the agricultural sector to reduce their GHG emissions by 22-30%. Whilst the CSP is a vehicle to deliver on these targets, the Climate Action Plan 2021 places legally binding commitments on the sector to deliver on these ambitious targets. This will increase Ireland's focus regarding reducing emissions resulting from agriculture.

The need to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions *(*Obj4.N1*)* will be addressed through a number of interventions. The *Eco-Scheme* provides support to farmers who commit to undertake agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment. Actions such as tree planting, and the limitation of nitrogen use are included in this scheme. The *Organic Farming Scheme* provides support to farmers interested in practicing organic farming methods rather than conventional farming methods, which tend to use a greater number of inputs, such as fertilisers and pesticides. Organic farming systems have greater carbon sequestration potential than conventional ones(Obj4.N2), and thus directly contributes to a reduction in GHG emissions (Obj4.N1).

The *AECM measures* are also designed to address the need to reduce GHG emissions resulting from agriculture. The *AECM General Measure* provides support to farmers who implement certain actions beneficial to the climate, environment and biodiversity, through payments based on costs incurred or income foregone. Actions under the AECM that address Obj4.N1 include but are not limited to Low Input Grassland and Low emission slurry spreading. The *AECM Cooperation measure* provides support to farmers who farm in specific pre-defined areas of high environmental priority to implement bespoke landscape/farm actions. Farmers supported under this measure will receive additional assistance from a Cooperation Project Team to implement such actions. In addition, farmers in the *AECM* will be provided with support for non-productive investments. Non-productive investments play a complementary role in both the *General AECM Measure* and the *Cooperation AECM Measure* in helping to achieve agri-environment and climate objectives; and in enhancing the environmental value of the areas where such investments are supported. Similarly, the *On-Farm Capital Investments Scheme* has provisions for investments in equipment that will allow farmers to reduce the amount of Green House Gas emissions that they produce during their agricultural practices. Examples of such equipment include Low Emission Slurry Spreaders and solar panels. All of the aforementioned measures directly contribute to the reduction in GHG emissions.

Obj4.W4 of the SWOT analysis shows that in Ireland, the dairy herd expansion is faster than mitigation capacity. Since 2010, the total number of dairy cows has increased by just over 40%. Additionally, in 2020 the Environmental protection Agency (EPA) reported that dairy cows emit more methane per head than suckler cows meaning that the growth in the dairy herd poses significant environmental challenges. In response to this Ireland is implementing two interventions that specifically combat this challenge. The *Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme (SCEP)* provides support to farmers who implement certain breeding actions in the beef herd, which aim to lower the overall GHG emissions coming from livestock production. For example, the implementation of breeding indices can be used to enhance genetic traits and increase herd efficiency, allowing for a reduction in methane emissions arising from the national beef herd. The *Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme* aims to improve the welfare of dairy beef cattle through the use of high dairy beef index (DBI) sires in dairy herds. The aim is to improve the beef traits of calves from the dairy herd to facilitate the retention of the calves on the island and integration into local production systems as a preference to live exports from a welfare perspective. A second order effect is of this will lead to a reduction of their impact on the environment. This intervention therefore has the potential to contribute to the reduction in greenhouse gases.

Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector supports the operation of Producer Organisations. POs can advise and support members to take actions to decrease GHG emissions on their farms. In order to receive EU funding, Operational Programmes must contain a minimum of 15% meaning that this intervention has the potential to address Obj4.N1. Finally, *EIPs* provide support for innovative 'bottom-up' projects that focus on addressing environmental, biodiversity and climate challenges, which may include projects concerned with the reduction of GHG emissions, thus directly addressing Obj4.N1.

The need to improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands (Obj4.N2*)* is addressed in similar ways by a number of interventions. The *Eco-Scheme* addresses this need by supporting farmers who undertake agricultural practices that support the maintenance of carbon stores in grasslands and woodlands. As referenced in the SWOT analysis, Obj4.O4 states that extending the grazing season as well as the land that is grazed increases the level of fresh grass consumed, which generates less methane compared to conserved grass, therefore mitigating GHG emissions. Through supporting extensive farming, the *Eco-Scheme* directly addresses Obj4.N2. Additionally, the *Eco-Scheme* supports farmers to sew a multi-species sward, and to lime their soil thus reducing agricultural pressure on grasslands. This directly addresses Obj4.N2. The *AECM General Measure* also addresses this need by providing supports to farmers who implement certain actions beneficial to the climate, such as the planting of hedgerows and low input grassland management. *The AECM Cooperation measure* focuses on areas of higher vulnerability, and supports actions including the management of peatlands. Part of this management is the rewetting of peat soils. As referenced in the SWOT analysis, Obj4.O7 states that maintaining moisture levels in peat-rich soils is an important measure to protect existing carbon stores in the soil from oxidation (loss as CO2). As such, the *AECM Cooperation* directly address Obj4.N2.

The *Straw Incorporation Measure* requires farmers to chop straw and incorporate it into their soil at the time of harvest which will sequester carbon in tillage soils *(*Obj4.N2*)*. As referenced in the SWOT analysis, Obj4.O21 outlines research that shows that the incorporation of straw in tillage soils allows for organic matter to be directly inputted back into soils, therefore increasing its Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) content. The research found that for every 4 tonnes of 15-20 straw incorporated over a period of years, there was a corresponding 7-17% increase in SOC in the top 15cm of that soil (depending on whether reduced tillage was also applied).

Obj4.N3, the need to increase the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland's forests and woodlands is not addressed by any of the interventions contained in the CSP. There are a number of initiatives and measures outside of the CSP that contribute to addressing this need. These include the Afforestation Grant and Premium Scheme, the Native Woodland Conservation Scheme, the Irish Forestry Board Forestry Programme, the 'Fit Forests' scheme and the Farm Carbon Project. Details are outline in section 2.1.2.

EIPs address Obj4.N2 through the dissemination of knowledge. *EIP*'s provide support to local action groups to come up with innovative solutions to climate related problems, including ways to appropriately manage existing carbon stores, such as peatlands. This intervention also addresses climate adaptation issues (Obj4.N4) and the production of renewable energy (Obj4.N5) in the same manner. Topics relating to environmental, biodiversity, and climate change challenges are the focus of stream B of the EIP intervention, which receives the majority of the financial allocation for the EIP intervention as a whole. This means that these needs which are of a high priority are attributed substantial resources in order for them to be comprehensively addressed.

The need to encourage climate adaptation (Obj4.N4*)* is directly addressed by the *Eco-Schemes* and *AECM* measures. The *Eco-Schemes* provides supports to farmers who undertake specific agricultural practices, including extensive farming, tree planting, sewing a multi-species sward, and enhancing crop diversification. As referenced in the SWOT analysis, Obj4.O24 states that nature-based solutions can be very effective in enhancing climate adaptation. As such, the practices supported under the *Eco-Scheme*

reduce agricultural pressure on land, and improve soil quality and structure, making the soil more resilient to extreme weather events such as flooding. The *AECM Cooperation Measure* prioritises areas of vulnerability, and provides support for bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures beneficial to the climate and environment. One of the objectives of the scheme is to provide support to farmers through a local Cooperation Project Team to help improve their understanding of climate change, allowing them to make informed decisions about climate adaptation on their farms, thus directly addressing Obj4.N4. In addition, *Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector* will facilitate farmers receiving advice in the area of climate adaptation via PO membership. Moreover, 15% of EU funding provided to POs must contribute to climate and environmental related needs. As such, this intervention has the potential to contribute to Obj4.N4. One of the indicative themes under Ireland's LEADER programme is "Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation". Therefore, this intervention has the potential to address Obj4.N4.

The *On Farm Capital Investment Scheme* provides support for investments in technologies and equipment including rainwater harvesting and storage equipment, solar panels and heat recovery units, thereby addressing the need to encourage climate adaptation (Obj4.N4*)*. It also addresses the need to increase energy efficiencies on farm through the uptake of new technologies and to facilitate the production and use of renewable energy sources (Obj4.N5) through support for investments in renewable energies on farm, such as solar panels. *Non-Productive Investments for the AECM* also provide support for investments that contribute to addressing climate change and environmental related challenges. Actions that are given investment support include the planting of trees as well as the rejuvenation, coppicing and laying of new hedgerows. These actions provide more carbon stores and vegetation thus helping to reduce GHG emissions resulting from agriculture as well the need to encourage climate adaptation. As such Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2 and Obj4.N4 are addressed by this intervention.

Finally, through support under *Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector*, POs will provide members with advice and information regarding the uptake and use of new technologies thereby having the potential to contribute to Obj4.N5.

2.1.SO4.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO4.7 Are you planning CAP contribution towards the LIFE programme (only for SO4, SO5, SO6) : **No**

2.1.SO4.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	**Target value**
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables - Concentration of supply Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors	72.18 %
R.12 - Adaptation to climate change Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to improve climate adaptation	4.76 %
R.14 PR - Carbon storage in soils and biomass Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)	8.88 %
R.15 CU - Renewable energy from agriculture and forestry and from other renewable sources Supported investments in renewable energy production capacity, including bio-based (in MW)	25.54 MW

R.16 CU - Investments related to climate Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to the production of renewable energy or biomaterials	15.05 %
R.19 PR - Improving and protecting soils Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)	10.61 %
R.22 PR - Sustainable nutrient management Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management	42.44 %
R.24 PR - Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage	7.45 %
R.28 CU - Environmental or climate-related performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance	234,898.00
R.29 PR - Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	7.46 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.12 Climate Change Adaptation

Within SO4, the *AECM General Measure*, *AECM Cooperation Measure* and the *Eco Scheme* contribute to the target value for R.12. The total target value is 4.76% which is the number of hectares paid under supported commitments for encouraging climate change adaptation. All of the interventions contribute to addressing Obj4.N4 (climate change adaptation).

The target values for the *AECM measures* are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support climate change adaptation. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.12 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include catch crops, minimum tillage, coppicing, laying and planting of new hedgerows and planting a grove of native trees.

The Eco-Scheme contribution to R.12 is 215,232 hectares. This figure assumes that 78,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 1 (AP1), preserving landscape features, and 39,000 farmers will undertake the enhanced option under AP1. The regular option requires beneficiaries to have 7% of their farm attributed to non-productive activity; the enhanced option requires farmers to have a further 3% of their farm attributed to non-productive activity (total of 10%). Assuming the average farm size of 32 hectares, AP1 and AP1 (enhanced) contributes 212,160 hectares to the target value.

The calculation of the target value also assumes that 10,000 farmers will undertake AP4, planting of native trees and hedgerows, and that a further 10,000 farmers will undertake the enhanced option under AP4. The regular option requires farmers to plant three trees per hectare and the enhanced option requires farmers to plant six trees per hectare. Assuming the average farm size of 32 hectares, AP4 and AP4 (enhanced) contributes 1,152 hectares to the target value.

Finally, the calculation of the value target also assumes that 1000 farmers undertake AP8 (sowing a multi-species sward). Assuming the average farm size of 32 hectares, AP8 contributes 1,920 hectares to the target. As such the total area covered under all of the AP's is 215,232 hectares. See table SO4.1 for a total percentage of UAA under supported commitments per intervention.

Table SO4.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
	Eco -Scheme	0	215,232	215,232	215,232	215,232	215,232	0
	AECM (General)	20,800	20,800	20,800	20,800	20,800	0	0
	AECM (Co-op)	90626	181253	181253	181,253	181,253	0	0
R.12	**Total annual**	111,426	417,285	417,285	417,285	417,285	0	0
	Total hectares without DC	111,426	215,232	215,232	215,232	215,232	215,232	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.22)	**2.46%**	**4.76%**	**4.76%**	**4.76%**	**4.76%**	**4.76%**	**0.00%**

R.14 Carbon Storage in Soils and Biomass

Within SO4, the *AECM General Measure*, *AECM Cooperation Measure*, *Coupled Income Support for Protein Aid*, the *Organic Farming Scheme*, *the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme (SCEP)* and the *Straw Incorporation Measure* all contribute to R.14. The total target value is 8.88% which is the numbers of hectares paid under the various schemes expressed a percentage of the total UAA.

Both the *AECM General and Cooperation measures* contribute to addressing Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2, and Obj4.N3 through their contribution of the target value for R.14.

The target values for the *AECM measures* are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support carbon storage in soils and biomass. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.14 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include planting trees, extensively grazed permanent pasture, Brassica fodder crop, Green Manure, Low input grassland, planting new hedgerows, minimum tillage, field margins, fallow land, low input peat grassland.

For example, the minimum tillage action, which includes the technique of direct drilling (i.e. the crop must be sown without inverting the soil), reduces the GHG emissions that are associated with conventional ploughing actions as less fuel is required to carry it out. This directly addresses Obj4.N1. The tree planting action encourages the planting of tree onto farms where they would not otherwise be planted. Trees sequester carbon meaning that the carbon stores on Irish farm are improved by this action. As such, Obj4.N2 is directly addressed.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance). This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming.

The Straw Incorporation Measure will contribute to Obj4.N2 (improving the protection and maintenance of carbon stores) through its contribution to R.14. The contribution of this intervention to the target value is projected based on experience when the pilot scheme in the transitional period of the RDP.

The *SCEP* will contribute is 256,667 has to the total target value for R.14. A co-efficient of 1.2 LU/ha is used in order to convert the number of "reference animals" into the number of hectares eligible for the scheme. These will be the “reference hectares” for payment under the BDGP in each of the years of the Programme. The "reference hectares" remain stable throughout the scheme. A farmer who has a number of hectares in his/her possession which is inferior to the number of "reference hectares" calculated, will still be eligible for participation in the scheme, but will only receive payment for the number of hectares he/she actually possesses. These projections are based on a reasonable expectation of uptake considering

the current uptake of the existing Beef Data and Genomics programme and the budget allocation for the proposed programme. Actions taken under this scheme will make farmers more efficient in the manner in which they breed and raise suckler cows, thus contributing to the reduction of Green House Gas emissions such as methane resulting from agriculture (Obj4.N1).

In order to avoid double counting, the area under SCEP and the OFS are not included in the target value. As an exception, in 2024, the area under the SCEP is slightly larger than the area under AECM and SIM combined and is thus the target value for that year. See table SO4.2 for total percentage of UAA under supported commitments per intervention.

Table SO4.2

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.14	AECM (General)	0	137,257	205,885	205,885	205,885	205,885	68,628
	AECM (Co-op)	0	77,947	155,895	155,895	155,895	155,895	77,947
	SIM	0	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	0
	SCEP		256,667	256,667	256,667	256,667	256,667	
	OFS		102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	
	Total annual values	0	256,667	401,780	401,780	401,780	401,780	146,575
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**5.67%**	**8.88%**	**8.88%**	**8.88%**	**8.88%**	**3.24%**

R.15 Renewable energy from agriculture, forestry and from other renewable sources

Within SO4 the *On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS*) is the only intervention that contributes to R.15. The total target value for this indicator is 25.5 Megawatts which is a cumulative value accruing across the programming period. . The OFCIS addresses Obj4.N1 (reducing GHG emissions resulting from agriculture), Obj4.N4 (encouraging climate adaptation), and Obj4.N5 (increasing energy efficiencies on farm through the uptake of renewable energy resources) through the achievement of the target value for this indicator, due to the resulting increased production in renewable energy.

Estimates for the target value are based on experiences of TAMS II (the equivalent intervention in the previous programming period). A total of 1,250 investments altogether which is expected to result in the production of 25.5 Megawatts of renewable energy. See table SO4.3 for megawatts produced per year.

Table SO4.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.15	OFCIS	0.30	1.64	1.80	11.00	10.80		
	Total annual	**0.30**	**1.64**	**1.80**	**11.00**	**10.80**	**0.00**	**0.00**
	Total cumulated	**0.30**	**1.94**	**3.74**	**14.74**	**25.54**	**25.54**	**25.54**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**

R.16 Investments related to climate

Within SO4, *Non-Productive Investments for the AECM* and the *OFCIS* contribute to R.16. The total target value is 15.05%, which is the number of farms receiving relevant support expressed as a percentage

of the total number of farms. This value is cumulative meaning that the percentage reflects the accrued proportion of farms covered under the schemes over the course of the programming period.

Non-Productive Investments for the AECM contributes to Obj4.N1 (reducing GHG emissions resulting from agriculture), Obj4.N2 (Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands) and Obj4.N4 (encourage Climate Adaptation) through its contribution to R.16. The total number of farms receiving support for non-productive investments under the AECM NPI, captured under R.16 is 15,400 (non-cumulated). This interventions contribution to the target value is based on the estimated uptake of proposed actions, based on the uptake of comparable actions in GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.16 are Planting trees, Planting hedgerows, Traditional orchards, Riparian margins, trees belts. These actions both mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon but are also related to adaptation as more trees/hedgerows in the landscape create nature corridors and help regulate flood events and offer animals more shelter for extremes of weather conditions such as heat waves.

The *OFCIS* contributes to Obj4.N1 (reducing GHG emissions resulting from agriculture) and Obj4.N5 (increased energy efficiencies on farm through the uptake of new technologies) through its contribution to R.16. It does so through the provision of grant aid on investments for technologies and equipment such as solar panels and Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) equipment. The projections for this interventions contribution to the target value are based on the uptake of investments under TAMS II of the 2014-2020 RDP and it is estimated that approximately 5,000 farms will contribute to the target value. See table SO4.4 for total number of farms receiving support per intervention.

Table SO4.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.16	AECM NPI (General)	0	4,000	6,000	0	0	0	0
	AECM NPI (Cooperation)	0	2,000	2,000	1,000	300	100	0
	OFCIS	60	285	360	2,290	2,305	0	0
	Total annual	**60**	**6285**	**8360**	**3290**	**2605**	**100**	**0**
	Total cumulated	**60**	**6345**	**14705**	**17995**	**20600**	**20700**	**20700**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.00%**	**0.00%**	**0.00%**	**1.66%**	**3.34%**	**15.05%**	**15.05%**

R.19: Improving and protecting soils

Within SO4, the *AECM (both the AECM General Measure and the AECM Cooperation Measure*), *Eco Schemes, the Organic Farming Scheme* and the *Straw Incorporation Measure* are the only interventions contributing to R.19. The total target value set for this indicator is 10.61% which is the number of hectares paid under the scheme, expressed as a percentage of the total UAA. Both the AECM General and Cooperation measures contribute to Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2, and Obj4.N3 through the achievement of the target value for R.19. Only the AECM Cooperation Measure however contributes to addressing Obj4.N4 (encouraging Climate Adaptation), as this measure targets predefined priority areas that are more susceptible to adverse impacts of climate change. The SIM contributes to addressing Obj4.N2. The Eco-Scheme contributes 480,000 hectares, AECM General contributes 165,810 hectares, the AECM Cooperation contributes 155,942 hectares, and SIM contribute 40,000 hectares to the total target value of R.19. The SIM and the AECM area is not included in the target value due to double counting with the area under Eco-Scheme.

The target values for AECM each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in soil health. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.19 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, extensively grazed permanent pasture, Brassica

fodder crop, Green manure, Low input grassland, Planting a new hedge, Minimum tillage, Field margins and lastly, Fallowing land. See table SO4.4 for total percentage of UAA under supported commitments per intervention.

For example, the AECM action of environmental management of arable fallow encourages leaving a fallow each spring. Moreover, the action requires a cover crop to be sown in the autumn to absorb residual nutrients. This protects the quality of the soil which will require fewer fertilisers the following year for the same yield as well as encouraging more extensive farming due to the field not being farmed. As such, this action addresses Obj4.N1.

The AECM action brassica fodder crops encourages farmers to plant this crop produce an abundance of herbage in a relatively short period of time. This assists with the suppression of weeds while also protecting soil aggregates from heavy deluges during winter. With greater soil quality, there is more fertility in the soils which promotes the growth of crops and crops and trees, both of which are carbon stores. As such, Obj4.N2 is addressed.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance). This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming.

The eco-scheme contribution to R.19 is 480,000 hectares. This figure assumes that 5,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 5 (Use of GPS Controlled Fertiliser Spreader) to spread fertiliser. It is further estimated that 1,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 7 (Growing a Break Crop), 1000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 8 (Sowing a multi-species sward) and 8,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 6 (Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming). It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 60,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 15,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 480,000 hectares. Some farmers may choose to do more than one of these measures, but for this calculation they have only been counted once. Considering the potential for double counting between interventions, the numerator value used for R.19 is the total area under eco-schemes See table SO4.5 for total hectares per intervention.

Table SO4.5

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.19	Eco Scheme	0	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	0
	AECM (General	0	110,540	165,810	165,810	165,810	165,810	55,270
	AECM (Cooperation)	0	77,971	155,942	155,942	155,942	155,942	77,971
	Organic Farming Scheme	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	
	SIM		40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
	Total annual	0	811,387	974,451	1,016,914	1,077,346	1,178,653	173,241
	Total Annual (without double counting)	0	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	173,241
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**3.83%**

R.22: Sustainable Nutrient Management

Within SO4, the *AECM* and the *Eco-Scheme* contribute to R.22. The total target value set for this indicator is 42.44% which is the number of hectares paid, expressed as a percentage of the total UAA. The Eco-Scheme's contribution to R.22 is 1,920,000 hectares. The *AECM General* contribution to R.22 is 180,810 hectares and the *AECM Cooperation* contribution is 155,942 hectares. Considering the potential

for double counting between interventions, the numerator value used for R.22 is the total area under the *Eco-Scheme*. The numerator value for 2029 is the total area with supported commitments under *AECM*, as the *Eco-Scheme* is not programmed in these years. See table SO4.5 for total hectares under supported commitments per intervention.

For the *AECM*, target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in water quality and soil health. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.22 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, Brassica fodder crop, Green manure, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture, Planting new hedgerows, Minimum tillage, Field margins, Fallow land and Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS).

For example, Low Emissions slurry spreader action requires farmers to apply slurry by one, or a combination of, band spreading, injection systems or trailing shoe techniques. These techniques more efficiently manage the application of fertiliser than conventional techniques which in turn reduces nitrous oxide, ammonia, and other emissions. As such the need to reduce GHG emissions from agriculture (Obj4.N1) is addressed.

Additionally, a requirement of the AECM is to take soil samples as part of the Farm Sustainability Plan which will allow farmers to see where they need to improve their nutrient management, and implement the necessary actions to achieve the target.

The *Eco-Scheme* target of 1,920,000 hectares assumes that 45,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 3 (Limiting Chemical Nitrogen) and 5,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 5 (Use of GPS Controlled Fertiliser Spreader) to spread fertiliser. It is further estimated that 1,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 7 (Growing a Break Crop), 1000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 8 (Sowing a multi-species sward) and 8,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 6 (Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming). It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 60,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 60,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 1,920,000 hectares. Some farmers may choose to do more than one of these measures, but for this calculation they have only been counted once.

Table SO4.6

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.22	Eco -Scheme	0	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	0
	AECM (General)	0	120,540	180,810	180,810	180,810	180,810	60,270
	AECM (Co-op)	0	77,971	155,942	155,942	155,942	155,942	77,971
	Total annual	0	2,118,511	2,256,752	2,256,752	2,256,752	2,256,752	138,241
	Total hectares without DC	0	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	138,241
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.22)	**0.00%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**3.06%**

R.24 Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides

The *AECM General and Cooperation measures* and the Organic Farming Scheme contribute to addressing Obj4.N1 through the achievement of the target value for R.24. The total target value for R.24 is 7.45%.

AECM General's contribution is 141,330 hectares and *AECM Cooperation's* contributions is 123,656 hectares. The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in the sustainable and reduced use of pesticides. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.24 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: field margins, low input grassland and extensively grazed permanent pasture.

For example, the AECM action of extensively grazed permanent pasture restricts fertiliser inputs and forbids the use of pesticides and herbicides except to spot treat or weed wipe to control nettles or other invasive non-native species. Considering the application of herbicides and pesticides can lead to surplus chemicals leaking into the atmosphere, the need to reduce GHG emissions resulting from agriculture (Obj4.N1) is met.

For AECM Cooperation Groups, farmers and advisors will develop their Farm Sustainability Plan based on a Local Action Plan which identifies priorities within the cooperation area, including threats from the overuse of pesticides. As such, the actions contributing to this indicator will be effectively targeted to meet their respective targets.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO4.7 for a summary of the interventions that contribute to this indicator.

Table SO4.7

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.24	OFS (Conversion)	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS (Maintenance)	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	AECM (General)	0	94,220	141,330	141,330	141,330	141,330	47,110
	AECM (Co-op)	0	61,828	123,656	123,656	123,656	123,656	61,828
	Total hectares without double counting	0	156,048	264,986	264,986	264,986	336,901	108,938
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.24)	**0.00%**	**3.45%**	**5.86%**	**5.86%**	**5.86%**	**7.45%**	**2.41%**

R.28*: *Environmental/climate performance through knowledge and innovation

Within SO4, *Support for Cooperation Groups within the AECM under Article 77* (hereafter AECM Article 77) and stream B of European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) contribute to R.28. The total target value for this indicator is 234,898, being the amount of people who have received training or support under any of the interventions that contribute to R.28. *Training to implement the AECM* and *Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme* also contribute to R.28 but do not address the needs identified under *Obj4.* The target value is cumulative meaning that it reflects the total amount of people supported across the entire programming period and is representative of all the schemes combined. The cumulative target value for *AECM Article 77* is 100,000 people and the cumulative target value for stream B of *EIPs is* 7,500 people.

AECM Article 77 complements the AECM Cooperation Measure by providing administrative support for the creation and maintenance of local action groups that carry out projects that have climate, environmental or biodiversity benefits. As such, it contributes to addressing the same needs as the Cooperation Measure (Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2, and Obj4.N4) through its facilitation of this intervention, and its enhancing of knowledge and innovation in the relevant areas. There are 8 cooperation projects planned that will cover approximately 10,000 farmers in 2024 and 2029, and 20,000 farmers between 2025-2028. This figure is based on experiences in the previous programming period.

EIPs supported under stream B, focus on projects aimed at addressing challenges related to the climate, environment and biodiversity. Support for innovation projects contributes to each of the needs identified under SO4, apart from the need to increase the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland's forests and woodlands, which is not addressed by any of the intervention contained in the CSP. See table SO4.8 for the number of trainings delivered per intervention.

Table SO4.8

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.28	EIPs stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM - Art. 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	Total annual	17,500	55,750	62,090	40,200	27,108	21,500	10,750
	Totals cumulative	**17,500**	**73,250**	**135,340**	**175,540**	**202,648**	**224,148**	**234,898**

R.29: Development of Organic Agriculture

The Organic Farming Scheme is the only intervention that contributes to this result indicator. This result indicator is quantified by the number hectares paid under the scheme, expressed as a percentage of the total number of farmers in Ireland. The total target set for R.29 is 7.45%. This is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming.

The target for R.29 is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO4.8 for total hectares of UAA 'in conversion' to organic farming and total hectares organic UAA 'in maintenance'. Seeing as organic farming systems have greater carbon sequestrations potential than conventional farming systems, the need to reduce Green House Gas emissions resulting from agriculture (Obj4.N1) is addressed.

Table SO4.9

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.29	OFS - Conversion	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS - Maintenance	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	Total annual	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**2.27%**	**2.93%**	**3.87%**	**5.21%**	**7.45%**	**0.00%**

R.11: Concentration of supply

Within SO4, Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector has the potential to address Obj4.N1 (Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture). Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector is the single intervention contributing to R.11. The total target value set for R.11 is 72.18%. In calculating 72.18%, it is anticipated that the combined VMP of all Irish fruit and vegetable POs will stay flat after 2023, against a fruit and vegetable sector forecast at 2% growth year on year. See table SO3.2 below.

Table SO4.10

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
R.11	Total value of marketed production	221,424,934	225,853,433	230,370,501	234,977,912	239,677,470
	Total value of production of the sectors concerned	306,777,192	312,912,736	319,170,991	325,554,411	332,065,499
	Totals annual values	**72%**	**72%**	**72%**	**72%**	**72%**

2.1.SO4.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will directly contribute to achieving the needs identified under SO4. Obj4.N3 is not addressed by the CSP.

- All the needs (i.e., Obj4.N1 – Obj4.N5, excluding Obj4.N3) are addressed by the Eco-Scheme, AECM General, AECM Cooperation (including support provided under Art.77 of the CSP regulation) and
- Obj4.N1 and Obj4.N2 are also addressed by the OFS and the Straw Incorporation Measure
- Obj4.N4 is also addressed by Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable sector, EIPs and OFCIS
- Obj4.N5 is also addressed by AECM Training, OFCIS, and Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector

AECM General Measure

The annual planned outputs under the *AECM General Measure* are based on the uptake of comparable actions in the agri-environmental climate measure in Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. The AECM Measures (General and Cooperation) will directly assist in reducing Green House Gas emissions resulting from agriculture (Obj4.N1), improving the protection and management of existing carbon stores (Obj4.N2), and in encouraging climate adaptation (Obj4.N4). The total financial allocation of €610 million for the General measure is adequate to achieve the target of:

4.76 % of UAA under supported commitments to encourage climate change adaptation (R.12) (as per table SO4.1)

8.88 % of UAA under supported commitments to reduce emissions, maintain and/or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland) (R.14) (as per Table SO4.2)

10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (as per table SO4.5)

7.45% of Utilised UAA under supported commitments beneficial for the reduced and sustainable use of pesticides (R.24, see SO4.7).

AECM Cooperation Measure

Support under this measure will be provided in the form of results-based payments which are designed to ensure that farmers are appropriately incentivised to improve the landscapes and catchments within which they farm. Payments will reflect the quality of the results achieved, i.e. The higher the result, the higher the payment. Fixed eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of the CSP Regulation. Works on lands which are difficult to access can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. This intervention addresses all the needs in SO4 and the total financial allocation of €460m is adequate to achieve the targets of:

4.76 % of UAA under supported commitments to encourage climate change adaptation (R.12) (as per table SO4.1)

8.88% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions, maintain and/or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland) (R.14) (as per Table SO4.2)

10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (as per Table SO4.5)

7.45% of Utilised UAA under supported commitments beneficial for the reduced and sustainable use of pesticides (R.24, see SO4.7).

AECM Article 77

The exact funding for each co-operation project will be dependent on the number of participants and the scale of the projects and ambition. An annual indicative budget allocation of €50m is set aside to cover the costs of running the co-operation projects and the landscape actions. It is expected that the Community Fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions could be €160m over the programme or approximately €20m for each of the 8 co-operation projects. The eight Co-operation Projects (CP) will work with DAFM in designing and implementing co-operation projects. As this intervention relates directly to the AECM Cooperation measure, it also contributes to addressing all the needs in SO4. The indicative budget allocation of €210m is adequate to support the R.28 cumulative target of 234,898 farmers in the most sensitive and challenging lands in the country (as per Table SO4.8).

Non-Productive Investments for the AECM

This is an investment support measure which is integrated within the *AECM* and provided for in accordance with Article 70 of the CSP Regulations. Support will be paid as part of the payment for the relevant actions under the *AECM* where the cost for the non-productive investment element will be in line with Article 70 of the CSP regulations. As such, this intervention complements the *AECM General*, and the *AECM Cooperation* interventions by providing the instrument through which beneficiaries can access finance required to carry out actions under the *AECM* interventions. The total indicative financial allocation is €140m for actions relating the *AECM General Option*, and €80m for actions relating to AECM Cooperation Option. The non-productive investments are linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives such as those included in SO4, namely Ob4.N1, Obj4.N2, and Onj4.N4.

The total financial allocation of €220m is adequate to achieve the target of 15.05% of farms benefiting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change, mitigation, and adaptation, and to renewable energy or biomaterials production (R.16) (as per Table SO4.4).

Straw Incorporation Measure

The support rate will be by way of annual area-based payment per hectare, where the per hectare payment is a uniform rate of €250 per hectare for cereal crops and a rate of €150 per hectare for oilseed rape. The support payment will compensate the farmer for the additional cost of the chopping, spreading and incorporation of straw into the soil. Having straw incorporated into soil over this area coverage will contribute to improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores (Obj4.N2). The total indicative financial allocation for this intervention is €50m over the programming period, and €10m annually will allow the intervention to achieve the target of:

8.88% of UAA under R.14 (see table SO4.2).

8.00% of UAA under R.19 (see Table SO4.5)

Organic Farming Scheme

Support under this scheme is provided based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer farming on a similar land area. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred. Supports vary based on whether beneficiaries are converting to organic practices or maintaining organic practices. It also varies based on whether the farming is dry stock, dairy, tillage, or horticulture. Organic farming has a number of beneficial environmental impacts which includes the reduction of GHG emission and improving the protection and management of existing carbon stores meaning that Obj4.N1 and Obj4.N2 are met. The total financial allocation of €256 million is adequate to achieve the target of:

7.45% of total UAA under (R.14, see table SO4.2)
7.45% of total UAA under (R.19, see table SO4.3)
7.45% of total UAA under (R.24, see table SO4.7)
74.5% of total UAA under (R.29, see table SO4.9)

Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme

This intervention supports farmers to carry out specific actions that will increase the environmental sustainability of the beef sector in Ireland, thereby addressing the need to reduce GHG emissions, as set

out in the Needs Assessment under SO4. In recognition of the higher marginal transaction costs for smaller holdings, it is proposed to frontload payments to the first 10 animals per herd. The total financial allocation of €256m is adequate achieve 6.46% of Livestock Units (LU) under support to reduce GHG emissions and/or ammonia, including manure management (R.13).

On-farm Capital Investment

The total financial allocation for the scheme is €100,000,000, and funding will be provided on a case-by-case basis where applicants meet the criteria to be eligible for support. Grants are provided for farmers wishing to invest in either productive or non-productive technologies and or equipment. These grants are awarded on a tiered basis depending on the category of farmer applying. The highest rate of subsidy for example is 60% of the original investment and that is awarded to young farmers and female farmers. Organic farmers are awarded a 50% subsidy of the original investment and the standard rate is 40% of the original investment. Seeing as organic farming contributes to reducing GHG emissions, and that organic farmers are supported at a higher rate, Obj4.N1 is addressed through this intervention. The intervention also supports investments that allow farmers to acquire technologies and equipment that increases their efficiencies and climate adaptation potential thus addressing Obj4.N4 and Obj4.N5. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €100 million is sufficient to achieve the targets of:

- investments that will generate 25.45 Megawatts in renewable energy production capacity, including bio-based (R.15) (as per Table SO4.3)
- 15.05% of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to renewable energy or biomaterials production (R.16) (as per Table SO4.4)

EIPs

The total financial allocation proposed for this scheme is €36.12m with €32.1m of this being attributed to Stream B. Support under this scheme will be provided for ‘bottom-up’ innovative projects in a range of areas aimed at addressing environmental, biodiversity and climate change challenges. Funding will be provided to projects approved by an expert evaluation committee and will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the development of detailed Operational Group Plans, not exceeding €10,000. As there is potential for support to be provided for ‘bottom-up’, innovative projects that contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, all the needs under SO4 are met except for the need to increase the carbon sequestration potential of Irelands forests and woodlands (Obj4.N4) which is not addressed by schemes contained in the CSP. The total financial allocation for the scheme of is adequate to achieve the target of 234,898 farmers in receipt of training, advice or knowledge exchange relating to environmental or climate related performance (R.28). See table SO4.8 above.

Eco-Scheme

The total Eco-Scheme budget has been ring fenced at 25% of Ireland’s Direct Payments allocation. The total indicative financial allocation of €1.48 billion over the period 2023-2027.

The rates of payment will vary depending on uptake of the eco-scheme. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), then the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (minimum rate of payment). If uptake is only half of that (i.e., c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, then the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 (maximum rate of payment).

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 (planned rate of payment). This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme, figures subject to rounding. Support provided under the eco-scheme will assist in directly addressing all the of needs in SO4 except for Obj4.N3 and Obj4.N5. The total financial allocation of €1.48 billion is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 42.44% of UAA under commitments related to improved nutrient management (R.22) (as per Table SO4.6)
- 7.45% of UAA supported by specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticides leakage (R24) (as per Table SO4.7)
- 10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (as per table SO4.5)

Sectoral Intervention Fruit and Veg Sector:

The total indicative allocation of €44m between 2023-2027 is justified on the basis that the existing 4 POs remain in the scheme with 1 new entrant. Support provided under this scheme has the potential to address the need to reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture (Obj4.N1) and the need to develop. The financial allocation is adequate to support 72.18% of the value of marketed production by sectoral Producer Organisations or Producer Groups with operational programmes (R.11), as per Table SO4.10.

2.1.SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency

2.1.SO5.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO5.1.1 Strengths

Obj5.S1: High mean organic carbon under all land cover types
Oj5.S2: High % farms with extensive stocking rate
Obj5.S3**:** Legislative framework and strong policy framework in place
Obj5.S4**:** Strong engagement of industry and advisors to improve water quality
Obj5.S5: Ireland typically has ample supply of water
Obj5.S6: High % of land under agri-environment-climate commitments
Obj5.S7: Low % of sealed soils (built environment)
Obj5.S8: Significant national cover of hedgerows and individual trees.
Obj5.S9: Peatlands cover over 20% of Ireland's area
Obj5.S10: Limited soil erosion by water

2.1.SO5.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj5.W1: Increase in livestock numbers
Obj5.W2**:** Increase in chemical fertiliser sales
Obj5.W3: Agricultural activity and forestry negatively impacting on water quality
Obj5.W4**:** Increasing area under Nitrates derogation
Obj5.W5: Sub-optimal soil fertility
Obj5.W6**:** Ongoing drainage of organic soils (grasslands and wetlands)
Obj5.W7: Ongoing degradation of peatlands
Obj5.W8: Low level of sustainably managed forest cover
Obj5.W9: Ammonia emissions in breach of targets set
Obj5.W10: Lack of appropriate mechanisms and indicators to monitor impacts of agri-environment schemes

2.1.SO5.1.3 Opportunities

Obj5.O1: Improve water quality and implement catchment-based approach
Obj5.O2: Build on strong engagement of industry and advisors to improve water quality
Obj5.O3: Improve land management including grassland management and soil fertility
Obj5.O4: Encourage straw incorporation by tillage farmers in order to increase soil quality
Obj5.O5: Increase numbers in sustainable farming systems such as organic farming
Obj5.O6: More efficient use of fertilisers thereby reducing nitrogen and ammonia emissions
Obj5.O7**:** Improve on-farm slurry storage and management
Obj5.O8: Better management of peatlands
Obj5.O9: Make further efficiency gains through the roll-out of agri-digitalisation, smart farming and precision farming technology
Obj5.O10:Foster a greater understanding of climate change and environmental issues at farm level through education
Obj5.O11: Increase afforestation and agroforestry
Obj5.O12: Encourage a whole of farm approach to link economic and environmental sustainability

2.1.SO5.1.4 Threats

Obj5.T1: Further deterioration in water quality Obj5.T2: Continuing failure to meet Ammonia emissions targets Obj5.T3: Inappropriate management practices threaten the functionality, fertility and the carbon content of Irish soil Obj5.T4: Low profitability and low average farm size of beef and sheep sectors could reduce the adoption of environmentally friendly practices Obj4.T5: Slowdown in generational renewal could affect uptake of climate appropriate practices Obj4.T6: Changes in soil/air temperatures, rainfall patterns and an increase in extreme climatic events

2.1.SO5.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO5.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes

2.1.SO5.3 Identification of the relevant (elements of) national plans emanating from the legislative instruments referred to in Annex XI of the CAP plan Regulation that have been taken into account in the CAP plans' needs assessment for this specific objective

Legislative instruments referred to in Annex XIII

Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe

Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Directive 2008/50/EC and Directive (EU) 2016/2284 provide the legal framework for the EU's air policy. Ammonia targets are accounted for under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 and are the most relevant for agriculture.

The National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP) 2021 was mandated under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 (NEC Directive). The format of the NAPCP is set down by the European Commission in implementing decision (EU) 2018/1522. The NAPCP is a technical document which outlines the pathway Ireland will follow to achieve compliance with its commitments under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 including in relation to ammonia from agriculture. Ireland is not anticipating any sustained exceedances of EU ambient air pollution limits into the future.

The with additional measures (WAM) scenario for ammonia emissions incorporates the Teagasc GHG MACC as it was included in Ireland's 2019 Climate Action Plan. It does not include the latest Teagasc Ammonia MACC measures (published September 2020) but expects these to deliver the additional cumulative abatement required to achieve compliance within the 2021 official projections. The 2021 official projections WAM scenario included the latest measures within the Teagasc Ammonia MACC and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Roadmap towards Climate Neutrality "Ag Climatise" which predict compliance with the 2020 emission reduction target in 2022, while compliance with the 2030 emission reduction target is also projected.

In addition, since the submission of the NAPCP and publication of the 2021 official projections, additional measures have been identified and included in the update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 (published November 2021). The full impact of all these measures on current and projected ammonia emissions have not yet been incorporated into the national emissions inventory and projections report, but this will be completed in early 2022.

Relationship between the needs identified under this Specific Objective and what appears in the environmental/climate plans

This environmental/climate plan is linked to Obj5.N1.

Obj5.N1 of Ireland's CSP aims to improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly ammonia. This need is related to the Directive 2008/50/EC and Directive (EU) 2016/2284 and The National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP) 2021.

The Key Metrics within Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 contributing to ammonia abatement include reducing chemical nitrogen use on farms, replacing 65% of Calcium Ammonium Nitrate with protected urea, achieving 90% uptake of Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS), improving animal breeding, reducing crude protein levels in livestock diets, reducing average bovine age of slaughter from 27 months to 24 months, and increasing the area farmed organically to 350,000 hectares.

Interventions that contribute to this need and environmental/climate plan include Eco-scheme, the AECM, the Organic Farming Scheme and the Capital Investment Scheme.

Legislative instruments referred to in Annex XIII

Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy

Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Ireland supports the delivery of Directive 2000/60/EC through various mechanisms. Through the implementation of the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and Nitrates Regulations (SI 605/2017) as amended, there is a robust Nitrates Action Programme relating to agriculture which provides for the protection of waters against pollution caused by agricultural sources. This programme is central to meeting Water Framework Directive targets. The current Nitrates Action Programme (2018-2021) has been amended to provide policy direction for the protection and stabilisation of water quality.

The fourth review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is currently on going. When it concludes it will ensure a significant contribution to the Water Framework Directive targets.

Relationship between the needs identified under this Specific Objective and what appears in the environmental/climate plans

This environmental/climate plan is linked to Obj5.N2.

Obj5.N2 of Irelands CSP aims to protect and improve water quality and is directly related to aims of Directive 2000/60/EC and he Nitrates Regulations (SI) 605/2017 which prevent the pollution of waters by nitrogen and phosphorus from agricultural sources while in addition providing co-benefits for climate, biodiversity and air quality.

Agriculture covers over 65% of the land area of Ireland and is the most frequent significant pressure in water bodies that are not meeting Water Framework Directive targets. The main problems arising from farming are loss of excess nutrients and sediment to water. Excess phosphorus and sediment levels are typically associated with rivers and lakes, while too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.

Ireland's third River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2022-2027 is due to be finalised in 2022. The current draft proposes to protect and restore each one of Ireland's 3,126 bodies of water to at least 'good status' by 2027 (with some limited exemptions). The RBMP also identifies 1,603 water bodies that are categorised as 'At Risk of not meeting their environmental objective of good or high-status'. Agriculture is the main significant pressure impacting on 1,000 of these water bodies. The loss of nitrogen from agricultural sources is one of the principal causes of the decline in water quality.

The targeting of actions in the 1,000 water bodies, and the resulting reduction in nutrient losses, will be achieved through multiple CSP interventions. Relevant regulatory frameworks, and other programmes outside the CAP including advisory services will also have a role to play to maximise the impact of CSP measures.

Interventions that address this need and emanate from the legislative instruments include the Eco scheme, the AECM, the Organic Farming Scheme, Protein Aid, EIPs and Capital Investment Scheme.

Legislative instruments referred to in Annex XIII

Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides

A regulation to replace Directive 2009/128/EC is currently being drafted by the European Commission. This regulatory framework is expected to enhance the current actions under the Sustainable Use Directive and will include legal requirements for the sustainable use of pesticide. Together with amendments to existing regulations, this new regulation is expected to form the basis of Ireland's actions regarding pesticide targets during the next CAP programme.

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Irish National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (Plant Protection Product) revised in February 2019

Relationship between the needs identified under this Specific Objective and what appears in the environmental/climate plans

This environmental/climate plan is linked to Obj5.N2.

Obj5.N2 of Irelands CSP aims to protect and improve water quality. This need is related to elements within the National Action Plan which outlines targets in the areas of training, equipment, storage, use in special area's etc which all serve to achieve the objectives of Directive 2009/128/EC. The National Action Plan includes mandatory training and certification for professional users (including farmers and landscapers), distributors and advisors. It is also obligatory to have pesticide application equipment tested periodically.

Interventions that contribute to this need and environmental/climate plan include Eco-scheme, the AECM, the Organic Farming Scheme and the Capital Investment Scheme.

2.1.SO5.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
DPdecoupled	Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare	51ECO - Eco-Scheme	O.8. Number of hectares or of livestock units benefitting from eco-schemes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	INVRE(47(1)(a)) - investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and other actions	52FVPO01 - Investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and analysis/forecasting/coordination	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMCP70 - Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMGEN - AECM General	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements

RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53SIM - Straw Incorporation Measure	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53AECMNPI - Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure	O.21. Number of supported on-farm non-productive investment operations or units
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53AECMCP77 - AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77	O.32. Number of supported other cooperation operations or units (excluding EIP reported under O.1)
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational group projects

Overview

The SWOT Analysis notes a number of issues relating to the care of natural resources in Ireland. With regards air quality, the SWOT analysis found that agriculture is the major source of ammonia emissions in Ireland, altogether emitting 106,900 tonnes of ammonia in 2015, representing 99% of overall ammonia emissions in Ireland - the highest amount in Europe. As ammonia is one of the five main pollutants contributing to poor air quality, it is necessary to reduce the level of ammonia arising from agriculture and improve air quality overall. In addition, the SWOT Analysis identified that agriculture is having a negative impact on water quality with the main issue arising from agriculture being a loss of excess nutrients and sediment to water which originate either from point sources (such as farmyards), or from diffuse sources (such as the spreading of fertilisers and manures). As a result, there is a need to protect and improve water quality.

The SWOT Analysis further found that 88% of Irish grasslands have sub-optimal soil fertility and that soil fertility management techniques are not commonly adopted in Ireland, despite them being well established. Therefore, there is a need to improve soil fertility and to encourage management techniques such as straw incorporation, that increase Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) contents and return valuable nutrients back into the soil. Lastly, the SWOT analysis identified an opportunity to increase numbers in sustainable farming systems, such as organic farming, which better utilise natural resources. Increasing the number of organic farming systems would also ensure that the targets outlined in the Irish Organic Strategy are met. These targets include increasing the number of hectares of organically farmed cereals and pulses to 5000 hectares (from a 2017 benchmark of 2426 hectares); and increasing organic production of dairy by 10% each year of the strategy, horticulture to 750 hectares altogether and beef to 1.6% of the national herd over the next 4 years.

The *Eco-Scheme* provides support to farmers on an annual basis, to undertake agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment. Irish farmers will have the opportunity to partake in 8 different Eco-Scheme Agricultural Practices, all of which address at least one of the four needs identified under SO5. In relation to Obj5.N1, a total of five agricultural practices are offered which assist in addressing this need. These include: Agricultural Practice 3 (Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Use), Agricultural Practice 4 (Planting of Native Trees/Hedgerows), Agricultural Practice 5 (Use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreaders/sprayers), Agricultural Practice 7 (Planting of a Break Crop) and Agricultural Practice 8 (Planting of multi species sward). In relation to Obj5.N2, agricultural practices 3,

5, 7 and 8 also address this need, in addition to Agricultural Practice 2 (Extensive Livestock production). In relation to Obj5.N3, agricultural practices 2, 7 and 6 (Soil sampling and appropriate liming) assist in addressing this need. Lastly, in relation to Obj5.N4, all of the agricultural practices described above, plus Agricultural practice 1 (Space for Nature (Non-productive areas) and landscape features), will go towards addressing this need.

All of the needs identified under SO5 are further addressed by the *AECM General* and *AECM Cooperation Measures.* Actions under the *AECM* include actions which support the protection of vulnerable water sites and carbon stores, minimum tillage actions, and low input grassland farming. The *AECM Cooperation Measure* provides additional support for bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures in predefined geographical areas deemed to be of significant priority. Under this measure, Cooperation Project teams assist farmers in implementing these additional actions. The aim of the *AECM Training* (a cross-cutting measure) is to assist farmers in implementing actions under the *AECM* and to equip farmers with the knowledge to make environmentally conscious decisions on their farms. As such, all the needs identified under specific objective five (Obj5.N1; Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3; Obj5.N4) are indirectly addressed by this measure. Support for non-productive investments also protects and improves water quality (*Obj5.N2*) through actions such as the planting of riparian margins which provides a protective barrier to streams including for sediment run off. Hedgerow rejuvenation can also have this positively impact water quality for this reason.

Another intervention designed to address all four of the needs identified under SO5 is the *Organic farming Scheme.* The *Organic Farming Scheme* provides support to farmers for transitioning to, or maintaining, organic food production. Organic farming practices refrain from using inorganic fertilisers, which emit 20% of ammonia emissions in the EU, thus improving air quality (Obj5.N1); and refrain from using pesticides and mineral fertilisers, therefore improving and protecting water quality (Obj5.N2). Organic soils also have higher levels of organic soil matter and biodiversity, which improves soil health (Obj5.N3). As organic farming is a sustainable farming system in and of itself it also addresses Obj5.N4.

The On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme further addresses all four of the needs identified under SO5. The OFCIS provides financial support to farmers looking to invest in nutrient storage facilities and precision farming equipment, such as low disturbance tillage equipment, and Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) equipment, that will improve air quality (Obj5.N1) and improve soil health (Obj5.N3). It further provides support for precision grass measurement equipment, rainwater harvesting and storage, solar panels, heat recovery units, heat pumps, biomass boilers, ventilation and insulation, which decrease energy pressure on farms and improve water quality on farms (Obj5.N2). In addition, it is worth noting that a higher rate of subsidy is provided to organic farmers to encourage greater investment in the organic farming sector. This will increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources (Obj5.N4).

The *Straw Incorporation Measure* requires farmers to chop straw, spread it evenly and incorporate it into the soil in the parcel. The purpose of the intervention is to encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops. The incorporation of straw will also have positive impact on soil biology and soil workability, therefore addressing Obj5.N3.

Additionally, support for *European Innovation partnerships (EIPs)* Operational Group projects, particularly those aimed at addressing areas related to environmental, biodiversity and climate change challenges (Stream B), will further address the needs identified under SO5. The specific needs addressed will be determined once projects are approved.

In addition to the above interventions, a number of other interventions, specifically *Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector*, the *Knowledge Transfer Programme* and *Continued Professional Development for Advisors* also partially address the needs identified under SO5. *Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector* provides support for the setting up and running of Producer Organisations

(POs) which are made up of primary producers. Under the CSP regulation, POs are encouraged to support organic farming practices and avoid the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers. Moreover, in order to receive EU funding, Operational Programmes must contain a minimum of 15% of actions designed to mitigate the effects of climate change and improve environmental performance. As such, by supporting POs in the F&V sector, the need to improve air quality (Obj5.N1), water quality (Obj5.N2); and soil quality (Obj5.N3), may be addressed. Additionally, POs will provide members with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement sustainable farming systems through advisory services and technical assistance, addressing the need to increase the number of sustainable farming systems (Obj5.N4). However, as there are currently only four F&V POs in Ireland in operation, it is unlikely that they will address these needs substantially.

In addition, the provision of certain modules under the *Knowledge Transfer Programme* may also potentially address the needs identified above, particularly the provision of modules in 'Digital and smart technologies and tools, and their applicability on farm' which will provide information on precision farming techniques, which are beneficial to air quality (Obj5.N1); 'Soil Quality and grassland management, incorporating available tools and best practice' (Obj5.N2); and 'Water Quality, incorporating key management techniques' (Obj5.N3). Furthermore, *Continued Professional Development for Advisors* provides support to advisors to improve their understanding of selected topics, including those related to natural resources (air, water, soil), so that they can disseminate important information to farmers. As such, CPD for Advisors also potentially contributes to the needs identified (Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3, Obj5.N4).

2.1.SO5.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO5.7 Are you planning CAP contribution towards the LIFE programme (only for SO4, SO5, SO6) : **No**

2.1.SO5.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables - Concentration of supply Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors	72.18 %
R.14 PR - Carbon storage in soils and biomass Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)	8.88 %
R.19 PR - Improving and protecting soils Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)	10.61 %
R.20 PR - Improving air quality Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce ammonia emission	4.88 %
R.21 PR - Protecting water quality Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies	31.83 %
R.22 PR - Sustainable nutrient management Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management	42.44 %
R.24 PR - Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage	7.45 %

R.26 CU - Investment related to natural resources Share of farms benifitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resource	13.93 %
R.28 CU - Environmental or climate-related performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance	234,898.00
R.29 PR - Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	7.46 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.14: Carbon storage in soils and biomass

Within SO5, multiple interventions contribute to improving soil health (Obj5.N3), including the Straw Incorporation Measure (SIM), the Organic Farming Scheme and the AECM. All of these interventions contribute to R.14. The total target value set for R.14 is 8.88%.

The SIM contribution is based on the experience of the pilot scheme in the transitional period of the RDP. The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. The AECM target values are based on the estimated uptake of proposed actions which support carbon storage in soils and biomass. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.14 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, Brassica fodder crop, Green Manure, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture, Planting new hedgerows, Minimum tillage, Field margins, Fallow land, Low input peat grassland. See table SO5.1 for total hectares per intervention.

For example, the low input peat grassland measure rewards farmers for improved management of grassland on peat soils next to raised bog sites. Maintaining the quality of the peat grassland helps to restore ecosystems and the services they provide which has a positive impact on soil health (Obj5.N3).

The Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme also contributes to R.14 but does not address any of the needs in SO5. See table SO5.1 for an overview of the interventions that contribute to this indicator.

Table SO5.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.14	AECM (General)	0	137,257	205,885	205,885	205,885	205,885	68,628
	AECM (Co-op)	0	77,947	155,895	155,895	155,895	155,895	77,947
	SIM	0	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	0
	SCEP		256,667	256,667	256,667	256,667	256,667	
	OFS		102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	
	Total annual values	0	256,667	401,780	401,780	401,780	401,780	146,575
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**5.67%**	**8.88%**	**8.88%**	**8.88%**	**8.88%**	**3.24%**

R.19: Improving and protecting soils

Within SO5, the AECM (both the AECM General Measure and the AECM Cooperation Measure), Eco-Scheme, the Organic Farming Scheme and the Straw Incorporation Measure (SIM) contribute to R.19. The total target value set for R.19 is 10.61%, which is the number of hectares paid under the scheme, expressed as a percentage of the total UAA. The AECM General and Coop, the Organic Farming Scheme

and the Eco-Scheme contribute to the achievement of all four of the needs identified (Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3 and Obj5.N4) while the SIM contributes to Obj5.N3. The Eco-Scheme contributes 480,000 hectares, AECM General contributes 165,810 hectares, the AECM Cooperation contributes 155,942 hectares, the OFS contributes 336,901 hectares and SIM contribute 40,000 hectares to the total target value of R.19. The area under the OFS, SIM and AECM is not included due to double counting with the area under the Eco-Scheme. The achievement of this target value will go towards improving soil quality specifically (Obj5.N3).

The target values for AECM each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in soil health. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.19 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, Brassica fodder crop, Green manure, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture, Planting new hedgerows, Minimum tillage, Field margins and lastly, Fallow land. See table SO5.2 for total hectares per intervention.

For example, the low input grassland action encourages farmers to graze their pastures extensively using low fertiliser and herbicide inputs. This improves inter alia, soil structure, water quality and carbon sequestration. The margins of the defined areas can be grazed but only during certain times period, in order to maintain areas throughout the winter for hibernating insects. These insects also enhance soil quality, further addressing Obj5.N3.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming.

The eco-scheme contribution to R.19 is 480,000 hectares. This figure assumes that 5,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 5 (Use of GPS Controlled Fertiliser Spreader) to spread fertiliser. It is further estimated that 1,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 7 (Growing a Break Crop), 1000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 8 (Sowing a multi-species sward) and 8,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 6 (Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming). It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 60,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 15,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 480,000 hectares. Some farmers may choose to do more than one of these measures, but for this calculation they have only been counted once. Considering the potential for double counting between interventions, the numerator value used for R.19 is the total area under eco-schemes See table SO5.2 for total hectares per intervention.

Table SO5.2

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.19	Eco Scheme	0	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	0
	AECM (General	0	110,540	165,810	165,810	165,810	165,810	55,270
	AECM (Cooperation)	0	77,971	155,942	155,942	155,942	155,942	77,971
	Organic Farming Scheme	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	
	SIM		40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
	Total annual	0	811,387	974,451	1,016,914	1,077,346	1,178,653	173,241
	Total Annual (without double counting)	0	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	173,241
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**3.83%**

R.20: Improving air quality

As already noted, the AECM General Measure contributes to the achievement of all four of the needs identified (Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3 and Obj5.N4) under SO5. The AECM General is the single intervention contributing to R.20. The total target value set for R.20 is 4.88%. AECM General contributes 220,810 ha to the total target value. The achievement of this target value will go towards improving air quality (Obj5.N1). The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that aim to improve air quality. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.20 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, Brassica fodder crop, Green manure, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture, Planting a new hedge, Minimum tillage, Field margins Fallow land, Low input peat grassland and Low Emission Slurry Spreading. See table SO5.3 for total hectares per AECM General and.

For example, the environmental management of arable fallow action reduces the pressure on agricultural lands by forcing them to remain fallow for a certain period. Chemical or organic fertiliser cannot be applied to the parcel either, a process that would otherwise take place through the use of farming machinery. Alternatively, a green cover crop is grown, increasing the carbon sequestration potential of the land. In combination, all of these effects will improve air quality (Obj5.N3).

Table SO5.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.20	AECM General	0	147,207	220,810	220,810	220,810	220,810	73,603
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	0.00%	3.25%	4.88%	4.88%	4.88%	4.88%	1.63%

R.21: Protecting water quality

Within SO5, the AECM, the Eco Scheme and the Organic Farming Scheme contribute to the protection and improvement of water quality (Obj5.N2) and to R.21. The total target value set for R.21 is 31.83%.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming

AECM General contributes 174,849 ha to the total target value and AECM Cooperation contributes 132,615 ha to the total target value. The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that aim to improve water quality, both under the AECM (General and Cooperation measures). The uptake of actions under the AECM are estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.21 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Riparian margins, Protection of wetlands, Brassica fodder crop, Green manure, Planting trees, Field margins, Planting hedgerows, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture, Low Emission Slurry Spreading and Fallow land. See table SO5.4 for total hectares per intervention.

In the selection criteria for the cooperation zones for AECM, high status water was an important priority in the consideration, as per the water framework classification process. The related actions in these zones are therefore expected to strongly impact on the water quality of these areas.

The Eco Scheme contributes 1,440,000 to the target value. This figure assumes that 45,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 3 (Limiting Chemical Nitrogen) **or** Agricultural Practice 5 (Use of GPS Controlled Fertiliser Spreader) to spread fertiliser. It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 45,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 45,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 1,440,000 hectares. Some farmers may choose to do more than

one of these measures, but for this calculation they have only been counted once. Considering the potential for double counting between interventions, the numerator value used for R.21 is the total area under the Eco-Scheme. See table SO5.4 for total hectares per intervention

Table SO5.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.21	Eco -Scheme		1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	0
	AECM (General)		116,566	174,849	174,849	174,849	174,849	92,892
	AECM (Co-op)		66,307	132,615	132,615	132,615	132,615	95,237
	OFS		102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	
	Total annual	0	1,725,749	1,880,163	1,922,626	1,983,058	2,084,365	188,129
	Total hectares without DC	0	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	188,129
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.22)	**0.00%**	**31.83%**	**31.83%**	**31.83%**	**31.83%**	**31.83%**	**4.16%**

R.22: Sustainable nutrient management

The AECM and the Eco-Scheme contribute to R.22. The total target value set for R.22 is 42.44%. The achievement of this target will go towards protecting and improving water quality (Obj5.N2) and improving soil health (Obj5.N3).

The AECM General contribution to R.22 is 180,810 hectares and the AECM Cooperation contribution is 155,942 hectares. For the AECM, target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in water quality and soil health. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.22 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, Brassica fodder crop, Green manure, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture, Planting new hedgerows, Minimum tillage, Field margins, Fallow land and Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS).

Additionally, a requirement of the AECM is to take soil samples as part of the Farm Sustainability Plan which will allow farmers to see where they need to improve their nutrient management, and implement the necessary actions to achieve the targe value.

The Eco-Scheme contribution to R.21 is 1,920,000 hectares. This figure assumes that 45,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 3 (Limiting Chemical Nitrogen) and 5,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 5 (Use of GPS Controlled Fertiliser Spreader) to spread fertiliser. It is further estimated that 1,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 7 (Growing a Break Crop), 1000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 8 (Sowing a multi-species sward) and 8,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 6 (Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming). It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 60,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 60,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 1,920,000 hectares. Some farmers may choose to do more than one of these measures, but for this calculation they have only been counted once. Considering the potential for double counting between interventions, the numerator value used for R.22 is the total area under the Eco-Scheme. See table SO5.5 for total hectares per intervention.

Table SO5.5

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.22	Eco -Scheme	0	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	0
	AECM (General)	0	120,540	180,810	180,810	180,810	180,810	60,270
	AECM (Co-op)	0	77,971	155,942	155,942	155,942	155,942	77,971
	Total annual	0	2,118,511	2,256,752	2,256,752	2,256,752	2,256,752	138,241
	Total hectares without DC	0	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	138,241
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.22)	**0.00%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**42.44%**	**3.06%**

R.24: Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides

The AECM and the Organic Farming Scheme contributes to R.24. total target value set for R.24 is 7.45%. The AECM General contribution to R.24 is 141,330 hectares and the AECM Cooperation contribution is 123,656 hectares. For the AECM, the achievement of this target will go towards improving air quality (Obj5.N1), protecting and improving water quality (Obj5.N2) and improving soil health (Obj5.N3). The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in air, water and soil health. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.24 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Field margins, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture.

For AECM Cooperation Groups, farmers and advisors will develop their Farm Sustainability Plan based on a Local Action Plan which identifies priorities within the cooperation area, including threats threat from the overuse of pesticides. As such the actions contributing to this indicator will be effectively targeted to meet the result indicator targets.

The OFS contribution to the target value is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance). The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming.See table SO5.6 for a summary of the interventions that contribute to this indicator.

Table SO5.6

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.24	OFS (Conversion)	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS (Maintenance)	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	AECM (General)	0	94,220	141,330	141,330	141,330	141,330	47,110
	AECM (Co-op)	0	61,828	123,656	123,656	123,656	123,656	61,828
	Total hectares without double counting	0	156,048	264,986	264,986	264,986	336,901	108,938
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.24)	**0.00%**	**3.45%**	**5.86%**	**5.86%**	**5.86%**	**7.45%**	**2.41%**

R.26: Investments related to natural resources

Within SO5, two investment interventions: AECM (Non-productive investments) and the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme, contribute to the achievement of all four of the needs identified under SO5. The total cumulated target value set for R.26 is 13.93%. The total number of farms receiving support for non-productive investments under the AECM NPI, captured under R.26 is 14,567 (non-cumulated).

Capital investments are demand driven and therefore exact figures are difficult to predict. Estimates are based on actual outcomes from TAMS II ((the equivalent intervention in the previous programming period). The target value set is based on the number of investments improving natural resources in TAMS II. It is predicted that 4,600 farms will receive support for investments related to natural resources under the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme. See table SO5.7 for total number of farms receiving support per intervention.

Table SO5.7

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.26	AECM NPI (General	0	3,667	5,500	0	0	0	0
	AECM NPI (Co-op)	0	2,000	2,000	1,000	300	100	0
	OFCIS	60	260	340	2,000	1,940	0	0
	Total annual	**60**	**5,927**	**7,840**	**3,000**	**2,240**	**100**	**0**
	Total Cumulated Values	**60**	**5,987**	**13,827**	**16,827**	**19,067**	**19,167**	**19,167**
	Total number of farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.04%**	**4.35%**	**10.05%**	**12.23%**	**13.86%**	**13.93%**	**13.93%**

R.28: Environmental or climate-related performance through knowledge

Within SO5, support for Cooperation Groups under the AECM as per Article 77 (i.e. AECM Article 77) and stream B of European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) contributes to R.28. Both of these interventions assist in achieving the needs outlined under SO5 (Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3 and Obj5.N4). These interventions, in addition to the Agri-environment Training Scheme and Training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme, contribute to the total target value of R.28. However, the Training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme does not address the needs identified under SO5. Although AECM Training does not directly address SO5, it assists beneficiaries of the AECM in carrying out actions that will address the needs under SO5. Under AECM Training, beneficiaries are required to take a mandatory training course in the first year of their participation in the scheme.

The total target value for this indicator is 234,898, being the amount of people who have received training under any of the schemes. This value is cumulative meaning that it spans across the entire programming period and is representative of all the schemes combined. AECM Article 77 provides administrative support to local action groups that are undertaking projects within the AECM Cooperation measures. There are 8 cooperation projects planned that will cover approximately 10,000 farmers in 2024 and 2029, and 20,000 farmers between 2025-2028. This figure is based on experiences in the previous programming period.

The cumulative target value for stream B of *EIPs is* 7,500 with 1,500 farmers targeted in 2025-2028, and 750 farmers targeted in 2024 and 2029. In order to reflect the increased ambition with regard to the environmental and climate-related objectives in the CSP, an increased number of projects are programmed under this CSP as compared to the previous RDP (30 targeted for 2023-2027 as opposed to 22 in place from 2014-2020). See table SO5.8.

Table SO5.9

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.28	EIPs stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM - Art. 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	Total annual	17,500	55,750	62,090	40,200	27,108	21,500	10,750
	Totals cumulative	**17,500**	**73,250**	**135,340**	**175,540**	**202,648**	**224,148**	**234,898**

R.29: Development of organic agriculture

Within SO5, the Organic Farming Scheme contributes to the achievement of all four of the needs identified (Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3 and Obj5.N4). The Organic Farming Scheme is the single intervention contributing to R.29. The total target value set for R.29 is 7.45% and is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming. This target is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO5.9 for total hectares of UAA 'in conversion' to organic farming and total hectares organic UAA 'in maintenance'.

Table SO5.9

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.29	OFS - Conversion	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS - Maintenance	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	Total annual	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**2.27%**	**2.93%**	**3.87%**	**5.21%**	**7.45%**	**0.00%**

2.1.SO5.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will directly contribute to achieving the needs identified under Specific Objective 5. All four needs will be directly addressed through the Eco-Scheme, AECM and the Organic Farming Scheme. In addition:

- Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2 and Obj5.N4 will be directly addressed by the Capital investment Scheme
- Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2 and Obj5.N3 will be directly addressed through Protein Aid
- Obj5.N3 will be directly addressed through the Straw Incorporation Measure

EIPs will directly address SO5, however, it is difficult to predict exactly which needs will be addressed under this scheme until projects have been approved.

Eco Scheme:

The total Eco-Scheme budget has been ring fenced at 25% of Ireland's Direct Payments allocation. Farmers who partake in an eco-scheme will receive an annual payment based on Article 31(7)(b) of the CSP regulation, i.e., based on additional costs incurred and income foregone. Income foregone will be calculated based on Teagasc National Farm Survey data for the years 2016-2020 and costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with

Article 82 of the CSP Regulation. The total indicative financial allocation of €1.48 billion over the period 2023-2027.

The rates of payment will vary depending on uptake of the eco-scheme. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), then the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (minimum rate of payment). If uptake is only half of that (i.e., c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, then the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 (maximum rate of payment). The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 (planned rate of payment). This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme, figures subject to rounding. Support provided under the eco-scheme will assist in directly addressing all four of the needs identified under specific objective 5. The total financial allocation of €1.48 billion is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 42.44% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management (R.22) (as per Table SO5.5)
- 7.45% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticides leakage (R.24) (as per Table SO5.6)
- 10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (as per Table SO5.2 above)

AECM General Measure

The annual planned outputs under the AECM General are based on the uptake of comparable actions in the agri-environmental climate measure in Ireland’s Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. The AECM measures (General and Cooperation) will directly assist in improving Ireland's air quality (Obj5.N1), water quality (Obj5.N2), and soil quality (Obj5.N3); and will encourage the practicing of sustainable farming techniques that better utilise and protect natural resource (Obj5.N4). The total financial allocation of €610 million for the General measure is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 9.32% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions, maintain and/or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland) (R.14) (as per Table SO5.1)
- 10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (as per Table SO5.2)
- 4.88% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce ammonia emission (R.20) (as per Table SO5.3)
- 6.80% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments for quality of water bodies (R.21) (as per Table SO5.4)
- 42.44% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management (R.22) (as per Table SO5.5)
- 7.45% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticides leakage (R.24) (as per Table SO5.6)

AECM Cooperation Measure

Support under this measure will be provided in the form of results-based payments which are designed to ensure that farmers are appropriately incentivised to improve the landscapes and catchments within which they farm. Payments will reflect the quality of the results achieved, i.e. the higher the result, the higher

the payment. Fixed eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of the CSP Regulation. Works on lands which are difficult to access can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. The AECM measures (General and Cooperation) will directly assist in improving Irelands air quality (Obj5.N1), water quality (Obj5.N2), and soil quality (Obj5.N3); and will encourage the practicing of sustainable farming techniques that better utilise and protect natural resource (Obj5.N4). The total financial allocation of €460 million is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 9.32% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions, maintain and/or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland) (R.14) (as per Table SO5.1)
- 10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (as per Table SO5.2)
- 6.80% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments for quality of water bodies (R.21) (as per Table SO5.4)
- 42.44% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management (R.22) (as per Table SO5.5)
- 7.45% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticides leakage (R.24) (as per Table SO5.6)

AECM Article 77

The exact funding for each co-operation project will be dependent on the number of participants and the scale of the projects and ambition. An indicative budget allocation of €50m is set aside to cover the costs of running the co-operation projects and the landscape actions. It is expected that the Community Fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions could be €160m over the programme or approximately €20m for each of the 8 co-operation projects. The eight Co-operation Projects (CP) will work with DAFM in designing and implementing co-operation projects. As this intervention relates directly to the AECM Cooperation measure, it also will directly assist in improving Ireland's air quality (Obj5.N1), water quality (Obj5.N2), and soil quality (Obj5.N3); and will encourage the practicing of sustainable farming techniques that better utilise and protect natural resource (Obj5.N4). The indicative budget allocation of €210m is adequate to support the R.28 target of 234,898 farmers (as per Table SO5.8).

AECM NPI:

This is an investment support measure which is integrated within the AECM and provided for in accordance with Article 70 of the CSP Regulations. Support will be paid as part of the payment for the relevant actions under the AECM where the cost for the non-productive investment element will be in line with Article 70 of the CSP regulations. As such, this intervention complements the AECM General and the AECM Cooperation interventions by providing the instrument through which beneficiaries can access the finance required to carry out actions under the AECM interventions. The total indicative financial allocation is €140m for actions under the AECM General Measure, and €80m for actions relating to the AECM Cooperation Measure. Support for non-productive investments under the AECM will assist in improving Irelands water quality (Obj5.N2), and soil quality (Obj5.N3); and will encourage the practicing of sustainable farming techniques that better utilise and protect natural resource (Obj5.N4). The total financial allocation of €220m is adequate to achieve the target of 13.93% of farms benefitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resources (R.26) (as per Table SO5.7)

Organic Farming scheme (OFS):

Support under this scheme is provided based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer farming on a similar land area. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred. Supports vary based on whether beneficiaries are converting to organic practices or maintaining organic practices. It also varies based on whether the farming is dry stock, dairy, tillage, or horticulture. The support provided under this scheme will primarily address Obj5.N4, given the fact that organic farming practices are based on sustainability and the protection of natural resources. As a result, this scheme will also directly address Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2 and Obj5.N3. The total financial allocation of €256 million is adequate to achieve the target of 7.5% of:

7.45% of total UAA under R.14 (See table SO5.1).
7.45% of total UAA under R.19 (See table SO5.2).
7.45% of total UAA under R.21 (See table SO5.4)
7.45% of total UAA under R.24 (See table SO5.6).
7.45% of total UAA under R.29 (See table SO5.9).

On-farm Capital Investment Scheme:
The total financial allocation for this scheme is €100 million. Funding will be provided on a case-by-case basis where applicants meet the criteria to be eligible for support. Grants are provided for farmers wishing to invest in productive technologies and/or equipment. These grants are awarded on a tiered basis depending on the category of farmer applying. The highest rate of subsidy for example is 60% of the original investment and that is awarded to young farmers and female farmers. Organic farmers are awarded a 50% subsidy of the original investment and the standard rate is 40% of the original investment.

Support provided under this scheme will directly address Obj5.N4 by providing an incentive to farmers to invest in sustainable farm practices that protect natural resources, i.e., organic farming practices; and will also directly address Obj5.N1 and Obj5.N2 by providing an incentive to farmers to invest in machinery and equipment that better protects air and water quality. Additionally, support under this scheme will address Obj5.N3 by supporting organic farming which aims to uphold good soil quality and by supporting investments in precision farming equipment, such as low disturbance tillage equipment and Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) equipment. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €100 million is sufficient to achieve the target of 13.93% of farms benefiting from CAP productive investment support related to care for the natural resources (R.26) (see Table SO5.7).

Straw Incorporation Measure:
Support under this scheme will be provided by way of an annual area-based payment per hectare, where the per hectare payment is a uniform rate of €250 per hectare for barley, wheat, oats and rye and a rate of €150 per hectare for oilseed rape. The support payment will compensate the farmer for the additional cost of the chopping, spreading and incorporation of straw into the soil. Support provided under this intervention will increase soil organic carbon levels and will directly address the need to improve soil quality (Obj5.N3). The total indicative financial allocation for this intervention is €50m over the programming period. €10m annually will allow the intervention to achieve its target of 40,000 hectares of coverage and will support the achievement of the R.14 target of:

8.88 % of UAA under R.14 (see Table SO5.1)

8.00% of UAA under R.19 (see Table SO5.2 above)

EIPs:
The total financial allocation proposed for this scheme is €36 million. Support under Stream B of this scheme will be provided for ‘bottom-up’ innovative projects in a range of areas aimed at addressing environmental, biodiversity and climate change challenges. Funding will be provided to projects

approved by an expert evaluation committee and will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the development of detailed Operational Group Plans, not exceeding €10,000. If successful, projects will move to Phase 3 where (under Stream B), they will receive funding not exceeding €1,050,000 to implement their plans.The total financial allocation for the scheme is adequate to achieve the R.28 target of 234,898 farmers in receipt of training, advice or knowledge exchange relating to environmental or climate related performance (as per Table SO5.8).

2.1.SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes

2.1.SO6.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO6.1.1 Strengths

Obj6.S1: Ireland has a network of Natura 2000 sites corresponding to 13% of the area of Ireland
Obj6.S2: High percentage of extensive grazing
Obj6.S3: An estimated 1.5 million hectares has the potential to be managed as High Nature Value farmland
Obj6.S4: Significant national cover of hedgerows and individual trees
Obj6.S5: Peat soils cover over 20% of Ireland's area
Obj6.S6: Strong policy framework to protect and enhance biodiversity
Obj6.S7: Good knowledge and experience of delivery of results-based agri-environment schemes
Obj6.S8: High plant health status in Ireland
Obj6.S9: Strong knowledge base on organics and biological farming in Ireland

2.1.SO6.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj6.W1: Majority of designated habitats have an unfavourable or declining status
Obj6.W3: Woodlands are deemed to be in bad but stable status
Obj6.W4: Lowest share of forest under protection to preserve biodiversity and safeguard landscapes and specific natural elements in the EU
Obj6.W5: Grassland habitats have undergone significant losses over last 10-15 years and most Annex I grasslands are all in unfavourable-bad status
Obj6.W6: Ongoing degradation of peatlands, with most peatland and fen habitats considered to be in bad status
Obj6.W7: Lack of coherence across a number of policy areas
Obj6.W8: More diversity and habitat connectivity needed in forestry planting
Obj6.W9: Lack of economic value attributed to wider public goods from landholdings
Obj6.W10: Lack of appropriate mechanisms / indicators to monitor areas outside of Natura 2000
Obj6.W11: Decline in pollinator species
Obj6.W12: Lack of appropriate advisory support on biodiversity related issues
Obj6.W13: No national habitat map
Obj6.W14: Capacity challenge in relation to enforcement of regulations

2.1.SO6.1.3 Opportunities

Obj6.O1: Incentivise the provision of ecosystem services including HNV farming
Obj6.O2: Enhance biodiversity by establishing new habitats, as well as maintaining existing habitats on more intensive farms
Obj6.O3: Appropriately manage forests and increase afforestation levels (particularly mixed forestry)
Obj6.O4: Incentivise low input farming such as organic and biological approaches
Obj6.O5: Foster a greater understanding of biodiversity issues at farm level through advisory services
Obj6.O6: Engage industry and the wider community on biodiversity related initiatives
Obj6.O7: Maximise use of available resources on environmental farm profiling

2.1.SO6.1.4 Threats

Obj6.T1: Habitat loss due to changes in land uses
Obj6.T2: Overgrazing of habitats

Obj6.T3: Under grazing or land abandonment
Obj6.T4: Agriculture intensification
Obj6.T5: Agricultural activities impacting negatively on the environment
Obj6.T6: Increase in invasive plant and pest species
Obj6.T7: Climate change negatively affecting species ranges and habitats
Obj6.T8: Slowdown in generational renewal could affect uptake of environmentally friendly practises
Obj6.T9: Continuing decline in pollinator species and invertebrates with a risk of species loss
Obj6.T10: Increasing ammonia emissions and their negative impact on habitats
Obj6.T11: Failure to meet obligations under national and international legal obligations in relation to habitat protection and biodiversity

2.1.SO6.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO6.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes
Obj6.N2	Maximise the contribution of forestry incl planting native trees, safeguarding existing habitats	2nd Highest for SO	No

2.1.SO6.3 Identification of the relevant (elements of) national plans emanating from the legislative instruments referred to in Annex XI of the CAP plan Regulation that have been taken into account in the CAP plans' needs assessment for this specific objective

Legislative instruments referred to in Annex XIII

Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Implemented in an Irish Context through the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2021.

Relationship between the needs identified under this Specific Objective and what appears in the environmental/climate plans

This environmental/climate plan is linked to Obj6.N1.

Obj6.N1 aims to restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators. This need is directly related to the protection of specific natural habitats and fauna associated with the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2021.

Ireland's current agri-food development strategy sets a target that by 2030, 10% of Ireland's farmed area will be prioritised for biodiversity, spread across all farms throughout the country. It is envisaged that this target will be achieved early through implementation of the CSP.

The greatest pressures impacting habitats relate to agricultural practices, such as over-/under-grazing, land abandonment and agricultural intensification. The current conservation status of agricultural habitats is very low with 100% of habitats categorised as 'Unfavourable' in 2013-2018. It is envisaged that at least 30% of agricultural habitats with a status of unfavourable are expected to demonstrate improving trends towards achieving favourable status by 2030 (2025-2030 reporting period).

Interventions that address this need and emanate from the legislative instruments include the Eco scheme, the AECM, Apiculture, EIPs, the Organic Farming Scheme and ANC.

2.1.SO6.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
DPdecoupled	Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare	51ECO - Eco-Scheme	O.8. Number of hectares or of livestock units benefitting from eco-schemes
Sectoral - Apiculture products	COOPAPI(55(1)(e)) - cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of research programs in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products	52API - Sectoral Intervention for the Apiculture Sector	O.37. Number of actions or units for beekeeping preservation or improvement
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMCP70 - Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMGEN - AECM General	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53GR - AECM Genetic Resources	O.19. Number of operations or units supporting genetic resources
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
RD	ANC(71) - Natural or other area-specific constraints	53ANC - ANC	O.12. Number of hectares benefitting from support for areas facing natural or specific constraints, including a breakdown per type of areas
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53AECMNPI - Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure	O.21. Number of supported on-farm non-productive investment operations or units
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53AECMCP77 - AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77	O.32. Number of supported other cooperation operations or units (excluding EIP reported under O.1)
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational group projects

Overview

The need to restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators (Obj6.N1) is addressed by the *Eco-Scheme,* and various actions provided under the *AECM Measures.* As referenced in the SWOT analysis, Obj6.S3 states that Ireland has an estimated 1.5 million hectares of UAA (20% of Ireland's total UAA) that has the potential to be managed as High Nature Value farmland (HNV). This means there is a lot of scope for the Eco-schemes and AECM measures to be applied and for them to have a considerable impact.

The *Eco-Scheme* provides support to farmers who commit to undertake agricultural practices beneficial for the climate, the environment, and biodiversity. Under the *Eco-Scheme,* actions supported include the maintenance of non-productive areas and landscape features, extensive livestock production, the planting

of native trees, enhanced crop diversification, and the sewing of a multi-species sward. These actions will improve Ireland's landscapes and habitats by providing more space for flora and fauna and biodiversity to flourish. Moreover, actions such as sewing a multi-species sward and enhanced crop diversification enrich the biological diversity of these areas, encouraging the restoration of landscapes and habitats. Through these *Eco-Scheme* actions the needs of Obj6.N1 are directly addressed.

Under the *AECM General Measure* actions which support biodiversity include, inter alia, ryegrass seed sewing, traditional dry stone wall maintenance, building of barn owl boxes, winter bird food and the planting/rejuvenation of hedgerows and winter stubble, all of which support the enhancement of biodiversity (Obj6.N1). The *AECM Genetic Resources* intervention which aims to facilitate the conservation of certain species – both animal and plant - forms part of the overall AECM General intervention. It consists of 2 actions which support the enhancement of biodiversity (Obj6.N1). The first action will support and conserve the genetic diversity of native breeds that are at risk of extinction. It will support the retention and, where possible, increase populations of specific rare breeds to ensure their long-term survival. In terms of eligible livestock and bloodstock species, participants in this measure can choose from a list of cattle, goats, horses and ponies and sheep. The second action supports biodiversity and help ensure the survival of traditional Irish apple varieties. While apple trees have been grown in Ireland for many centuries, the native genetic pool has been significantly altered to incorporate several modern varieties. This measure endeavours to conserve the authenticity of traditional apple tree varieties while also sustaining their heritage, by only growing trees that were once common to Irish soils.

The *AECM Cooperation measure* offers the same actions as the *AECM General* but also offers additional actions to farmers farming in predefined geographical areas, considered to be of high environmental value. These include farmland habitat conservation actions, and location appropriate actions centred on a meaningful adaptive interaction between advisor, farmer, and experts (Obj6.N1). As part of the *AECM Cooperation Measure*, farmers will be assisted in implementing actions with the support of Local Cooperation Project teams. The *AECM* also provides support for *Non-Productive Investments*. This includes providing capital assistance to support the planting of native trees and the planting of hedgerows which contributes to maintaining biodiverse habitats and native woodlands (Obj6.N1*)*.

In a similar fashion, the *On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS)* addresses *Obj6.N1* through the provision of grant aid on non-productive investments for machinery such as precision farming equipment including Low Emissions Slurry Spreaders (LESS). The use of such machinery encourages better management and reduction of mineral fertilizers and pesticides which will contribute to improving biodiversity conditions.

Aid is also provided for investments in measuring grass which enable accurate grass management. This reduces the need for the housing of livestock and supplemental feeding. The measurement allows for the targeted application of fertiliser to produce only the required amount of grass. By managing grass correctly, it is possible to extend the reseeding interval, hence directly benefiting biodiversity. Grass measurement also allows for grazing fields to targeted heights to help weed control without the need for herbicide or other pesticide applications.Grant aid for sheep fencing used along hedgerows and boundaries assists in creating wildlife corridors throughout the country side as the hedgerow is protected from grazing animals, wildlife and increased biodiversity has the area to survive and flourish. Finally, Organic farmers will be able to avail of all investments under the OFCIS at an increased rate. The type of investments available for organic farmers contributing to biodiversity include a range of horticultural and tillage machinery such as an inter-row cultivator. Such investments will allow farmers to switch to and maintain organic production systems, without using herbicides that are harmful to biodiversity. there are also flame weeders, brush weeders, rotary cultivator weeders and combcut weeders. Organic farmers are dependent on mechanical weeding to control weeds in crops. The reduction in use of chemical weed control is a significant boon for biodiversity.

European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) are innovative 'bottom-up' projects that focus on addressing specific challenges. Stream B of the scheme focusses on addressing challenges in areas relating to the environment and biodiversity and will further address Obj6.N1.The specific actions that will address this need will be determined once projects are approved however, urgent conservation priority and specific needs for Breeding Waders will be addressed through a specific themed EIP Call.

The *Organic Farming Scheme* also addresses Obj6.N1 as a result of the low impact organic farming has on biodiverse habitats. Organic farming practices prohibit the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers which are damaging to biodiversity. It also improves soil quality, which improves soil biota, thus addressing this need. The *Apiculture* scheme provides support for research actions in the apiculture sector, including the dissemination of findings through knowledge exchange and the exchange of best practices. Supporting the dissemination of research findings in the apiculture sector will have far reaching benefits for beekeepers and bee colonies.

Finally, the *Area of Specific and Natural Constraints (ANC)* scheme addresses Obj6.N1 due to minimum stocking rate requirements that Ireland has developed in order to protect biodiversity and habitats. Without a minimum stocking rate land would be under grazed which would have a negative impact on biodiversity. As such, the payments made to farmers under the ANC allow them to buy the animals that graze land in areas that would otherwise not be grazed.

Obj6.N2, the need to maximise the contribution of forestry, including the planting of native trees in appropriate locations, safeguarding existing biodiverse habitats is not addressed by any of the interventions contained within the CSP. There are however a number of initiatives and measures outside the CSP that contribute to this need. These include the Afforestation Grant and Premium Scheme, the Native Woodland Conservation Scheme, and the Irish Forestry Board Forestry including. Details are outlined in section 2.1 'Assessments of need and intervention strategy'.

2.1.SO6.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO6.7 Are you planning CAP contribution towards the LIFE programme (only for SO4, SO5, SO6) : **No**

2.1.SO6.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.19 PR - Improving and protecting soils Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)	10.61 %
R.24 PR - Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage	7.45 %
R.26 CU - Investment related to natural resources Share of farms benifitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resource	13.93 %
R.28 CU - Environmental or climate-related performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance	234,898.00
R.29 PR - Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	7.46 %

R.31 PR - Preserving habitats and species Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including high-nature-value farming practices	38.73 %
R.32 CU - Investments related to biodiversity Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to biodiversity	14.35 %
R.33 - Improving Natura 2000 management Share of total Natura 2000 area under supported commitments	80.14 %
R.34 PR - Preserving landscape features Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees	4.69 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.19 Improving and protecting soils

Within *SO6*, the *AECM (both the AECM General Measure and the AECM Cooperation Measure*), the Organic Farming Scheme, the Eco-Scheme, and the Straw Incorporation Measure (SIM) contribute to R.19. The total target value set for this indicator is 10.61% which is the number of hectares paid under the scheme, expressed as a percentage of the total UAA. The AECM General and Cooperation, SIM and the Eco-Scheme contribute to addressing *Obj6.N1* through the achievement of the target value for R.19. The Eco-Scheme contribute 480,000 hectares, AECM General contributes 165,810 hectares, the AECM Cooperation contributes 155,942 hectares,the Organic Farming Scheme contributes 336,901 hectares and SIM contribute 40,000 hectares to the total target value of R.19. The SIM and the AECM area is not included in the target value due to double counting with the area under the Eco-Scheme.

The target values for AECM each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in soil health. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.19 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, extensively grazed permanent pasture, Brassica fodder crop, Green manure, Low input grassland, Planting a new hedge, Minimum tillage, Field margins and lastly, Fallowing land. See table SO6.1 for the total percentage of UAA under supported commitments per year.

For example, the Brassica fodder crop action provides winter foraging resources for farmland birds including finches and buntings thus providing an improved biodiversity habitat for these animals (Obj6.N1). Moreover, no herbicides or insecticides are permitted on the land parcels devoted to this action meaning the quality of the soil is concurrently improved.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming

The eco-scheme contribution to R.19 is 480,000 hectares. This figure assumes that 5,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 5 (Use of GPS Controlled Fertiliser Spreader) to spread fertiliser. It is further estimated that 1,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 7 (Growing a Break Crop), 1000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 8 (Sowing a multi-species sward) and 8,000 farmers may undertake Agricultural Practice 6 (Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming). It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 60,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 15,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 480,000 hectares. Some farmers may choose to do more than one of these measures, but for this calculation they have only been counted once. Considering the potential for double counting between interventions, the numerator value used for R.19 is the total area under eco-schemes See table SO4.4 for total hectares per intervention.

See table SO6.1 for the total percentage of UAA under supported commitments per year. The Straw Incorporation Measure also contributes to R.19 but the area under SIM is not included due to double counting with the area under AECM.

Table SO6.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.19	Eco Scheme	0	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	0
	AECM (General	0	110,540	165,810	165,810	165,810	165,810	55,270
	AECM (Cooperation)	0	77,971	155,942	155,942	155,942	155,942	77,971
	Organic Farming Scheme	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	
	SIM		40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
	Total annual	0	811,387	974,451	1,016,914	1,077,346	1,178,653	173,241
	Total Annual (without double counting)	0	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	480,000	173,241
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**10.61%**	**3.83%**

R.24 Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides

The *AECM General and Cooperation measures* and the Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) contribute to addressing Obj6.N1 through the achievement of the target value for R.24. The total target value for R.24 is 7.45%. Both interventions contribute towards addressing Obj6.N1 through the target for R.24 as the use of pesticides can be damaging to biodiversity and biodiverse habitats.

AECM General's contribution is 141,330 hectares and AECM Cooperation's contributions is 123,656 hectares. The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support improvements in the sustainable and reduced use of pesticides. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.24 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: field margins, low input grassland and extensively grazed permanent pasture.

For AECM Cooperation Groups, farmers and advisors will develop their Farm Sustainability Plan based on a Local Action Plan which identifies priorities within the cooperation area, including threats threat from the overuse of pesticides. As such the actions contributing to this indicator will be effectively targeted to meet the result indicator.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO4.6 for a summary of the interventions that contribute to this indicator. See table SO6.2 for a summary on the interventions that contribute to this indicator.

Table SO6.2:

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.24	OFS (Conversion)	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS (Maintenance)	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	AECM (General)	0	94,220	141,330	141,330	141,330	141,330	47,110
	AECM (Co-op)	0	61,828	123,656	123,656	123,656	123,656	61,828
	Total hectares without double counting	0	156,048	264,986	264,986	264,986	336,901	108,938
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.24)	**0.00%**	**3.45%**	**5.86%**	**5.86%**	**5.86%**	**7.45%**	**2.41%**

R.26 Investments related to natural resources

Within SO6, *Non-Productive investments for the AECM* contribute to the achievement of Obj6.N2. The total target value set for R.26 is 13.93%. The total number of farms receiving support for non-productive investments under the AECM, captured under R.26 is 14,567 altogether (non-cumulated). The projections for this interventions contribution to the target value are based on the estimated share of farms receiving support, based on the provision of grant aid in GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.26 that grant aid is provided for are: planting a grove of trees, planting hedgerows, planting grass margins, and planning riparian margins. The *OFCIS* also contributes to this result indicator but does not address the needs identified under SO6. See table SO6.3 for total number of farms receiving support per intervention.

Table SO6.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.26	AECM NPI (General	0	3,667	5,500	0	0	0	0
	AECM NPI (Co-op)	0	2,000	2,000	1,000	300	100	0
	OFCIS	60	260	340	2,000	1,940	0	0
	Total annual	**60**	**5,927**	**7,840**	**3,000**	**2,240**	**100**	**0**
	Total Cumulated Values	**60**	**5,987**	**13,827**	**16,827**	**19,067**	**19,167**	**19,167**
	Total number of farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.04%**	**4.35%**	**10.05%**	**12.23%**	**13.86%**	**13.93%**	**13.93%**

R. 28 Environmental/climate performance through knowledge and innovation

Within SO6, *Support for Cooperation Groups within the AECM under Article 77* (hereafter AECM Article 77) and stream B of European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) contribute to R.28. The total cumulative target value for this indicator is 234,898, being the amount of people who have received training under any of the schemes that contribute to R.28. This value is cumulative meaning that it reflects the total amount of people supported across the entire programming period and is representative of all the schemes combined. The cumulative target value for *AECM Article 77* specifically is 100,000 people and the cumulative target value for stream B of *EIPs is* 7,500 people. *Training to implement the AECM* and *Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme* also contribute to R.28 but do not address the needs identified under SO6.

AECM Article 77 complements the AECM Cooperation Measure by providing administrative support for the creation and maintenance of local action groups that carry out projects that have climate, environmental or biodiversity benefits. As such, it contributes to addressing Obj6.N1 through its facilitation of the main intervention.

EIPs supported under stream B, focus on projects aimed at addressing challenges related to the climate, environment and biodiversity. Support for innovation projects contributes to each of the needs identified under SO5 due to the 'bottom up' nature of the intervention that supports partnerships that addresses challenges outlined in the CSP. See table SO6.4.

Table SO6.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.28	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM - Art. 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	Total annual	17,500	55,000	60,590	38,700	25,608	20,000	10,000
	Totals cumulative	**17,500**	**72,500**	**133,090**	**171,790**	**197,398**	**217,398**	**227,398**

R.29 Development of organic agriculture

The *Organic Farming Scheme* is the only intervention that contributes to R.29. This result indicator is quantified by the number of hectares paid under the scheme, expressed as a percentage of the total number of UAA in Ireland. The total target set for R.29 is 7.45%. This is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming.

The target for R.29 is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO6.5 for total hectares of UAA 'in conversion' to organic farming and total hectares organic UAA 'in maintenance'. Seeing as organic farming systems have a reduced impact on soil health, air quality, water quality etc, meeting this target value contributes to the need to restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline including farmland birds and pollinators (Obj6.N1).

Table SO6.5

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.29	OFS - Conversion	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS - Maintenance	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	Total annual	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**2.27%**	**2.93%**	**3.87%**	**5.21%**	**7.45%**	**0.00%**

R.31 Preserving habitats and species

Within SO6, the *AECM (the AECM General Measure, AECM Genetic Resources and the AECM Cooperation Measure*, the Organic Farming Scheme and the *Eco-Scheme* contribute to this result indicator. The total target value for R.31 is 38.73% being the number of hectares paid under the schemes, expressed as a percentage of the total UAA. All the Schemes contribution to the target value for R.31 helps to address Obj6.N1.

AECM General's (including AECM Genetic Resources) contribution is 278,675 hectares *AECM Cooperation's* contribution is 190,474 hectares. The target values for the *AECM Measures* are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions, that support the preservation of habitats and species. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions in GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.31 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS) include: conservation of Rare Breeds, planting a traditional orchard, ryegrass seed set, unharvested cereal headlands, winter bird food, field margins, over winter stubble, brassica fodder crop, green manure, traditional dry-stone maintenance, extensively grazed permanent pasture, low input grassland, private natura, fallow land, housing geese and swans and low input peat grassland.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming

The Eco-Scheme contribution to R.31 is 1,752,128 hectares. This figure assumes that 52,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 2 (AP2) - Extensive Livestock Production (low stocking rate, not no stock). It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 52,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 52,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 1,664,000 hectares. It is also anticipated that half of those who undertake Agricultural Practice 1 (AP1) - Preserving Landscape features will not have chosen AP2. As such, the land under AP1 will also contribute to R.31**.** It is assumed that 39,000 farmers will avail of this. It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 39,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares and that they will meet the criteria of 7% of the farm being a non-productive area/landscape feature. 39,000 farmers multiplied by 32 hectares is 1,248,000 hectares; 7% of 1,248,000 equals 87,360 hectares.

Additionally, it is also anticipated that 10,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 4 (Planting of Native Trees/hedgerows). Once again, it is assumed that the average farm size of these 10,000 farmers will be in line with the 32 hectares national average. 10,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 320,000 hectares. As the measure calls for 3 trees per hectare, this equates to 960,000 trees. Each tree will cover 4 square metres, meaning a total area of 3,840,000 sq. metres. This equates to 384 hectares.

It is also anticipated that 10,000 farmers will undertake the enhanced option under AP4. It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 10,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares. 10,000 farmers multiplied by the average farm size of 32 hectares equals 320,000 hectares. As the enhanced measure calls for 6 trees per hectare, this equates to 1,920,000 trees. Each tree will cover 4 square metres, meaning a total area of 7,680,000 sq. metres. This equates to 768 hectares.

To summarise, AP2 will contribute 1,664,000 hectares, AP1 will contribute 87,360 hectares and AP4 will contribute 1152 hectares. Thus, the Eco-schemes' full contribution to R.31 is 1,752,512 hectares. Considering the potential for double counting between interventions the numerator value used for R.31 is the total area under ANC. In 2028 and 2029 however, the total area under the AECM General and Cooperation measures is larger than that of ANC and is thus used as the numerator. See table SO6.6 for a summary of the percentage of UAA under supported commitments per intervention.

Table SO6.6

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.31	Eco -Scheme		1,752,128	1,752,128	1,752,128	1,752,128	1,752,128	0
	AECM (General)		185,783	278,675	278,675	278,675	278,675	92,892
	AECM (Co-op)		95,237	190,474	190,474	190,474	190,474	95,237
	OFS		102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	
	Total annual	0	2,136,024	2,353,976	2,396,439	2,456,871	2,558,178	188,129
	Total hectares without DC	0	1,752,128	1,752,128	1,752,128	1,752,128	1,752,128	188,129
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.22)	**0.00%**	**38.73%**	**38.73%**	**38.73%**	**38.73%**	**38.73%**	**4.16%**

R.32 Investments related to biodiversity

Within SO6 *Non-Productive Investments supporting the AECM* (hereafter AECM NPI) and the On Farm Capital investment Scheme (OFCIS) are the only interventions that contributes to R.32. The overall target value is 14.35%, being the number of farms receiving relevant support expressed as a percentage of the total number of farms in Ireland. This value is cumulative meaning that the percentage reflects the accrued proportion of farms covered under the schemes over the course of the programming period. The total number of farms receiving support for non-productive investments under the AECM NPI, captured under R.32 is 18,733 (non-cumulated). The total number of farms receiving support for non-productive investments under the OFCIS is 1,000.

AECM NPI contributes to addressing Obj6.N1 through its contribution to the target value of R.32. It does so in its complementary role to both the General and Cooperation measures, helping to achieve the agri-environment and climate objectives; and in enhancing the environmental value of the areas where such investments are supported. The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of proposed actions, based on the uptake of comparable actions in GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.32 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS) are: Ryegrass seed set, Grass margins, Barn owl boxes. See table SO6.7 for number of farms receiving relevant support per intervention.

OFCIS contributes to addressing Obj6.N1 through the support for investment actions that will have positive impact on biodiversity habitats where they are implemented. The targets are estimated based on an estimate based on the uptake of comparative investment in TAMS II (the equivalent scheme in the previous programming period). The actions that contribute to the targets for R.32 include Low Emission

Slurry Spreaders, precision grass measurement (which enables accurate grass management),sheep fencing used along hedgerows and boundaries, inter-row cultivator, flame weeders, brush weeders, rotary cultivator weeders and combcut weeders.For the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme, the first three years of the programming period are financed via the previous RDP apart from items available at the increased rate for women farmers

Table SO6.7

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.32	AECM NPI (General)	0	5,333	8,000	0	0	0	0
	AECM NPI (Co-op)	0	2,000	2,000	1,000	300	100	0
	OFCIS	15	60	75	425	425		
	Total annual	**15**	**7,393**	**10,075**	**1,425**	**725**	**100**	**0**
	Total Cumulated Values	**15**	**7,408**	**17,483**	**18,908**	**19,633**	**19,733**	**19,733**
	Total number of farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.01%**	**5.39%**	**12.71%**	**13.75%**	**14.27%**	**14.35%**	**14.35%**

R.33 Improving Natura 2000 management

Within SO6, the *AECM Measures (both the AECM General Measure and the AECM Cooperation Measure*) are the only interventions contributing to R.33. The total target value set for this indicator is 80.14% which is the percentage of hectares with relevant commitments on Natura 2000 sites expressed as a percentage of the total agricultural and forest area in Natura 2000 sites. 80.14% of Irelands agricultural and forest area in Natura 2000 sites equates to 118,292 hectares. Both the AECM General and Cooperation measures contribute to Obj6.N1 through the achievement of the target value for R.33.

The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of proposed actions, based on the uptake of comparable actions in GLAS (reduced by those who, on the basis of the current indicative map of land areas for AECM General and Cooperation, are not eligible to join the Cooperation Measure and so join the General Measure.) The actions included in the calculation of R.33 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS) include: Commonage and Private natura. The AECM measures contribution to this result indicator addresses Obj6.N1. See table SO6.8 for percentage of agricultural and forest area in Natura 2000 sites with relevant commitments per intervention.

For example, the commonage management action requires cooperation amongst the shareholders in the delivery of a sustainable grazing regime. This shared management will improve the ecological integrity of the land, including in Natura 2000 areas.

Table SO6.8

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.33	AECM General	0	43,284	64,926	64,926	64,926	64,926	21,642
	AECM Coop	0	26,683	53,366	53,366	53,366	53,366	26,683
	Total Annual	0	69,967	118,292	118,292	118,292	118,292	48,325
	Total Agr. and Forestry area in Natura 2000 sites	147,614	147,614	147,614	147,614	147,614	147,614	147,614
	%	**0%**	**47%**	**80%**	**80%**	**80%**	**80%**	**33%**

R.34 Preserving landscape features

Within SO6, the *AECM Measures (the AECM General Measure,* AECM Genetic Resources *and the AECM Cooperation Measure*) and the Eco-Scheme contributes to R.34. The total target value set for this indicator is 4.69%, which is the percentage of UAA under supported commitments for managing landscape features. The AECM General and Cooperation, and the Eco-Scheme contribute to addressing *Obj6.N1* through the achievement of the target value for R.34.

The target values for AECM (including AECM Genetic Resources) are based on the estimated uptake of proposed actions, based on the uptake of comparable actions in GLAS (reduced by those who, on the basis of the current indicative map of land areas for AECM General and Cooperation, are likely to be eligible to join the AECM Co-operation measure instead of the General measure.) The actions included in the calculation of R.34 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS) include: Protection of archaeological monuments, Dry stone wall maintenance and Managing hedgerows.

On landscape features the CP teams will be considering/promoting actions to enhance landscape elements in a co-ordinated way. The cumulative impact of the co-operative approach is thus expected to have a positive contribution to landscape elements.

The eco-scheme contribution to R.34 is 212,160 hectares. This figure assumes that 78,000 farmers will undertake Agricultural Practice 1(AP1) Preserving Landscape features. It is also assumed that the average farm size of these 78,000 farmers will be in line with the national average i.e. 32 hectares and that they will meet the criteria of 7% of the farm being a non-productive area/landscape feature. 78,000 farmers by 32 hectares by 7% = 174,720 hectares. Additionally, it is assumed 39,000 farmers may undertake the enhanced option under AP 1, with the additional contribution to the result indicator being 10%-7%, = 3%. 39,000 X 32ha X 3% = 37,440 hectares. 174,720 + 37440 = 212,160 hectares.

Considering the potential for double counting between interventions, the numerator value used for R.34 is the total area under eco-schemes See table SO6.9 for total hectares per intervention.

Table SO6.9

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.34	Eco Scheme	0	212,160	212,160	212,160	212,160	212,160	0
	AECM (General)	0	43,977	65,966	65,966	65,966	65,966	21,989
	AECM (Co-op)	0	27,013	54,026	54,026	54,026	54,026	27,013
	Total annual values (without double counting)	0	212,160	212,160	212,160	212,160	212,160	49,002
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**4.69%**	**4.69%**	**4.69%**	**4.69%**	**4.69%**	**1.08%**

2.1.SO6.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The Apiculture Scheme, the Organic Farming Scheme. the Eco-scheme, AECM General measure, AECM Cooperation Measure, AECM Article 77, AECM for Non-Productive Investments, and EIPs all address the need to restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes (Obj6 N1). Obj6.N2 is not addressed by schemes contained within the CSP.

Apiculture

The annual budget for the Irish National Apiculture Programme is equivalent to the Member States' allocation set in Annex X of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and the corresponding equal funding provided by Ireland. Progress reports, including a technical report and details on financial expenditure incurred will be required to be submitted to DAFM at set intervals. Payment of instalments of the funding will be dependent on receipt of reports confirming satisfactory progress. The total financial allocation of €123,280 per annum accounts for one research and educational programme amounting to a total financial allocation of €597427.40. The allocation for the financial year 2023 is slightly reduced to account for the use of the same envelope for measures implemented from August to December 2022 under the current apiculture programme. As per Article 111 of Regulation (EU) 2022/2115, only interventions under type of intervention described in Article 55(1)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 in the apiculture sector shall contribute to Result indicator 35". Therefore no result indicator milestones or targets have been programmed for the only supported apiculture intervention : Cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of research programmes in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products, which is supported under Article 55(1)(e).

Organic Farming Scheme

Support under this scheme is provided based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer farming on a similar land area. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred. Supports vary based on whether beneficiaries are converting to organic practices or maintaining organic practices. It also varies based on whether the farming is dry stock, dairy, tillage, or horticulture. Organic farming prohibits the use of synthetic pesticides and improves soil quality, which in turn is beneficial for biodiverse habitats, thus addressing Obj6.N1. The total financial allocation of €256 million is adequate to achieve the target of

7.45% of total UAA under organics R.19 (see Table SO6.1)
7.45% of total UAA under organics R.24 (see Table SO6.2)
7.45% of total UAA under organics R.29 (see Table SO6.5)
7.45% of total UAA under organics R.31 (see Table SO6.6)

AECM General (including AECM Genetic Resources)

The annual planned outputs under the AECM General (including AECM Genetic Resources) are based on the uptake of comparable actions in the agri-environmental climate measure in Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. The AECM measures (Genera, Genetic Resources and Cooperation) will directly assist in addressing the need to restore and maintain Ireland's habitats and landscapes to protect biodiversity (Obj6.N1). The total financial allocation of €610m is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (see Table SO6.1).
- 38.73% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including HNV farming practices (R.31) (see Table SO6.6).
- 80.14% of total Natura 2000 area under supported commitments (R.33) (see table SO6.8).

AECM Cooperation Measure (including support provided under Art.77 of the CSP Regulation)

Support under this measure will be provided in the form of results-based payments which are designed to ensure that farmers are appropriately incentivised to improve the landscapes and catchments within which they farm. Payments will reflect the quality of the results achieved, i.e. The higher the result, the higher the payment. Fixed eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of the CSP Regulation. Works on lands which are difficult to access can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. Support under the AECM Cooperation measure will also assist in addressing the need to restore and maintain Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to protect biodiversity (Obj6.N1). The total financial allocation of €460m is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (see Table SO6.1).
- 38.73% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including HNV farming practices (R.31) (see Table SO6.5).
- 80.14% of total Natura 2000 area under supported commitments (R.33) (see Table SO6.8).

AECM Article 77

The exact funding for each co-operation project will be dependent on the number of participants and the scale of the projects and ambition. An indicative budget allocation of €50m is set aside to cover the costs of running the co-operation projects and the landscape actions. It is expected that the Community Fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions could be €160m over the programme or approximately €20m for each of the 8 co-operation projects.

The eight Co-operation Projects (CP) will work with DAFM in designing and implementing co-operation projects. As this intervention relates directly to the AECM Cooperation measure, it also contributes to addressing all the needs in SO6. The indicative budget allocation of €210m is adequate to support the R.28 target of 234,898 farmers in the most sensitive and challenging lands in the country (see Table SO6.4 above).

Non-Productive Investments for the AECM

This is an investment support measure which is integrated within the AECM and provided for in accordance with Article 70 of the CSP Regulations. Support will be paid as part of the payment for the relevant actions under the AECM where the cost for the non-productive investment element will be in line with Article 70 of the CSP regulations. As such, this intervention complements the AECM General, and the AECM Cooperation interventions by providing the instrument through which beneficiaries can access finance required to carry out actions under the AECM interventions. The total indicative financial allocation is €140m for actions relating the AECM General Option, and €80m for actions relating to AECM Cooperation Option. The non-productive investments are linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives such as Obj6.N1 namely, the need to maintain and improve Irelands habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline. Planting trees is an example of an action that is supported under this intervention and contributes to addressing this need. The total financial allocation of €220m is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 13.93% of farms benefitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resources (R.26) (see Table SO6.2).
- 14.35% of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to biodiversity (R.32) (see Table SO6.6).

Eco-scheme

The total Eco-Scheme budget has been ring fenced at 25% of Ireland's Direct Payments allocation. The total indicative financial allocation of €1.48 billion over the period 2023-2027.

The rates of payment will vary depending on uptake of the eco-scheme. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), then the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (minimum rate of payment). If uptake is only half of that (i.e., c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, then the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 (maximum rate of payment).

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 (planned rate of payment). This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme, figures subject to rounding. Support provided under the eco-scheme will assist in directly addressing Obj6 N1.
The total financial allocation of €1.48 billion is adequate to achieve the targets of:

10.61% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reduce tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops) (R.19) (see Table SO6.1 above).

38.73% of UAA paid under supported commitments for biodiversity conservation or restoration including HNV farming practices (R31) (see table SO6.6).

EIPs
The total financial allocation proposed for this scheme is €36 million. Support under Stream B of this scheme will be provided for 'bottom-up' innovative projects in a range of areas aimed at addressing environmental, biodiversity and climate change challenges. Funding will be provided to projects approved by an expert evaluation committee and will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the development of detailed Operational Group Plans, not exceeding €10,000. If successful, projects will move to Phase 3 where (under Stream B), they will receive funding not exceeding €1,050,000 to implement their plans. The total financial allocation for the scheme is adequate to achieve the R.28 target of 234,898 farmers in receipt of training, advice or knowledge exchange relating to environmental or climate related performance (see table SO6.4 above).

On Farm Capital Investment Scheme

The total indicative financial allocation for this intervention is €100 million. The need to restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators (Obj6.N1) is addressed through the support for investment actions that will contribute to improving biodiversity habitats in the areas that the investment actions are applied. The higher rate of investment support to organic farmers under the OFCIS will also encourage diversification into this area which will also assist in improving biodiversity conditions and habitats. Organic farming practices are beneficial for biodiversity due to inter alia, reduced use of synthetic fertilisers and the subsequent improvement in water quality in the surrounding area. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €100m is sufficient to achieve the target of 14.35%, of farms receiving investment support beneficial to biodiversity (R.32 – see table SO6.7).

2.1.SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas

2.1.SO7.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO7.1.1 Strengths

Obj7 N1: Irish farmers are highly educated and have high levels of agricultural training
Obj7.S2: Irish farmers have access to a range of education and training opportunities
Obj7.S3: Well established and easily accessed knowledge transfer system
Obj7.S4: Effective design and implementation of supports for Young Farmers
Obj7.S5: Agri-taxation policy supports young farmers
Obj7.S6: Well-established collaborative farming arrangements in place to assist young farmers trying to access land and business opportunities
Obj7.S7: Strong agri-food sector providing opportunities for young farmers and business development in rural areas
Obj7.S8: Strong off-farm employment opportunities allow less profitable farming systems to remain economically sustainable
Obj7.S9: Government initiatives in place to facilitate business development in rural areas

2.1.SO7.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj7.W1: Agriculture has an ageing workforce with small proportion of young farm managers
Obj7.W2: Difficulties associated with accessing land for purchase
Obj7.W3: Difficulties accessing finance
Obj7.W4: Farmers receive a lower than average income compared to other sectors of the economy
Obj7.W5: Lack of diverse employment opportunities and a higher risk of poverty in rural areas
Obj7.W6: Reduced access to services in rural areas compared to large urban centres

2.1.SO7.1.3 Opportunities

Obj7.O1: Continue to increase the level of training and education opportunities available to young farmers
Obj7.O2: Build on the range of supports available for Young Farmers including assisting in the mobilisation of land
Obj7.O3: Increase availability and access to digital technologies in agriculture
Obj7.O4: Develop and promote career pathways in agriculture including, for example, into organic farming
Obj7.O5: Encourage the continued development of the forestry sector in rural areas
Obj7.O6: Encourage diversification of the rural economy
Obj7.O7: Facilitate remote working in rural areas
Obj7.O8: Encourage the continued development of the bio-economy in rural areas

2.1.SO7.1.4 Threats

Obj7.T1: Income volatility across the agricultural sector due to changes in weather and market conditions
Obj7.T2: Low incomes in certain sectors may deter young farmers
Obj7.T3: Reduction in existing young farmer supports
Obj7.T4: Continued decline in young farmer numbers
Obj7.T5: The deterioration of rural towns and villages
Obj7.T6: Not maximising opportunities presented by the digital economy
Obj7.T7: Increasing levels of poverty and social isolation in rural Ireland

Obj7.T8: Uncertainties associated with climate change

2.1.SO7.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO7.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes
Obj7.N2	Support YF in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in/develop their farm	2nd Highest SO7	Yes
Obj7.N3	Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises	3rd Highest Priority	Yes

2.1.SO7.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
DPdecoupled	BISS(21) - Basic income support for sustainability	51BISS - BISS	O.4. Number of hectares benefitting from for basic income support
DPdecoupled	CRISS(29) - Complementary redistributive income support for sustainability	51CRISS - Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability	O.7. Number of hectares benefitting from complementary redistributive income support
DPdecoupled	CIS-YF(30) - Complementary income support for young farmers	51CISYF - Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers	O.6. Number of hectares benefitting from complementary income support for young farmers
DPdecoupled	Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare	51ECO - Eco-Scheme	O.8. Number of hectares or of livestock units benefitting from eco-schemes
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53CFG - Collaborative Farming Grant	O.30. Number of supported operations or units for generational renewal (excluding setting-up support)
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational group projects
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53ESSPO - Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations	O.28. Number of supported producer groups and producer organisations
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53LEADER - LEADER	O.31. Number of supported local development strategies (LEADER) or preparatory actions

Overview

According to the SWOT Analysis, 7,400 farmers in 2016 were considered to be young farmers, amounting to 5% of the total farmer population in Ireland. In addition, 38% of farmers aged over 60 did not have a farming successor identified. The need for an effective mechanism to increase the numbers of young farmers (Obj7.N1) is addressed by a number of schemes. The *Basic Income Support for Sustainability* provides income support to all farmers in the agricultural sector. This decreases income disparities between the agricultural sector and other sectors of the economy, making farming a more attractive career choice for young farmers. It further ensures that young farmers are supported to maintain a career in the agricultural sector. Similarly, the *Complementary Income Support for Sustainability*

increases the proportional support received by small/medium sized farmers, which decreases income disparities between farmers within the agricultural sector. This ensures that farmers managing small and medium sized farms are further supported to maintain a career in agriculture; and further encourages young farmers working or managing small/medium sized farms to begin and continue farming. The *Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers* provides additional support (alongside *BISS)* to farmers under the age of 40, who have completed a recognised agricultural course (Green Cert). This is an extra incentive to encourage young farmers into the agricultural sector, therefore increasing the number of young farmers overall (Obj7.N1).

The *Collaborative Farming Grant* further encourages young farmers to stay in agriculture through the facilitation of land succession (Obj7.N1). The support offered under this scheme is provided in the form of financial assistance towards the professional costs, such as legal, taxation and advisory, associated with setting up registered farm partnerships as well as the professional costs associated with providing advice to older farmers on succession and retirement options. The aim is to assist old farmers transitioning to retirement in passing over their land to younger farmers.

The SWOT analysis further noted difficulties associated with accessing finance and with accessing land for purchase, resulting in the need to support young farmers in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in and develop their farm enterprise (Obj7.N2). The *On farm Capital Investment Scheme* supports young farmers by providing grant aid at a rate of 60% of investments for farmers below the age of 40 years (young farmers), as opposed to the 40% grant aid rate provided for in the general scheme. This places young farmers in a better position to invest in their farm enterprise (Obj7.N2). In addition, this reassures young farmers that they will be able to maintain a career in farming and therefore addresses Obj7.N1.

Additionally, *European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs)* represent an effective mechanism to address the issue of decreasing young farmer numbers. *EIPs* support ‘bottom-up’, innovative approaches to challenges in the agricultural sector. Projects may include those focused on accessibility issues for young farmers and innovative projects designed to promote generational renewal on Irish farms (Obj7.N1).Stream A of the intervention is aimed at addressing wider competitiveness, modernisation and animal health and welfare challenges in the sector, and generational renewal will fall under this umbrella of themes for which innovative projects are supported under. The calls for proposals will be initiated by DAFM and are informed by consultation with relevant stakeholders and policy area experts. Seeing as generational renewal is a key area of concern, DAFM will be in a position to incentivise projects that will address this challenge through a specific call for proposals under this theme. In doing so, Obj7.N1 will be addressed.

Lastly, the need to provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises (Obj7.N3) is addressed through *Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations.* This scheme provides support to groups of producers in order to assist them in forming producer organisations (POs). POs have greater influence and position in the value chain and can therefore improve the possibility of producers in the beef, sheep and other sectors to generate greater profits from their enterprise. This need will also be addressed by the LEADER programme, which provides support for community-led local development. One of the indicative LEADER themes in which funding will be provided under is ‘Economic Development and Job Creation’, with ‘Social, Community & Cooperative Enterprises’ being an important element of this. As such, support delivered under the LEADER programme will provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises and businesses (Obj7.N3).

In addition to the above interventions which directly address the needs identified under SO7, *Continuous Professional Development for Advisors* has the potential to address the needs identified too. *CPD for Advisors* equips advisors with the knowledge necessary to support young farmers in gaining access to

finance, as well as maximising the finance they receive through the various schemes offered under the CAP *(*Obj7.N2*)*.

2.1.SO7.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO7.6 Are you planning CAP contribution towards the Erasmus programme

: **No**

2.1.SO7.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	**Target value**
R.1 CU PR - Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance	297,928.00
R.4 - Linking income support to standards and good practices Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality	97.41 %
R.9 CU PR - Farm modernisation Share of farmers receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency	3.63 %
R.10 CU PR - Better supply chain organisation Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP	0.76 %
R.36 CU PR - Generational renewal Number of young farmers benefitting from setting up with support from the CAP, including a gender breakdown	7,000.00
R.37 CU - Growth and jobs in rural areas New jobs supported in CAP projects	7,000.00
R.38 CU - LEADER coverage Share of rural population covered by local development strategies	81.93 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.1 Enhancing Performance through knowledge and innovation

Within SO7, EIPs have the potential to address Obj7.N1 by providing support to projects which focus on accessibility issues for young farmers or projects designed to promote generational renewal on Irish farms.

The total target value for this indicator is 297,928 persons. In the context of SO7, only Stream A of the *EIP* intervention contributes to the target value for this result indicator. The targets are based on experience to date with implementation of current EIPs. As you can see from Table SO7.1, it is expected that 15 people will participate in EIP operational groups under Stream A and will be accounted for in the total milestone/target values in 2024 and 2029. In each year between 2025-2028, it is expected that 30 people will participate in EIP operational groups under Stream A and will be accounted for in the total milestone values each year. Projects funded under Stream B of the EIP intervention do not address the needs identified under SO7 but the people participating in these operational groups re still accounted for in the cumulative target for R.1 (see Table SO7.1 for a breakdown).

Additionally, the Knowledge Transfer (KT) Programme, Continued Professional Development for advisors, training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme, training to implement the AECM, and administrative support for the AECM cooperation group under article 77 (i.e. AECM Article

77) also contribute to the cumulative target value for R.1, These additional schemes however, do not address the needs under SO7.

Table SO7.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.1	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM Article 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	EIPs - Stream A	0	15	30	30	30	30	15
	EIPs - Stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	CPD for advisors	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200		
	KT Programme	0	0	18,960	18,960	18,960	0	0
	Total annual	**18,700**	**56,965**	**82,280**	**60,390**	**47,298**	**21,530**	**10,765**
	Totals (R.1) - cumulative	**18,700**	**75,665**	**157,945**	**218,335**	**265,633**	**287,163**	**297,928**

R.4: Linking income support to standards and good practices

Within SO7, the Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS), the Complementary Redistributive Support for Sustainability and the Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers (CIS-YF) address Obj7.N1 (Effective mechanism to increase the numbers of young farmers, including through income support, encouraging land mobility and succession planning). These interventions (in addition to Protein Aid, Eco-schemes and ANC) are accounted for in the total target value set for R.4. The total target value for R.4 is 97.41%. Table SO7.2 shows the total number of hectares accounted for by each scheme. The total area included under each intervention is already accounted for under the BISS area, and therefore, the total area under BISS is the total numerator value included in the calculation of R.4.Eco-Schemes are included in the calculation for R.4.

Table SO7.2

R.4	BISS	0	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042
	Eco Scheme	0	3,838,634	3,838,634	3,838,634	3,838,634	3,838,634
	Protein Aid	0	14,000	18,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
	CIS-YF	0	181,500	190,575	200,145	210,210	220,770
	CRISS	0	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000
	ANC	1,894,836	2,229,219	2,229,219	2,229,219	2,229,219	334,383
	Total hectares without double counting	1,894,836	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042	4,407,042
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**41.88%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**	**97.41%**

R.9: Farm modernisation

Within SO7, the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS) contributes to the achievement of both Obj7.N1 (Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers, including through income support, encouraging land mobility and succession planning) and Obj7.N2 (Support young farmers in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in and develop their farm enterprise). The OFCIS is the single contributor to R.9. The total target value set for R.9 is 3.63% (5,000 investments altogether). Capital investments are demand driven and therefore exact figures are difficult to predict. It is predicted that a number of investments will contribute to restructuring, modernising and improving

resource efficiency on farms. Estimates are based on schemes approvals in TAMS II (except those under the Dairy Equipment Scheme), at a 70% completion rate. See table SO7.3 below.

Table SO7.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.9	OFCIS	75	300	375	2,125	2,125		
	Total annual	**75**	**300**	**375**	**2,125**	**2,125**	**0**	**0**
	Total cumulated	**75**	**375**	**750**	**2,875**	**5,000**	**5,000**	**5,000**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**1.5%**	**3.1%**	**3.6%**	**3.6%**

R.10: Better supply chain organisation

Within SO7, Early-Stage support for POs (in addition to Sectoral Interventions in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector) contributes to the target value established for R.10. The total target value set for R.10 is 0.76%. The achievement of this target will depend on rural enterprises and individuals being provided with opportunities and support in order to expand their enterprises (Obj7.N3). When calculating the proportion of R.10 attributed to Early-stage Support for POs, target participant rates were based on projections from stakeholder consultation on potential beef, sheep, fruit and vegetable, tillage, potato and amenity applicants based on existing producer groups. The number of producers supported in the beef sector is targeted at 15 producers in 2023, with this figure dropping to 10 producers in 2024 and 5 producers in 2025. The number of producers supported in other sectors is targeted at 260 producers each year between 2023 and 2025. See table SO7.4 below.

Table SO7.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.10	F&V PO	46	46	46	46	46	0	0
	Early-stage Support for Pos (Beef Sheep)	15	10	5	0	0	0	0
	Early-stage Support for Pos (Other sectors)	260	260	260	0	0	0	0
	Total cumulated	**321**	**637**	**948**	**994**	**1040**	**1040**	**1040**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.23%**	**0.46%**	**0.69%**	**0.72%**	**0.76%**	**0.76%**	**0.76%**

R.36: Generational Renewal

Within SO7, both Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers (CIS-YF) and Collaborative Farming address Obj7.N1 (Effective mechanism to increase the numbers of young farmers, including through income support, encouraging land mobility and succession planning). Both these schemes contribute to the achievement of the targets set under R.36. The total cumulative target set for R.36 is 7,000 young farmers.

The target values established under the CISYF show 1,300 farmers benefitting in 2024, growing to 7,000 farmers in 2028. The projected 2023 figure is based on the number of beneficiaries under the Young Farmers Scheme in 2020 and 2021 taken with the anticipated increase in enrolment in agricultural education courses. For subsequent years up to 2027 a 5% increase is applied each year showing the estimated increase in young farmer numbers year on year.

The targets values established under the Collaborative Farming Grant are 170 farmers each year between 2024-2028. Total potential beneficiaries are estimated based on the Collaborative Farming Grant budget and the maximum payment potential per applicant. To date approximately 85% of newly constituted Registered Farm Partnerships (RFPs) are intra-family, i.e. between a parent and a child. Parent/child RFPs are the RFPs contributing towards the generational renewal goal, and therefore only 85% of the potential beneficiaries estimated are included in the total target value.

The total cumulated target value for R.36 is 7,000 young farmers. The target value established considers double counting and assumes that the total number of farmers benefiting from the Collaborative Farming Grant (170 farmers each year between 2024-2028) will also receive support under the CIS-YF. Therefore, total target values are calculated based only on those receiving support under the CIS-YF. See table SO7.5 below.

Table SO7.5

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.36	CIS-YF		1,300	1,350	1,400	1,450	1,500	0
	Collaborative farming	0	170	170	170	170	170	0
	Total annual (without double counting)	**0**	**1,300**	**1,350**	**1,400**	**1,450**	**1,500**	**0**
	Totals cumulative	**0**	**1,300**	**2,650**	**4,050**	**5,500**	**7,000**	**7,000**

R.37: Growth and Jobs in rural areas

The target values for R.37 are identical to R.36 as the supporting of young farmers concurrently supports new jobs. See justification for R.36.

R.38: LEADER Coverage

Within SO7, the LEADER Programme has the potential to contribute to Obj7.N3 (Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises). The LEADER Programme is the single intervention contributing to R.38. The target value set for R.38 is 81.93%. This is based on the fact that Ireland has a much higher percentage of its territory and population living in rural areas relative to the EU27 average. The significance of rural areas in Ireland is confirmed in published Commission data. However, because there is no single agreed definition of 'rural' as a concept, different definitions are used by different bodies. The Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) defined rural Ireland as 'all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities' - therefore the term 'rural areas' was used to encompass open countryside, as well as small, medium and large towns. This definition is consistent with Our Rural Future's requirement to adopt a holistic and place-based approach to rural development. The figure of 3,082,317 ha is based on LDS for the 2014-2020 programme and may be amended after the creation/selection of LEADER LDS's for the 2023-2027 programme and Census 2022.

It is worth noting that once Local Development Strategies (LDS) are created/selected, the CSP will be amended based on the content of the strategies, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included. In this regard, potential RIs include. In this regard, potential RIs relevant to SO7 include: R.37 (Growth and jobs in rural areas) and R.39 (Developing the rural economy). See table SO7.6.

Table SO7.6

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.38	LEADER	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317
	Total rural population	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043
	%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%	81.93%

2.1.SO7.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will directly contribute to achieving the needs identified under Specific Objective 7.

- Obj7.N1 will be directly addressed through the BISS, CRISS, CIS-YF, the Collaborative Farming Grant and EIPs;
- Obj7.N2 will be directly addressed through the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme
- Obj7.N3 will be directly addressed through Early Stage support for Producer Organisations and the LEADER programme.

Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS):

The total financial allocation for the BISS is €3.64 billion for the period 2023-2027. Support is based on the number and value of entitlements held. The planned average unit amount under this intervention is €158.68 per Payment per activated entitlement. Taking the number of expected activated Payment Entitlements as 4,407,042 at an average planned unit amount of €158.68 would lead to an annual financial allocation of €728m, (including an allocation of €35 million to the National Reserve). Support under BISS addresses the need to increase the numbers of young farmers, by providing them with income support (Obj7.N1) along with all other active farmers in the country and the total financial allocation of €3.64 billion is adequate to achieve the targeted 97.41% of total Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) as per table SO7.2.

Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability (CRISS):

It is proposed to ringfence 10% of the direct payments ceiling for CRISS, which corresponds to a total indicative financial allocation of approximately €593 million for the period 2023-2027. Based on historical information in relation to farm sizes, it is expected that the number of hectares planned to be supported will be 2,750,000 hectares. Support under CRISS addresses the need to increase the numbers of young farmers, by providing them with income support (Obj7.N1). The total financial allocation of €593m is adequate to achieve the target hectares outlined for R.4 (97.41%) in table SO7.2.

Complementary Income Support for Young Farmer:

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €178 million. Support under this intervention will help to address the issue of an ageing farming population in Ireland by attracting young farmers into the sector. The proposed support of €196 per eligible hectare in 2024, reducing each year to a rate of €161 in 2028, subject to a maximum of 50 hectares, will provide young farmers with a total annual budget of €35.58 million under Pillar I payments from 2024-2028. In addition, Ireland proposes to grant support under the CIS-YF to eligible farmers under the Young Farmers Scheme who need support for the remainder of the period of eligibility under that scheme. The payment amount will build on the significant progress made since 2015 under the Young Farmers Scheme (YFS). Under CIS-YF, direct income support is provided to young farmers. Therefore, this scheme directly addresses the need to increase young farmers by providing young farmers specifically with direct income support (Obj7.N1). This financial allocation adequately supports the achievement of the R.4 target of 97.41% (see table SO7.2); as well as the achievement of the cumulative R.36 and R.37 targets of 7,000 young farmers. (See table SO7.5).

Collaborative Farming Grant:

The total financial allocation under this scheme is €2 million. Support under this scheme will be provided by way of a grant to the value of 50% of the administrative costs involved in establishing a new Registered Farm Partnership – i.e., vouched expenses for legal, accounting and advisory costs up to a maximum of €1,500. Financial support towards the professional costs, such as legal, taxation and advisory for older farmers will contribute 50% of such vouched costs, to a maximum payment of €1,500 per beneficiary. The support provided under this scheme will directly address Obj7.N1 by encouraging land mobility and succession planning and the financial allocation of €2m is adequate to support the achievement of the cumulative R.36 and R.37 targets of 7,000 young farmers (See table SO7.5).

EIPs:

The total financial allocation proposed for this scheme is €36 million. Support under this scheme will be provided for 'bottom-up' innovative projects, including those focused on supporting generational renewal (Obj7.N1). Stream A projects will address wider competitiveness, modernisation and animal health and welfare challenges in the sector. Funding will be provided to projects approved by an expert evaluation committee and will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the development of detailed Operational Group Plans, not exceeding €10,000. If successful, projects will move to Phase 3 where (under Stream A), they will receive funding not exceeding €650,000 to implement their plans. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €36.12m is adequate to achieve the target value for R.1 of 297,928 persons benefitting from advice, training or knowledge exchange related to enhancing sustainable economic and social performance. (See Table SO7.1).

On Farm Capital Investment Scheme:

The total financial allocation for the scheme is €100 million and funding will be provided on a case-by-case basis where applicants meet the criteria to be eligible for support. Grants are provided for farmers wishing to invest in productive technologies and or equipment. These grants are awarded on a tiered basis depending on the category of farmer applying. Support for young farmers is offered at a 60% grant rate. Based on an indicative investment ceiling of €90,000 at 60% grant rate, the maximum support that can be obtained by young farmers is €54,000.. The higher support rate offered to young farmers under this scheme will entice young farmers to invest in their farm enterprise and will therefore directly address (Obj7.N2).The total financial allocation for the scheme of €100,000,000 is sufficient to achieve the target of 3.63% of farms receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency (R.9) (See Table SO7.3).

Early Stage support for Producer Organisations

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €1.49 million for the period 2023-2027. Support under this scheme is provided to groups of producers in the beef and sheep and other sectors who are interested in becoming Producer Organisations (POs). The total amount of €1.49 million is justified on the basis that total planned allocation over the course of the programme to each organisation is €33,000 to be paid over three years. The support provided under this intervention will directly address Obj7.N3 by providing support to rural enterprises in the beef, sheep and other sectors. The financial allocation is adequate to achieve the target value participant rates of 275 beneficiaries in 2023, 270 beneficiaries in 2024 and 265 beneficiaries in 2025 as outlined under R.10 in Table SO7.4 and the R.10 target of 0.76%.

LEADER:

The total indicative allocation of this scheme is €180m for the period 2023-2027. There are three different pathways by which funding under the LEADER programme will be delivered. Funding will be granted for the implementation of operations under the Community Led Development Strategy; for the preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action; and for running costs and animation. The LEADER programme will directly address Obj7.N3 by supporting 'economic development and job creation' in rural Ireland. The total financial allocation for the LEADER programme is adequate to achieve the target of 29 Local Development Strategies (LDS) across the programming period, and the R.38 target value of 81.93% as per Table SO7.6.

2.1.SO8 Promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry

2.1.SO8.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO8.1.1 Strengths

Obj8.S1: Dedicated Government Department for Rural and Community Development
Obj8.S2: A whole of Government approach to rural development
Obj8 N3: Ireland's National Planning Framework and Development Plan - Project Ireland 2040 - includes a strategic objective on Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
Obj8.S4: High proportion of Irish population live in rural areas compared to EU
Obj8.S5: Unemployment rates lower in rural areas than urban areas in Ireland
Obj.8.S6: Strong community involvement and a bottom-up approach to local development
Obj8.S7: Strong agri-food sector contributing to the rural economy
Obj8.S8: Strong tourism sector contributing to the rural economy
Obj8.S9: Ireland's landscape and unique cultural heritage are a key tourism attraction (domestic and international)
Obj8.S10: National policy ambition to become a global leader for the bio-economy
Obj8.S11: Ireland has an abundance of natural advantages to allow for the development and expansion of the bio-economy
Obj8.S12: Successive publicly funded forestry programmes
Obj8.S13: National policy ambition to support the development of social enterprises

2.1.SO8.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj8.W1: Rural population at higher risk of poverty than those living in urban areas
Obj8.W2: Low levels of female participation in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sector; especially in leadership roles
Obj8.W3: Prevalence of social isolation in rural areas due to limited access to basic services
Obj8.W4: Unequal distribution of employment opportunities in rural areas
Obj8.W5: Rural economies are particularly vulnerable to economic downturns
Obj8.W6: Fragmented nature of forestry sector and lack of education and training within the forestry sector limiting its sustainability
Obj8.W7: Barriers hindering the supply of biomass resources, ultimately hindering the development of the bio-economy
Obj8.W8: Lack of awareness and understanding of the bio-economy hindering its uptake and development

2.1.SO8.1.3 Opportunities

Obj8.O1: Build local capacities to enable and support cohesive rural communities
Obj8.O2: Develop the tourism industry in rural areas in a sustainable way, including through agri-tourism
Obj8.O3: Improve availability of and access to necessary services in rural areas
Obj8.O4: Increase employment rates, and expand employment opportunities in rural areas
Obj8.O5: Increase opportunities for women in agriculture, including in leadership roles
Obj8.O6: Foster social cohesion in rural areas
Obj8.O7: Optimise digital connectivity and entrepreneurial activity
Obj8.O8: Develop and expand the bio-economy and circular economy in rural Ireland
Obj8.O9: Develop and expand the forestry sector to manage the increasing supply of timber biomass

Obj8.O10: Encourage the development of community-based energy production schemes *Obj8.O11*: Increase afforestation rates *Obj8.O12*: Increase opportunities for diversification of rural economies, including farm enterprises *Obj8.O13*: Capitalize on the increased market opportunities for wood and biomass particularly in the construction and energy sectors

2.1.SO8.1.4 Threats

Obj8.T1: Prevalence of higher age profile in rural areas compared to national average *Obj8.T2:* Over reliance on traditional employment options and reluctance to diversify business types in rural areas *Obj8.T3:* Changing nature of retail, service delivery and town centre living *Obj8.T4:* Negative economic, social and environmental impacts of climate change and land use changes on rural communities *Obj8.T5*: Increased financing, compliance and governance requirements *Obj8.T6:* Poor farmer health, wellbeing and rural isolation; and ongoing farm safety issues *Obj8.T7:* Failure to maximise opportunities presented by the digital economy *Obj8.T8:* Potential negative impact of Brexit on agri-food related employment *Obj8.T9:* Emerging plant pests and diseases in Irelands forests, reducing the level of biomass available

2.1.SO8.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO8.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj8.N1	Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas	Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N2	Improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas including broadband	2nd Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N3	Support sustainable community development in rural areas, in particular to address E+C challenges	3rd Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N4	Support the further development of the tourism industry in rural Ireland	4th Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N5	Improve on farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being	5th Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N6	Increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development	6th Highest for SO 8	Yes

2.1.SO8.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational group projects

RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53LEADER - LEADER	O.31. Number of supported local development strategies (LEADER) or preparatory actions

Overview

The need to maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bioeconomy in rural areas (Obj8.N1) is addressed by a number of interventions. The *Organic Farming Scheme* supports farmers to transition to or maintain organic farming practices through financial support to the value of costs incurred or income forgone in making/maintaining this transition. One action supported under the scheme is the use of organic and green manures to improve soil organic matter. Manure is a waste product of livestock production and therefore the use of manure in organic farming systems promotes the circular economy (Obj8.N1). The *On-Farm Capital Investment scheme (OFCIS)* also contributes to Obj8.N1 through support for investments that improve environmental performance on farm. Examples include investments in biomass boilers, or a heat recovery unit. In order to maximise the opportunities presented by the bioeconomy, certain specialised infrastructure and technologies such as biomass boilers are required. Therefore, the *OFCIS*, which provides financial assistance to purchase such equipment, addresses this need (Obj8.N1).

The circular economy, a facet of agriculture rooted in innovation, is also addressed through *European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs).* Support under *EIPs* is granted for 'bottom-up', innovative projects that provide solutions to specific challenges within the agricultural sector. Stream A of the intervention focusses on addressing wider competitiveness, modernisation and animal health and welfare challenges which includes innovative ways to maximise opportunities presented by the circular economy, an aspect of the agri-food sector that will require creative and ambitious action in order to make such a transition. As such Obj8.N1 is addressed.

The *LEADER Programme* supports community led local development programmes and in doing so contributes to a number of needs under SO8. Projects under LEADER will be selected based on how they relate to predefined themes. One of the indicative themes for the Irish LEADER programme 2023-2027 is 'Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion'. This theme pertains directly to the need to improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas (Obj8.N2). As referenced in the SWOT analysis, Obj8.O3 states that the average distance to most everyday services in rural Ireland was at least three times longer compared to urban areas. Moreover, in order for rural businesses to attract Foreign Direct Investment, rural Ireland will need appropriate infrastructure. As such, promoting community development projects under the LEADER programme is of high importance.

LEADER projects will be roughly guided by indicative themes set by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). One of these themes is 'Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation' and directly pertains to the need to support sustainable community development in rural areas, in particular in addressing environmental and climate challenges (Obj8.N3). Moreover, the broad theme of 'Economic Development and Job Creation' and its subtheme 'Rural Tourism and Recreation' will address the need to support the further development of the tourism industry in rural Ireland (Obj8.N4).

The need to improve farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being (Obj8.N5), is addressed by the *On Farm Capital Investment Scheme*. This scheme offers financial support to farmers to assist them in buying farm safety equipment such as safety rails/fences, plant protection products and solid covers for slurry stores. These investments will be supported at a higher grant rate of 50%, compared to the grant rate of 40% for general investments. Without this support, farmers might not be willing to buy, or be able to afford farm safety equipment. As such, providing support to assist in the purchasing of this equipment will simultaneously improve farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being thus addressing Obj8.N5.

The OFCIS also addresses the need to increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development (Obj8.N6) by virtue of the higher grant rate of 60% that women receive in comparison to the standard rate of 40% offered under the scheme. Through this increased grant rate, women are facilitated and encouraged to participate in agriculture and business development, thus addressing the need. *EIPs* also address Obj8.N6 by providing support to innovative 'bottom-up' projects that promote gender balance in the agricultural sector. Finally, Knowledge Transfer Groups can be set up to have women only participation, based on the groups' local needs and therefore has the potential to address Obj8.N6.

On Obj8.N6, data collection for a number of the interventions contained in the CSP are split by gender. As such, patterns for the participation of women in other schemes can be used to inform the design of schemes in future programmes in such a way to increase their opportunities in agriculture.

2.1.SO8.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO8.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.1 CU PR - Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance	297,928.00
R.9 CU PR - Farm modernisation Share of farmers receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency	3.63 %
R.29 PR - Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	7.46 %
R.38 CU - LEADER coverage Share of rural population covered by local development strategies	81.93 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.1 Enhancing Performance through knowledge and innovation

Within SO8, EIPs address Obj8.N1 and Obj8.N6 by providing support to projects which focus, projects that maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bioeconomy as well as projects that focus on increasing the opportunities for women in agriculture or rural enterprises.

The total cumulative target value for this indicator is 297,928 persons. In the context of SO8, Stream A of the *EIP* intervention contributes to the target value for this result indicator. The targets are based on experience to date with implementation of current EIPs. As you can see from Table SO8.1, it is expected that 30 people per year will participate in EIP operational groups under Stream A. These targets are cumulative. Projects funded under Stream B of the *EIP* intervention do not address the needs identified under SO8 but people participating in these Operational Groups are still accounted for in the cumulative target for R.1 (see table SO8.1 for breakdown).

Additionally, the Knowledge Transfer (KT) Programme, Continued Professional Development (CPD) for advisors, training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme, training to implement the AECM, and administrative support for the AECM cooperation group under article 77 (i.e. AECM Article 77) also contribute to the cumulative target value for R.1. These additional schemes however, do not address the needs under SO8.

Table SO8.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.1	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM Article 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	EIPs - Stream A	0	15	30	30	30	30	15
	EIPs - Stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	CPD for advisors	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200		
	KT Programme	0	0	18,960	18,960	18,960	0	0
	Total annual	**18,700**	**56,965**	**82,280**	**60,390**	**47,298**	**21,530**	**10,765**
	Totals (R.1) - cumulative	**18,700**	**75,665**	**157,945**	**218,335**	**265,633**	**287,163**	**297,928**

R.9: Farm modernisation

Within SO8, the *On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS*) is the only intervention that contributes to this result indicator. In the context of SO8, the intention of *OFCIS* is to provide farmers with the capacity to invest in resources that maximise the opportunities that arise from the circular and bioeconomy, such as biomass boilers (Obj8.N1). The target is 3.63% which quantifies the number of farms receiving support under this measure. These figures are estimated based on comparative investment in TAMS II (the equivalent scheme in the previous programming period). Funding for the first three years of the programming period is covered by the previous RDP, apart from items available at the increased rate for women farmers. Overall, this will contribute to the need to maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas (Obj8.N1) and the need to improve on farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being (Obj8.N5). See table SO8.2 for the number of farms receiving relevant support.

Table SO8.2

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.9	OFCIS	75	300	375	2,125	2,125		
	Total annual	**75**	**300**	**375**	**2,125**	**2,125**	**0**	**0**
	Total cumulated	**75**	**375**	**750**	**2,875**	**5,000**	**5,000**	**5,000**
	Total farms	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
	%	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**1.5%**	**3.1%**	**3.6%**	**3.6%**

R.29: Development of organic agriculture

The *Organic Farming Scheme* is the only intervention that contributes to R.29. This result indicator is quantified by the number of hectares paid under the scheme, expressed as a percentage of the total number of UAA in Ireland. The total target set for R.29 is 7.45%. This is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming.

The target for R.29 is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO8.3 for total hectares of UAA 'in conversion' to organic farming and total hectares organic UAA 'in maintenance'. Seeing as most of the nutrients required as part of organic farming systems come from by-products of other farming practices such as manure and compost, the OFS addresses the need to maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bioeconomy in rural areas (Obj8.N1) through achieving the target value for R.29.

Table SO8.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.29	OFS - Conversion	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS - Maintenance	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	Total annual	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**2.27%**	**2.93%**	**3.87%**	**5.21%**	**7.45%**	**0.00%**

R.38: LEADER Coverage

Within SO8, the LEADER Programme has the potential to contribute to Obj8.N1 (maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bioeconomy in rural areas). LEADER is the single intervention contributing to R.38. The target value set for R.38 is 81.93%. This is based on the fact that Ireland has a much higher percentage of its territory and population living in rural areas relative to the EU27 average. The significance of rural areas in Ireland is confirmed in published Commission data. However, because there is no single agreed definition of 'rural' as a concept, different definitions are used by different bodies. The Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) defined rural Ireland as 'all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities' - therefore the term 'rural areas' was used to encompass open countryside, as well as small, medium and large towns. This definition is consistent with Our Rural Future's requirement to adopt a holistic and place-based approach to rural development. The figure of 3,082,317 ha is based on LDS for the 2014-2020 programme and may be amended after the creation/selection of LEADER LDS's for the 2023-2027 programme and Census 2022.

It is worth noting that once Local Development Strategies (LDS) are created/selected, the CSP will be amended based on the content of the strategies, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included. In this regard, potential RIs relevant to SO8 include R.41 (Connecting rural Europe), R.27 (Environment-/climate-related performance through investment in rural areas), and R.39 (Developing the rural economy). See table SO8.4.

Table SO8.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.38	LEADER	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317
	Total rural population	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043
	%	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**	**81.93%**

2.1.SO8.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will directly contribute to achieving the needs identified under Specific Objective 8.

- Obj8.N2 – Obj8.N4 are all addressed by the LEADER Programme.
- Obj8.N1 is addressed by the OFCIS, the Organic Farming Scheme, and EIPs.
- Obj8.N5 and Obj8.N6 are also addressed by the OFCIS.

Organic Farming Scheme

Support under this scheme is provided based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer farming on a similar land area. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred. Supports vary based on whether beneficiaries are converting to organic practices or maintaining organic practices. It also varies based on whether the farming is dry stock, dairy, tillage, or horticulture. One action supported under the scheme, which supports Obj8.N1, is the use of organic and green manures to improve soil organic matter. Manure is a waste product of livestock production and therefore the use of manure in organic farming systems promotes the circular economy. The total financial allocation of €256m is adequate to achieve the target of 7.45% of total UAA under organics (see table SO8.3).

On-farm Capital investment

The total financial allocation for the scheme is €100m, and funding will be provided on a case-by-case basis where applicants meet the criteria to be eligible for support. Grants are provided for farmers wishing to invest in either productive technologies and or equipment. These grants are awarded on a tiered basis depending on the category of farmer applying. The highest rate of subsidy for example is 60% of the original investment and that is awarded to young farmers and female farmers. Organic farmers are awarded a 50% subsidy of the original investment and the standard rate is 40% of the original investment. Seeing as organic farming contributes to maximising the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas, the higher grant rate provided for organic farmers contributes to addressing Obj8.N1. Furthermore, the intervention supports investments in technology and equipment that improve environmental performance on farms. Such equipment includes biomass boilers, or heat recovery units. Therefore, the On Farm Capital investment Scheme, which provides financial assistance to purchase such equipment, further contributes to addressing Obj8.N1.

The total financial allocation for the scheme of €100m is sufficient to achieve the target of 3.63 % of farms receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency (R.9) (see table SO8.1).

LEADER Programme

There are three different pathways by which funding under the LEADER programme will be delivered. Funding will be granted for the implementation of operations under the Community Led Development Strategy; for the preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action; and for running costs and animation. The LEADER programme will directly address Obj8.N2, Obj8.N3 and Obj8.N4. The LEADER Programme will support these needs by providing support to communities to improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas (Obj8.N2); to address environmental and climate challenges (Obj8.N3); and to support the further development of the tourism industry in rural Ireland (Obj8.N4). The total financial allocation for the LEADER programme is €180m is adequate to achieve the target of 29 Local Development Strategies (LDS) across the programming period and the R.38 target value of 81.93% as per Table SO8.4.

EIPs

The total financial allocation proposed for this scheme is €36.12m. Support under stream A will be provided for ‘bottom-up’ innovative projects in a range of areas including approaches to support gender balance in farming in Ireland and amounts to € 4.02m. Projects that fall under Stream B do not address the need identified under SO8.

Funding will be provided to projects approved by an expert evaluation committee and will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the development of detailed Operational Group Plans, not exceeding €10,000. As there is potential for support to be provided for projects leading to circular and bioeconomy development as well as projects that focus on increasing the opportunities for women in agriculture or rural enterprises, Obj8.N1 and Obj8.N6 are addressed. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €36.12m is adequate to achieve the target of 297,928 persons benefitting from advice, training or knowledge exchange related to enhancing sustainable economic and social performance as well resource efficiency (R.1). See Table SO8.1.

2.1.SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

2.1.SO9.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.SO9.1.1 Strengths

Obj9.S1: National Action Plan developed to tackle Antimicrobial Resistance
Obj9.S2: Antibiotics usage in Ireland is below the EU average
Obj9.S3: National Plan on the Sustainable use of Pesticides
Obj9.S4: Ireland has been successful in decreasing the risks associated with the use of pesticides
Obj9.S5: National Strategy developed to sustain optimal animal health on farms
Obj9.S6: Establishment of Animal Health Ireland
Obj9.S7: History of successful agri-food industry initiatives concerning animal health and welfare
Obj9.S8: Development of a Food Safety and Food Authenticity Strategy
Obj9.S9: Existence of a Sustainable Healthy Agri-Food Research Plan
Obj9.S10: Strategy for the Development of the Organic Food Sector
Obj9.S11: Increasing percentage of UAA organically farmed
Obj9.S12: Internationally recognised and credible Sustainable Quality Assurance Schemes
Obj9.S13: Numerous EU co-funded marketing campaigns
Obj9.S14: Public and private initiatives accorded to combating food waste

2.1.SO9.1.2 Weaknesses

Obj9.W1: Low level of understanding of AMR
Obj9.W2: Lack of appropriate data to monitor antibiotic usage on farm
Obj9.W3: Persistence of animal welfare issues
Obj9.W4: Low level of organic farming in Ireland
Obj9.W5: Reliance on imports of certain animal feeds
Obj9.W6: No system in place to measure farmers' efforts to meet societal demands
Obj9.W7: Lack of accurate data available on food waste
Obj9.W8: Persistent level of food poverty in Ireland

2.1.SO9.1.3 Opportunities

Obj9.O1: Further encourage the use of vaccines to decrease the dependency on antibiotics
Obj9.O2: Develop a database to monitor antibiotic usage
Obj9.O3: Encourage farmers to move towards sustainable/organic food production systems, in order to meet increasing consumer demand for sustainably produced food
Obj9.O4: Increase consumer awareness of food provenance through the development of a labelling system
Obj9.O5: Increase the use of targeted advisory services on animal health
Obj9.O6: Improve fertility performance on farm
Obj9.O7: Improve awareness of bio-security protocols and cohesiveness of strategies
Obj9.O8: Use local networks to support sustainable food productions and reduce food waste
Obj9.O9: Harness the considerable carbon reduction potential of reducing food waste
Obj9.O10: Assess food loss at all stages of the production cycle

2.1.SO9.1.4 Threats

Obj9.T1: Increasing levels of intensive farming resulting in increasing use of antibiotics Obj9.T2: Any reduction in animal welfare standards will negatively affect the economy Obj9.T3: Effects of climate change Obj9.T4: Slowdown in generational renewal affecting the uptake of appropriate practices Obj9.T5: Antimicrobial and anthelmintic resistance Obj9.T6: Failure to meet animal welfare standards Obj9.T7: New and emerging crop and animal diseases Obj9.T8: Failure to meet food waste targets poses reputational risks Obj9.T9: Dairy-free and meat-free campaigns

2.1.SO9.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.SO9.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
Obj9.N1	Increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics	Highest priority SO9	Yes
Obj9.N2	Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and increasing awareness of AMR and ATR	2nd Highest SO9	Yes
Obj9.N3	Support the efficient/environmentally responsible use of pesticides + encourage alternative practise	3rd Highest SO9	Yes
Obj9.N4	Promote the consumption of safe food + increase awareness of animal health and welfare standards	4th Highest SO9	Partially
Obj9.N5	Support the assessment of food loss along the food chain	5th Highest SO9	No

2.1.SO9.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
DPdecoupled	Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare	51ECO - Eco-Scheme	O.8. Number of hectares or of livestock units benefitting from eco-schemes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	PROMO(47(1)(f)) - promotion, communication and marketing including actions and activities aimed in particular at raising consumer awareness about the Union quality schemes and the importance of healthy diets, and at diversification and consolidation of markets	52FVPO06 - Promotion, Communication and Marketing	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	QUAL(47(1)(g)) - implementation of Union and national quality schemes	52FVPO07 - Implementing Union and national quality schemes	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRACE(47(1)(h)) - implementation of traceability and certification systems, in particular the monitoring of the quality of products sold to final consumers	52FVPO08 - Implementation of traceability and certification systems	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMCP70 - Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements

RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53AECMGEN - AECM General	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53DBWS - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
RD	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments	53SIP - Sheep Improvement Scheme	O.18. Number of livestock units (LU) benefitting from support for animal welfare, health or increased biosecurity measures
RD	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53AECMCP77 - AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77	O.32. Number of supported other cooperation operations or units (excluding EIP reported under O.1)
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational group projects

Overview

According to the SWOT Analysis, Ireland has the third lowest level of agricultural land allocated to organic farming across the EU-27 at c.74,000 hectares, which corresponds to around 2% total UAA. As a result, there is a need to increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics (Obj9.N1) and this need is directly addressed by the *Organic Farming Scheme (OFS).* Increasing the share of UAA farmed organically would also ensure that the targets outlined in the Irish Organic Strategy are achieved and is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming. These targets include increasing the number of hectares of organically farmed cereals and pulses to 5000 hectares (from a 2017 benchmark of 2426 hectares); and increasing organic production of dairy by 10% each year of the strategy, horticulture to 750 hectares altogether and beef to 1.6% of the national herd over the next 4 years. The *OFS* provides financial support to farmers for transitioning to or maintaining organic food production practices. This will naturally increase the share of UAA under organic production and therefore will directly address Obj9.N1.

The *On Farm Capital Investment Scheme* also addresses Obj9.N1 by providing a higher grant rate of support for investments in organic farming materials/equipment, at a higher rate of 60% in comparison to the rate of 40% for general investments. This will encourage farmers to adopt organic farming methods, ultimately increasing the share of UAA under Organics (Obj9.N1). The *On Farm Capital Investment* scheme will further provide support for investments that improve animal health and welfare standards on farm (Obj9.N2), such as the modernisation of animal housing facilities or the construction of new animal housing facilities on farm; and investments that allow farmers to acquire technologies and equipment that increase their efficiencies, including precision farming equipment. Precision farming allows for a reduced use of fertilisers and pesticides, as well as a more accurate application of pesticides which reduces their environmental risk, and therefore the *On Farm Capital Investment Scheme* also addresses Obj9.N3.

The SWOT analysis found that a number of animal health and welfare issues persist in Ireland, including welfare issues relating to male dairy calves and lameness in sheep. In addition, the SWOT analysis found

that people in Ireland have a low level of understanding of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and that Ireland is lacking an effective monitoring system to accurately monitor antibiotic usage on farm. There is therefore a strong need to address Obj9.N2.

A number of schemes therefore address the need to improve animal health and welfare standards and to address antimicrobial/anthelminthic resistance on farm. *The Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme* the use of high dairy beef index (DBI) sires in dairy herds. The aim is to improve the beef traits of calves from the dairy herd to facilitate the retention of the calves on the island and integration into local production systems as a preference to live exports from a welfare perspective thus improving animal health and welfare standards (Obj9.N2). The *Sheep Improvement Scheme* also addresses Obj9.N2 by supporting sheep farmer to take actions that improve the welfare of their sheep. Actions include lameness control, mineral supplementation for ewe's post mating, parasite control, and meal feeding lambs post weaning. Additionally, *European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs)* represent an effective mechanism to address animal health and welfare issues. *EIPs* support 'bottom-up', innovative approaches to challenges in the agricultural sector. Calls for projects will target innovative ways of improving animal welfare, such as innovative approaches to support the rearing of pigs with intact tails on Irish farms. *(*Obj9.N2).

The SWOT analysis further noted the importance of keeping Ireland's drinking water free of pesticides and noted that the current control system for pesticide usage is insufficient, with few inspections being carried out on the equipment in use and many pesticide operators lacking training and certification. In addition, the promotion of low pesticide-input pest management and controls for integrated pest management are limited. The need to support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practises (Obj9.N3) is addressed directly through actions under the *AECM. The AECM General measure* supports farmers to take actions that are beneficial to the environment, climate and biodiversity. Actions under this scheme which support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides include the planting of riparian buffer zones, riparian buffer strips and grass margins. Riparian buffer zones and strips reduce the impact of pesticide run-off into water bodies. The *AECM Cooperation measure* offers additional actions in predefined geographical areas considered to be of high environmental priority, for example, location appropriate interventions centred on a meaningful adaptive interaction between advisor, farmer, and experts. Environmentally vulnerable agricultural areas include areas that are close to water bodies, whereby a reduction in pesticide application may be necessary, ultimately contributing to Obj9.N3. The *AECM Cooperation measure* also provides a local Cooperation Project Team to assist farmers in implementing bespoke actions allowing for a reduction in the use of pesticides, particularly in areas where water quality is at risk.

In addition to the above, a number of interventions have the potential to address the needs identified under SO9. *Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable sector* will potentially address both Obj9.N3 and Obj9.N4. Obj9.N4 relates to raising consumer awareness. In the SWOT Analysis, it was noted that Ireland lacks a robust means of quantifying the efforts being made by individual farmers to meet societal demands in relation to the safety of the food they produce and the health and welfare of their livestock and therefore it is necessary to raise consumer awareness of these efforts.

Legislative provisions for Producer Organisations require them to invest in research of experimental and innovative production methods, including in management techniques for improving resilience against pests and ways to reduce risks and impacts associated with pesticide use. This includes implementing Integrated Pest Management techniques (as per Art 47(a)(vii) of the CSP Regulation). It also contains provisions for advisory services and technical assistance actions, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products (as per Art 47(b) of the CSP Regulation). Therefore, POs in the F&V sector could potentially support both the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides (Obj9.N3), and the need to provide safe, nutritious, sustainable food for public consumption (Obj9.N4). However, as there are currently only four F&V POs in Ireland in operation, it is unlikely that they will address Obj9.N3 or Obj9.N4 substantially.

In addition, organic farming has a beneficial impact on animal health and welfare as it requires adherence with organic legislative requirements that pertain to animal welfare including minimum standards relating to animal housing, compulsory access to open areas, stocking rate, feed, controls on veterinary treatments, and animal health management and therefore, the *OFS* partially addresses Obj9.N2 too. In addition, organic farming requires the prohibition of synthetic pesticides, meaning Obj9.N3 is partially met. Lastly, the *OFS* partially addresses Obj9.N4 by stimulating the production of organic produce to meet consumer demands.

Lastly, the provision of certain modules under the *Knowledge Transfer Programme* may also go towards addressing the needs identified above, specifically Obj9.N2 and Obj9.N3, through modules in 'Animal health and welfare, incorporating best practice in areas such as biosecurity and antimicrobial drugs/antibiotics' *(*Obj9.N2*);* and both 'Soil quality and grassland management, incorporating available tools and best practice' and 'Digital and smart technologies and tools, and their applicability on farm.' (Obj9.N3).

2.1.SO9.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.SO9.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.1 CU PR - Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance	297,928.00
R.20 PR - Improving air quality Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce ammonia emission	4.88 %
R.24 PR - Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage	7.45 %
R.28 CU - Environmental or climate-related performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance	234,898.00
R.29 PR - Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	7.46 %
R.43 PR - Limiting antimicrobial use Share of livestock units (LU) concerned by supported actions to limit the use of antimicrobials (prevention/reduction)	3.23 %
R.44 PR - Improving animal welfare Share of livestock units (LU) covered by supported actions to improve animal welfare	5.39 %

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.1 Enhancing Performance through knowledge and innovation

Within SO9, stream A of EIPs and administrative support for the AECM cooperation group under article 77 (i.e. AECM Article 77) contribute to the target value for R.1. The total target value for this indicator is 297,928, being the number of beneficiaries (persons) of any of the schemes contributing to the indicator. This target is cumulative, accruing over the course of the entire programming period.

Stream A of EIPs provides support to projects focused on finding innovative ways of improving animal welfare, such as innovative approaches to support the rearing of pigs with intact tails on Irish farms, meaning that Obj9.N2 is addressed. . The targets for EIPs are based on experience to date with implementation of current EIPs. As you can see from Table SO9.1, it is expected that 15 people will participate in EIP operational groups under Stream A and will be accounted for in the total milestone/target values in 2024 and 2029. In each year between 2025-2028, it is expected that 30 people will participate in EIP operational groups under Stream A and will be accounted for in the total milestone values each year. Projects funded under Stream B of the EIP intervention do not address the needs identified under SO9 but the people participating in these operational groups are still accounted for in the cumulative target for R.1 (see Table SO9.1 for a breakdown).

AECM Article 77 provides administrative support to local action groups that are undertaking projects within the AECM Cooperation measures. The AECM cooperation measures will include actions that support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practises meaning that Obj9.N3 is addressed. There are 8 cooperation projects planned that will cover approximately 10,000 farmers in 2024 and 2029, and 20,000 farmers between 2025-2028. This figure is based on uptake in the previous programming period.

Additionally, the Knowledge Transfer (KT) Programme, Continued Professional Development for advisors, training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme and training to implement the AECM, also contribute to the cumulative target value for R.1. These additional schemes however, do not directly address the needs under SO9. See table SO9.1 for a summary of the contribution of different schemes to R.1.

Table SO9.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.1	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM Article 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	EIPs - Stream A	0	15	30	30	30	30	15
	EIPs - Stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	CPD for advisors	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200		
	KT Programme	0	0	18,960	18,960	18,960	0	0
	Total annual	**18,700**	**56,965**	**82,280**	**60,390**	**47,298**	**21,530**	**10,765**
	Totals (R.1) - cumulative	**18,700**	**75,665**	**157,945**	**218,335**	**265,633**	**287,163**	**297,928**

R.20: Improving air quality

Within SO9 the *AECM General Measure* contributes to the achievement of Obj9.N3 (Support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practises). The AECM is the single intervention contributing to R.20. The total target value set for R.20 is 4.88%. The target values each year are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that aim to improve air quality. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.20 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS), include: Planting trees, Brassica fodder crop, Green manure, Low input grassland, Extensively grazed permanent pasture, Planting a new hedge, Minimum tillage, Field margins, Fallow land, Low Emission Slurry Spreading and lastly, Low input peat grassland. See table SO9.2 for total hectares per AECM General.

For example, the LESS action improves the utilisation efficiency of slurry compared to the traditional splash plate. The band spreading, injection systems and trailing shoe techniques ensure minimal air contamination from the ammonia contained in slurry as it being efficiently applied into the soil. As such, the need to support to the environmentally responsible use of pesticides is addressed (Obj9.N3).

Table SO9.2

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.20	AECM General	0	147,207	220,810	220,810	220,810	220,810	73,603
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	0.00%	3.25%	4.88%	4.88%	4.88%	4.88%	1.63%

R.24: Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides

Within SO9, the *AECM* (both the *AECM General Measure* and the *AECM Cooperation Measure*) and the Organic Farming Scheme contribute to the achievement of Obj9.N3 (Support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practises) and contribute to the target values outlined for R.24. The total target value set for R.24 is 7.45%. The achievement of this target is dependent of the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides. The AECM General contribution to R.24 is 141,330 and the AECM Cooperation contribution is 123,656. For the AECM, target values are based on the estimated uptake of relevant proposed actions that support the sustainable and reduced use of pesticides. The uptake of these actions is estimated based on the uptake of comparable actions under GLAS. The actions included in the calculation of R.24 (and which have comparable actions under GLAS) include: Field margins, Low input grassland and Extensively grazed permanent pasture.

For AECM Cooperation Groups, farmers and advisors will develop their Farm Sustainability Plan based on a Local Action Plan which identifies priorities within the cooperation area, including threats threat from the overuse of pesticides. As such the actions contributing to this indicator will be effectively targeted to meet the result indicator targets.

The OFS contribution is 336,901 hectares (161,299 hectares in conversion and 175,602 hectares in maintenance. This is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO9.3 for a summary of the interventions that contribute to this indicator.

Table SO9.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.24	AECM (General)	0	94,220	141,330	141,330	141,330	141,330	47,110
	AECM (Co-op)	0	61,828	123,656	123,656	123,656	123,656	61,828
	Total annual	0	156,048	264,986	264,986	264,986	264,986	108,938
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	Totals (R.22)	0.00%	3.45%	5.86%	5.86%	5.86%	5.86%	2.41%

R.28: Environmental/climate performance through knowledge and innovation

Within SO9, AECM Article 77) contributes to R.28 and assists in the achievement of Obj9.N3 (Support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practises). This justification is also outlined for R.1, as R.28 is a subset of R.1.

This intervention, in addition to the Agri-environment Training Scheme,Training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme, and stream B of the EIP intervention contribute to the total target value of R.28. However, the Training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme and stream B of the EIP intervention do not address the needs identified under SO9.

Although AECM Training does not directly address SO9, it assists beneficiaries of the AECM in carrying out actions that will address Obj9.N3. Under AECM Training, beneficiaries are required to take a mandatory training course in the first year of their participation in the scheme. Beneficiaries also have the opportunity to partake in a non-mandatory course during the third year of participation in the scheme, which is additional to the mandatory course taken in the first year of the scheme. The annual planned

output of 17,500, 25,000 and 7,500 farmers trained in each of the years 2023, 2024 and 2025 respectively reflects the phased intake and the mandatory requirement to attend training course in 1st year of AECM participation. The reduction in annual planned output (to 13,090, 18,700 and 5,608) each year in 2025, 2026 and 2027 respectively reflects estimated attendance at the voluntary training course. Based on previous scheme experience and on the fact that participation in the second training course is voluntary, we predict that 75% of farmers will attend the voluntary training courses offered in 2025 and 2026 (37,398 farmers).

Table SO9.4

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.28	EIPs stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM - Art. 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	Total annual	17,500	55,750	62,090	40,200	27,108	21,500	10,750
	Totals cumulative	**17,500**	**73,250**	**135,340**	**175,540**	**202,648**	**224,148**	**234,898**

R.29: Development of organic agriculture

Within SO9, the Organic Farming Scheme directly contributes to the achievement of Obj9.N1 (Increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics). The Organic Farming Scheme is the single intervention contributing to R.29. The total target value set for R.29 is 7.46% and is in line with Ireland's national contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming. This target is based on the projected area of lands under organic farming, in terms of in-conversion and in-maintenance, summed together to demonstrate the overall UAA devoted to organic farming. See table SO9.5 for total hectares of UAA 'in conversion' to organic farming and total hectares organic UAA 'in maintenance'.

Table SO9.5

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.29	OFS - Conversion	0	21,876	51,699	72,295	98,859	161,299	0
	OFS - Maintenance	0	81,000	81,000	102,867	136,735	175,602	0
	Total annual	0	102,876	132,699	175,162	235,594	336,901	0
	Total UAA	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150	4,524,150
	%	**0.00%**	**2.27%**	**2.93%**	**3.87%**	**5.21%**	**7.45%**	**0.00%**

R.43 Reducing Anti-Microbial resistance

The Organic Farming Scheme and the Sheep Improvement Scheme all contribute to the target value for R.43. R.43 is quantified by the percentage of Livestock Units (LUs) supported by actions concerning the limited use of anti-microbials and the total target value is 3.23%. All of the interventions contribute to addressing the need to reduce Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and improve animal welfare standards (Ob9.N2).

Organic farming practices ensure higher animal health and welfare standards are met on farm and it contributes 29,765 LUs to the target value for R.43. This is based on the uptake of the scheme of during the transitional period of the previous RDP (2021 and 2022).

The Sheep Improvement Scheme contributes 166,666 LUs to the target for R.44. This is based on participation rates in the current Sheep Welfare Scheme. See table SO9.6 for a summary of the interventions that contribute to this indicator.

Table SO9.6

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.43	Sheep Welfare	0	166,666	166,666	166,666	166,666	166,666	0
	OFS	0	10,287	13,270	17,516	23,559	33,690	0
	Total annual LU	0	176,953	179,936	184,182	190,225	200,356	0
	Total LU	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640
	%	**0.00%**	**2.86%**	**2.90%**	**2.97%**	**3.07%**	**3.23%**	**0.00%**

R.44: Improving animal welfare

Within SO9, multiple interventions contribute to the achievement of Obj9.N2 (Continue improving animal health and welfare standards and increasing awareness of antimicrobial (AMR) and anthelmintic resistance) including: Organic Farming Scheme, Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme, Sheep Improvement Scheme and Capital Investment Scheme. All four interventions contribute to the achievement of the target values set out for R.44. The total target value set for R.44 is 5.3%.

The Organic Farming Schemes contributes 33,690 LUs to the target value for R.44. This is based on the uptake of the scheme of during the transitional period of the previous RDP (2021 and 2022).

The Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme contributes 100,000 LUs to the target value for R.44. This is based on the uptake in the previous national exchequer funded programme which targeted the dairy beef sector, as well as the interventions overall budget.

The Sheep Improvement Scheme contributes 166,666 LUs to the target for R.44. This is based on participation rates in the current Sheep Welfare Scheme.

The OFCIS contributes to approximately 44,364 LUs to the target for R.44, based on the number of expected investments per farm. The average livestock unit per farm is calculated by dividing the Common Context indicator for total LUs in Ireland by the Common Context indicator for the total number of farms in Ireland. Table SO9.7 below for total LU per intervention per

Table SO9.7

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.44	Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme	0	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0
	Sheep Improvement Scheme	0	166,666	166,666	166,666	166,666	166,666	0
	OFCIS	3378	6080	8332	44364	43463		
	Organic farming	0	12005	14886	18,459	23,073	29765	0
	Total Numerator	**3,378**	**284,751**	**289,884**	**329,489**	**333,202**	**296,431**	**0**
	Total number of LU	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640
	%	**0.05%**	**4.60%**	**4.68%**	**5.32%**	**5.38%**	**4.78%**	**0.00%**

2.1.SO9.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions will either directly or partially contribute to achieving the needs identified under Specific Objective 9. All of the needs, except for Obj9.N5, are addressed by the CAP. Obj9.N5 is not addressed by the CAP.

- Obj9.N1 is directly addressed by the Organic Farming Scheme and the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme
- Obj9.N2 is directly addressed through Dairy Beef Welfare, the Sheep Improvement Scheme and the On Farm Capital Investment Scheme and EIPs
- Obj9.N3 is directly addressed through the AECM

Organic Farming Scheme

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €256 million. Support under this scheme is provided based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer farming on a similar land area. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred. Supports vary based on whether beneficiaries are converting to organic practices or maintaining organic practices. It also varies based on whether the farming is dry stock, dairy, tillage, or horticulture. The OFS will increase the share of UAA under organics by encouraging farmers to convert to organic farming practices, meaning Obj9.N1 is met. The total financial allocation of €256 million is adequate to achieve the target of 7.45% of total UAA under organics. (See table SO9.5).

On-farm Capital investment

The total financial allocation for the scheme is €100 million and funding will be provided on a case-by-case basis where applicants meet the criteria to be eligible for support. Grants are provided for farmers wishing to invest in productive technologies and/or equipment. These grants are awarded on a tiered basis depending on the category of farmer applying. Organic farmers are awarded a 50% subsidy of the original investment compared to the standard rate of 40% of the original investment. Considering the fact that organic farming directly contributes to Obj9.N1 and partially contributes to Obj9.N2 - Obj9.N4; and considering the fact that organic farmers are supported at a higher rate, the OFCIS therefore fully supports these needs too. The intervention further supports Obj9.N2 by supporting investments in animal housing facilities; and Obj9N3 by supporting investments in precision farming equipment. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €100 million is sufficient to achieve the total target value of 5.39% for R.44, as per Table SO9.6.

Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €25 million. Under this scheme, farmers are supported to improve the beef traits of calves from the dairy herd to facilitate the retention of the calves on the island and integration into local production systems as a preference to live exports from a welfare perspective.The introduction of the High DBI bulls is to focus on a good welfare outcome for both the cow and the calf and directly address the need to improve animal welfare standards (Obj9.N2). The total amount payable under the scheme is €20 per calf and the maximum number of eligible animals per applicant is 40. The amount of support is calculated on the basis of costs incurred and income foregone. The total financial allocation of €25m is adequate to achieve the target value of 5.39% under R.44, as per table SO9.7.

Sheep Improvement Scheme

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €100 million. Under this scheme, farmers are supported to take actions, such as lameness control and mineral supplementation, that support sheep health and welfare. These actions directly address the need to improve animal welfare standards (Obj9.N2). The total amount payable under the scheme is €12 per eligible ewe or €120 per Livestock Unit per year. Payments are based on costs incurred minus the net economic benefit associated with the actions. A transaction cost of 20% of the total cost per ewe is included in the calculations. The payment rates proposed are based on partial compensation, in order to achieve the target of 170,000 livestock units.

Based on the 2019 National Sheep Census, there is a total of 46,000 registered flock-keepers in Ireland with a total of 2.57m (257,000 LU) eligible breeding ewes. Based on participation rates in the current Sheep Welfare Scheme, the anticipated participation rate in the Sheep Improvement Scheme is 16,600 flock-keepers participating in the scheme, holding approximately 170,000 of the existing 257,000 LU held nationally. The total financial allocation of €100m is adequate to achieve the target value of:

3.23% under R.43, as per table SO9.6

5.38% under R.44, as per table SO9.7

EIPs:

The total financial allocation proposed for this scheme is €36 million. Support under this scheme will be provided for ‘bottom-up’ innovative projects, including those focused on supporting and improving animal health and welfare (Obj9.N2). Stream A projects will address wider competitiveness, modernisation and animal health and welfare challenges in the sector. Funding will be provided to projects approved by an expert evaluation committee and will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the development of detailed Operational Group Plans, not exceeding €10,000. If successful, projects will move to Phase 3 where (under Stream A), they will receive funding not exceeding €650,000 to implement their plans. The total financial allocation for the scheme of €36 million is adequate to support a predicted 6 projects under Stream A and to support the achievement of the target value for R.1 of 297,928 persons (see Table SO9.1).

AECM General

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €610 million. The annual planned outputs under the AECM General are based on the uptake of comparable actions in the agri-environmental climate measure in Ireland’s Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. Support under the AECM General measure will assist in addressing the need to support the environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practices (Obj9 N3) through the actions Riparian Buffer strips, Riparian Buffer zones, Grass margins Low Input Grassland and Over winter stubble. The total financial allocation of €610 million is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 4.88% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce ammonia emission (R.20) (as per Table SO9.2)

- 7.45% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) concerned by supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticides leakage (R.24) (as per Table SO9.3)

AECM Cooperation Measure

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €460 million. Support under this measure will be provided in the form of results-based payments which are designed to ensure that farmers are appropriately incentivised to improve the landscapes and catchments within which they farm. Payments will reflect the quality of the results achieved, i.e. the higher the result, the higher the payment. Fixed eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of the CSP Regulation. Works on lands which are difficult to access can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. This intervention further assists the AECM General in addressing Obj9.N3 by further encouraging bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures that support the use of alternative farming practices. The total financial allocation of €460m is adequate to achieve the targets of:

- 7.45% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) concerned by supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticides leakage (R.24) (as per Table SO9.3)

AECM Article 77:

The total financial allocation for this scheme is €210 million. The exact funding for each co-operation project will be dependent on the number of participants and the scale of the projects and ambition. An indicative annual budget allocation of €50m is set aside to cover the costs of running the co-operation projects and the landscape actions. It is expected that the Community Fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions could be €160m over the programme or approximately €20m for each of the 8 co-operation projects. The eight Co-operation Projects (CP) will work with DAFM in designing and implementing co-operation projects. As this intervention relates directly to the AECM Cooperation measure, it also contributes to addressing Obj9.N3. The indicative budget allocation of €210m is adequate to assist in achieving the target of 234,898 persons for R.28, as per table SO9.4.

2.1.XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

2.1.XCO.1 Summary of the SWOT Analysis

2.1.XCO.1.1 Strengths

ObjAKIS.S1: The constituent parts of the Irish AKIS (Research, Knowledge Transfer, Farm Advisory Service, and Cooperation & CAP Network) are well established

ObjAKIS.S2: National investment in agricultural research is significant, delivering new knowledge consistently

ObjAKIS.S3: Successful peer-to-peer learning through knowledge transfer groups

ObjAKIS.S4: Teagasc provide a significant range of Education and CPD activities on a national basis

ObjAKIS.S5: Significant engagement by agri-food actors in developing AKIS related programmes

ObjAKIS.S6: Well-established public and private farm advisory services within the AKIS system which act as one of the main information sources for farmers

ObjAKIS.S7: Successful implementation of EIP-AGRI projects

ObjAKIS.S8: Significant investment at EU & national level on research and innovation in agri-digitalisation

ObjAKIS.S9: Significant public-private investment in agri-digitalisation

ObjAKIS.S10: There are already significant innovation support structures in place such as accelerator programmes to support agri-digitalisation development

ObjAKIS.S11: Significant development of public agri-digital products (decision support tools) and services (LPIS, AIMS), which can support the design and implementation of agriculture policies

ObjAKIS.S12: Irish farmers are highly educated and have high levels of agricultural training

ObjAKIS.S13: Ireland ranks highly in the Digital Economy and Society Index 2020

2.1.XCO.1.2 Weaknesses

ObjAKIS.W1: The organisational set-up of AKIS is not structured and lacks coordination and strategic direction

ObjAKIS.W2: Weak relationships between certain parts of the AKIS system

ObjAKIS.W3: The level of agricultural research being applied in practice is insufficient

ObjAKIS.W4: Researchers are not incentivised sufficiently for their impact beyond academia

ObjAKIS.W5: Advisory system involvement in co-creation innovation activity is insufficient

ObjAKIS.W6: EIP Operational Groups do not currently engage in a broad scope of activities, related to all nine CAP specific objectives

ObjAKIS.W7: Awareness and confidence levels in using technology are low

2.1.XCO.1.3 Opportunities

ObjAKIS.O1: Structure the AKIS so that it is more collaborative and responsive to the needs of primary producers

ObjAKIS.O2: Enhance the speed and process of knowledge transfer

ObjAKIS.O3: Knowledge Transfer peer-to-peer discussion group model could be utilised to address societal challenges

ObjAKIS.O4: Engagement in cross-border Operational Groups

ObjAKIS.O5: Enable equal access to training for public & private advisors

ObjAKIS.O6: Further integrate private veterinary practitioners and the DAFM Regional Veterinary Laboratory network

ObjAKIS.O7: Promote private and public investment in AKIS *ObjAKIS.O8*: A strategic approach to steer the digital transformation of the farming sector and rural areas *ObjAKIS.O9*: Improve training supports to assist farmers to adopt technology on the farm *ObjAKIS.O10*: Make better use of data collected to inform farm level decision and evidenced-based policy.

2.1.XCO.1.4 Threats

ObjAKIS.T1: A non-structured AKIS will lead to inefficiencies in the agri-food sector *ObjAKIS.T2*: Issues relating to data use, data security, data sharing and data ownership *ObjAKIS.T3:* The costs of technology are often viewed as a barrier to uptake of new technologies *ObjAKIS.T4:* Broadband provision and quality

2.1.XCO.1.5 Other comments

N/A

2.1.XCO.2 Identification of needs

Code	Title	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Need is addressed in Cap Strategic Plan
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N2	Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition	2nd Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N3	Ensure consistency of advice by providing for CPD for advisors and for primary producers	3rd Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N4	Continue to provide support for R + I in the AF sector; + encourage the application of findings	4th Highest for CCO	Yes

2.1.XCO.4 Intervention logic

Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ADVI1(47(1)(b)) - advisory services and technical assistance, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the conditions of employment, employer obligations and occupational health and safety	52FVPO02 - Advisory Services and Technical Assistance	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRAINCO(47(1)(c)) - training including coaching and exchange of best practices, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as the use of organised trading platforms and commodity exchanges on the spot and futures market	52FVPO03 - Training; Including Personalised Advice and Best Practices	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53AECMCP77 - AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77	O.32. Number of supported other cooperation operations or units (excluding EIP reported under O.1)
RD	COOP(77) - Cooperation	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP)

			operational group projects
RD	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information	53AECMTR - Training to Implement Agri-Environment-Climate Measure	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units
RD	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information	53CPDA - CPD For Advisors	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units
RD	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information	53KT - Knowledge Transfer Programme	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units
RD	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information	53SCT - Training to Implement Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units

Overview

The cross-cutting objective (CCO), which is centred on modernising the agricultural sector, relies on interventions pertaining to the creation and transfer of knowledge. *Continued Professional Development for Advisors* (CPD) provides high quality professional training to advisors in a range of targeted areas so that this information can be shared with farmers who then apply their learnings to their everyday agricultural practices. The areas that advisors will receive training include climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare as well as biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level, therefore addressing ObjAKIS.N1. The fact that CPD for advisors is offered to agricultural advisors in both the public and private sector ensures consistency of advice across the advisory services. Moreover, the fact that this can be reviewed regularly by DAFM to reflect new challenges and ambitions within the sector, means that ObjAKIS.N2 and ObjAKIS.N3 are addressed. Additionally, *CPD for Advisors* will be reviewed annually to ensure the provision of the most up to date research and innovations in farming practices are included in the curriculum. In line with Ireland's National Digital Strategy, "Harnessing Digital - The Digital Ireland Framework" continuous professional development is intended to allow advisers to ensure that they are familiar with the latest digitalization techniques and technologies in a rapidly changing agri-food sector. This will ensure the application of the most up to date research findings and innovative technologies on farm, therefore addressing ObjAKIS.N4.

As referenced in the SWOT analysis (ObjAKIS.S2), investment in Research, Development and Innovation targeting the Agri-Food sector was in excess of €157 million in 2018. The presence of this level of investment indicates the high degree of commitment in Ireland to promoting innovation in the sector, reaffirming the goals of the AKIS Objective generally speaking but related particularly to ObjAKIS.N4 - the need to continue providing support for research and innovation in the agri-food sector; and encouraging the application of findings at farm level. This is very encouraging considering that as referenced in ObjAKIS.S1, Ireland is considered to have one of the strongest and most integrated AKIS in the EU. As such, this area has considerable potential to progress even further in Ireland.

The need to increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1) is also addressed by the *AECM Training* measure and the *Training for the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme*. *AECM Training* provides training to all farmers registered under the AECM (i.e. under the AECM General and AECM Cooperation measures) on ways in which to successfully implement the suite of actions offered under the AECM that contribute positively to the environment, climate, and biodiversity. The training will be offered in two stages, the first stage is mandatory to ensure farmers avail of the scheme effectively. The second stage of training is voluntary and offers beneficiaries the opportunity to undertake one of a number of available courses centred on addressing more specific

challenges within the sector. Through this voluntary course, innovative methods and research is imparted on farmers and encouraged to be applied at the farm level. As such, *AECM Training* has the potential to address ObjAKIS.N4.

In order to avail of support under the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme, farmers in the programme must attend specific *Training for the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme.* Beneficiaries of the scheme are required to complete training modules in the first and second years of the programme that are aimed at assisting them in effectively implementing the actions within the scheme. The Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme provides support to farmers who implement certain breeding actions in the beef herd, which aim to lower the overall GHG emissions coming from livestock production. Training implemented under this intervention therefore increases farmers' understanding of climate change and animal health and welfare related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1).

A number of the 'priority topics' provided under the *Knowledge Transfer Programme* relate to climate change, and environmental and biodiversity challenges. Examples include 'Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies; and understanding the main contributors to emissions on Irish farms', and 'Biodiversity conservation with a focus on identifying key habitats and species and associated tools and management techniques.' All the topics referenced in ObjAKIS.N1 are addressed in modules provided for under the Knowledge Transfer Programme, meaning this need is addressed.

The range of priority topics included in the *Knowledge Transfer Programme*, are reviewed annually, therefore addressing ObjAKIS.N2. The *Knowledge Transfer Programme* acts as a form of continued professional development for farmers and primary producers, therefore addressing the need to provide CPD for advisors and for primary producers (ObjAKIS.N3). By providing farmers with information on new and innovative farming practices, they will be encouraged and will feel more equipped to apply these innovative practices on their own farms, meaning the *Knowledge Transfer Programme* addresses ObjAKIS.N4.

European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) provide support to locally-led 'bottom-up' innovative projects that address specific challenges in the agri-food sector. Project themes are split into two categories. Stream A focusses on addressing issues relating to animal health and welfare challenges, and stream B focuses on issues relating to environmental and biodiversity challenges. Encouraging innovation in these areas simultaneously addresses the need to increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1), and the need to provide support for research and innovation in the agri-food sector; and encourage the application of findings at farm level (ObjAKIS.N4).

Via *AECM Article 77*, support is provided to farmers through Local Cooperation Project teams who assist farmers in addressing bespoke, landscape/habitat specific biodiversity and environmental challenges. The teams may also assist farmers in implementing innovative bespoke actions in their areas. As such ObjAKIS.*N1* and ObjAKIS.N4 are addressed through this intervention. The local Co-operation teams will be led by supporting administrative staff, project managers and experts including academics. Considering that in the SWOT analysis ObjAKIS.W4 states that researchers are not incentivised sufficiently for their impact beyond academia, *AECM Article 77* provides opportunities for researchers and academics to apply their expertise and contribute to wider societal and innovative developments. This serves the general purpose of the CCO very well.

In order to avail of support under the *Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme*, farmers in the programme must attend specific *Training for the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme.* Beneficiaries of the scheme are required to complete training modules in the first and second years of the programme that are aimed at assisting them in effectively implementing the actions within the scheme. The *Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme* provides support to farmers who implement certain breeding actions in the beef herd, which

aim to lower the overall GHG emissions coming from livestock production. Training implemented under this intervention therefore increases farmers' understanding of climate change and animal health and welfare related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1).

A number of the 'priority topics' provided under the *Knowledge Transfer* scheme relate to climate change, and environmental and biodiversity challenges. Examples include 'Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies; and understanding the main contributors to emissions on Irish farms', and 'Biodiversity conservation with a focus on identifying key habitats and species and associated tools and management techniques'. All the topics referenced in ObjAKIS.N1 are addressed in modules provided for under the Knowledge Transfer Programme, meaning this need is addressed.In line with Ireland's National Digital Strategy, "Harnessing Digital - The Digital Ireland Framework" key topics in the Knowledge Transfer Groups description of the intervention explicitly references digital and smart technologies and tools; and their applicability on farms.

The range of priority topics included in the *Knowledge Transfer Programme*, are reviewed annually, therefore addressing ObjAKIS.N2. The *Knowledge Transfer* programme acts as a form of continued professional development for farmers and primary producers, therefore addressing the need to provide CPD for advisors and for primary producers (ObjAKIS.N3). By providing farmers with information on new and innovative farming practices, they will be encouraged and will feel more equipped to apply these innovative practices on their own farms, meaning the *Knowledge Transfer Programme* addresses ObjAKIS.N4.

European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) provide support to locally-led 'bottom-up' innovative projects that address specific challenges in the agri-food sector. Project themes are split into two categories. Stream A focusses on addressing issues relating to animal health and welfare challenges, and stream B focuses on issues relating to environmental and biodiversity challenges. Encouraging innovation in these areas simultaneously addresses the need to increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1), and the need to provide support for research and innovation in the agri-food sector; and encourage the application of findings at farm level (ObjAKIS.N4).

Via *AECM Article 77*, support is provided to farmers through Local Cooperation Project teams who assist farmers in addressing bespoke, landscape/habitat specific biodiversity and environmental challenges. The teams may also assist farmers in implementing innovative bespoke actions in their areas. As such ObjAKIS.N1 and ObjAKIS.N4 are addressed through this intervention. The local Co-operation teams will be led by supporting administrative staff, project managers and experts including academics. Considering that in the SWOT analysis ObjAKIS W4 states that researchers are not incentivised sufficiently for their impact beyond academia, *AECM Article 77* provides opportunities for researchers and academics to apply their expertise and contribute to wider societal and innovative developments. This serves the general purpose of ObjAKIS very well.

2.1.XCO.5 Where relevant, a justification for the use of InvestEU, including the amount and its expected contribution to the Specific Objective/Cross-Cutting Objective

N/A

2.1.XCO.8 Selection of the result indicator(s)

Selection of the result indicator(s) for this specific objective

Result indicators [recommended Result indicators for this specific objective are fully displayed in bold]	Target value
R.1 CU PR - Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance	297,928.00

R.2 CU - Linking advice and knowledge systems Number of advisors receiving support to be integrated within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)	10,176.00
R.28 CU - Environmental or climate-related performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance	234,898.00

Justification of the targets and related milestones

R.1 Enhancing Performance through knowledge and innovation

In the Cross-Cutting Objective (CCO), *EIPs*, *AECM Training*, *Support for Cooperation Groups within the AECM under Article 77* (hereafter AECM Article 77), *Training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme* contribute to both R.1 and R.28, seeing as R.28 is a subset of R.1. *Knowledge Transfer Groups* and *Continued Professional Development for advisors* also contribute to R.1. The total target value for this indicator is 297,928, being the number of beneficiaries (persons) of any of the schemes contributing to the indicator. This target is cumulative, accruing over the course of the entire programming period.

In the context of the CCO, both stream A and stream B of the *EIP* intervention contribute to the target value for this result indicator. The targets are based on experience to date with implementation of current EIPs. In stream A there are 6 EIP operational groups with an average of 5 participants and in stream B there are 30 EIP operational groups with an average of 50 participants. Competitive calls for proposals are structured around a three-phase process. Financial support for the development of proposals is provided at phase two which will only begin in 2024.

In contributing to the target value for R.1, EIPs directly address the need to increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1) and the need to provide support for research and innovation in the agri-food sector; and encourage the application of findings at farm level (ObjAKIS.N4). They do so through the facilitation of innovative, bottom-up projects that focus on finding solutions to challenges in key areas in the agri-food sector.

Knowledge Transfer Groups contribute to all the needs in the CCO. This is due to the input that DAFM have into how they structure the teaching methods and content of the courses delivered under this intervention. The targeted modules will be regularly reviewed throughout the course of the programming period to reflect new areas of interest in the agri-food, and rural development areas generally speaking, as well as reflecting the Needs Assessment prepared for the delivery of the upcoming CSP. The cumulative total number of persons benefitting from KT is expected to be 56,880. This is informed by the experience of delivery under the 2014-2020 RDP and the emphasis placed on the role of knowledge transfer in the SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, and on stakeholder feedback.

Continued Professional Development for advisors contributes 6000 to R.1. This figure is cumulative, with 1,200 advisors projected to be registered each year from 2023-2027. These projections are based on the experiences in previous programming period. Currently, there are 1000 advisors registered with DAFM, but it is proposed that an additional 200 advisors will be onboarded to reflect an increased need to maximise the utility advisors can provide to farmers in engaging with the various schemes provided in the CSP. This is particularly relevant in relation to the increased number of climate, environmental, and biodiversity related schemes and measures. In this context, meeting the target value for R.1 will contribute to the need to ObkAKIS.N1, ObjAKIS.N3, and ObjAKIS.N4. See table CCO.1

AECM Article 77 provides administrative support to local action groups that are undertaking projects within the AECM Cooperation measures which address key agri-environmental, climate, and biodiversity

related challenges. As such it addresses the need to increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1) and the need to continue to provide support for research and innovation in the agri-food sector; and encourage the application of findings at farm level (ObjAKIS.N4). There are 8 cooperation projects planned that will cover approximately 10,000 farmers in 2024 and 2029, and 20,000 farmers between 2025-2028. This figure is based on experiences in the previous programming period.

AECM Training contributes directly to ObjAKIS.N1, ObjAKIS.N2, and ObjAKIS.N3. It also has the potential to address ObjAKIS.N4. Beneficiaries have the opportunity to partake in a non-mandatory course during the third year of participation in the scheme, which is additional to the mandatory course taken in the first year of the scheme. Based on experience in the years 2023, 2024 and 2025 respectively reflects the phased intake and the mandatory requirement to attend training course in 1st year of AECM participation. The estimated attendance at the voluntary training course is based on previous programming period scheme experience where participation is estimated to be around that 75%. Overall, this equates to a total 87,398 trainings delivered to participants of the scheme.

Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme contributes to the need to Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1) due to the knowledge it equips farmers with, in the context of participating in the SCEP. As this training is mandatory for all beneficiaries of the scheme, the target of 20,000 persons per year in 2024 and 2025 is based on the expected uptake of the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme. See table CCO.3 for a summary of the contributions to R.28 per intervention.
See table CCO.1 for the number or people receiving support per intervention.

Table CCO.1

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.1	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM Article 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	EIPs - Stream A	0	15	30	30	30	30	15
	EIPs - Stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	CPD for advisors	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200		
	KT Programme	0	0	18,960	18,960	18,960	0	0
	Total annual	**18,700**	**56,965**	**82,280**	**60,390**	**47,298**	**21,530**	**10,765**
	Totals (R.1) - cumulative	**18,700**	**75,665**	**157,945**	**218,335**	**265,633**	**287,163**	**297,928**

R.2 Linking advice and knowledge systems

Within the CCO, Continued Professional Development for Advisors (CPD), EIPs, the Knowledge Transfer Programme and training to implement the AECM contributes to R.2. The total target value for this indicator is 10.176, being the number of advisors receiving support. This target is cumulative, accruing over the course of the entire programming period.

CPD contributes 6000 to the target value. Projections for these figures are based on the experiences in previous programming period. Currently, there are 1000 advisors registered with DAFM, but it is proposed that an additional 200 advisors will be onboarded to reflect an increased need to maximise the utility advisors can provide to farmers in engaging with the various schemes provided in the CSP. This is particularly relevant in relation to the increased number of climate, environmental, and biodiversity related schemes and measures. In this context, meeting the target value for R.2 will contribute to the need to ObkAKIS.N1, ObjAKIS.N3, and ObjAKIS.N4. See table CCO.2.

Stream A and Stream B of EIPs both contribute to the the target value, with 180 advisors being supported. The target value assumes that there will be on average one advisor per Operational Group. As such, the target value reflects the number of operational groups projected in both Steam A and Stream B combined. EIPs contribute to addressing ObjAKIS.N1 and ObjAKIS. N4 by facilitating the improved dissemination of information that encourages farmers to learn about innovative approaches to agricultural practices that improve environmental performance and animal welfare standards, and encourage their application at farm level.

Training to implement the AECM contributes 2,100 to the target value for R.2, and contributes directly to ObjAKIS.N1, ObjAKIS.N2, and ObjAKIS.N3. It also has the potential to address ObjAKIS.N4. This target value is based on the number of advisors that have already been approved to give AETS training courses as well experience from the previous programming period in terms of the number of trainers that were onboarded to provide training to implement the GLAS intervention. See table CCO.2 for a summary of interventions that contribute to R.2.

Table CCO.2

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.2	CPD for Advisors	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	0	0
	EIPS (Stream A)	0	3	6	6	6	6	3
	EIPS (Stream B)	0	15	30	30	30	30	15
	KT Programme	0	0	632	632	632	0	0
	AECM Training	450	450	450	450	300		
	Total annual	**1,650**	**1,668**	**2,318**	**2,318**	**2,168**	**36**	**18**
	Totals cumulative	**1,200**	**2,868**	**5,186**	**7,504**	**9,672**	**9,708**	**9,726**

R.28 Environmental/Climate Performance through knowledge and innovation

Within the CCO, *AECM Article 77*, *AECM Training*, ,and *Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme* contribute to R.28 as is outlined in the justification for R.1. *Stream B of EIPs* also contributes to R.28 The total target value for R.28 is 291,928, being the amount of people who have received training under each of the schemes. This value is cumulative meaning that it spans across the entire programming period and is representative of all the schemes combined.

Stream B of EIPs focus on projects aimed at addressing challenges related to the climate, environment and biodiversity. As such the need to increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level (ObjAKIS.N1).

AECM Article 77, AECM Training, Training to implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme all address the needs that are listed for the same interventions in the justification for R.1.

Table CCO.3

		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
R.28	EIPs stream B	0	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	750
	AECM Training	17,500	25,000	20,590	18,700	5,608	0	0
	AECM - Art. 77	0	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
	Suckler Training	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0
	Total annual	17,500	55,750	62,090	40,200	27,108	21,500	10,750
	Totals cumulative	**17,500**	**73,250**	**135,340**	**175,540**	**202,648**	**224,148**	**234,898**

2.1.XCO.9 Justification of the financial allocation

The following list of interventions contribute to achieving the needs identified under the Cross-Cutting Objective.

- ObjAKIS.N1 – ObjAKIS.N4 are addressed by *Knowledge Transfer Programmes* and *AECM Training*.
- ObjAKIS.N1 is also addressed by *AECM Article 77*, *Training for the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme*, *EIPs* and *Continued Professional Development for Advisors* and *Training to Implement the AECM*.
- ObjAKIS.N3 is also addressed by Continued Professional Development for Advisors.
- ObjAKIS.N4 is also addressed, *AECM Article 77* and *Continued Professional Development for Advisors*.

EIPs

The total financial allocation proposed for this scheme is €36,120,000 with €4,020,000 of this being attributed to Stream A and €32,100,000 of this being attributed to Stream B. Operational Groups will be structured in such a way to involve a range of actors, including farm advisors, thereby supporting the cross fertilisation and potential replication of a wide range of ideas, approaches and experiences. This intervention is thus designed in a manner coherent with the arrangements for the set up and development of the national AKIS (ObjAKIS.N1, ObjAKIS.N4).

The financial allocation is sufficient to support 7,650 beneficiaries through EIP participation in both stream A and stream B and the cumulative target of 297,928 beneficiaries in R.1 (see Table CCO.1 above) Stream B of EIPs will support 7,500 beneficiaries, contributing to the cumulative target of 234,898 beneficiaries for R.28 (see table CCO.3 above). Additionally, the financial allocation is sufficient to achieve the target value of 10,176 for R.2 (see table CCO.2). Stream A and Stream B both contribute to this target value.

AECM Article 77

The exact funding for each co-operation project will be dependent on the number of participants and the scale of the projects and ambition. An annual indicative budget allocation of €50m is set aside to cover the costs of running the co-operation projects and the landscape actions. It is expected that the Community Fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions could be €160m over the programme or approximately €20m for each of the 8 co-operation projects.

The eight Co-operation Projects (CP) will be designed and implemented in collaboration with DAFM. All of the associated actions and planning will be targeted towards approximately 20,000 farmers in the most

sensitive and challenging lands in the country. In doing so, the Co-operation projects promote knowledge and innovation in rural Ireland. More specifically, *AECM Article 77* increases farmers and advisors understanding of climate change and biodiversity challenges at farm level, as well as encouraging the application of findings from research and innovation in the agri-food sector, thereby directly addressing ObjAKIS.N1 and ObjAKIS.N4.

The indicative budget allocation of €210m is adequate to support a cumulative total of 100,000 beneficiaries in the most sensitive and challenging lands in the country. This contributes to the target values of R.1 (297,928 beneficiaries) and R.28 (234,898 beneficiaries), as per tables CCO.1 and CCO.3 above.

Training for the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme

The total amount payable per attendee at the training courses in year 1 and 2 is €100 annually or €200 in total. The cost of farmer's time for attendance is factored into their rates of payment under the scheme measures. The €100 per attendee rate for the knowledge provider is based on the cost associated with delivery and preparation time, course materials and delivery costs. The training provided under the scheme will increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level thus addressing ObjAKIS.N1. The financial allocation of €4m is adequate support a cumulative total of 40,000 beneficiaries being trained. This contributes to the target values of R.1 (297,928 beneficiaries) and R.28 (234,898 beneficiaries), as per tables CCO.1 and CCO.3 above.

Training to implement the AECM measures

This intervention is intended to provide the necessary training to beneficiaries of the AECM measures, in order to implement the actions properly. As such, two training courses are provided to beneficiaries during the programming period. One course is mandatory and the other is voluntary. In providing training to beneficiaries to implement AECM actions, farmers will have an increased awareness about climate change, and biodiversity related challenges at the farm level, as well having the opportunity to apply methods stemming from advancements in research and innovation within the agri-food sector, thus addressing ObjAKIS.N1 and ObjAKIS.N4. Additionally, due to the fact that DAFM have a high degree of control over the content and information provided as part of the training, we can ensure that it reflects new challenges and ambitions, as well as being consistent in its delivery. This addresses ObjAKIS.N2 and ObjAKIS.N3.

The total indicative financial allocation of €21,500,000, is adequate to support a cumulative total of 87,389 trainings delivered to farmers across the programming period in order from them to benefit from advice, training and knowledge exchange supported by the CAP. This contributes to the target values of R.1 (297,928 beneficiaries), R.2 (10,176 advisors) and R.28 (234,898 beneficiaries), as per tables CCO.1, CCO.2 and CCO.3 above.

Continuous Professional Development for Advisors

The planned unit amount (€200,000 per training intervention delivered) is estimated based on experience in the previous programming period, including the transitional period. It is envisaged that two training interventions will be provided in each year of the CAP Strategic Plan. Due to the fact that DAFM have a high degree of control over the content and information provided to advisors, consistency in the delivery of advisory services is ensured, addressing ObjAKIS.N3. Moreover, as the purpose of the intervention is to bring advisors and farmers up to speed with the most to date information pertaining to relevant areas of the agri-food sectors, the application of findings from research and innovation (ObjAKIS.N4) is facilitated, as is an increased awareness of climate change and biodiversity related challenges at the farm

level (ObjAKIS.N1). The total indicative financial allocation of €1.9m is adequate to achieve the target values of 297,928 for R.1 (see table CCO.1) and 10,176 for R.2 (see table CCO.2)

Knowledge Transfer

The total indicative financial allocation for this intervention is €71.1m. KT Facilitators will receive €500 per annum for each farmer in their group who completes each year of the intervention. Farmers participating in the Groups will receive €750 upon completion of each year of the intervention. For farmers, these support rates are based on costs incurred an income forgone. For the KT facilitator the support rate is based on the costs of initiating, registering, preparing for, and delivering the KT group meetings, along with all administrative duties related to the implementation of the KT groups.

The targeted knowledge and skills training supported under this intervention allows the dissemination of the most up to date information in targeted priority areas, meaning that all the needs under the CCO are met. The financial allocation is adequate to support the targets of 18,960 farmers to participate in the Knowledge Transfer Programme participation and the cumulative target of 297,928 beneficiaries in R.1 (see Table CCO.1) and 10,176 advisors in R.2 (see table CCO.2).

2.2 Context Indicators and other values used for the calculation of the targets

Context indicators (PMEF Code)	Baseline value	Baseline year	Updated value	Updated year	Justification/Comments	Source of data
C.01 Total rural population – for LEADER (R.38) (Number of)	2,823,690.00	2020	3,762,043.00	2016	The total rural population has been updated to reflect the definition used in section 4.7.2	https://data.cso.ie/#
C.01b Total rural population – for services and infrastructure (R.41) (Number of)	2,823,690.00	2020	3,762,043.00	2016	The total rural population has been updated to reflect the definition used in section 4.7.2	https://data.cso.ie/#
C.05 Total forest area (Hectares)	996,291.00	2018				
C.12 Total number of farms (Number of)	137,560.00	2016				
C.17 Total utilised agricultural area (UAA) (Hectares)	4,524,150.00	2019				
C.19 Total agricultural area and forest area in Natura 2000 sites (Hectares)	147,614.00	2018				
C.23 Total number of livestock units (Number of)	6,195,640.00	2016				
D.35 Total number of beehives notified to the EU Commission: average of the latest three years available at the time of establishing the plan. (Number of)	26,251.00	2020				

2.3 Targets Plan

2.3.1 Recapitulative table

Result Indicator	Specific Objective	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Overall Target Value
R.1 CU PR Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance	SO7, SO8, SO9, XCO	18,700	75,665	157,945	218,335	265,633	287,163	297,928	297,928
R.2 CU Linking advice and knowledge systems Number of advisors receiving support to be integrated within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)	XCO	1,650	3,318	5,636	7,954	10,122	10,158	10,176	10,176
R.3 CU Digitalising agriculture Share of farms benefitting from support for digital farming technology through CAP	SO2	0.01 %	0.07 %	0.14 %	0.53 %	0.91 %	0.91 %	0.91 %	0.91 %
R.3 Numerator: Number of beneficiaries from relevant paid support		15	90	190	725	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250
R.3 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.4 Linking income support to standards and good practices Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality	SO1, SO7	41.88 %	97.41 %	97.41 %	97.41 %	97.41 %	97.41 %	%	97.41 %
R.4 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		1,894,836 ha	4,407,042 ha	4,407,042 ha	4,407,042 ha	4,407,042 ha	4,407,042 ha	0 ha	4,407,042 ha
R.4 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.5 Risk management Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools	SO3	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.01 %

Result Indicator	Specific Objective	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Overall Target Value
R.5 Numerator: Number of farms benefiting from relevant support		0	0	0	0	20	0	0	20
R.5 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.6 [PR] Redistribution to smaller farms Percentage of additional direct payments per hectare for eligible farms below average farm size (compared to average)	SO1	0.00 %	104.33 %	104.46 %	105.07 %	105.42 %	105.32 %	0.00 %	105.42 %
R.6 Numerator: Average DP/ha paid to beneficiaries below average farm size		0 EUR/ha	257 EUR/ha	257 EUR/ha	258 EUR/ha	259 EUR/ha	259 EUR/ha	0 EUR/ha	259 EUR/ha
R.6 Denominator: Average DP/ha paid to all beneficiaries		247 EUR/ha	247 EUR/ha	246 EUR/ha	246 EUR/ha	246 EUR/ha	246 EUR/ha	EUR/ha	246 EUR/ha
R.7 [PR] Enhancing support for farms in areas with specific needs Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)	SO1	0.00 %	103.45 %	103.73 %	104.00 %	104.25 %	104.18 %	0.00 %	104.25 %
R.7 Numerator: Average income support/ha for beneficiaries in areas with specific needs		0 EUR/ha	309 EUR/ha	309 EUR/ha	310 EUR/ha	310 EUR/ha	310 EUR/ha	0 EUR/ha	310 EUR/ha
R.7 Denominator: Average income support/ha paid to all beneficiaries		299 EUR/ha	298 EUR/ha	298 EUR/ha	298 EUR/ha	297 EUR/ha	297 EUR/ha	EUR/ha	297 EUR/ha
R.8 Targeting farms in specific sectors Share of farms benefitting from coupled income support for improving competitiveness, sustainability or quality	SO1	0.00 %	0.73 %	0.73 %	0.80 %	0.87 %	0.87 %	0.00 %	0.87 %
R.8 Numerator: Number of beneficiaries of coupled income support		0	1,000	1,000	1,100	1,200	1,200	0	1,200
R.8 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.9 [CU PR] Farm modernisation Share of farmers receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency	SO2, SO7, SO8	0.05 %	0.27 %	0.55 %	2.09 %	3.63 %	3.63 %	3.63 %	3.63 %
R.9 Numerator: Number of beneficiaries receiving relevant support		75	375	750	2,875	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000

Result Indicator	Specific Objective	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Overall Target Value
R.9 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.10 CU PR Better supply chain organisation Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP	SO2, SO3, SO7	0.23 %	0.46 %	0.69 %	0.72 %	0.76 %	0.76 %	0.76 %	0.76 %
R.10 Numerator: Number of beneficiaries from relevant support		321	637	948	994	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040
R.10 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.11 /Fruit and Vegetables Concentration of supply Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors	SO3, SO4, SO5	72.18 %	72.18 %	72.18 %	72.18 %	72.18 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	72.18 %
R.11 Numerator: Total value of marketed production by POs with operational programmes		221,424,934 EUR	225,853,433 EUR	230,370,501 EUR	234,977,912 EUR	239,677,470 EUR	0 EUR	0 EUR	239,677,470 EUR
R.11 Denominator: Total value of production of sectors concerned		306,777,192 EUR	312,912,736 EUR	319,170,991 EUR	325,554,411 EUR	332,065,499 EUR	332,065,499 EUR	332,065,499 EUR	332,065,499 EUR
R.12 Adaptation to climate change Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to improve climate adaptation	SO4	%	4.76 %	4.76 %	4.76 %	4.76 %	4.76 %	2.16 %	4.76 %
R.12 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	215,232 ha	215,232 ha	215,232 ha	215,232 ha	215,232 ha	97,560 ha	215,232 ha
R.12 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.14 PR Carbon storage in soils and biomass Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)	SO4, SO5	0.00 %	5.67 %	8.88 %	8.88 %	8.88 %	8.88 %	3.24 %	8.88 %
R.14 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	256,667 ha	401,780 ha	401,780 ha	401,780 ha	401,780 ha	146,575 ha	401,780 ha

Result Indicator	Specific Objective	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Overall Target Value
R.14 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.15 CU Renewable energy from agriculture and forestry and from other renewable sources Supported investments in renewable energy production capacity, including bio-based (in MW)	SO4	0 MW	2 MW	4 MW	15 MW	26 MW	26 MW	26 MW	26 MW
R.16 CU Investments related to climate Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to the production of renewable energy or biomaterials	SO4	0.04 %	4.61 %	10.69 %	13.08 %	14.98 %	15.05 %	15.05 %	15.05 %
R.16 Numerator: Number of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to renewable energy or biomaterials production		60	6,345	14,705	17,995	20,600	20,700	20,700	20,700
R.16 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.19 PR Improving and protecting soils Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)	SO4, SO5, SO6	%	10.61 %	10.61 %	10.61 %	10.61 %	10.61 %	2.95 %	10.61 %
R.19 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	480,000 ha	480,000 ha	480,000 ha	480,000 ha	480,000 ha	133,241 ha	480,000 ha
R.19 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.20 PR Improving air quality Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce ammonia emission	SO5, SO9	%	3.25 %	4.88 %	4.88 %	4.88 %	4.88 %	1.63 %	4.88 %
R.20 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	147,207 ha	220,810 ha	220,810 ha	220,810 ha	220,810 ha	73,603 ha	220,810 ha
R.20 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.21 PR Protecting water quality Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under	SO5	%	31.83 %	31.83 %	31.83 %	31.83 %	31.83 %	2.75 %	31.83 %

Result Indicator	Specific Objective	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Overall Target Value
supported commitments for the quality of water bodies									
R.21 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	1,440,000 ha	1,440,000 ha	1,440,000 ha	1,440,000 ha	1,440,000 ha	124,590 ha	1,440,000 ha
R.21 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.22 PR Sustainable nutrient management Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management	SO4, SO5	42.44 %	42.44 %	42.44 %	42.44 %	42.44 %	7.44 %	3.06 %	42.44 %
R.22 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		1,920,000 ha	1,920,000 ha	1,920,000 ha	1,920,000 ha	1,920,000 ha	336,752 ha	138,241 ha	1,920,000 ha
R.22 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.24 PR Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage	SO4, SO5, SO6, SO9	%	3.45 %	5.86 %	5.86 %	5.86 %	7.45 %	2.41 %	7.45 %
R.24 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	156,048 ha	264,986 ha	264,986 ha	264,986 ha	336,901 ha	108,938 ha	336,901 ha
R.24 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.26 CU Investment related to natural resources Share of farms benifitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resource	SO5, SO6	0.04 %	4.35 %	10.05 %	12.23 %	13.86 %	13.93 %	13.93 %	13.93 %
R.26 Numerator: Number of farms receiving relevant support		60	5,987	13,827	16,827	19,067	19,167	19,167	19,167
R.26 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.28 CU Environmental or climate-related performance through knowledge and innovation Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance	SO4, SO5, SO6, SO9, XCO	17,500	73,250	135,340	175,540	202,648	224,148	234,898	234,898

Result Indicator	Specific Objective	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Overall Target Value
R.29 PR Development of organic agriculture Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion	SO1, SO3, SO4, SO5, SO6, SO8, SO9	%	2.27 %	2.93 %	3.87 %	5.21 %	7.45 %	%	7.46 %
R.29 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	102,876 ha	132,699 ha	175,162 ha	235,594 ha	336,901 ha	0 ha	337,500 ha
R.29 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.31 PR Preserving habitats and species Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including high-nature-value farming practices	SO6	%	38.73 %	38.73 %	38.73 %	38.73 %	38.73 %	4.16 %	38.73 %
R.31 Numerator: Number of hectares paid		0 ha	1,752,128 ha	1,752,128 ha	1,752,128 ha	1,752,128 ha	1,752,128 ha	188,129 ha	1,752,128 ha
R.31 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.32 CU Investments related to biodiversity Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to biodiversity	SO6	0.01 %	5.39 %	12.71 %	13.75 %	14.27 %	14.35 %	14.35 %	14.35 %
R.32 Numerator: Number of farms receiving relevant support		15	7,408	17,483	18,908	19,633	19,733	19,733	19,733
R.32 Denominator: Total number of farms		137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560	137,560
R.33 Improving Natura 2000 management Share of total Natura 2000 area under supported commitments	SO6	%	47.40 %	80.14 %	80.14 %	80.14 %	80.14 %	32.74 %	80.14 %
R.33 Numerator: Ha with relevant commitments on Natura 2000 sites		0 ha	69,967 ha	118,292 ha	118,292 ha	118,292 ha	118,292 ha	48,325 ha	118,292 ha
R.33 Denominator: Total agricultural area and forest area in Natura 2000 sites		147,614 ha	147,614 ha	147,614 ha	147,614 ha	147,614 ha	147,614 ha	147,614 ha	147,614 ha
R.34 PR Preserving landscape features Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees	SO6	%	4.69 %	4.69 %	4.69 %	4.69 %	4.69 %	1.08 %	4.69 %

Result Indicator	Specific Objective	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Overall Target Value
R.34 Numerator: Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees		0 ha	212,160 ha	212,160 ha	212,160 ha	212,160 ha	212,160 ha	49,002 ha	212,160 ha
R.34 Denominator: Total utilised agricultural area (UAA)		4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha	4,524,150 ha
R.36 CU PR Generational renewal Number of young farmers benefitting from setting up with support from the CAP, including a gender breakdown	SO1, SO7	0	1,300	2,650	4,050	5,500	7,000	7,000	7,000
R.37 CU Growth and jobs in rural areas New jobs supported in CAP projects	SO1, SO7	0	1,300	2,650	4,050	5,500	7,000	7,000	7,000
R.38 CU LEADER coverage Share of rural population covered by local development strategies	SO1, SO3, SO7, SO8	81.93 %	81.93 %	81.93 %	81.93 %	81.93 %	81.93 %	81.93 %	81.93 %
R.38 Numerator: Rural population covered by LAG funded through LEADER over the programming period		3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317	3,082,317
R.38 Denominator: Total rural population – for LEADER (R.38)		3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043	3,762,043
R.43 PR Limiting antimicrobial use Share of livestock units (LU) concerned by supported actions to limit the use of antimicrobials (prevention/reduction)	SO9	0.00 %	2.86 %	2.90 %	2.97 %	3.07 %	3.23 %	0.00 %	3.23 %
R.43 Numerator: Number of livestock units for which a related payment was made		0	176,936	179,936	184,182	190,225	200,356	0	200,356
R.43 Denominator: Total number of livestock units		6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640
R.44 PR Improving animal welfare Share of livestock units (LU) covered by supported actions to improve animal welfare	SO9	0.05 %	4.57 %	4.65 %	5.30 %	5.39 %	4.85 %	0.00 %	5.39 %
R.44 Numerator: Number of livestock units for which a related payment was made		3,378	283,033	288,268	328,546	333,689	300,356	0	333,689
R.44 Denominator: Total number of livestock units		6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640	6,195,640

2.3.2 Planned interventions and outputs with a direct and significant link to result indicators

See the table in SFC2021 application

2.3.3 Consistency with and contribution to the Union targets for 2030 set out in the Farm to Fork Strategy and the EU Biodiversity for 2030

Irish Context

Farming plays an important role in the Irish economy and landscape and approximately two-thirds of the Irish land area is in agricultural use.

There are 137,560 farms in Ireland with an average farm size of 32.4ha of utilisable agricultural area (UAA) per holding. Overall, the majority of farms in Ireland (65%) are small and small-medium sized farms.

Irish agriculture is primarily a grass-based industry with 90% of Ireland's UAA considered permanent grassland and meadow compared to the EU-27 figure of 31%. Dairy and beef production play a key role in the Irish agricultural economy with milk and beef output accounting for over 61% of agricultural goods output at producer prices in 2020.

Almost all ruminant livestock are maintained outdoors with the exception of the winter housing period which arises due to inclement weather and low levels of grass growth. In general, these animals graze extensively, however there is a trend towards intensification in some areas of the country. This has arisen through the expansion of the dairy herd following the abolition of milk quotas in 2015.

Ireland has a relatively small area dedicated to arable farming with 7% of UAA in arable use, compared with an average of 22% at EU level. Ireland's tillage area has been declining, especially on mixed farms, as farmers converted to livestock production. There is increasing specialisation within Irish farming with many farmers moving away from Ireland's traditional mixed faming systems. For biodiversity and climate reasons Ireland is seeking to retain and where possible expand its area under arable production, especially on mixed farms. Pesticide use in Ireland is very low in comparison with other EU Member States and significantly reducing this level could be challenging, particularly given the climatic conditions in Ireland, which give rise to wet weather diseases in cereal production.

Ireland is seeking to significantly expand the area under organic production from less than 2% of UAA to 7.5% of UAA by 2027. Ireland is also seeking to reduce agriculture's losses of nutrients to water, to improve on-farm biodiversity and to create more sustainable food systems.

The necessary changes will be achieved through a combination of:

1.Incentivises under the CSP to where necessary facilitate change

2.Regulation, to where necessary require change

3.Market/Private Industry Incentives to reward change

4.Technological developments facilitating change

5.Diversification

The correct combination of these drivers of change will deliver the most effective changes.

Food Vision 2030 – Ireland's new Food Strategy

Food Vision 2030 is Ireland's stakeholder strategy for the development of the Irish agri-food sector to 2030. It proposes solutions and charts a pathway to sustainability in all its dimensions – environmental, economic and social, using the food system approach.

The Strategy sets out four high-level missions to achieve its vision:
·A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Agri-Food Sector,
·Viable and Resilient Primary Producers with Enhanced Wellbeing Food that is Safe, Nutritious and Appealing,
·Trusted and Valued at Home and Abroad,
·An Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Sector, driven by Technology and Talent.

There are seven Goals in the environmental mission that aim to deliver a climate-neutral food system by 2050, with verifiable progress achieved by 2030, encompassing emissions reductions, carbon sequestration, improvements in air quality, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity, improvements in water quality, development of diverse forests, enhanced seafood sustainability, exploring the bioeconomy and strengthening Origin Green.

For more details see: gov.ie - Food Vision 2030 – A World Leader in Sustainable Food Systems (www.gov.ie)

Green Deal Targets

As part of the Green Deal a number of targets have been set at EU level under the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies.

The targets concerned are related to nutrient loss, use and risk of pesticides, sales of antimicrobials, area under organic farming and access to fast broadband internet in the Farm to Fork Strategy, and high diversity landscape features in the Biodiversity Strategy. These targets are set out below.

Table 1: EU level targets set under the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies

Subject area	EU level target
Nutrient loss	A reduction of 50% in nutrient losses, while ensuring no deterioration on soil fertility. A reduction of at least 20% in fertiliser use by 2030.
Use and risk associated with pesticides	Reduction by 50% in the use and risk of chemical pesticides by 2030. Reduce by 50% the use of high-risk pesticides.
Sales of antimicrobials	A reduction by 50% in the sales of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture by 2030.
Area under organic farming	Achieve 25% of total farmland under organic farming by 2030.
High diversity landscape features	Achieve at least 10% of agricultural area under high-diversity landscape features.
Access to fast broadband internet	Accelerate the roll-out of fast broadband internet in rural areas to achieve the objective of 100% access by 2025

Nutrient Loss

Irish context

Ireland's Food Vision Strategy commits to reduce nutrient losses from agriculture to water by 50% by 2030.This will be achieved through all nitrogen management tools being optimised. Reduction in fertiliser use is a likely by-product of this.

The quality of waters in Ireland's rivers, lakes and groundwater is relatively good but needs to improve. Improved farming practices will play a key role in this regard.

Agriculture is the most frequent significant pressure in water bodies that are not meeting their Water Framework Directive targets. The main problems arising from farming are loss of excess nutrients and sediment to water. Excess phosphorus and sediment levels are typically associated with rivers and lakes, while too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.

Through the implementation of the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and Ireland's Nitrates Regulations (SI 605/2017), Ireland has a robust Nitrates Action Programme relating to agriculture which provides for the protection of waters against pollution caused by agricultural sources. The current Nitrates Action Programme (2018-2021) has been amended to provide policy direction for the protection and stabilisation of water quality. The fourth review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is currently on going. Requirements under Conditionality within the CSP will be adjusted where appropriate to take account of the ongoing review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme.

Ireland's third River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2022-2027 is due to be finalised in 2022. The current draft proposes to protect and restore each one of Ireland's 3,126 bodies of water to at least 'good status' by 2027 (with some limited exemptions). The RBMP also identifies 1,603 water bodies that are categorised as 'At Risk of not meeting their environmental objective of good or high-status'. Agriculture is the main significant pressure impacting on 1,000 of these water bodies. The loss of nitrogen from agricultural sources is one of the principal causes of the decline in water quality.

The targeting of actions in the 1,000 water bodies, and the resulting reduction in nutrient losses, will be achieved through multiple CSP interventions. Relevant regulatory frameworks, and other programmes outside the CAP including advisory services will also have a role to play to maximise the impact of CSP measures.

In addition to the revised regulatory and **Conditionality** requirements arising from the Nitrates Action Programme Review, Ireland will introduce a number of initiatives under the CSP and outside the CSP to reduce nutrient loses. These are summarised below.

Eco-Scheme

Ireland's Eco-Scheme has a strong focus on reducing nutrient losses and improving nutrient use efficiency. It will assist in reducing dependency on inorganic chemical nitrogen and improving water quality by rewarding farmers for using less chemical nitrogen through agricultural practices associated with extensive livestock production, limiting chemical nitrogen use, planting of a break crop(s) and sowing of a multi-species sward. In addition, the Eco-Scheme will facilitate improved nutrient use efficiency by encouraging greater use of Precision Agriculture, specifically the use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreaders/sprayers, which will ensure optimal placement, and hence a reduction in the use of chemical fertilisers/plant protection products. A further practice within the Eco-Scheme relates to soil sampling and appropriate liming. This will ensure that soils are at the optimal pH which is most beneficial in terms of efficient and effective utilisation of nutrients.

Protein Aid

The Protein Aid intervention supports production of eligible protein crops that play an important role in fixing nitrogen from the atmosphere resulting in reduced chemical nitrogen fertiliser usage in the year in question and in the subsequent crop. This scheme aims to support 14,000ha of protein crops in 2023 rising to 20,000ha by 2027.

AECM

Both AECM General and AECM Cooperation Projects will contribute to a reduction in nutrient loses.

Relevant actions under AECM General include: Riparian strips/zones; Low Input Grassland; Low Input Peat Grasslands; Extensively managed permanent pasture, Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse; Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) ; Grass margin on arable/grassland; Planting Trees in new Riparian Buffer Strips/Zones; Catch crops; Environmental management of arable fallow.

Under AECM Cooperation eight Cooperation Areas have been defined. These will be managed through Co-operation Projects through locally-led results-based payments schemes which will be designed by dedicated Project Teams to address specific requirements at a local level. Farmers participating in the AECM Cooperation will complete bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures in the AECM Cooperation Areas. In addition, where appropriate, they will also be able to avail of the AECM General actions outlined above.

Mandatory AECM training, followed by voluntary training in later years, will be important to ensure effective delivery of actions under both approaches above. Farmers in AECM Cooperation will also have the on-going support of a dedicated local Project Team.

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme offers a payment for conversion to organic farming and a maintenance payment to encourage ongoing commitment to organic production. The Organic Farming Scheme facilitates the elimination of chemical fertiliser application on organic land. Increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of UAA to 7.5% of UAA over the course of the CSP will directly contribute to reducing nutrient loses.

Capital Investment Scheme

Due to the high level of funding available in the RDP 2014-2020 as extended under the transitional arrangements, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027.In these years, the Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to reducing nutrient loses and improving nutrient use efficiency by providing support for investments in nutrient storage facilities, LESS equipment and precision farming equipment.

European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Projects

Themes for calls for EIP Projects will be developed further following stakeholder consultation as the programming period progresses. This will maximise the contribution to environmental and climate-change objectives. However, Ireland can already confirm that water quality will be addressed through a specific themed EIP Call. This will align with Irelands commitments under the draft 3rd Cycle RBMP 2022-2027 which identifies targeted areas for protection.

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

Nitrates Action Programme

Ireland adopts a whole of territory approach to the implementation of the Nitrates Directive through Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme (2022-2025). Ireland is currently implementing its 5th Nitrates Action Programme. Unlike most other EU Member States, Ireland's Nitrates Regulations contain measures that control both Nitrogen and Phosphorus and these measures set the regulatory baseline for all

farmers in Ireland for the protection of waters. This engages the more intensive farmers who traditionally do not join the main agri-environment schemes or may not be in receipt of CAP payments.

The Fifth Nitrates Action Programme (NAP) which sets out new and strengthened measures beyond previous iterations. Such measures include, a register of chemical fertiliser sales and chemical fertiliser use reduction requirements, improving compliance and enforcement, revision of slurry and soil water storage and management requirements, adjustments to livestock excretion rates, soil management and grazing land management actions, amongst others. These actions are designed to be implemented at farm, local or national level to provide a holistic action programme for the protection of surface and groundwater from nutrient pollution arising from agricultural sources.

The Nitrates Action Programme will play a key role in meeting agriculture's commitments to the targets set under the Water Framework Directive to 2027 and align with the CSP's commitment for the stabilisation and protection of water quality from agriculture.

Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP)

The Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP) is an innovative Irish Government/industry initiative which was established in 2018. It is a collaborative initiative, involving a range of stakeholders to facilitate improvements in water quality.

The ASSAP has involved a clear commitment and initially provided resources of 30 Agricultural Sustainability Advisors, 20 funded by the Irish Government and 10 by the Dairy Industry. Additionally, the Dairy Industry have provisionally committed a further 8 advisors from 2022, this is, in advance of negotiating a future programme and signals the value of this approach for the protection of waters.

The ASSAP Advisors are promoting on-farm best practice to farmers in 190 'Areas for Action' in the current 2nd cycle of the River Basin Management Plan which were identified by the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), where the status of the water is at risk of deteriorating. Farmers are availing of this service within the 'Areas for Action' on a voluntary basis and are provided with one-to-one advice on reducing nutrient losses at farm level, through both nitrogen and phosphorus/sediment actions.

All advisors have received comprehensive training from the EPA and Teagasc to ensure a common approach. The process of engagement with both the wider communities and with farmers in the 190 'Areas for Action' has been ongoing for the last 3 years. Funding for the programme is due to expire in 2022, however those involved are currently exploring the possibility of extending the programme to coincide with the CSP period.

Funding to support water quality in Group Water Schemes (GWS) Drinking Water Catchments

This Irish Government is currently funding (until end 2023) implementation of targeted drinking water source protection actions in group water scheme catchments as part of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes source protection strategy. This provides practical support towards the protection of drinking water quality, biodiversity enhancement and climate action. The initiative also provides an opportunity to trial new and innovative approaches which, if successful, could be adopted more generally to assist Ireland meet its Water Framework Directive objectives as set out in the proposed RBMP as well as informing development of future agri-environmental actions.

This funding is focused on seven group water schemes catchments that fall within, or close to, current Priority Areas for Action defined in Ireland's 2nd RBMP. These catchments are largely impacted by agricultural pressures.

Use and risk associated with pesticides

Irish context

Usage levels of pesticides in Ireland are amongst the lowest in the EU (0.67kgs/ha UAA compared with the EU average of 2.11 kgs/ha UAA (2019 data)). This is largely attributable to the predominance of extensive grassland farming in Ireland which receives very low levels of pesticide application.

The use and risk linked to pesticides reduced in Ireland by 23% between the baseline period 2015-2017 and 2019.

A regulation to replace Directive 2009/128/EC is currently being drafted by the European Commission. This regulatory framework is expected to enhance the current actions under the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD) and to include legal requirements for the sustainable use of pesticide. Together with amendments to existing regulations, this new regulation is expected to be the main contributory factor to meeting the targets for pesticides and to form the basis of Ireland's actions regarding pesticide targets during the CSP programme.

As outlined in Food Vision, Ireland is committed to playing a constructive role with other Member States to progress a revised regulatory framework that will contribute to the sustainable use of pesticides.

The SWOT analysis noted that sales of Plant Protection Products in Ireland have declined overall since 2011, and that Ireland has been successful in decreasing the risks associated with the use of pesticides, and Ireland commitment to lower usage even further is under pinned by the 2nd National Action Plan 2019-2024 for the Sustainable use of Pesticides (2019) has five main areas in which it aims to make improvements: ·Training, Education, Information Exchange and Data Gathering; ·Controls on Application Equipment; ·Controls on Storage, Supply and Disposal of Plant Protection Products; ·Controls on use of Plant Protection Products in Specified Areas; ·Integrated Pest Management.

Measures that will contribute to a reduction in use and risk associated with pesticides are outlined under the headings below.

Measures under the CAP Strategic Plan

Conditionality

SMR 8 concerns controls on requirements in Directive 2009/128/EC. In line with Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 elements of this Directive are being fully integrated into conditionality.

Checks under SMR 8 are compatible with the requirements and standards of the Irish National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (Plant Protection Product (PPP)) and contribute directly to the following broad areas of Ireland's National Action Plan: controls on application equipment, the storage, supply and disposal of PPP, the use of PPPs (including records) and Integrated Pest Management.

SMR 7 facilitates controls regarding the placing of PPPs on the market as set out in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. Other Conditionality elements contributing to the safe use of PPP include GAEC 4 on the establishment of buffer strips along water courses.

Eco-Scheme

Farmers wishing to participate in the Eco-Scheme will have to complete two Eco-Scheme agricultural practices. One of these options will be the use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreader/sprayer for the application of chemical fertiliser and/or PPPs. This will assist in the accurate and even application of PPPs facilitating a reduction in their use. Other Eco-Scheme practices, increasing space for nature, which builds on GAEC 8 requirements, and extensive livestock production, will also contribute to a reduction in pesticide use.

AECM

AECM General will contribute to a reduction in use and risks associated with pesticides. Relevant actions include: Riparian Buffer Strip/Zones; Grassland Margins (Arable); Extensively grazed permanent pasture; Environmental Management of Arable Fallow. AECM Training will improve knowledge which will also contribute to the reduction in pesticide use.

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme targets increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of Ireland's UAA to a target of 7.5%. This will facilitate the elimination of chemical pesticide application on a higher proportion of land thereby contributing to the reduction in pesticide use.

Capital Investment Schemes

As outlined above, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027. In these years, the Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to reducing the use of pesticides by providing support for investments in precision farming equipment for application of PPPs. It will also support investment in equipment such as Ring Rollers and Haulm Toppers to reduce reliance on PPPs.

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Under the SUD it is compulsory for professional users of pesticides to apply the principles of Integrated Pest Management. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has funded a number of research projects in relation to Integrated Pest Management practices at farm level. Ireland's Agriculture and Food Development Authority, Teagasc carries out extensive work in the area of research and advice/education to support the implementation of IPM principles.

Biological control agents

Ireland can contribute to the assessment and evaluation of biological control agents within the EU system under Regulation (EC) 1107 of 2009 by increasing expertise to handle biopesticides and by supporting research. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine funds research such as Biostimulants and Biopesticides for Crop Production (BioCrop) under the Stimulus fund (Project: 2019PROG705).

Scheme of Investment Aid for the Development of the Commercial Horticulture Sector

This Irish Government funded capital investment scheme supports capital investments in specialised horticultural equipment. This scheme operates on an annual basis and in recent years has provided support for specialised investments that reduce pesticide use such as equipment for mechanical weed control and GPS controlled sprayers as well as automatic steering equipment.

Producers who are members of a Fruit and Vegetable Producer Organization (PO) will be able to avail of support for environmental interventions to reduce pesticide use under the CSP. Some Irish POs are currently involved in research relating to biological controls, while others are receiving support for actions to reduce pesticide use, such as the purchase of bio-degradable starch-based mulch, to control weeds in crops.

Actions outside agriculture

Urban greening plans will also play an important role in reducing the use and risk of chemical pesticides. The National Biodiversity Plan is encouraging behavioural change here through work with Local Authorities and communities.

Sales of antimicrobials

Irish context

A reduction target for sales of antimicrobials has not yet been agreed but remains under consideration, notwithstanding that Ireland remains consistently below the target value of 59mg/PCU 2030 threshold set by the EU for 2030. Ireland is committed to setting an ambitious, achievable national value to be achieved within a defined timeframe, and discussions are ongoing in the context of Ireland's iNAP2 - Ireland's second One Health National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance 2021-2025.

Total sales of antimicrobials for food producing animals have fluctuated marginally from year to year.

Measures under and outside the CAP Strategic Plan

The proposals contained in the CSP do not provide for an antimicrobial resistance (AMR)-specific intervention in relation to animal health to support future sales reduction targets, however AMR is covered within a number of interventions under the CSP namely the:

·Sheep Improvement Scheme which will provide support for a broad range of actions to improve ovine health and welfare, including reducing the risk of anthelmintic resistance.

·Organic Farming Scheme will significantly expand the area under organic farming from less than 2%, to 7.5% of UAA. This will reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance on those farms.

·Capital Investment Scheme will support improved animal welfare and hence reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance by providing grant aid for investments in

1.New animal housing, and in the case of pigs and poultry upgrading of existing pig and poultry houses. This will improve animal health and welfare and hence reduce the need for antimicrobial treatment.

2.New or upgrades to pig and poultry feeding systems - allowing for targeted provision of medicated feed or water. This will avoid unnecessary treatment of all animals in a house thereby reducing the risk of antimicrobial resistance.

3.Animal Handling facilities - good facilities assist the safe and easy handling and treatment of animals. Good facilities allow for increased vaccination and preventative treatment thereby reducing the need for antimicrobial treatment.

iNAP, the national action plan to address AMR is now in its second iteration, providing a mechanism to implement detailed actions to prevent disease and reduce overall sales and use of antimicrobials.

It is expected that any reduction targets will be agreed through the iNAP platform, which will also oversee the delivery of actions to meet these targets. More information iNAP-2, including actions: gov.ie - Antimicrobial Resistance: A One Health Approach (www.gov.ie)

Area under organic farming

Irish context

Currently less than 2% of Ireland's UAA is farmed organically.

Food Vision targets at least 7.5% of Ireland's UAA to be farmed organically by 2030. Under the CSP Ireland is seeking to achieve this target by 2027. This will necessitate a very significant increase in the area of land farmed organically from 87,000ha to 337,500ha by the end of the CSP. This is a challenging target that will increase the area farmed organically by 350% during the lifetime of the plan. It is important that realistic targets are set, while ensuring markets for the extra organic product is achievable but will require much greater change in Irish agriculture than has been seen up to this point, and it will take time to achieve such growth. A new Organic Strategy Forum with 24 stakeholders from across the organic sector has recently been established in Ireland will assist in this regard. The stakeholder group is

tasked with driving growth of the organic sector and will assist in securing a higher share of added value for farmers and contribute to ensuring organic produce receives a premium price.

Ireland's current Programme for Government aims to focus on developing domestic and international organic markets, to ensure that farmers have access to premium-paying markets for their produce. The Programme for Government also focuses particularly on maximising potential opportunities in the organic sector, the supply of quality Irish grains to an expanding food and drinks industry, and opportunities for home-grown proteins in animal feeds.

Measures under the CAP Strategic Plan

The targeted increase in the area farmed organically will be facilitated through the CSP's Organic Farming Scheme. To give certainty for producers committing to organic farming, support will be provided through an annual area-based payment per hectare of UAA over a minimum of 5 years. The is also give more certainty to allow processors plan and prepare for the anticipated supply of organic produce.

The rates of aid under the Organic Farming Scheme will comprise of a higher payment for farmers converting land to organic farming for the first time. This will be payable for the initial maximum two-year conversion period, with a maintenance payment thereafter. Higher rates of aid will be payable for horticultural operations (including fruit), tillage operations, and dairy operations, all of which are strongly in market deficit.

High diversity landscape features

The EU's 2030 Biodiversity Strategy builds upon and goes beyond the existing EU Birds and Habitats Directives and the EU Natura 2000 Network of protected areas. It sets ambitious EU targets and commitments for 2030 to achieve healthy and resilient ecosystems.

The 2030 Biodiversity Strategy and the Farm to Fork Strategy aim is to put Europe's biodiversity on the path to recovery by 2030.

Irish context

Food Vision sets a target that by 2030, 10% of Ireland's farmed area will be prioritised for biodiversity, spread across all farms throughout the country. It is envisaged that this target will be achieve early through implementation of the CSP.

The greatest pressures impacting Irish habitats relate to agricultural practices, such as over-/under-grazing, land abandonment and agricultural intensification. The current conservation status of agricultural habitats is very low with 100% of habitats categorised as 'Unfavourable' in 2013-2018. It is envisaged that at least 30% of agricultural habitats with a status of unfavourable are expected to demonstrate improving trends towards achieving favourable status by 2030 (2025-2030 reporting period). A key element to drive success in this regard will be the AECM Co-operation Projects proposed for defined high-priority areas as part of the CSP.

The only legislative metric that Ireland currently has for Biodiversity is the Article 17 reporting under the Habitats Directive. This reports on 59 habitats and 60 species, the majority of which occur on Natura 2000 lands which are not all farmed.

Measures under the CAP Strategic Plan

Ireland's CSP is focussed on creating space for biodiversity in our agricultural landscape, building on our current significant network of hedges, field margins and areas of value to biodiversity to support the objective of achieving an average of 10% farmed land with high biodiversity value by 2030 outside of lands currently designated.

This will be underpinned by an appropriate definition of the Eligible Hectare, implementation of enhanced Conditionality, the Eco-Scheme under Pillar I and a number of Pillar II interventions as set out below.

Eligible Hectare

To maintain and improve biodiversity on farmland, and to ensure as much coherence as possible between Pillar I and Pillar II of the CAP, Ireland proposes that in defining the eligible hectare, other landscape features, outside GAEC 8, will be allowed occupy up to 30% of the reference parcel without a deduction to the eligible area being required provided that they do not impact the agricultural activity. This represents a significant change from the 2014-2020 CAP programme period where farmers were incentivised to remove such ecologically beneficial features to maximise their area eligible for Direct Payments.

Conditionality

Ireland will operate a system of enhanced Conditionality under the CSP. To strengthen Ireland's controls under SMR 3 and 4, there will be greater emphasis on targeting controls to ensure effectiveness. This will be achieved through consideration of new information relevant to SMR 3 and/or 4, input from the relevant bodies, evaluation of the outcome of past controls and an effective risk analysis procedure in the selection process. Furthermore, once Checks By Monitoring are established for certain requirements, it will facilitate more widespread implementation of controls relating to actions within SPA's and SAC's. In addition, a communications plan will be implemented to inform farmers of their obligations on designated SPA's and SAC's.

Other Conditionality measures that will make a significant contribution to Irish biodiversity include GAECs 1, 2, 8 and 9. Ireland intends to introduce requirements under GAEC 2 from 2024. The GAEC 8 requirements for at least 4% of arable land at farm level to be devoted to non-productive areas and features, will be extended to all farms. Extending this requirement to all farmers means it will apply to approximately 130,000 farmers compared to only approximately 6,000 arable farmers if the measure was restricted to arable areas in line with the regulatory minimum. For biodiversity and climate reasons, Ireland is seeking to retain arable areas on its mixed farms, therefore the 4% minimum non-productive features requirement will apply at farm level rather than sectoral level within the farm.

Eco Scheme

Farmers wishing to participate in the Eco-Scheme will have to complete two Eco-Scheme agricultural practices. One of these options will build on Conditionality through the option to devote a minimum of 7% of land to space for nature (landscape features and non-productive areas building on requirements under GAEC 8). Farmers who wish to devote 10% of their land to space for nature in a given year will not be required to complete another Eco-Scheme practice.

Other agricultural practice under the Eco-Scheme that will enhance biodiversity are the planting of trees/hedgerows and extensive livestock production where a farmer must maintain a low stocking rate. Separately the sowing of multi-species swards as an agricultural practice will also deliver biodiversity benefits.

AECM

Both AECM General and especially AECM Cooperation Projects will drive improvements in biodiversity.

The structure of the AECM has been designed to differentiate between the habitat and species priorities under different types of farm management. The AECM has been divided into two distinct operational approaches as follows:

1)Land with a high proportion of semi-natural habitat will be managed to reflect this. Eight co-operation project areas have been defined in areas of high semi-natural habitat and these will be managed through Co-operation Projects through locally-led results-based payments schemes which will be designed by dedicated Project Teams to reflect the specific habitat and species requirements at a local level and in line with the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) 2021. Farmers participating in the AECM Cooperation will complete bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures in the AECM Cooperation Areas. In addition, where appropriate, they will also be able to avail of the AECM General actions outlined below.

2)The actions in the AECM General are designed to improve on the quantity and quality of farmland biodiversity habitats in line with the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) 2021. Relevant actions under AECM General include: Management of private Natura; Commonage; Low input grassland; Low input peat grassland; Extensively grazed permanent pasture; Planting Trees; Planting new hedgerows; Hedgerow Rejuvenation (Hedgerow Coppicing and Hedgerow Laying); Grassland Margin – Arable or Grassland; Environmental management of Arable fallow; Rye-grass seed set as winter food for birds; Unharvested cereal headlands; Grassland Margin – Arable or Grassland; Environmental management of Arable fallow; Brassica Fodder Stubble; Winter bird food; Overwinter stubble; Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse; Planting a traditional orchard. The Birds of Conservation Concern of Ireland updated lists of Red and Amber species were considered in the development of the range and specification of actions in order to cover the ecological requirements of farmland bird species. Where additional bespoke requirements are necessary these will be addressed through species specific actions.

The proposed actions for AECM General will be designed with ecological assessment advice and expertise. Mandatory advisor training, including the latest ecological advice, and training on the use of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's IT system will be provided to registered farm planners to ensure that any proposed actions with potential to have an impact on a European Site will be screened for that potential risk.

The Department's IT systems will flag any proposed actions that may have a potential impact on a European Site and these proposed actions will be flagged for further consideration.

In addition, the AECM Cooperation Projects will have ecological expertise as part of the cooperation project team. This project team will provide on-going support to farmers in AECM Cooperation.

The AECM priority areas and actions identified have been agreed in close collaboration with Ireland's National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mandatory AECM participant training, followed by voluntary training in later years, will also be important to ensure effective delivery of biodiversity actions under both approaches above.

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme offers a payment for conversion to organic farming and a maintenance payment to encourage ongoing commitment to organic production. The Organic Farming Scheme facilitates the elimination of chemical fertiliser and chemical pesticide application on organic land and promotes more sustainable farming systems. Increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of UAA to 7.5% of UAA over the course of the CSP will directly contribute to improving biodiversity.

Areas of Natural Constraints

The Areas of Natural and Specific Constraints intervention will continue to grant payments to beneficiaries in areas designated pursuant to Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013.

Those farming in designated areas face significant hardships from factors including difficult topography, climatic problems and poor soil conditions. Given the minimum stocking rate requirement, payments under this scheme will encourage continued management of this agricultural land, contributing to biodiversity as well as to maintaining and promoting sustainable farming systems.

European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Projects

Themes for calls for EIP Projects will be developed further following stakeholder consultation as the programming period progresses. This will maximise the contribution to environmental and climate-change objectives. However, Ireland can already confirm that the urgent conservation priority and specific needs for Breeding Waders will be addressed through a specific themed EIP Call. Other EIP calls will have the potential to address other relevant biodiversity issues, for example,

·Innovative approaches to working on farmed peatlands.

·Implementing results-based programmes in relevant areas/measures for wintering sites for birds.

·Innovative approaches to farming in the callows and how to protect the varied birdlife and habitats which exist there.

·Innovative approaches to farming in Coastal areas.

Ireland has set an ambition to extend the 4% requirement under GAEC 8 to all agricultural area (not just arable as required by the regulation, with certain exemptions). This has the potential to ensure that all farmers are contributing to ensuring there is "space for nature" on all farms regardless of the level of farming intensity. Ireland has set out a list of qualifying features (along with relevant weightings) that will contribute to a farmer’s space for nature percentage. Many of the features are those that were included in the ecological focus areas (EFA) calculations back in 2014/2015 in the existing CAP with some additional qualifying features proposed.

To further safeguard Ireland’s ambitions in achieving 10% prioritised areas for biodiversity on farmed areas nationally, under the definition of eligible hectare, landscape features such as scrub and woodland will be accepted on up to 50% of the reference parcel without deduction to the eligible area. This removes the unintentional incentive in the previous programme period where maximising the eligible land area for Basic Income Support, led to removal of such valuable features for biodiversity, climate mitigation and other ecosystem services.

Under both Pillar I and II of Ireland’s proposal, there are several interventions which will incentivise the maintenance and expansion of high diversity landscape features. For example, the Agricultural Practice of “Space for Nature” in Ireland’s Eco-scheme rewards farmers for having 7% of features which are qualifying features under Space for Nature on their farms. Where the percentage is 10% or higher, that will give farmers greater credit in Ireland’s Eco Scheme.

There are also other interventions within the General AECM such as planting trees and hedgerows, field margins and riparian buffer strips, which when encouraged and applied in a holistic manner, through appropriate training and knowledge transfer between and amongst advisors and farmers.

The AECM co-operation projects will also support the achievement of the target with wide ranging measures including habitat and result oriented actions on high priority environment lands in 8 geographic regions identified. It also is proposed to have several EIP-AGRI projects focussing on biodiversity including a specific call on breeding waders. The combined area targeted for preserving these habitat and species under these AECM interventions is 469,149ha or 10% of Utilisable Agricultural Area.

Thus, the combined impact of all these interventions is anticipated to exceed the ambition to have 10% of farmed land areas prioritised for biodiversity.

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

LIFE Projects

Ireland does not intend to fund LIFE projects through the CSP; however, Ireland foresees strong complementarity between its CSP interventions and its current LIFE projects including Strategic Nature Projects (SNaP).

Two large-scale LIFE projects that commenced in 2021 are the Wild Atlantic Nature LIFE IP and Corncrake LIFE. The Wild Atlantic Nature project aims to support appropriate and sensitive habitat management in blanket bog areas in the west and north-west of Ireland through a results-based payments scheme along with other community supports and innovations. Corncrake LIFE is also working with farmers and landowners to improve the habitat conditions and range of Corncrake areas in the west and north-west of the country.

Ireland will continue to seek to participate in future LIFE projects and Horizon Projects that will contribute to the objective of improving biodiversity, climate, and water quality and other environmental objectives to support the transition to carbon neutrality.

Business and Biodiversity platform

The Business and Biodiversity platform set up by Natural Capital Ireland, a vehicle supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, is working to encourage larger agri-economic sector businesses to adopt biodiversity conscious campaigns and actions, including habitat creation or altered management practices.

Access to fast broadband internet

Irish context

Ireland is currently rolling out its National Broadband Plan. The aim of the National Broadband Plan is that by the end of 2026, all premises within the State, including in rural areas, will have been provided with access to fast (high speed) broadband.

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) State led Intervention will be delivered by National Broadband Ireland (NBI) under a contract to roll out a high-speed and future-proofed broadband network within the Intervention Area which covers 1.1 million people living and working in the almost 560,000 premises, including almost 100,000 businesses and farms along with some 679 schools. The contract for the National Broadband Plan (NBP) State led intervention was signed with NBI on 19 November 2019 with a 7-year rollout plan and deployment is due to be complete by the end of 2026. The network rollout for the National Broadband Plan is divided into 227 Deployment Areas (DAs) across the country. The DAs typically cover an area of approximately 25km in radius and in total they cover 96% of Ireland's landmass. The National Broadband Plan will have a profound impact on the future of our country and will provide new opportunities for rural areas in particular. These include improved career opportunities for those living in rural areas, facilitating smart farming, allowing employers to access the pool of talent that resides outside our large towns and cities, and the provision of services such as eHealth and eLearning.

NBI has confirmed that as of 22 April 2022, over 321,000 premises have been surveyed or have survey underway, with almost 172,000 premises constructed or under construction across all counties. NBI has also advised that almost 64,000 premises are available to order and pre-order across 22 counties.

As of 22 April 2022, the number of Premises Passed is over 47,000, and over 63,000 premises can order or pre-order service across 22 counties. Over 10,000 connections have been made to the network.

It remains the ambition of the Government to rollout the National Broadband Plan State led intervention as quickly as possible. The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications has worked with NBI to agree an Updated Interim Remedial Plan (UIRP) which recalibrate the targets for 2022 to take account of the knock on effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and other delays to the Programme. The revised target is 102,000 premises passed by the end of January 2023 (cumulative) as against an original contracted target of just over 200,000. The focus is to continue to build momentum in the build program, catching up on the delays experienced due to Covid-19 and planning for acceleration. NBI is planning to have over 200,000 premises with build commenced at the end of 2022.

Whilst delivery of the Programme is the responsibility of NBI under the Contract, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) continues to monitor delivery very closely in accordance with the Department's role under the contract. In parallel with the ongoing oversight of the contract with NBI, the Department has also been working with the 31 Local Authorities, the County and City Management Agency (CCMA), the Roads Maintenance Office (RMO), Broadband Officers and other Government Departments, where appropriate, to ensure that any possible barriers that might delay the rollout are addressed as soon as possible. This also includes engagement with other bodies such as Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Irish Rail and ComReg.

In advance of the fibre rollout Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) are a key support for promoting balanced regional development as part of a sustainable and equitable post-pandemic recovery and will enable rural communities to avail of the opportunities presented by the digital economy. BCPs are available in every county and are located in areas of community importance thereby providing for local residents to quickly get free public access to high-speed broadband. As of 22 April 2022, 269 publicly available BCPS are now connected with high-speed broadband service through a service provider contract with Vodafone.

The Irish Government expects to meet the European Commission Gigabit targets well in advance of the 2030 timeline set for Member States. This will be achieved through a mix of commercial and State funded fibre to the home network rollouts. Ireland is uniquely placed to meet broadband coverage targets as it has a contract in place with National Broadband Ireland, committed public funding of €2.7bn and a rollout plan that is well under way to reach 100% of rural premises. While the target is to ensure all premises across rural Ireland will have access to gigabit broadband by 2026, the Irish Government and National Broadband Ireland are in parallel reviewing all options to accelerate the rollout so that the network can be complete by 2025, this includes reviewing alternative technologies, hiring more subcontractors and increasing the rate of pole and ducting upgrade by the incumbent *eir*.

3 Consistency of the Strategy and complementarities

3.1 Overview of the environmental and climate architecture

3.1.1 A description of the overall contribution of conditionality to the specific environmental- and climate-related objectives set out in points (d), (e) and (f) of Article 6(1)

Conditionality

Conditionality incudes a package of measures intended to address specific issues in relation to climate change, water quality, soil protection, biodiversity and landscape protection, food safety, the use of plant protection products and animal welfare. However, it is important to note that many of the measures/practices designed to address these issues individually will also have an indirect complementary benefit on other elements. For example, measures to protect the soil potential under GAECs 5 and 6 will also have a positive impact on water quality.

Contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as to promote sustainable energy, Article 6(1) (d)

The following conditions for the maintenance of land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAECs) and Statutory Management Requirement (SMRs) will contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, in particular through measures to enhance carbon sequestration.

GAEC 1 provides for the overall maintenance of the ratio of permanent grassland to arable area, thus promoting the maintenance of such grassland on a national basis. It is particularly important in Ireland's context given the predominance of permanent grassland.

GAEC 2 (protection of peatland and wetland) and GAEC 9 (protection of Environmentally Sensitive Permanent Grassland (ESPG)) are measures to promote and maintain carbon sequestration in targeted areas with high carbon stocks. Intensive agriculture, particularly drainage, in these areas can lead to reduced organic stocks, which in turn contributes to climate change. Ireland proposes to apply GAEC 2 from 2024 onwards as a lead time is required to define and map the areas involved. Ireland is one of four countries participating in the European Commission's Joint Research Centre SEPLA (Satellite based mapping and monitoring of European peatland and wetland for LULUCF and agriculture) project. This project involves developing a methodology to identify and map 'candidate' peatland/wetland areas. The timeline for completion of this project is April 2023, which should make implementation of GAEC 2 possible from 2024.

GAEC 3 bans the burning of arable stubble which maintains organic carbon and prevents the direct release of CO_2 to the atmosphere. Burning of crop stubble and crop residues such as straw, will be prohibited except where there is a plant health reason and prior authorisation has been granted by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Crop diversification under GAEC 7 will enable arable farmers to adapt crop plans in response to changing Irish weather, and to balance their exposure to the risks associated with severe deviations from normal weather patterns, with the need to optimise their crop production. Where holdings choose to grow a monoculture of crops the soil carbon stock will be preserved through the use of a rotation involving cover crops.

The main objective of GAEC 8 is to maintain non-productive features and areas, in order to improve on-farm biodiversity. Ireland intends to extend this requirement to all farmers participating in CAP interventions. Non-productive features will include, inter alia, groups of trees, scrub and set aside. Such

features will contribute significantly to the ambition of enhancing measures for carbon sequestration. Accordingly, all farmers will be required to have a minimum share of 4% of eligible area devoted to such non-productive areas.

SMR 1 and 2 concern the protection of waters and comprise a number of related farm management actions that will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with manure management. These include the use of low emission spreading systems, and the efficient use of fertiliser.

SMRs 3 and 4 are primarily aimed at protection and conservation of wild birds and habitats. Accordingly, areas are designated specifically for this purpose. In many cases such designation bans ploughing, thereby avoiding the associated loss of soil organic carbon, thus contributing to the overall objective of enhancing carbon sequestration.

Contribution to fostering sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency, Article 6(1) (e)

SMRs 1 and 2 directly concern the efficient management of water through specific rules for water abstraction points and measures to promote good agricultural practices for the protection of waters. In particular, protection will include measures addressing stocking rates, the rate and use of fertilizers, buffer zones, restrictions on ploughing, establishing green cover and record keeping. The requirements applicable to SMR 2 will be updated where necessary in light of the on-going review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme.

SMR 8 covers the sustainable use of plant protection products. The Directive covers rules concerning the safe use of such products, including restrictions that may apply to use in certain areas under the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000 legislation. It also advocates the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a strategy to promote sustainable management of plant production products (PPPs) in a way that minimises the adverse effects of PPP application on the environment and on human health. SMR 8 also covers the safe handling, storage and disposal (where necessary) of such products.

GAEC 4 provides for a buffer strip of at least 3m along water courses. This aims to prevent nutrients from fertilizers and/or chemical residues from the application of plant protection products entering watercourses. GAEC 4 requirements will be amended if necessary, in light of the on-going review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme.

GAECs 5 and 6 will prevent/minimise soil erosion which occurs in Ireland mainly via water erosion. These GAECs include measures to prevent certain tillage operation during vulnerable periods and in areas with slope considerations, and to ensure the establishment of green cover, as appropriate. To promote the sustainable development and use of soils, GAEC 7 provides for measures/practices to preserve the potential of Irish soils, particularly their soil organic matter content. Ireland proposes to implement GAEC 7 by giving non-exempt arable farmers the option to select between crop diversification and crop rotation requirements.

Contribution to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes, Article 6(1) (f)

SMRs 3 and 4 will directly and positively impact biodiversity through controls on Special Protected Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) intended to protect wild birds and habitats. SMRs 1 and 2, targeting water quality measures, will also have a positive impact on habitats and biodiversity. Non-productive features as provided for in GAEC 8 will be required of all farmers participating in CAP interventions and receiving payments. This will have a positive impact on biodiversity through enhancement of habitats and ecosystems. Retention of landscape features under GAEC 8 will also benefit biodiversity and contribute to the preservation of habitats and landscapes. GAEC 8's ban on the cutting of trees and hedges during the bird nesting season and breeding

season will be implemented in line with requirements under SMR 3. GAEC 9 bans the conversion or ploughing of permanent grasslands in ESPG designated areas, thereby contributing to the maintenance of biodiversity and preservation of habitats in these areas.

Other standards that will contribute to the preservation of habitats and landscapes include GAECs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7, while the requirements set under SMRs 7 and 8 will control the placing on the market, and the use, of plant protection products.

The designation process for SPAs (SMR 3) and SACs (SMR 4) is completed with the making of a Statutory Instrument for each site. Each Statutory Instrument sets out the Qualifying Interests of the site, i.e. the species and/or habitats for which the site is protected, and the activities requiring consent. Activities Requiring Consent (ARCs) are specific activities which have the potential to damage a Special Protection Area (SPA) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC). A list of 38 ARCs has been established. ARCs are not prohibited activities but before being carried out, consent must be granted by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage or by another relevant public authority to which the consent function for that activity falls. This prior consent requirement ensures that the Minister (or the relevant competent authority) carries out the necessary environmental assessment to determine if the activity can take place without significant negative effects on the conservation objectives of the site and if any conditions should be attached to any consent given. It is an offence to carry out an ARC without prior consent.

Compliance checks include:

SMR 3:
- Checking all lands for disturbance to birds or damage or deterioration to bird habitats.
- Checking of SPAs for works which disturb, cause deterioration or destroy the special interest of the site.
- Checking of SPAs for works where consent has not been granted by the Minister Housing, Local Government and Heritage in advance.
- Checking of SPAs for works which disturb, cause deterioration or destroy the site

SMR 4:
- Checking of SACs for works which disturb, cause deterioration or destroy the site.
- Checking of SACs for works which the NPWS has not issued consent.
- Checking of compliance with any consent issued by NPWS.

3.1.2 Overview of the complementarity between the relevant baseline conditions, as referred to in Article 31(5) and Article 70(3), conditionality and the different interventions addressing environment and climate-related objectives

Ireland’s Eco-Scheme and the agri-environmental and climate interventions proposed under Article 70 will complement and build on Conditionality requirements to address the CAP’s specific environment and climate related objectives. The interventions proposed under Article 31 and Article 70 all differ from/go beyond Conditionality and national legislative requirements.

There are no overlaps between actions proposed under Article 31 and Article 70. However, in some cases, costings under both types of intervention take account of the same issue. In such cases certain categories of farmer, for example, organic farmers, will not be able to avail of certain scheme actions. Alternatively, participating farmers will receive a lower payment under one of the schemes to avoid a situation where the farmer would be overcompensated through their participation in two or more actions with some common costing elements under different schemes.

The complementarity and further details regarding each intervention are set out in more detail below.

Eco-Scheme

Ireland proposes one Eco-Scheme which will be designed to accommodate all farmers, with the objective of maximising farmer participation to deliver environmental change.

Ireland is allocating 25% of its Pillar 1 budget to the Eco-Scheme notwithstanding the flexibility afforded to Ireland by Article 97 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. The Eco-Scheme will make a significant contribution to each of the specific objectives set out in points (d), (e) and (f) of Article 6(1).

There will be eight options provided, with participating farmers required to fulfil the requirements associated with at least two of these in the year in question (with the exception of enhanced agricultural practices). Targeting of certain Eco-Scheme practices to the most appropriate farmers will ensure the most appropriate practices are taken up by specific groups of farmers. The eight proposed actions address a range of environmental and climate objectives and are set out below.

Practice 1 Space for Nature[1]

At least 7% of the holding must be devoted to Space for Nature (non-productive areas and landscape features). This will build on the 4% requirement set under GAEC 8 as part of Conditionality. Where the farmer commits to devoting at least 10% of their holding to Space for Nature, **this will count as two actions for the Eco-Scheme.** Thus, there is a synergy between this practice under eco-schemes and the GAEC 8 minimum share 4% requirement. This is further complemented by additional new actions such as hedgerow or tree planting funded under eco-scheme practice 4 or under the AECM (but any trees funded under these will not count for GAEC 8 to eliminate double funding), which brings further synergies regarding these features present on farms.

Practice 2 Extensive Livestock Production

This will promote traditional grassland farming practices at extensive animal stocking rates. To qualify, the stocking rate over the previous year must fall between a minimum and a maximum values, set out in the options available with further administrative and on-the-spot checks in the year of Eco-Scheme participation as required. The AECM will also have a synergy with eco-scheme practice 2 extensive livestock production by rewarding farmers to further enhance extensive farming systems by rewarding the quality of habitat produced through result-based approaches which reward more tailored grazing and landscape management to address local priorities and mitigating environmental pressures, through these more tailored and advice-led extensive management practices.

Practice 3 Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage[2]

This will promote low usage of chemical nitrogen. To qualify the farmer must not exceed a certain level of chemical nitrogen across their holding in the year of Eco-Scheme participation. This level is below the maximum allowed under Conditionality; different limits will be offered depending on the previous year's stocking rate. A separate limit will apply for tillage farmers. This practice builds on the NAP/GAP regulations (implemented through SMRs 1 and 2) by further limiting chemical N inputs and thereby facilitating our green deal target to reduce fertiliser usage and N losses by 2030. The planting of multi-species swards can also further enhance efficiency by using legumes in the species mixture to reduce dependence on external chemical N inputs to a farm. There is a further synergy with the Organic farming scheme which prohibits the use of chemical fertilisers. Eco-scheme practice 6 also builds on practice 2, as improving soil pH, results in more efficient use of nutrient inputs and reduces the risk of nutrient losses to the environment.

Practice 4 Planting of Native Trees/Hedgerows[1]

This will promote planting of native trees and hedgerows. To qualify the farmer must plant at least three trees or one metre of hedgerow per eligible hectare in the year of Eco-Scheme participation. Where a farmer commits to plant twice that (6 native trees or 2 metres of hedgerow per eligible hectare), **that will count as two actions for the Eco-Scheme.** To ensure the Eco-Scheme builds on Conditionality requirements, trees/hedgerows planted under the Eco-Scheme will not count towards GAEC 8 requirements in the year of application.

Practice 5 Use of a GPS controlled fertiliser spreader/sprayer[2]

Use of a GPS-controlled fertiliser spreader and/or GPS controlled sprayer for application of 100% of chemical fertiliser and/or plant protection products applied on the holding in the year of the commitment. This will promote the use of precision machinery for application of chemical fertiliser and plant protection products, thereby reducing inputs while also reducing environmental and climate impact.

Practice 6 Soil sampling and appropriate liming

This will promote soil sampling and the application of lime where there is a need to correct soil acidity. A farmer will only be able to avail of this practice once every three years. This practice is only open to farmers who are not obliged to take soil samples for some other requirement.

Practice 7 Planting of a Break Crop

This will promote the planting of break crops. To go beyond baseline Conditionality requirements, this Eco-Scheme practice will require at least 20% of the arable area of the holding to be planted to a break crop(s) from a prescribed list in the year of the commitment. This practice builds on GAEC 7 requirements by promoting a break crop on at least 20% of the holding, which in turn will foster more sustainable cropping practices on a holding over time

Practice 8 Planting of Multi-Species Sward

This will promote establishment of mixed species swards comprising a range of grass species, legumes and herbs. There are no related requirements under Conditionality or Article 70.

Note[1]: Non-productive area established under Article 70 AECM will not count towards the minimum area required for non-productive features under either Conditionality or the Eco-Scheme for the duration of the AECM contract. Similarly, trees/hedgerows planted under Article 70 will not count towards the minimum requirement for non-productive features under Conditionality or the Eco-Scheme for the duration of the AECM contract. Similarly, trees and hedgerows planted under AECM will not count towards Eco-Scheme planting requirements.

Note[2]: The Eco-Scheme practices associated with limiting chemical nitrogen or the use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreaders/sprayers will not be open to organic farmers as, due to their organic status, these farmers are precluded from spreading chemical fertilisers/applying chemical plant protection products (with the exception of specific products authorised for use in organic production).

All Practices above will make a significant contribution to the specific objective set out in point (d) of Article 6(1).

Practice 1 and 4 will contribute to enhancing carbon sequestration as well as climate change adaptation.

Practice 2 will discourage any further intensification which would lead to increases in greenhouse gas emissions.

Practices 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 will contribute to a reduction in chemical nitrogen use and hence directly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Practices 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 above will make a significant contribution to the specific objective set out in point (e) of Article 6(1).

Practices 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 will assist in reducing dependency on inorganic chemical nitrogen and will improve water as well as soil quality by rewarding farmers for using less chemical nitrogen.

Practice 5 will also contribute to more accurate application of inorganic compounds thereby protecting soil and water quality.

Practice 2 will assist in maintaining the soil's potential.

Practices 1, 2, 4, and 8 above will make a significant contribution to the specific objective set out in point (f) of Article 6(1). They will contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services and preserving habitats and landscapes.

Agri-Environment and Climate Measure

Under Article 70, the flagship AECM has been divided into two distinct operational approaches, as follows:

1. Land with a high proportion of semi-natural habitat will be managed to reflect this. Eight co-operation project areas have been defined in areas of high semi-natural habitat and these will be managed through Co-operation Projects. Locally led results-based payment schemes will be designed by dedicated Project Teams to reflect the specific habitat and species requirements at a local level and in line with the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) 2021. Farmers participating in AECM Cooperation will complete bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures, which will be aimed at achieving landscape-level improvements in biodiversity and water quality in the selected areas. In addition, where appropriate, they will also be able to avail of the AECM General actions outlined below.

2. Farmers outside the defined high-priority areas outlined above will be able to join AECM General. The actions in the AECM General are designed to improve on the quantity and quality of farmland biodiversity habitats, in line with the PAF 2021. Where additional bespoke requirements are necessary, these will be addressed through species-specific actions.

Both approaches will focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable use and development of natural resources, and contributing to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services, and preserving habitats and landscapes. A broad range of actions is proposed for inclusion under both AECM approaches, as set out in Section 5.3 of the CSP. These will differ from, and go beyond, Conditionality requirements, as well as going beyond national legislative requirements. They will effectively build upon the existing baseline set under the SMRs and GAECs, and the specific relationships between the actions and SMRs/GAECs are elaborated in the AECM intervention.

They will also differ from the optional practices available to farmers under the Eco-Scheme.

As set out above, for the duration of a farmer's AECM contract, non-productive features, or other elements created as part of an AECM action will not qualify towards minimum requirements under Conditionality or associated Eco-Scheme actions

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There are no overlaps between actions proposed under the Eco-Scheme and the flagship AECM. However, for some actions, costings under both interventions take account of the same issue. If a participating farmer selects actions in both schemes where costings take account of the same issue, they will receive a receive a reduced payment under one of the schemes to avoid a situation where the farmer would be overcompensated through their participation in two or more actions with some common costing elements under different schemes. This approach will encourage farmers to select actions delivering greater environmental/climate benefits while also facilitating participation in both schemes.

The AECM actions under Article 70 will be complemented by support for non-productive investments (Article 73) and training to implement the AECM measures (under Article 78). In addition, under Article 77, farmers in AECM Cooperation will have the on-going support of a dedicated local Project Team and

the opportunity to engage in bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures. These elements will have a key role in delivering on scheme objectives and will complement the AECM interventions under Article 70.

Organic Farming Scheme

A multi-annual Organic Farming Scheme is also proposed under Article 70. This will cover land in conversion to, and land maintained at, certified organic status. Requirements for the proposed Organic Farming Scheme are all in addition to what is required under Conditionality. The support provided under this intervention is based on the commitment to farming to organic standards.

As set out above, in some cases costings under this intervention and for certain Eco-Scheme practices, as well as flagship AECM actions, take account of the same issue. To address this issue organic farmers will not be able to avail of certain scheme actions, or alternatively will receive a lower payment under one of the schemes, to avoid a situation where the farmer would be overcompensated through their participation in actions with some common costing elements under different schemes.

Other environmental and climate interventions under Article 70

The proposed **Straw Incorporation Measure** will encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops and oilseed rape. Incorporation of straw will enhance the soil's carbon pool. This will have a positive effect on soil biology through its impact on soil structure and functionality, which will also contribute to improved soil nutrient and water retention as well as resilience against erosion, thus complementing GAEC 5, 6 & 7 by building carbon stocks and further protecting soils. This will further improve the environmental sustainability of Ireland's tillage sector. The commitments under this intervention go beyond Conditionality and national legislative requirements and are different to the options available to farmers under the Eco-Scheme or flagship AECM.

The proposed new **Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme** will reduce absolute emissions by improving the environmental sustainability and genetic merit of the suckler herd. All commitments under this intervention go beyond Conditionality and national legislative requirements.

Other environmental and climate interventions outside Article 70

The **Areas of Natural Constraint** intervention proposed under Article 71 will encourage continued management of agricultural land in areas designated under this intervention. This will contribute to biodiversity as well as to maintaining and promoting sustainable farming systems. The commitments under this intervention go beyond Conditionality and national legislative requirements and differ from requirements applicable under the Eco-Scheme or flagship AECM.

It should also be noted that the **Capital Investment Scheme** proposed under Article 73 will only fund investments that go beyond the farmer's obligations under Conditionality and national legislative requirements, with an exception for new legislative requirements as provided for under Article 73(5).

3.1.3 Explanation on how to achieve the greater overall contribution set out in Article 105

Irish Context

Farming plays an important role in the Irish economy and landscape, and approximately two-thirds of the Irish land area is in agricultural use.

There are 137,560 farms in Ireland with an average farm size of 32.4ha of utilisable agricultural area (UAA) per holding. Overall, the majority of farms (65%) are small and small-medium sized farms (CSO Farm Structure Survey, 2016).

Irish agriculture is primarily a grass-based industry, with 90% of UAA considered permanent grassland and meadow, compared to the EU-27 figure of 31%. Dairy and beef production play a key role in the agricultural economy, with milk and beef output accounting for over 61% of agricultural goods output at producer prices in 2020.

Almost all ruminant livestock are maintained outdoors, with the exception of the winter housing period which arises due to inclement weather and low levels of grass growth. In general, these animals graze extensively. However, there is a trend towards intensification in some areas of the country. This has arisen in particular through the expansion of the dairy herd following the abolition of milk quotas in 2015.

Ireland has a relatively small area dedicated to arable farming, with 7% of UAA in arable use, compared with an average of 22% at EU level. Ireland's tillage area has been declining, especially on mixed farms, as farmers have converted to livestock production. There is increasing specialisation within Irish farming, with many farmers moving away from traditional mixed faming systems. For biodiversity and climate reasons Ireland is seeking to retain and, where possible, expand its area under arable production, especially on mixed farms.

High Environmental Ambition

Ireland is environmentally ambitious and will use the CSP to deliver significantly improved environmental outcomes. Over the period 2023-2027 Ireland is seeking to:

1. Reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions,
2. Improve its nutrient use efficiency and reduce chemical nitrogen use,
3. Improve water and air quality, and
4. Improve biodiversity levels.

Ireland's CSP places significant emphasis on the environmental sustainability. Increased environmental and climate ambition will be achieved in Pillar 1 through the targeting of 25% of the direct payments ceiling (€297 million annually, and just under €1.5 billion over the period of the CSP) at the delivery of suitable farming practices under the new Eco-Scheme. In Pillar 2 this will be achieved through a number of measures, for example the allocation of €1.5 billion to a new Agri-Environment and Climate Measure, the allocation of €256 million for an ambitious Organic Farming scheme, and these ambitions are underlined by an increased national co-funding rate of 60%. The combined funding allocation far exceeding the regulatory target of 35%.

In tandem with the measures outside the CSP, there to be strong emphasis on the achievement of a higher level of climate and environment ambition through the new "Green Architecture", and combined these will address the wide-ranging environmental challenges. From the CSP perspective a range of new measures in this regard, including.

- Strengthened Conditionality requirements for the receipt of direct payments, which integrate existing Greening measures and introduce new requirements to, for example, protect wetlands and peatlands, and increase nature and biodiversity-rich areas. Ireland also proposes to increase the baseline to include all agricultural area (with certain exemptions) in GAEC 8 (4%) min share of non-productive features and areas.

- A new Eco-scheme, comprised of a number of climate- and environment-focused farming practices, which all 130,000 farmers will have an opportunity to participate. The large scale and broad ranging measures are expected to deliver cumulative impacts by engaging a large number of farmers to agri-environment schemes for the first time, rewarding them both for the continuation of existing sustainable practices as well as for implementing new actions such as tree or hedgerow planting. The scheme includes practices aimed at reducing chemical nitrogen usage, increasing tree planting, increasing

nature-and biodiversity-rich land areas and encouraging extensive livestock production (HNV type farming) and contributing positively to a range of indicators.

- An ambitious new Pillar 2 environmental scheme, targeted at 50,000 participants, that will be underpinned by a greater focus on results-based actions, NPIs and on collective actions aimed at achieving landscape-scale benefits, in 8 high priority geographic areas which significant emphasis on result/quality based payments; This represents a major scaling up of the lessons and learnings from the current RD programme of building on the Burren Programme and a range of EIPs and LIFE projects. The AECM will again be supported by a new suite of thematic based EIPs for example on breeding waders. This represents a significant increase in ambition compared to the current programme where Ireland is already considered to be a leading MS on result-oriented approaches to AECM delivery and contributing to a wide range of environmental parameters.

- An Organic Farming Scheme aimed at more than tripling the area of agricultural land that is farmed organically from 2% to 7.5%, and contributing.

- A Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme, a Dairy Beef Welfare measure and a Sheep Improvement Scheme that will foster significant improvements to the environmental efficiency of livestock production. These efficiency gains are critically important in the context of delivering on climate ambitions as well as food security.

- A Straw Incorporation Measure and Protein Aid Scheme that will improve soil quality and lead to a reduction in chemical nitrogen usage.

These interventions will be underpinned by extensive training of farmers and advisors, as well as a targeted Knowledge Transfer programme, all of which will strengthen the capacity to deliver optimal climate and environment outcomes from the various interventions and measures[WJ1] .

These Interventions will take place in the wider context of Ireland's recently agreed Food Vision 2030 strategy and its 2021 Climate Action Plan. Food Vision 2030 is Ireland's stakeholder strategy for the development of the agri-food sector over the period to 2030 and charts a pathway to sustainability in all its dimensions – environmental, economic and social - using the food systems approach. It should also be noted that Food Vision 2030, a ten-year stakeholder-led strategy, for sustainable development of the agri-food sector published in August 2021, aims for Ireland to become a world leader in sustainable food systems over the decade ahead. It takes a food systems approach, acknowledging the inter-connections between food, health and nutrition, and between food and the environment; and charting a pathway for the sector to sustainability in all its dimensions, environmental, economic and social. The Food Vision 2030 strategy includes commitments to produce detailed plans to manage the sustainable environmental footprint of both the dairy and the beef sectors, including minimising total emissions.

A Food Vision Dairy Group was established to advance the actions for the dairy sector identified in the Food Vision 2030 strategy, and taking account of the requirement for the dairy sector to contribute to achieving the targets set for the agriculture and land use sector in the Climate Action Plan 2021. The Food Vision Dairy Group's first priority will be to fulfil the Food Vision commitment to 'produce a detailed plan to manage the sustainable environmental footprint of the dairy sector, including minimising total emissions, while making a positive contribution to improved water quality and biodiversity, in line with government policy'. A similar Food Vision beef Group has also been established. In addition, under the Climate Action Plan 2021, Ireland's agri-food sector has been set ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by 2030. The medium-term objectives for the sector have therefore been clearly laid out, and they demonstrate a substantial increase in environmental and climate ambition. The objectives and pressures arising from the livestock sector were taken into account in the SWOT and needs assessment

when drawing up the CSP. In this context it must be borne in mind that there are a significant number of provisions outside CAP most notably Ireland's Climate Action plan and Nitrates Action Programme as well as a number of other initiatives in place as listed detailed elsewhere in the CSP, but that the CSP will make an important contribution to the achievement of these objectives.

Climate

Due to the lack of heavy industry in Ireland, and the nature of its grass-based livestock production system, agriculture contributes the highest share of GHG emissions in Ireland. GHG emissions from agriculture have been increasing, mainly due to increases in biogenic methane from livestock and nitrous oxide related to fertiliser use following the abolition of milk quotas in 2015. Ireland's Climate Action Plan, launched in late 2021, sets out an indicative 22-30% reduction in agriculture's GHG emissions by 2030, based on 2018 levels. This is equivalent to a reduction in emissions from 23MT CO_2 eq to a range of 16-18 MT CO_2 eq. In addition, the agriculture sector will contribute approximately 2MT CO_2 eq of abatement through LULUCF measures.

Nutrient use efficiency and water quality

Ireland's Food Vision Strategy commits to reduce nutrient losses from agriculture to water by 50% by 2030. This will be achieved through the optimisation of all available nitrogen management tools which will facilitate an absolute reduction in chemical fertiliser usage.

Ireland has a robust Nitrates Action Programme relating to agriculture which provides for the protection of waters against pollution caused by agricultural sources. The current Nitrates Action Programme (2022-2025) has been amended to provide policy direction for the protection and stabilisation of water quality. The fourth review of the Nitrates Action Programme is currently ongoing. Requirements under Conditionality within the CSP will be adjusted, where appropriate, to take account of the outcome of the review.

Ireland's third River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2022-2027 is due to be finalised in 2022. The current draft proposes to protect and restore each one of Ireland's 3,126 bodies of water to at least 'good status' by 2027 (with some limited exemptions). The RBMP also identifies 1,603 water bodies that are categorised as 'At Risk of not meeting their environmental objective of good or high-status'. Agriculture is the main significant pressure impacting on 1,000 of these water bodies. The loss of nitrogen from agricultural sources is one of the principal causes of the decline in water quality.

The targeting of actions in the 1,000 water bodies, and the resulting reduction in nutrient losses, will be achieved through multiple CSP interventions. Relevant regulatory frameworks, and other programmes outside the CAP, including relating to advisory services, will also have a role to play to maximise the impact of CSP measures.

Air Quality

The agriculture sector is the largest source of ammonia in Ireland, accounting for over 99% of total national ammonia emissions in 2019. Management of animal manures produced 48% of ammonia emissions from agriculture in 2019, with application of inorganic fertiliser, sewage sludge and animal manures deposited and applied to soils accounting for the remaining 52%.

Ireland's ammonia emissions trend is largely determined by the cattle population. A decline in cattle and sheep population, as well as a decrease in fertiliser use, contributed to reductions in ammonia emissions in the period 1999-2014. However, emissions from 2015-2018 were on an upward trend in response to increasing herd size following the removal of milk quotas in 2015. Emissions peaked in 2018 at 134.3 kt. Ammonia emissions from the agriculture sector in 2019 were 14.0% higher than emissions levels in 1990. However, they were 7.2% lower than the peak levels in 2018.

The Key Metrics within Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 contributing to ammonia abatement include reducing chemical nitrogen use on farms, replacing 65% of Calcium Ammonium Nitrate with protected urea, achieving 90% uptake of Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS), improving animal breeding, reducing crude protein levels in livestock diets, reducing average bovine age of slaughter from 27 months to 24 months, and increasing the area farmed organically to 350,000 hectares.

Biodiversity

The greatest pressures impacting Irish habitats relate to agricultural practices, such as over-/under-grazing, land abandonment and agricultural intensification. The current conservation status of agricultural habitats is very low, with 100% of habitats categorised as 'Unfavourable' in 2013-2018. Through the actions planned under the CSP, it is envisaged that at least 30% of agricultural habitats with a status of 'unfavourable' are expected to demonstrate improving trends towards achieving favourable status by 2030 (2025-2030 reporting period).

Food Vision sets a target that, by 2030, 10% of Ireland's farmed area will be prioritised for biodiversity, spread across all farms throughout the country. It is envisaged that this target will be achieved early through implementation of the CSP.

In relation to the Prioritised Action Framework for Natura land (PAF), it is addressed in the AECM strategy, which includes a significant €1.5bn AECM, encompassing a twin track AECM approach – with half of the funding directed towards a general scheme and half for the Co-Operative element to target 8 high priority areas. Together these elements address the threats associated with the Nature Directives, both within and outside Natura areas /PAF priorities. The Co-op areas have been selected to specifically address PAF priorities, with 50% of our National Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and 62% of our Special Protection Area (SPA) included in these areas, with farmers rewarded for habitat quality and the scorecard approach addressing any threats to these areas. The remaining Natura areas are also prioritised with farmers based in SACs or SPAs given priority entry to the general AECM, with results-based scorecards also used to assess habitat quality.

Organic framing

Food Vision targets at least 7.5% of Ireland's UAA to be farmed organically by 2030. Under the CSP Ireland is seeking to achieve this target by 2027. This will necessitate a very significant increase in the area of land farmed organically, from 87,000ha to 337,500ha, by the end of the CSP.

Achieving the targets

To achieve the targets outlined above the necessary changes will be delivered through a combination of:

1. Incentives under the CSP, to **encourage and facilitate** change;
2. Regulation, to **require** change;
3. Market/private industry incentives, to **reward** change;
4. Technological developments, to **accelerate** change;
5. Diversification Opportunities, to **reinforce** change.

The correct combination of these drivers will deliver the most effective environmental improvements.

Ireland's proposed Monitoring and Evaluation of the CSP

During the CSP implementation phase, a Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group will be established within the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation requirements of the CSP are met. External actors will also be consulted, as appropriate, in relation to any specific issues as they arise.

In addition, an Inter-Departmental Environmental Committee will be established. This Committee will contain representatives from the Government Departments responsible for climate, air and water quality, as well as representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The relevant State agencies will also be involved. The Committee's remit will be to ensure that the most up to date datasets, research and information are available, and to provide a coherent approach to the monitoring of the environmental and climate impacts of the CSP, and to make recommendations where appropriate.

While Article 140 (5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 states that Member States shall submit the evaluation plan to the monitoring committee no later than one year after the adoption of the CAP Strategic Plan, it is intended to compile a draft evaluation plan for the CSP in Q1 2022. The evaluation plan will outline the need for an evaluation team to assess the impact of CSP interventions across the three overarching themes of the CSP.

Overall, there will be much stronger emphasis on monitoring and evaluation than took place under the CAP 2014-2020. The processes will ensure the CSP interventions are effectively addressing Ireland's environmental and climate challenges.

Contribution of interventions under the CAP Strategic Plan to achieving higher environmental ambition

Interventions under the Green Architecture within Ireland's CSP will deliver a greater overall contribution to the achievement of the specific environmental and climate-related objectives set out in points (d), (e) and (f) of Article 6(1) in comparison to the overall contribution made to the achievement of the objective laid down in point (b) of the first subparagraph of Article 110(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 through support under the EAGF and the EAFRD in the period 2014 to 2020.

Details of how proposed interventions will contribute are set out below for each intervention that will make a significantly greater overall contribution. Where appropriate, references are made to the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CSP.

Eligible Hectare

Ireland's Needs Assessment identified the need to restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators (Obj6.N1).

To maintain and improve biodiversity on farmland, and to ensure as much coherence as possible between Pillar I and Pillar II of the CAP, Ireland proposes that, in defining the eligible hectare, other landscape features, such as scrub, copse and woodland will be allowed occupy up to 50% of the reference parcel without a deduction to the eligible area being required, provided that they do not impact the agricultural activity. This represents a significant change from the 2014-2020 CAP programme period, where farmers were incentivised to remove such ecologically beneficial features to maximise their area eligible for Direct Payments.

Conditionality

Conditionality sets the baseline requirements for farmers in receipt of CAP Payments. Consisting of Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs) and standards for the maintenance of land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAECs), Ireland will implement a system of enhanced conditionality through the CSP. This will be achieved through a combination of new and enhanced GAECs as well as the full integration of certain existing Greening requirements into Conditionality.

In particular, Ireland proposes that under **GAEC 8**, the minimum requirement for non-productive features will be applied to all agricultural areas (with certain exemptions). This is a significantly higher level of ambition than the regulatory baseline, which relates to arable lands only. It also represents a very significant change from the 2014-2020 CAP programme, where requirements to assign a proportion of

land to ecological focus areas applied to just 4% of Irish farmers (DAFM, BPS applications 2021). Combined with an appropriately worded definition of the eligible hectare, this extension of regulatory requirements will have a positive impact on biodiversity through enhancement of habitats and ecosystems.

GAEC 8 will contribute significantly towards addressing the following need identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment; Obj6.N1 restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators. Combined with the Eco-Scheme practice of increasing "Space for Nature," the requirements under GAEC 8 will for the first time place an economic value on biodiversity across all Irish farms in receipt of CAP payments.

GAEC 2 is a new GAEC relating to protection of peatland and wetland. This GAEC has not been applied previously. With effect from 2024 it will provide for measures to promote and maintain carbon sequestration in targeted areas with high carbon stocks. Due to the nature of Ireland's soils, it is anticipated that a significant portion of Irish agricultural land will fall under the definition of peatland/wetland that will be applicable to GAEC 2.

This will contribute to the following need identified in the Needs Assessment: Obj4.N2: Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands.

In addition, the requirements under **GAECs 4, 5 and 6 as well as SMRs 1 and 2** will be adjusted, as appropriate, to take account of the ongoing review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme. This is expected to lead to increased environmental requirements.

Eco-Scheme

Eco-Schemes are being introduced for the first time under the CSP. Ireland's Eco-Scheme represents a substantial change compared to "Greening" under the 2014-2020 Programme, where, due to the nature of Irish farming with over 90% of UAA devoted to permanent pasture, the vast majority of Irish farmers were "green by definition." For example, ecological focus areas applied to just 4% of Irish farmers in 2021 (DAFM, BPS applications 2021).

Ireland proposes one Eco-Scheme which will be designed to accommodate all farmers, with the objective of maximising farmer participation to deliver improved environmental outcomes. As part of this objective, the Eco-Scheme will seek to engage many farmers who have never previously joined an agri-environmental scheme under Pillar II.

Ireland is allocating 25% of its Pillar 1 budget to the Eco-Scheme, notwithstanding the flexibility afforded by Article 97 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. The Eco-Scheme will make a significant contribution to each of the specific objectives set out in points (d), (e) and (f) of Article 6(1).

Farmers will undertake two agricultural practices under the Eco-Scheme that will deliver environmental benefits and build on Conditionality requirements. The eight agricultural practices proposed for the Eco-Scheme aim to contribute to meeting several needs identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment.

The Eco-Scheme will discourage intensification, provide more "Space for Nature" and improve biodiversity on farms. It will incentivise reductions in chemical nitrogen use, improve nutrient use efficiency and improve accuracy of application of chemical inputs, thereby facilitating reductions in fertiliser and pesticide use. The specific objectives and associated needs that the new Eco-Scheme will address are set out below. Further details on the eight Eco-Scheme practices are set out in Section 5.1 of the CSP.

SO4: Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation

Obj4.N1: Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture

Obj4.N2: Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands

Obj4.N4: Encourage climate adaptation

All Eco-Scheme Practices will make a significant contribution to the specific objective set out in point (d) of Article 6(1).

Practice 1 and 4 will contribute to enhancing carbon sequestration as well as climate change adaptation.

Practice 2 will discourage any further intensification which would lead to increases in GHG emissions.

Practices 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 will contribute to a reduction in chemical nitrogen use and hence directly reduce GHG emissions.

SO5: Sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources

Obj5.N1: Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly ammonia

Obj5.N2: Protect and improve water quality

Obj5.N3: Improve soil health

Obj5.N4: Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources

Eco-Scheme Practices 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 will make a significant contribution to the specific objective set out in point (e) of Article 6(1).

Practices 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 will assist in reducing dependency on inorganic chemical nitrogen and will improve water as well as soil quality by rewarding farmers for using less chemical nitrogen.

Practice 5 will also contribute to more accurate application of inorganic compounds thereby protecting soil and water quality.

Practice 2 will assist in maintaining the soil's potential.

SO6: Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services and preserving habitats and landscapes

Obj6.N1: Restore, maintain, and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators.

Eco-Scheme Practices 1, 2, 4, and 8 above will make a significant contribution to the specific objective set out in point (f) of Article 6(1). They will contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services and preserving habitats and landscapes.

Agri Environment Climate Measure

The new flagship Agri Environment Climate Measure (AECM) will build on the experience gained from previous Agri Environment schemes, including the current GLAS scheme. It will also build on the success of innovative practices introduced, piloted, and trialed by the Burren Programme and European Innovation Partnerships (EIP-Agri). Through a step-change in approach, it will deliver improved environmental outcomes compared to those achieved in the period 2014-2020.

The structure of the AECM has been designed to differentiate between the habitat and species priorities under differing types of farm management. The AECM has been divided into two distinct operational approaches as follows:

1)Land with a high proportion of semi-natural habitat will be managed to reflect this. Eight co-operation project areas have been defined in areas of high semi-natural habitat and these will be managed through

Co-operation Projects. Locally led results-based payment schemes will be designed by dedicated Project Teams to reflect the specific habitat and species requirements at a local level and in line with the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) 2021. Farmers participating in AECM Cooperation will complete bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures, which will be aimed at achieving landscape-level improvements in biodiversity and water quality in the selected areas. In addition, where appropriate, they will also be able to avail of the AECM General actions outlined below.

2) Farmers outside the defined high-priority areas outlined above will be able to join AECM General. The actions in the AECM General are designed to improve on the quantity and quality of farmland biodiversity habitats, in line with the PAF 2021. Where additional bespoke requirements are necessary, these will be addressed through species-specific actions.

Both approaches will focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable use and development of natural resources, and contributing to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services, and preserving habitats and landscapes. A broad range of actions is proposed for inclusion under both AECM approaches.

The proposed actions for AECM General will be designed with ecological assessment advice and expertise. Mandatory advisor training, including the latest ecological advice, and mandatory farmer training will ensure successful delivery. In addition, the AECM Cooperation Projects will have ecological expertise as part of the cooperation project team. This project team will provide on-going support to farmers in AECM Cooperation.

The new AECM framework, with result-based actions and locally based project teams bringing in experts including from across Government and state agencies, including Ireland's National Parks and Wildlife Service, is a step change in how the flagship agri-environment scheme is delivered, and will achieve real progress in addressing Ireland's needs.

The AECM General is moving from a prescription-based scheme to a hybrid scheme, combining prescription-based measures and results-based measures. This is a significant positive change in the national AECM scheme. It will allow a gradual shift from compliance based to results-based measures. Results-based measures include those for grassland and commonage.

Introduction of a Farm Sustainability Plan (FSP) will ensure better targeting of measures and uptake of more appropriate actions. The requirement for each AECM applicant to assess the whole farm and complete a FSP will greatly enhance the selection of appropriate actions in optimum locations on the farm. The FSP will outline where there are risks or potential risks to water quality, biodiversity, climate, or soil, and ensure that the highest risks are addressed as a priority through mitigation actions and/or practice change.

Nutrient Management Planning will also be a core requirement within the FSP, and the time spent in up-skilling landowners/managers to implement the Nutrient Management Plan will be supported. Resources will also be made available to advisors and applicants to help inform the FSP, for example EPA Pollution Impact Potential Mapping will be used to highlight critical source areas.

The specific objectives and associated needs that the new AECM will address are set out below.

SO4: Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation

Obj4.N1: Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture

Obj4.N2: Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands

Obj4.N4: Encourage climate adaptation

SO5: Sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources

Obj5.N1: Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly ammonia

Obj5.N2: Protect and improve water quality

Obj5.N3: Improve soil health

Obj5.N4: Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources

SO6: Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services and preserving habitats and landscapes

Obj6.N1: Restore, maintain, and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators.

Section 5.3 of the CSP sets out the various AECM interventions under Articles 70, 73, 77 and 78. It also sets out the actions that will contribute to addressing the Needs outlined above. Environmental enhancement of existing measures and the addition of new measures will ensure higher environmental ambition.

The measures include a strong focus on water quality, tree planting, and building on Conditionality as well as the Eco-Scheme by creating more 'space for nature' on farms and improving habitats. In addition, appropriate management of peat-based soils through the Low Input Peat Grassland action in AECM General and the rewetting of blanket bog under agricultural use through the AECM Cooperation Projects will also make a significant contribution to achieving higher environmental ambition. Over the period to 2027, the AECM is expected to facilitate water table management of at least 40,000 hectares of drained, agricultural, managed, carbon-rich soils.

Organic Farming Scheme

Under the 2014-2020 CAP programme one of the targets for the Organic Farming Scheme was to convert some 16,000 hectares of new land to organic production. The target for the CSP is significantly higher, with some 250,000 extra hectares to be brought into organic production over the period to 2027.

Given the nature of organic farming, the Organic Farming Scheme will address all the objectives set out in Article 6(1) (d), (e) and (f). It will also make a significant contribution to addressing the following Needs set out in Ireland's Needs Assessment: Obj4.N1, Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3, Obj5.N4, and Obj6.N1. By facilitating conversion to, and the maintenance of, organic farming, the intervention will contribute through the elimination of chemical fertiliser and chemical pesticide application on organic land, use of organic and green manures to improve soil organic matter, improved crop rotation and more extensive and sustainable farming practices.

The major increase in land under organic production targeted for the CSP will allow the Organic Farming Scheme to make a significantly greater contribution to the environmental and climate-related objectives than was achieved under the 2014-2020 CAP programme.

Capital Investment Scheme

Due to the high level of funding available in the RDP 2014-2020, as extended under the transitional arrangements, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027.

Many of the investments proposed to be funded under the Capital Investment Scheme will support and contribute to addressing more than one of the needs listed in the Needs Assessment, including Obj4.N1, Obj4.N4, Obj4.N5, Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3, Obj5.N4 and Obj6.N1.

The proposals for this intervention include a higher grant rate of 50% that will apply to specific investments that are not linked to an increase in production, but that provide clear benefits to water quality, emissions reductions, and the environment. These include investments in precision grass measurement, rainwater harvesting and storage, solar panels, heat recovery units, heat pumps, biomass boilers, insulation and covers for slurry stores. Some of these investments will also contribute to the wider renewable energy policy.

A higher grant rate of 50% is also proposed to apply to investments under the Organic Farming Capital Investment Scheme. These investments will improve soil and water quality, contribute to improving biodiversity, and assist in mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

It is also proposed to have a 50% grant rate for Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment (LESS) attachments. Low emission spreading technology will reduce ammonia emissions and have a positive effect on emissions reductions, thus providing climate change benefits. It will also encourage better management, and reduction, of mineral fertilizers and pesticides usage, which will in turn contribute to improving biodiversity conditions.

The higher rates of funding being proposed will encourage more focused investment on farms and will make a greater overall contribution to achievement of the specific environmental and climate-related objectives than was achieved under the 2014-2020 CAP programme.

Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme

The proposed new Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme is designed to reduce absolute emissions by improving the environmental sustainability and genetic merit of the suckler herd. The intervention is focused on addressing the following need identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment;
Obj4.N1: Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture.

This intervention will deliver permanent change through improving the national suckler herd's genetics. It will build on the gains delivered through the Beef Data Genetics Programme (BDGP) funded under the 2014-2020 RDP and the Irish exchequer-funded Beef Environmental Efficiency Programme in recent years.

This measure targets improved bovine livestock emission efficiency through enhanced use of genetics, genomics and performance metrics. Through increased genotyping and the requirement for a higher proportion of participating cows to have a high genetic merit index, the scheme will deliver higher environmental ambition and build on the gains delivered thus far through BDGP and BEEP. It will continue the trajectory of improving the environmental sustainability and efficiency of the Irish Suckler Herd.

Straw Incorporation Measure

The proposed Straw Incorporation Measure was not included in Ireland's 2014-2020 CAP programme.

Ireland's SWOT Analysis notes the importance of increasing the carbon sequestration and storage potential of the Irish land-use sector. Additionally, Ireland's Needs Assessment identifies the need to adopt management practices to improve soil health.

The objective of the Straw Incorporation Measure is to encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops and oilseed rape. Incorporation of straw will enhance the soil's carbon pool. This will have a positive effect on soil biology through its impact on soil structure and functionality, which will also contribute to improved soil nutrient and water retention as well as resilience against erosion.

Other Pillar II measures making a significant contribution to Ireland's Green Architecture

European Innovation Partnerships

Given the nature of European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) and Ireland's proposed approach to their implementation under the CSP, this intervention has the potential to address all the objectives set out in Article 6(1) (d), (e) and (f). This is recognised within the SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment identified several needs that this intervention can help to address, including:

- Obj4.N1 (for example, by reducing chemical fertilisers and low intensity management of priority grasslands);
- Obj4.N2 (for example, by planning at landscape and catchment level; management of peatlands and drain management);
- Obj4.N4 (for example, by introducing fire resilience structures; introducing native breeds back into uplands);
- Obj5.N1, N2, N3, N4 (for example, by reduction of fertilisers; improving land management; increasing training; results-based programmes to incentivise farmers and landscape/catchment scale management) and
- Obj6N1(for example, by implementing results-based programmes in relevant areas/measures for wintering sites for birds).

Themes will be developed further following stakeholder consultation as the programming period progresses, allowing opportunities for even greater contribution to environmental and climate-change objectives. However, Ireland can already confirm that:

- water quality will be addressed through a specific themed EIP Call. This will align with Ireland's commitments under the draft 3rd Cycle RBMP 2022-2027, which identifies targeted areas for protection.
- the urgent conservation priority and specific needs for Breeding Waders will be addressed through a specific themed EIP Call.

Under the CSP, Ireland is planning to significantly increase the number of environmental EIP Operational Group projects as compared to the programme from 2014-2020. Ireland is targeting 30 environmental EIP Operational Groups for 2023-2027 as opposed to 22 in place under the 2014-2020 programme. This demonstrates a significantly increased ambition regarding the environmental and climate-related objectives set out in Article 6, 1 (d), (e) and (f), especially given that many of the existing EIPs will be subsumed into AECM Cooperation Projects.

Knowledge Transfer Programme and **Continuous Professional Development**

The Knowledge Transfer Programme will continue to support peer-to-peer learning between farmers, advisors, and relevant experts. However, it will contain a greater focus across a range of environmental and climate topics.

To further facilitate change, professional training in a range of areas will be provided through the Continuous Professional Development programme for Agricultural Advisors, including climate change (both mitigation and adaptation); sustainable energy; air, soil and water quality; biodiversity conservation, and the adoption of new technologies. It will contribute strongly to addressing the following need identified in Ireland's Needs Analysis, ObjAKIS.N1: Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of

climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level.

Other Pillar I measures making a significant contribution to Ireland's Green Architecture

Protein Aid

While possibly considered to be outside the Green Architecture, it is worth noting that Ireland's proposed Protein Aid intervention under CSP will make a significantly increased contribution to environmental and climate objectives. It will contribute to addressing a number of needs identified in the Needs Assessment, including Obj4.N1, Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2 and Obj5.N3.

The percentage of the Pillar I budget devoted to the Protein Aid intervention is being increased significantly. The intervention sets a target of 20,000 hectares of eligible protein crops to be grown and supported annually by the end of the CSP programme period, compared to circa 10,000 hectares under the 2014-2020 CAP programme.

The Protein Aid intervention provides a direct financial support for production of eligible protein crops. Supporting these crops reduces Ireland's reliance on imported protein sources. These protein crops also play an important role in fixing nitrogen from the atmosphere, resulting in reduced chemical nitrogen fertiliser usage in the year in question and in the subsequent crop.

Contribution of measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan to achieving higher environmental ambition

As set out above, to achieve Ireland's environmental and climate targets the necessary changes will be delivered through a combination of:

1. Incentives under the CSP, to **encourage and facilitate** change;
2. Regulation, to **require** change;
3. Market/private industry incentives, to **reward** change;
4. Technological developments, to **accelerate** change;
5. Diversification Opportunities, to **reinforce** change.

The correct combination of these drivers will deliver the most effective environmental improvements. Some of the significant measures outside the CSP that will also contribute to addressing Ireland's higher environmental and climate ambition are set out under the respective specific objectives below. Due to their multifunctional nature, many of these measures will contribute to more than one of the specific environmental and climate objectives set for the CSP.

SO4: Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation

Afforestation

Ireland's national afforestation programme will continue to be funded outside the CAP. As set out in Ireland's Climate Action Plan, Ireland will continue to promote afforestation to increase planting to a rate consistent with realising its 2030 ambition, and to contribute to achieving carbon neutrality no later than 2050. To achieve this a new national Forestry Programme will be developed.

Other measures to achieve Climate Targets

In addition to the supports provided under the CSP, Ireland's approach to achieve our climate targets centres on three other drivers of change:

1) **Regulation -** this will focus primarily on reducing nitrogen allowances, mandatory use of LESS and use of nitrogen fixing clover, including in the context of the introduction of a National Fertiliser Register as well as ongoing compliance with the Nitrates Directive.

2) **Market/Private Industry Incentives –** Financial incentives by industry will play a significant role in driving on farm change. Several new incentives around biodiversity bonus payments are already being established. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine continues to engage with industry on the development of price and bonus payments to ensure industry goals are firmly aligned with Ireland's climate and environmental targets.

3) **New Technologies, Innovation and Diversification Opportunities** – Ireland is confident that technologies are on the horizon that can deliver significant emissions reductions. Industry incentives will also be needed to ensure that they are fully adopted at farm level. This includes innovations such as feed additives, income diversification into areas such as Anaerobic Digestion and development of Carbon farming models.

National Agricultural Soil Carbon Observatory

Ireland is focused on developing a framework to facilitate carbon farming in the future, especially given the high proportion of Irish carbon-rich soils.

Using Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine funding, Ireland's National Agricultural Soil Carbon Observatory was established in 2021 by Teagasc, Ireland's agriculture and food development authority.

The National Agricultural Soil Carbon Observatory will include 17 Eddy Covariance Flux Towers located on benchmark sites including agricultural grasslands, mineral soils and peatlands. The data generated will provide accurate, long-term information on the carbon dynamics of Irish agricultural systems. It will also complement other greenhouse gas research being carried out in relation to agriculture.

Overall, the National Agricultural Soil Carbon Observatory will place Ireland at the forefront of international carbon research and will enable:

·Improved measurement, modelling and mapping of carbon uptake and release from agricultural land.

·Accurate assessment of carbon sequestration according to climatic conditions, soil type and agricultural management practices.

·Better understanding of the efficacy of mitigation measures to increase carbon sequestration.

·National inventory and emission factor refinement.

·Allow for participation in the EU ICOS (Integrated Carbon Observation System) network.

Teagasc Signpost Programme

Teagasc's Signpost programme is a multi-annual campaign to lead climate action by all Irish farmers. It is a collaborative programme, led by Teagasc, which involves a partnership of over 30 companies and organisations from the Irish agri-food sector.

The programme objectives are:

·To lead and support the transition of Irish farming towards more sustainable farming systems;

·To reduce agricultural GHG and ammonia emissions,

·To reduce other negative environmental impacts of agriculture, specifically, to improve water quality and to improve biodiversity; and

·To reduce costs and improve margins from farming.

There are two elements to the programme:

1. A network of 100 Signpost Farms, which act as demonstration farms showcasing science-based technologies and as sites for carbon sequestration measurements. These Signpost Farms will point the way forward towards climate smart farming, and are central to the second element,
2. The Signpost Advisory campaign, this aims to engage all farmers and support them to move towards more sustainable farming systems.

SO5: Sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources

Nitrates Action Programme

Ireland adopts a whole of territory approach to the implementation of the Nitrates Directive through its Nitrates Action Programme (2018-2021). Ireland is currently negotiating its 5th Nitrates Action Programme.

Unlike most other EU Member States, Ireland's Nitrates Regulations contain measures that control both Nitrogen and Phosphorus, and these measures set the regulatory baseline for all farmers in Ireland for the protection of waters. This engages the more intensive farmers who traditionally do not join the main agri-environment schemes or may not be in receipt of CAP payments.

The Nitrates Action Programme will play a key role in meeting agriculture's commitments to the targets set under the Water Framework Directive to 2027 and will align with the CSP's commitment to the stabilisation and protection of water quality from agriculture.

The target for low emission slurry spreading will be achieved through a combination of Regulation under the proposed Nitrates Action Programme and, for those farmers not subject to regulatory requirements, incentives under AECM and the Capital Investment Scheme. Additionally, the proposed draft Nitrates Action Programme will lower crude protein levels in livestock diets and revise the organic nitrogen output of the Dairy Cow, reducing stocking rate for a cohort of farmers. Separately, it is anticipated that industry incentives will reduce average bovine age of slaughter, thereby achieving further reductions in ammonia emissions.

Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP)

The Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP) is an innovative Irish Government/industry initiative which was established in 2018. It is a collaborative initiative, involving a range of stakeholders to facilitate improvements in water quality.

The ASSAP has involved a clear commitment and initially provided resources of 30 Agricultural Sustainability Advisors, 20 funded by the Irish Government and 10 by the Dairy Industry. Additionally, the Dairy Industry has provisionally committed a further eight advisors from 2022. This is in advance of negotiating a future programme and signals the value of this approach for the protection of waters.

The ASSAP Advisors are promoting on-farm best practice to farmers in 190 'Areas for Action' in the current 2nd cycle of the River Basin Management Plan which were identified by the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), where the status of the water is at risk of deteriorating. Farmers are availing of this service within the 'Areas for Action' on a voluntary basis and are provided with one-to-one advice on reducing nutrient losses at farm level, through both nitrogen and phosphorus/sediment actions.

All advisors have received comprehensive training from the EPA and Teagasc to ensure a common approach. The process of engagement with both the wider communities and with farmers in the 190

‘Areas for Action’ has been ongoing for the last three years. Funding for the programme is due to expire in 2022, but those involved are currently exploring the possibility of extending the programme to coincide with the CSP period.

Funding to support water quality in Group Water Schemes (GWS) Drinking Water Catchments

This Irish Government is currently funding (until end 2023) implementation of targeted drinking water source protection actions in group water scheme catchments as part of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes source protection strategy. This provides practical support towards the protection of drinking water quality, biodiversity enhancement and climate action. The initiative also provides an opportunity to trial new and innovative approaches which, if successful, could be adopted more generally to assist Ireland meet its Water Framework Directive objectives as set out in the proposed RBMP as well as informing development of future agri-environmental actions.

This funding is focused on seven group water schemes catchments that fall within, or close to, current Priority Areas for Action defined in Ireland’s 2nd RBMP. These catchments are largely impacted by agricultural pressures.

SO6: Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services and preserving habitats and landscapes

LIFE Projects

Ireland does not intend to fund LIFE projects through the CSP. However, Ireland foresees strong complementarity between its CSP interventions and its current LIFE projects, including Strategic Nature Projects (SNaP).

Two large-scale LIFE projects that commenced in 2021 are the Wild Atlantic Nature LIFE IP and Corncrake LIFE. The Wild Atlantic Nature project aims to support appropriate and sensitive habitat management in blanket bog areas in the west and north-west of Ireland through a results-based payments scheme along with other community supports and innovations. Corncrake LIFE is also working with farmers and landowners to improve the habitat conditions and range of Corncrake areas in the west and north-west of the country.

Ireland will continue to seek to participate in future LIFE projects and Horizon Projects that will contribute to the objective of improving biodiversity, climate, and water quality and other environmental objectives to support the transition to carbon neutrality.

Business and Biodiversity platform

The Business and Biodiversity platform set up by Natural Capital Ireland, a vehicle supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, is working to encourage larger agri-economic sector businesses to adopt biodiversity conscious campaigns and actions, including habitat creation or altered management practices.

3.1.4 Explanation of how the environmental and climate architecture of the CAP Strategic Plan is meant to contribute to already established long-term national targets set out in or deriving from the legislative instruments referred to in Annex XI

The contribution and consistency of the CAP Strategic Plan and associated measures outside the CAP with regards to the legislative instruments referred to in Annex XIII is set out below under the following headings:

1. Birds and Natural Habitats
2. Water
3. Air Quality
4. Climate Change
5. Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
6. Sustainable use of pesticides

1.Birds and Natural Habitats

Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Implemented in an Irish Context through the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2021.

Specific targets in the Directive(s) and/or the national plan

Definition and protection of specific natural habitats and fauna associated with the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2021.

Ireland's current agri-food development strategy sets a target that by 2030, 10% of Ireland's farmed area will be prioritised for biodiversity, spread across all farms throughout the country. It is envisaged that this target will be achieved early through implementation of the CSP.

The greatest pressures impacting habitats relate to agricultural practices, such as over-/under-grazing, land abandonment and agricultural intensification. The current conservation status of agricultural habitats is very low with 100% of habitats categorised as 'Unfavourable' in 2013-2018. It is envisaged that at least 30% of agricultural habitats with a status of unfavourable are expected to demonstrate improving trends towards achieving favourable status by 2030 (2025-2030 reporting period). A key element to drive success will be the AECM Co-operation Projects proposed for defined high-priority areas. Further details are set out below.

Contribution and Consistency of the CAP Strategic Plan

Relevant Need(s) identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment:

Obj6.N1: Restore, maintain, and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline, including farmland birds and pollinators.

Under Conditionality, Pillar I and Pillar II Ireland is proposing a number of interventions to address this need as well as the requirements of Directive 2009/147/EC and Directive 92/43/EEC. These will be complemented by actions outside the CSP.

Conditionality

SMR 3 and 4 are relevant.

SMR 3 is applicable to all farmers and certain lands with additional rules applying to 154 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds. In accordance with and in support of the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) 2021 for Natura 2000 in Ireland, SMR 3 controls will include checks on actions requiring consent (ARCs) in designated SPA sites and checks on all farms for evidence of activities likely to cause a disturbance affecting birds, for example hedge cutting during the bird nesting season.

Regarding SMR 4 Ireland currently has a network of 439 sites selected for conservation as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and adopted by the Commission as sites of community importance. As of 14 July 2020, 276 sites have been formally designated by Statutory Instrument as SACs with the formal designation process for the remaining 163 ongoing (PAF 2021). In accordance with the PAF for Natura 2000 in Ireland, SMR 4 controls will include checks on notifiable actions requiring consent in designated SAC sites.

To strengthen the controls under SMR 3 and 4, there will be greater emphasis on targeting controls to ensure effectiveness. This will be achieved through consideration of new information relevant to SMR 3 and/or 4, input from the relevant bodies, evaluation of the outcome of past controls and an effective risk analysis procedure in the selection process. Furthermore, once Checks By Monitoring are established for certain requirements, it will facilitate more widespread implementation of controls relating to actions within SPA's and SAC's. In addition, a communications plan will be implemented to inform farmers of their obligations on designated SPA's and SAC's.

SMR 3 and 4 are in alignment with and support Ireland's CSP Needs Assessment Obj6.N1. They also align with the Commission's CSP Recommendation for Ireland concerning improvement of the conservation status of grasslands and heathlands.

Other Conditionality measures that will make a significant contribution to this area include GAECs 1, 2, 8 and 9.

Eco-Scheme

Farmers wishing to participate in the Eco-Scheme will have to complete two Eco-Scheme agricultural practices. One of these options will build on Conditionality through the option to devote a minimum of 7% of land to space for nature (landscape features and non-productive areas building on requirements under GAEC 8). Farmers who wish to devote 10% of their land to space for nature in a given year will not be required to complete another Eco-Scheme practice. A further optional agricultural practice under the Eco-Scheme is the planting of trees/hedgerows which in time once established and maintained will deliver further food sources and nesting sites. Another option is extensive livestock production where a farmer must maintain a low stocking rate. Separately the sowing of multi-species swards as an agricultural practice will also deliver biodiversity benefits.

Aiming to engage as many farmers as possible, the Eco-Scheme will make a significant contribution to addressing Obj6.N1.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

- **R.31** Preserving habitats and species: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration, including HNV farming practices.
- R.34: Preserving landscape features

AECM

Both AECM General and AECM Cooperation Projects will contribute to this area.

The structure of the AECM has been designed to differentiate between the habitat and species priorities under differing types of farm management. The AECM has been divided into two distinct operational approaches as follows:

1) Land with a high proportion of semi-natural habitat will be managed to reflect this. Eight co-operation project areas have been defined in areas of high semi-natural habitat and these will be managed through Co-operation Projects through locally-led results-based payments schemes which will be designed by dedicated Project Teams to reflect the specific habitat and species requirements at a local level and in line with the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) 2021. Farmers participating in the AECM Cooperation will complete bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures in the AECM Cooperation Areas. In addition, where appropriate, they will also be able to avail of the AECM General actions outlined below.

2) The actions in the AECM General are designed to improve on the quantity and quality of farmland biodiversity habitats which support farmland bird species in line with the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) 2021. Relevant actions under AECM General include: Management of private Natura; Commonage; Low input grassland; Low input peat grassland; Extensively grazed permanent pasture; Planting Trees; Planting new hedgerows; Hedgerow Rejuvenation (Hedgerow Coppicing and Hedgerow Laying); Grassland Margin – Arable or Grassland; Environmental management of Arable fallow; Rye-grass seed set as winter food for birds; Unharvested cereal headlands; Grassland Margin – Arable or Grassland; Environmental management of Arable fallow; Brassica Fodder Stubble; Winter bird food; Overwinter stubble; Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse; Planting a traditional orchard. The Birds of Conservation Concern of Ireland updated lists of Red and Amber species were considered in the development of the range and specification of actions in order to cover the ecological requirements of farmland bird species. Where additional bespoke requirements are necessary these will be addressed through specific actions i.e. Barn Owl Boxes and Geese and Swans prescription.

The proposed actions for AECM General will be designed with ecological assessment advice and expertise. Mandatory advisor training, including the latest ecological advice, and training on the use of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's IT system will be provided to registered farm planners to ensure that any proposed actions with potential to have an impact on a European Site will be screened for that potential risk.

The Department's IT systems will flag any proposed actions that may have a potential impact on a European Site and these proposed actions will be flagged for further consideration.

In addition, the AECM Cooperation Projects will have ecological expertise as part of the cooperation project team. This project team will provide on-going support to farmers in AECM Cooperation.

The AECM priority areas and actions identified have been agreed in close collaboration with Ireland's National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mandatory AECM participant training, followed by voluntary training in later years, will also be important to ensure effective delivery of actions under both approaches above.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

- **R.31** Preserving habitats and species: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under management commitments supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including HNV farming practices.
- **R.33** Improving Natura 2000 management: Share of total Natura 2000 area under supported commitments.

- **R.34** Preserving landscape features: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area under commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees.

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme offers a payment for conversion to organic farming and a maintenance payment to encourage ongoing commitment to organic production. The Scheme facilitates the elimination of chemical fertiliser and chemical pesticide application on organic land and promotes more sustainable farming systems. Increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of UAA to 7.5% of UAA over the course of the CSP will directly contribute to improving biodiversity.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.29 Development of organic agriculture: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming, with a split between maintenance and conversion

Areas of Natural Constraints

The Areas of Natural and Specific Constraints intervention will continue to grant payments to beneficiaries in designated areas.

Those farming in designated areas face significant hardships from factors including difficult topography, climatic problems and poor soil conditions. Through the minimum stocking rate requirement, payments under this scheme will encourage continued management of this agricultural land, contributing to biodiversity as well as to maintaining and promoting sustainable farming systems.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

- **R.31** Preserving habitats and species: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under management commitments supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including HNV farming practices.
    - R.31 Preserving habitats and species: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration, including HNV farming practices.
    - R.34: Preserving landscape features

European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Projects

Themes for calls for EIP Projects will be developed further following stakeholder consultation as the programming period progress to maximise the contribution to environmental and climate-change objectives. However, Ireland can already confirm that the urgent conservation priority and specific needs for Breeding Waders will be addressed through a specific themed EIP Call. Other EIP calls will have the potential to address other relevant issues, for example,

·Innovative approaches to working on farmed peatlands.

·Implementing results-based programmes in relevant areas/measures for wintering sites for birds.

·Innovative approaches to farming in the callows and how to protect the varied birdlife and habitats which exist there.

·Innovative approaches to farming in Coastal areas.

Ireland is planning to have 30 environmental EIP Operational Group projects under the CSP. This is a significant increase compared to the previous RDP especially given the significant number of former EIP actions that will now be achieved under AECM Cooperation.

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

LIFE Projects

Ireland does not intend to fund LIFE projects through the CSP; however, Ireland foresees strong complementarity between its CSP interventions and its current LIFE projects including Strategic Nature Projects (SNaP).

Two large-scale LIFE projects that commenced in 2021 are the Wild Atlantic Nature LIFE IP and Corncrake LIFE. The Wild Atlantic Nature project aims to support appropriate and sensitive habitat management in blanket bog areas in the west and north-west of Ireland through a results-based payments scheme along with other community supports and innovations. Corncrake LIFE is also working with farmers and landowners to improve the habitat conditions and range of Corncrake areas in the west and north-west of the country.

Ireland will continue to seek to participate in future LIFE projects and Horizon Projects that will contribute to the objective of improving biodiversity, climate, and water quality and other environmental objectives to support the transition to carbon neutrality.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (Agriculture) Regulations

The EIA (Agriculture) Regulations apply to three different types of activities;

·Restructuring of rural land holdings

·Commencing to use uncultivated land or semi-natural areas for intensive agriculture

·Land drainage works on lands used for agriculture.

As a result, the EIA Regulations address certain elements that are outside the scope of Conditionality. The EIA Regulations do not, however, apply to reclamation, infill or drainage of wetlands. These activities are subject to planning permission under the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2011 and the European Communities (Amendment to Planning and Development) Regulations 2011.

Where it is proposed to undertake any of the activities subject to the EIA Regulations, and the proposed works exceed the size threshold for screening set out in the Regulations, a farmer must make an application for screening to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Where it is proposed to undertake any of these activities within, or where the activity may affect a proposed NHA or a Natura site, a farmer must apply to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for screening regardless of the size of the area involved.

Likewise, where the proposed activities do not exceed the size thresholds, but the works may have a significant effect on the environment, a farmer must make an application to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

2.Water

Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy

Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Ireland supports the delivery of Directive 2000/60/EC through various mechanisms. Through the implementation of the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and Nitrates Regulations (SI 605/2017) as amended, there is a robust Nitrates Action Programme relating to agriculture which provides for the protection of waters against pollution caused by agricultural sources. This programme is central to meeting Water Framework Directive targets. The current Nitrates Action Programme (2018-2021) has been amended to provide policy direction for the protection and stabilisation of water quality.

The fourth review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is currently on going. When it concludes it will ensure a significant contribution to the Water Framework Directive targets. Any legislative changes will apply through the conditionality as appropriate.

Specific targets in the Directive(s) and/or the national plan

The Nitrates Regulations prevent the pollution of waters by nitrogen and phosphorus from agricultural sources while in addition providing co-benefits for climate, biodiversity and air quality.

Agriculture covers over 65% of the land area of Ireland and is the most frequent significant pressure in water bodies that are not meeting Water Framework Directive targets. The main problems arising from farming are loss of excess nutrients and sediment to water. Excess phosphorus and sediment levels are typically associated with rivers and lakes, while too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.

Ireland's third River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2022-2027 is due to be finalised in 2022. The current draft proposes to protect and restore each one of Ireland's 3,126 bodies of water to at least 'good status' by 2027 (with some limited exemptions). The RBMP also identifies 1,603 water bodies that are categorised as 'At Risk of not meeting their environmental objective of good or high-status'. Agriculture is the main significant pressure impacting on 1,000 of these water bodies. The loss of nitrogen from agricultural sources is one of the principal causes of the decline in water quality.

The targeting of actions in the 1,000 water bodies, and the resulting reduction in nutrient losses, will be achieved through multiple CSP interventions. Relevant regulatory frameworks, and other programmes outside the CAP including advisory services will also have a role to play to maximise the impact of CSP measures.

Contribution and Consistency of the CAP Strategic Plan

Relevant Need(s) identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment:

Obj5.N2: Protect and improve water quality.

Under Conditionality, Pillar I and Pillar II Ireland is proposing a number of interventions to address this need as well as the requirements of Directive 2000/60/EC and Council Directive 91/676/EEC. These will be complemented by actions outside the CSP.

Conditionality

SMR 1 concerns checks for compliance with Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy: Article 11(3)(e) and Article 11(3)(h) as regards mandatory requirements to control diffuse sources of pollution by phosphates.

SMR 2 establishes baseline requirements for compliance with Council Directive 91/676/EEC concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources: Articles 4 and 5.

SMR 1 and 2 are in alignment with and support Ireland's CSP Needs Assessment Obj5.N2. They also align with the Commission's CSP Recommendation for Ireland on ensuring a widespread improvement in nutrient management. Controls under SMR 1 include checks on water abstraction points and diffuse sources liable to cause pollution. Controls under SMR 2 include, inter alia, checks for compliance on the storage and handling of organic fertilizers, organic and artificial fertilizer applications (closed periods, buffer strips, records, etc), restrictions on ploughing during certain periods and the establishment of green cover.

SMRs 1 and 2 and GAEC 4 together form the baseline requirements concerning the protection of waters on farmland.

The requirements under Conditionality will be adjusted where appropriate to take account of the ongoing review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme.

Eco-Scheme

The Eco-Scheme will assist in reducing dependency on inorganic chemical nitrogen and improving water quality by rewarding farmers for using less chemical nitrogen through agricultural practices associated with extensive livestock production, limiting chemical nitrogen use, planting of a break crop(s) and sowing of a multi-species sward. In addition, the Eco-Scheme will encourage greater use of Precision Agriculture, specifically the use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreaders/sprayers, which will ensure optimal placement of chemical fertilisers/plant protection products. A further practice within the Eco-Scheme relates to soil sampling and appropriate liming. This will ensure that soils are at the optimal pH which is most beneficial in terms of efficient and effective utilisation of nutrients.

Aiming to engage as many farmers as possible, the Eco-Scheme will make a significant contribution to addressing Obj5.N2.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.21 Protecting water quality: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies

R.22 Sustainable nutrient management: Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management.

Protein Aid

The Protein Aid intervention contributes to this area by supporting production of eligible protein crops that play an important role in fixing nitrogen from the atmosphere resulting in reduced chemical nitrogen fertiliser usage in the year in question and in the subsequent crop. This scheme aims to support 14,000Ha of protein crops in 2023 rising to 20,000Ha by 2027.

AECM

Both AECM General and AECM Cooperation Projects will contribute to this area.

Relevant actions under AECM General include: Riparian strips/zones; Low Input Grassland; Low Input Peat Grasslands; Extensively managed permanent pasture, Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse; Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) ; Grass margin on arable/grassland; Planting Trees in new Riparian Buffer Strips/Zones; Catch crops; Environmental management of arable fallow.

Under the AECM Cooperation eight Cooperation Areas have been defined. These will be managed through Co-operation Projects through locally-led results-based payments schemes which will be designed by dedicated Project Teams to address specific requirements at a local level. Farmers participating in the AECM Cooperation will complete bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures in the AECM Cooperation Areas. In addition, where appropriate, they will also be able to avail of the AECM General actions outlined above.

Mandatory AECM training, followed by voluntary training in later years, will be important to ensure effective delivery of actions under both approaches above. Farmers in AECM Cooperation will also have the on-going support of a dedicated local Project Team.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.21 Protecting water quality: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies

R.22 Sustainable nutrient management: Share of agricultural land under commitments related to improved nutrient management

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme offers a payment for conversion to organic farming and a maintenance payment to encourage ongoing commitment to organic production. The Organic Farming Scheme facilitates the elimination of chemical fertiliser as well as the elimination of chemical pesticide application on organic land. Increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) to 7.5% of UAA over the course of the CSP will directly contribute to addressing Obj5.N2.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.29 Development of organic agriculture: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming, with a split between maintenance and conversion

R.21 Protecting water quality: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies

Capital Investment Scheme

Due to the high level of funding available in the RDP 2014-2020 as extended under the transitional arrangements, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027. In these years, the Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to addressing Obj5.N2 by providing support for investments in nutrient storage facilities, LESS equipment and precision farming equipment.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.9 Farm modernisation: Share of farms receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency

R.26 Investments related to natural resources: Share of farms benefitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resources

European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Projects

Themes for calls for EIP Projects will be developed further following stakeholder consultation as the programming period progresses. This will maximise the contribution to environmental and climate-change objectives. However, Ireland can already confirm that water quality will be addressed through a specific themed EIP Call. This will align with Irelands commitments under the draft 3rd Cycle RBMP 2022-2027 which identifies targeted areas for protection.

Ireland is planning to have 30 environmental EIP Operational Group projects under the CSP. This is a significant increase compared to the previous RDP, especially given the significant number of former EIP projects that will evolve into AECM Cooperation.

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

Nitrates Action Programme

Ireland adopts a whole of territory approach to the implementation of the Nitrates Directive through Irelands Nitrates Action Programme (2022-2025) and is currently implementing its 5th Nitrates Action programme which was finalised in March 2022. It contains a number of strengthened and additional measures which go beyond the requirements of Ireland's previous NAP. Unlike most other EU Member States, Ireland's Nitrates Regulations contain measures that control both Nitrogen and Phosphorus and these measures set the regulatory baseline for all farmers in Ireland for the protection of waters. This engages the more intensive farmers who traditionally do not join the main agri-environment schemes or may not be in receipt of CAP payments.

The Nitrates Action Programme will play a key role in meeting agriculture's commitments to the targets set under the Water Framework Directive to 2027 and align with the CAP Strategic Plan's commitment for the stabilisation and protection of water quality from agriculture. Ireland's third River Basin Management Plan is not expected to be finalised until the end of Quarter 3 of 2022. A consultation on the draft plan closed on 31st March following receipt of 1,400 submissions for consideration as the process is finalised.

Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP)

The Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP) is an innovative Irish Government/industry initiative which was established in 2018. It is a collaborative initiative, involving a range of stakeholders to facilitate improvements in water quality.

The ASSAP has involved a clear commitment and initially provided resources of 30 Agricultural Sustainability Advisors, 20 funded by the Irish Government and 10 by the Dairy Industry. Additionally, the Dairy Industry have provisionally committed a further 8 advisors from 2022, this is, in advance of negotiating a future programme and signals the value of this approach for the protection of waters.

The ASSAP Advisors are promoting on-farm best practice to farmers in 190 'Areas for Action' in the current 2nd cycle of the River Basin Management Plan which were identified by the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), where the status of the water is at risk of deteriorating. Farmers are availing of this service within the 'Areas for Action' on a voluntary basis and are provided with one-to-one advice on reducing nutrient losses at farm level through both nitrogen and phosphorus/sediment actions.

All advisors have received comprehensive training from the EPA and Teagasc to ensure a common approach. The process of engagement with both the wider communities and with farmers in the 190 'Areas for Action' has been ongoing for the last 3 years. Funding for the programme is due to expire in 2022, however those involved are currently exploring the possibility of extending the programme to coincide with the CSP period.

Funding to support water quality in Group Water Schemes (GWS) Drinking Water Catchments

This Irish Government is currently funding (until end 2023) implementation of targeted drinking water source protection actions in group water scheme catchments as part of the National Federation of Group

Water Schemes source protection strategy. This provides practical support towards the protection of drinking water quality, biodiversity enhancement and climate action. The initiative also provides an opportunity to trial new and innovative approaches which, if successful, could be adopted more generally to assist Ireland meet its Water Framework Directive objectives as set out in the proposed RBMP as well as informing development of future agri-environmental actions.

This funding is focused on seven group water schemes catchments that fall within, or close to, current Priority Areas for Action defined in Ireland's 2nd River Basin Management Plan. These catchments are largely impacted by agricultural pressures.

3.Air Quality

Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe

Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Directive 2008/50/EC and Directive (EU) 2016/2284 provide the legal framework for the EU's air policy. Ammonia targets are accounted for under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 and are the most relevant for agriculture.

The agriculture sector is the largest source of ammonia in Ireland accounting for over 99% of national total ammonia emissions in 2019. Management of animal manures produced 48% of ammonia emissions from agriculture in 2019, with application of inorganic fertiliser, sewage sludge and animal manures deposited and applied to soils accounting for the remainder (52%).

Ireland's ammonia emission trend is largely determined by the cattle population. A decline in cattle and sheep population, as well as a decrease in fertiliser use, contributed to reductions in ammonia emissions in the period 1999-2014. However, emissions from 2015-2018 were on an upward trend in response to increasing herd size following the removal of milk quotas in 2015. Emissions peaked in 2018 at 134.3 kt. The ammonia emissions from the agriculture sector in 2019 were 14.0% higher than the emission levels in 1990, however they were 7.2% lower than the peak levels in 2018.

The National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP) 2021 was mandated under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 (NEC Directive). The format of the NAPCP is set down by the European Commission in implementing decision (EU) 2018/1522. The NAPCP is a technical document which outlines the pathway Ireland will follow to achieve compliance with its commitments under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 including in relation to ammonia from agriculture. Ireland is not anticipating any sustained exceedances of EU ambient air pollution limits into the future.

The with additional measures (WAM) scenario for ammonia emissions incorporates the Teagasc GHG MACC[1] as it was included in Ireland's 2019 Climate Action Plan. It does not include the latest Teagasc Ammonia MACC[2] measures (published September 2020) but expects these to deliver the additional cumulative abatement required to achieve compliance within the 2021 official projections. The 2021 official projections WAM scenario included the latest measures within the Teagasc Ammonia MACC and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Roadmap towards Climate Neutrality "Ag

Climatise" which predict compliance with the 2020 emission reduction target in 2022, while compliance with the 2030 emission reduction target is also projected.

In addition, since the submission of the NAPCP and publication of the 2021 official projections, additional measures have been identified and included in the update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 (published November 2021). The full impact of all these measures on current and projected ammonia emissions have not yet been incorporated into the national emissions inventory and projections report, but this will be completed in early 2022.

Note[1]: An-Analysis-of-Abatement-Potential-of-Greenhouse-Gas-Emissions-in-Irish-Agriculture-2021-2030.pdf (teagasc.ie)

Note[2]: NH3-Ammonia-MACC.pdf (teagasc.ie)

Specific targets in the Directive(s) and/or the national plan

Under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 the targets are 1% reduction in ammonia emissions by 2020 and 5% reduction in ammonia emissions by 2030 (both relative to 2005).

The Key Metrics within Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 contributing to ammonia abatement include reducing chemical nitrogen use on farms, replacing 65% of Calcium Ammonium Nitrate with protected urea, achieving 90% uptake of Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS), improving animal breeding, reducing crude protein levels in livestock diets, reducing average bovine age of slaughter from 27 months to 24 months, and increasing the area farmed organically to 350,000 hectares.

Contribution and Consistency of the CAP Strategic Plan

Relevant Need(s) identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment:

Obj5.N1: Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly ammonia.

Under Conditionality, Pillar I and Pillar II Ireland is proposing a number of interventions to address this need as well as the requirements of Directive (EU) 2016/2284. These will be complemented by actions outside the CSP.

Conditionality

The fourth review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is currently on going. It proposes increased requirements for farmers including a reduction in the livestock intensity threshold for mandatory use of LESS. The requirements under SMR 2 will be adjusted where appropriate to take account of the ongoing review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme. When the Nitrates Action Programme concludes it will ensure a significant contribution to the Obj5.N1.

Eco-scheme

Farmers wishing to participate in the Eco-Scheme will have to complete two Eco-Scheme agricultural practices. One of these optional practices is Extensive Livestock Production. This will reduce ammonia emissions. A number of other Eco-Scheme options will contribute to a reduction in chemical nitrogen use. Given the proportion of nitrogen fertiliser spread in the form of Urea this will directly reduce ammonia emissions. The options that will contribute to the reduction in chemical nitrogen use and hence a reduction in ammonia emissions are:

·Agricultural Practice 3: Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage below standard rates.

·Agricultural Practice 5: Use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreader/sprayer.

·Agricultural Practice 6: Soil Sampling and Appropriate Liming on all eligible hectares

·Agricultural Practice 8: Sowing of a Multi-Species Sward.

Aiming to engage as many farmers as possible, the Eco-Scheme will make a significant contribution to addressing Obj5.N1.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.22 Sustainable nutrient management: Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management.

AECM

AECM General will also contribute to Obj5.N1. Relevant actions include planting tree belt for ammonia capture at farmyard as well as LESS (where not required under Regulation), Low Input Grassland; Low Input Peat Grasslands; Extensively grazed permanent pasture; Grass margins; and Environmental Management of Arable Fallow. The AECM will make a significant contribution to addressing Obj5.N1.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.20 Improving air quality: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce ammonia emission.

R.22 Sustainable nutrient management: Share of agricultural land under commitments related to improved nutrient management.

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme offers a payment for conversion to organic farming and a maintenance payment to encourage ongoing commitment to organic production. The Organic Farming Scheme facilitates the elimination of chemical fertiliser application on organic land. Increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) to 7.5% of UAA over the course of the CSP will directly contribute to addressing Obj5.N1.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.29 Development of organic agriculture: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming, with a split between maintenance and conversion.

Capital Investment Scheme

As set out above, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027. In these years, the Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to addressing Obj5.N1 by providing support for investments in nutrient storage facilities, covering of slurry stores, LESS equipment and precision farming equipment.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.9 Farm modernisation: Share of farms receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency.

R.26 Investments related to natural resources: Share of farms benefitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resources.

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

Ireland's Fifth Nitrates Action Programme (NAP) was finalised in March 2022. It contains a number of strengthened and additional measures which go beyond the requirements of Ireland's previous NAP. In relation to organic nitrogen output, three new excretion rate bands have been introduced for dairy cows in

the 5th NAP which will be calculated as 80kg/ha, 92kg/ha and 106kg/ha. This means that to remain below the maximum permitted organic nitrogen loads of 250kg/ha in derogation, (or 170kg/ha outside derogation) there will be a lower maximum number of dairy cows per hectare for the majority of Irish farmers. Other new measures include changes to the closed period and application dates for organic manures, new requirement for shallow cultivation to reduce nutrient losses post-harvest, requirement for soil testing for all holdings stocked above 170 kg N/ha in 2022 and stocked above 130 kg N/ha in 2023. Without soil tests there will be no allowance for Phosphorus application. This measure will allow farmers to properly nutrient management plan for their farms and apply nutrients as required from the soil test, reduction of stocking rate allowance on commonage land to a maximum of 50 kg N/ha with no chemical fertiliser allowed, new requirements for certain categories of holdings regarding compulsory use of Low Emission Slurry Spreading equipment (which is already compulsory for those farmers stocked above 170 kg N/ha).

All of these measures are further strengthening Irelands Nitrates Action Programme and will contribute to reduction of nutrient losses to the environment and will ensure a significant contribution to the Obj5.N1, including for those farmers that decide not to avail of CAP payments.

The target for LESS will be achieved through a combination of Regulation under the proposed Nitrates Action Programme and, for those farmers not subject to regulatory requirements, incentives under AECM and the Capital Investment Scheme. Additionally, the Nitrates Action Programme will lower crude protein levels in livestock diets and revise the organic nitrogen output of the Dairy Cow reducing stocking rate for a cohort of farmers. Separately it is anticipated that industry incentives will reduce average bovine age of slaughter thereby achieving further reductions in ammonia emissions.

4.Climate Change

Regulation (EU) 2018/841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry in the 2030 climate and energy framework and amending Regulation No 525/2013 and Decision No 529/2013/EU

Regulation (EU) 2018/842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement and amending Regulation (EU) No 525/2013

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

The Climate Action Plan 2021 sets out 2030 targets for each sector to meet the greenhouse gas emission targets under Regulation (EU) 2018/842. It also incorporates LULUCF emissions targets as provided for in Regulation 2018/841.The draft national targets in the revised Regulation (EU) 2018/842 and Regulation (EU) 2018/841 have been taken into account in the CSP notwithstanding the ongoing nature of the negotiations. Ireland fully supports the ambitious new EU emission reduction targets for 2050 and 2030 as set out in the European Climate Law. However, notwithstanding that Ireland is very positively supporting the Fit for 55 package as a whole, and the engagement process, especially in relation to LULUCF.

Specific targets in the legislation and/or the national plan

Under Ireland’s Climate Action Plan 2021 the national target is a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions economy wide compared to 2018 levels. These are extremely ambitious targets going beyond Ireland’s requirements set out under Regulation (EU) 2018/842.

Under the Climate Action Plan 2021, the agriculture sector is committed to reducing its emissions by 22-30%. This requires agriculture emissions to reduce to between 16 and 18 MT by 2030 – an absolute reduction of 5-7 MT CO_2 eq. Measures under the CSP are expected to facilitate a reduction of up to 1.3 MT in agriculture's emissions. These will be complemented by other measures outside the CSP to achieve the overall target reduction of 5-7 MT CO_2 eq by 2030.

There is also a commitment to contribute towards the 4.8MT LULUCF emissions reduction target. Agriculture is expected to deliver a contribution of approximately 2MT towards the achievement of this total, by 2030. Of this 2MT contribution by 2030, the CSP is expected to deliver approximately 1.2MT over the 5-year programme from 2023-2027.

The following actions are contained within Ireland's Climate Action Plan, to be achieved by 2030:

·Increasing our annual afforestation rate consistent with realizing this ambition and achieving carbon neutrality no later than 2050, including promoting forest management initiatives to increase carbon sinks and stores.

·80,000 ha. of reduced management intensity (water table management) of grasslands on drained organic soils.

·Improving our management for carbon sequestration of at least 450,000 hectares of grasslands on mineral soils.

·Increasing the inclusion of cover crops in tillage to at least 50,000 hectares by 2030.

·Increasing the incorporation of straw to at least 10% of the tillage (cereal) area.

Contribution and Consistency of the CAP Strategic Plan

Relevant Need(s) identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment:

Obj4.N1: Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture

Obj4.N2: Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands

Obj4.N4: Encourage climate adaptation

Under Conditionality, Pillar I and Pillar II Ireland is proposing a number of interventions to address this need as well as the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2018/841, Regulation (EU) 2018/842 and the higher level of ambition set in Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021. The actions within the CSP will be complemented by actions outside the CSP.

Conditionality

Several GAEC standards will contribute directly to the Climate Action Plan 2021. GAEC 1 concerns the maintenance of permanent grassland in relation to agricultural area. The aim is to preserve existing carbon stock. GAEC 2 aims to protect carbon rich grasslands and peatlands; Ireland proposes to implement GAEC 2 from 2024. GAEC 9 on the protection of Environmentally Sensitive Permanent Grassland (ESPG) bans the ploughing or conversion of ESPG in designated areas. GAECs 1, 2 and 9 will all contribute to addressing Obj4.N2.

Extension of GAEC 8 requirements relating to non-productive features to all farmland (i.e. not confined to arable areas) will further contribute positively to the protection and management of carbon stores.

Eco-Scheme

Farmers wishing to participate in the Eco-Scheme will have to complete two Eco-Scheme agricultural practices. One of these options will build on Conditionality through the option to devote a minimum of 7% of land to non-productive areas and landscape features. Farmers who wish to devote 10% of their land

to space for nature in a given year will not be required to complete another Eco-Scheme practice. Another optional agricultural practice in the Eco-Scheme is the planting of native trees/hedgerows. These options will contribute to enhancing carbon sequestration.

A further optional agricultural practice under the Eco- Scheme will be to reward farmers for maintaining an extensive livestock stocking rate. This will discourage any further intensification which would lead to increases in greenhouse gas emissions. A number of other options will contribute to a reduction in chemical nitrogen use and hence directly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The options that will contribute to the reduction in chemical nitrogen use are:

·Agricultural Practice 3: Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage below standard rates.

·Agricultural Practice 5: Use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreader/sprayer.

·Agricultural Practice 6: Soil Sampling and Appropriate Liming on all eligible hectares

·Agricultural Practice 7: Planting of a break crop(s)

·Agricultural Practice 8: Sowing of a Multi-Species Sward.

Aiming to engage as many farmers as possible, the Eco-Scheme will make a significant contribution to addressing Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2 and Obj4.N4.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.22 Sustainable nutrient management: Share of Utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management.

R.31 Preserving habitats and species: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration, including HNV farming practices

R.12: Adaptation to climate change

R.19 : Improving and protecting soils.

Protein Aid

The Protein Aid intervention will contribute to this area by supporting production of eligible protein crops. These protein crops play an important role in fixing nitrogen from the atmosphere resulting in reduced chemical nitrogen fertiliser usage in the year in question and in the subsequent crop. This scheme aims to support 14,000Ha of protein crops in 2023 rising to 20,000Ha by 2027.

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme targets increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of Ireland's utilisable agricultural area to a target of 7.5%. This is in line with the Programme for Government commitment and will reduce emissions through the elimination of the use of chemical fertiliser on these lands as well as the lower stocking rate associated with organic livestock production.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.29 Development of organic agriculture: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming, with a split between maintenance and conversion

R.19: Improving and protecting soils

R.24: Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides

AECM

Both AECM General and AECM Cooperation Projects will contribute to Obj4.N1 and Obj4.N2. Relevant actions under AECM General include: Low Input Grassland; Low Input Peat Grasslands; Extensively

grazed permanent pasture; Environmental Management of Arable Fallow; Planting new hedgerows; Planting trees; Hedgerow Rejuvenation (Hedgerow Coppicing and Hedgerow Laying); Minimum Tillage; Low Emission Slurry Spreading and AECM Training. These actions will be complemented by bespoke farm, landscape, and catchment measures in the AECM Cooperation Areas including upland blanket bog management where appropriate. Over the period to 2027 the AECM is expected to achieve reduced management intensity (water table management) of at least 40,000 hectares of drained, agricultural, managed, carbon-rich soils.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.14 Carbon storage in soils and biomass: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions, maintain and/or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)

R.19: Improving and protecting soils

R.24: Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides

R.12: Adaptation to climate change

Straw Incorporation Measure

The Straw Incorporation Measure will encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops and oilseed rape. Incorporation of straw will enhance the soil's carbon pool thereby contributing to Obj 4.N1 and Obj4.N2. This will have a positive effect on soil biology through its impact on soil structure and functionality. This intervention targets a total of 40,000ha per year for the duration of the CAP Strategic plan.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.14 Carbon storage in soils and biomass: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions, maintain and/or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)

Suckler Carbon Efficiency Measure

The Suckler Carbon Efficiency Measure will reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the livestock sector through enhanced use of genetics, genomics and performance metrics that will permanently increase the sustainability and environmental efficiency of the Irish suckler herd. This intervention targets 400,000 suckler cows for the duration of the CAP Strategic Plan.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.14 Carbon storage in soils and biomass: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions, maintain and/or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)

Capital Investment Scheme

As outlined above, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027. In these years, the Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to addressing Obj4,N1 and Obj4,N4 by providing support for investments in precision farming equipment and in the case of the tillage sector, low disturbance tillage equipment, straw incorporating equipment and equipment to assist the establishment of green cover.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.16 Investments related to climate: Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to renewable energy or biomaterials production.

R.26 Investments related to natural resources: Share of farms benefitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resources.

Knowledge Transfer Programme and Continuous Professional Development

The Knowledge Transfer Programme will support peer-to-peer learning between farmers, advisors, and relevant experts across a range of areas including climate related topics. To further facilitate change, professional training in a range of areas including climate change (both mitigation and adaptation), sustainable energy and the adoption of new technologies will be provided through the Continuous Professional Development programme for Agricultural Advisors. Through their contribution under AKIS these interventions also have the potential to contribute to addressing Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2 and Obj4.N4.

Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector

The sectoral intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector supports the operation of Producer Organisations (POs). POs can advise and support members to take actions to decrease GHG emissions on their farms. In order to receive EU funding, Operational Programmes in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector must contain a minimum of 15% of expenditure devoted to environmental and/or climate related actions. This gives the potential to directly address Obj4.N1 and Obj4.N4

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

Afforestation

Ireland's national afforestation programme will continue to be funded outside the CAP. As set out in Ireland's Climate Action Plan, Ireland will continue to promote afforestation to increase planting to a rate consistent with realising its 2030 ambition and contribute to achieving carbon neutrality no later than 2050. To achieve this a new national Forestry Programme will be developed.

Other measures to achieve Climate Targets

In addition to the supports provided under the CSP, Ireland's approach to achieve our climate targets centres on three other drivers of change:

1.Core measure outside CSP (estimated abatement 1.5 MT)

As outlined in Irelands Climate action plan there are a number of actions that fall outside the scope of the CSP which will contribute to mitigation. One of the most important actions is the transition away from CAN fertiliser to a urea-based product treated with a urease inhibitor, commonly known as protected urea.

2. Regulation & Market/ Private Industry Incentives (estimated abatement 1.2 MT) - this will focus in the main on further reducing nitrogen allowances, including in the context of the introduction of a National Fertiliser Register as well as ongoing compliance with the Nitrates Directive.

3. New Technologies, Innovation and 'additional measures' (estimated abatement 1.0 MT+) The sector cannot comply with its indicative target range without the provision of new technologies. This is consistent with all sections of the economy as set out in our Climate Action Plan.

The total mitigation potential from these 3 elements and the estimated CSP contribution (1.3MT) is 5.0MT+ thus bringing Ireland into the target range for mitigation. As stated above the sector will also contribute approximately 2 MT CO2 equivalent of abatement through LULUCF measures.

5.Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources

Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Ireland's National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030 was prepared in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action to incorporate all planned policies and measures that were identified up to the end of 2019 and which collectively deliver a 30% reduction by 2030 in non-ETS greenhouse gas emissions (from 2005 levels).With Additional Measures (WAM) the NECP commits to a 34.1% share of renewables by 2030.

Specific targets in the legislation and/or the national plan

Within Directive (EU) 2018/2001 at least 40% renewables by 2030 at EU level.

It is expected that Member States will be asked to propose an indicative national RES target which will contribute to the overall EU RES target in the context of the update of the Member States' NECPs in 2023. Ireland's indicative 2030 renewable energy target, as outlined in the NECP, is 34.1%. Although, based on the RES share allocation formula used during the NECP process, the REDIII impact assessment itself suggests an indicative 40% share for Ireland.

Furthermore, given Ireland's commitment under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 to reduce GHG emissions by 51% over 2018 – 2030 it is likely that Ireland will need to deliver on a RES share in excess of 40% in order to meet the carbon budgets and sector emissions ceilings that are expected to be established in Irish law in early 2022.

The recently published Climate Action Plan 2021 commits to increasing the share of renewable electricity up to 80% with specific targets as follows:

·1.5 - 2.5GW of grid scale solar capacity

·Up to 8GW of onshore wind capacity

·At least 5GW of offshore wind capacity

Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC

Ireland's NECP 2021-2030 set its national contribution for energy efficiency in primary energy savings by 2030. According to the WAM scenario trajectories, primary energy consumption equals 13.7 Mtoe and final energy consumption equals 11.2 Mtoe in 2030.

Within the Directive the specific target is 32.5 % improvement in energy efficiency by 2030 at EU level. Ireland's National Contribution to this target is set out in the NECP and in the Long-Term Renovation Strategy (LTRS). The new National Residential Retrofit Plan was published as part of Climate Action Plan 2021. This is Ireland's plan to retrofit 500,000 homes by 2030, with unprecedented levels of resource commitment. Home retrofits will make an important contribution to meeting Ireland's LTRS, NECP and Energy Efficiency Directive goals.

Contribution and Consistency of the CAP Strategic Plan

Relevant Need(s) identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment:

Obj4.N5: Increase energy efficiencies on farm through the uptake of new technologies and facilitate the production and use of renewable energy sources.

The Capital Investment Scheme will address this need as well as contributing to the requirements of Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 2012/27/EU. It will be complemented by actions outside the CSP.

Capital Investment Scheme

As outlined above, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027. In these years, the Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to addressing Obj4,N5.

The Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to renewable energy targets by providing support for investments in solar panels, heat recovery units, heat pumps, and biomass boilers. It is projected that a total of 25 MW of renewable energy will be funded within the next CSP across 1, 250 investments.

The Capital Investment Scheme will also contribute to improved energy efficiency by providing support for investments in heat recovery units, heat pumps, biomass boilers, ventilation, and insulation. It is projected that a total of 2,100 investments improving energy efficiency will be funded within the next CSP.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.15 Renewable energy from agriculture, forestry and from other renewable sources: Supported investments in renewable energy production capacity, including bio-based (Megawatt)

R.16 Investments related to climate: Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to renewable energy or biomaterials production

Measures outside the CAP Strategic Plan

As set out above, the new National Residential Retrofit Plan was published as part of Climate Action Plan 2021. Home retrofits will make an important contribution to meeting Ireland's LTRS, NECP and Energy Efficiency Directive goals. Under the Climate Action Plan 2021 a series of actions are set out. For further details see https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/6223e-climate-action-plan-2021/

In December 2021 a new Microgeneration Support Scheme was announced. It will target support for installed micro-generation capacity, to contribute to the target of up to 2.5GW of solar renewables under the Climate Action Plan 2021.

6.Sustainable use of Pesticides

Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides

A regulation to replace Directive 2009/128/EC is currently being drafted by the European Commission. This regulatory framework is expected to enhance the current actions under the Sustainable Use Directive and will include legal requirements for the sustainable use of pesticide. Together with amendments to existing regulations, this new regulation is expected to form the basis of Ireland's actions regarding pesticide targets during the CSP programme.

Ireland's national environment and/or climate plan where appropriate

Irish National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (Plant Protection Product) revised in February 2019

Specific targets in the Directive and/or the national plan

The National Action Plan sets out targets in the areas of training, equipment, storage, use in special area's etc. These all serve to achieve the objectives of Directive 2009/128/EC.

The National Action Plan includes mandatory training and certification for professional users (including farmers and landscapers), distributors and advisors. It is also obligatory to have pesticide application equipment tested periodically.

Contribution and Consistency of the CAP Strategic Plan

Relevant Need(s) identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment:

Obj5.N2: Protect and improve water quality

Obj9.N3: Support the efficient and environmentally responsible use of pesticides and encourage alternative practise

Under Conditionality, Pillar I and Pillar II Ireland is proposing a number of interventions to address these needs as well as the requirements of Directive 2009/128/EC.

Conditionality

SMR 8 concerns controls on requirements in Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides: Article 5(2) and Article 8(1) to (5) apply. Article 12 applies with regard to restrictions on the use of pesticides in protected areas defined on the basis of the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000 legislation. Article 13(1) and (3) apply regarding handling and storage of pesticides and disposal of remnants.

SMR 8 aligns with and will contribute to addressing Obj5.N2 and Obj9.N3. Checks under SMR 8 are compatible with the requirements and standards of the Irish National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (Plant Protection Product (PPP)) and contribute directly to the following broad areas of the National Action Plan: controls on application equipment, the storage, supply and disposal of PPP, the use of PPPs (including records) and Integrated Pest Management.

SMR 7 facilitates controls regarding the placing of PPPs on the market as set out in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009: Article 55, first and second sentence. Other Conditionality elements contributing to the safe use of PPP include GAEC 4 on the establishment of buffer strips along water courses.

AECM

AECM General will contribute to this area. Relevant actions include: Riparian Buffer Strip/Zones; Grassland Margins (Arable); Extensively grazed permanent pasture; Environmental Management of Arable Fallow. AECM Training will improve knowledge which will contribute to the reduction in pesticide use.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.24 Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) concerned by supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticide leakage

Organic Farming Scheme

The Organic Farming Scheme targets increasing the area under organic production from less than 2% of Ireland's utilisable agricultural area to a target of 7.5%. This is in line with the Programme for Government commitment and will facilitate the elimination of chemical pesticide application on a higher proportion of land. It will contribute to addressing Obj5.N2.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.29 Development of organic agriculture: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming, with a split between maintenance and conversion

R.24 Sustainable and reduced use of pesticides: Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) concerned by supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides such as pesticide leakage

Capital Investment Schemes

As outlined above, it is proposed to provide capital investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027. In these years, the Capital Investment Scheme will contribute to addressing Obj5,N2 and Obj9,N3 by providing support for investments in precision farming equipment for application of plant protection products. It will also support investment in equipment such as Ring Rollers and Haulm Toppers to reduce reliance on plant protection products.

Relevant Result Indicator(s):

R.9 Farm modernisation: Share of farms receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency

3.1.5 Where relevant, CAP contribution towards LIFE projects

3.2 Overview of the generational renewal strategy

An overview of the relevant interventions and specific conditions for young farmers, such as "Complementary income support for young farmers" and "Installation of young farmers", and their respective budgetary allocations; this overview shall also explain in general terms the interplay with any relevant national instruments with a view of improving the consistency between Union and national actions in this area.

The challenge of generational renewal is widely recognised both at national and EU level and Ireland is committed to providing supports with the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and via national supports. The current Programme for Government "Our Shared Future" contains a commitment to support younger farmers. In addition, Food Vision 2030, the new stakeholder-led strategy for the agri-food sector, also highlights the challenge of generational renewal and proposes a number of actions, including maintaining the strong level of current support, the promotion of land mobility and succession planning and increased education and promotion of the diversity of careers in the agri-food sector.

This reflects the need to ensure a vibrant agricultural sector equipped with skilled and innovative young farmers to respond to societal demands for quality food and environmental public goods. It is clear that facilitating generational renewal is critical to ensure a bright future for the agri-food sector.

Nationally – taxation and access to finance

At national level there are a number of measures aimed at young farmers including a number of taxation measures, both to facilitate succession and to support their establishment.

Succession and the early transfer of family farms is supported by Agricultural Relief from Capital Acquisitions Tax and Stamp Duty exemptions. In addition, the Succession Farm Partnership Scheme provides for a tax credit over five years to further assist the transfer of land within a partnership structure to encourage earlier transfer of family farms.

Investment and access to land are supported by 100% Stamp Duty Relief for Young Trained Farmers, 100% Stock Relief for Young Trained Farmers. Relief for Long-Term Leasing has been an important driver of land mobility by providing access to land and security of tenure for younger farmers and a route to retirement for older farmers.

The Future Growth Loan Scheme, developed in partnership with the European Investment Fund (EIF), provides a source of finance for young farmers who may not have high levels of security and has been in high demand.

CAP Strategic Plan Proposals 2023-2027

In terms of the new CAP Strategic Plan (CSP), the SWOT analysis informed the Needs assessment which identified three needs, namely:

·N1 Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers, including through income support, encouraging land mobility and succession planning

·N2 Support young farmers in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in and develop their farm enterprise

·N3 Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises.

The CSP interventions for generational renewal have been informed by the SWOT and needs analysis, along with extensive consultation through the CAP Consultative Committee and through bilateral meetings with the main representative bodies and bilateral engagement with the young farmers organisation (Macra na Feirme).

Ireland will implement the Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers (CISYF) in the new CAP programme, dedicating 3% of the direct payments ceiling to this intervention to help young farmers establish their farming businesses. This allocation of approximately €35m per year will see qualifying young farmers benefit on a per hectare basis which will be more advantageous to young farmers than the current system, which was linked to payment entitlements. The proposed rate will significantly increase from approximately €70 per activated entitlement in the current programme to an average of €170 per hectare in the new CAP paid on all eligible hectares to a maximum of 50ha. In addition, the National Reserve will provide an allocation of Payment Entitlements to young farmers, or new entrants to farming at the national average value, or top up lower value entitlements to the average.

In addition, a higher grant rate for qualified young farmers is included under the capital investment measure proposed under the CSP. Capital Investments will be funded under the current Rural Development Programme for the years 2023-2025 and under the CSP for the years 2026 and 2027. The CSP will also continue to provide support for collaborative farming which will increase the availability of land for younger farmers. Under the proposed EIP measure it is envisaged that there will be calls for proposals on a wide variety of themes which may include additional focus such as innovative approaches to promote generational renewal on Irish farms. Supports for innovation and knowledge transfer will be supported thorough the AKIS to enable young farmers to address the challenges. It is also anticipated the support under the collaborate farm measures will facilitate a pathway for young people to enter farming. In addition, the support for advice for older farmers may also result in improved succession planning benefiting young farmers.

The combination of all of these measures, under both CSP and implemented nationally, will work together to provide start up supports for young farmers in their business for the first time.They build on the successful suite of measures that have been in place since 2015 in Ireland and have been met with

approval by farm organisations during consultations. Full allocations, unit amounts and particular conditions are available in the relevant CSP sections.

3.2.1 Where relevant, CAP contribution towards Erasmus projects

3.3 Explanation on how the interventions under coupled income support as referred to in Subsection 1 of Section 3 of Chapter II of Title III are consistent with the Water Framework Directive - 2000/60/EC

The eligible crops for the protein scheme are all legumes which means they are nitrogen fixing crops. They have no requirement for nitrogenous chemical fertilisers which will reduce usage. Protein crops also leave residual nitrogen in the ground after harvest thereby reducing the chemical nitrogen requirement in subsequent crops also. This support aims to maintain current areas and to increase protein area further to 20,000 hectares then this will reduce overall chemical nitrogenous fertiliser usage and thereby helping to achieve the goals for reduction in nitrogen fertiliser usage. The inclusion of protein/cereal mix crop would make organic farming more attractive to new entrants. Organic farming does not use chemical nitrogenous fertilisers.

This reduction in fertiliser usage has the potential to positively impact on water quality but the impact is extremely difficult to quantify because there are so many variables not least the weather. The tillage sector is the most efficient in terms of nitrogen use efficiency but there are still undoubtedly potential benefits to water quality in terms of potential reduction of Nitrate leaching into waterways etc.

3.4 Overview as regards the aim of fairer distribution and more effective and efficient targeting of income support

This section describes the objectives and factors that were considered in the development of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan to deliver on the CAP objectives, improve the fairness and efficiency of direct payments (DP) and target the implementation of measures to support those who need it the most.

A frequently used ratio in terms of CAP funds is that 80% of the funds go to 20%of the farmers; though, it is worth noting that in the Irish context 56% of the funds go to 20% of the farmers and in a European context, Ireland ranks 5th in this regard according to a DG AGRI source from 2018 (Table 1).

Table 1: Trend in 80-20 ratio by Member State between 2015 and 2018 & The share of Direct Payments that accrues to 20% of the Farmers in EU Member States.

% of Direct Payment received by the 20% biggest of beneficiaries (in amount)				**% of Agricultural Area** hold by the 20% biggest farmers (in size)	
MS	2018	Difference 2018 vs. 2015	Ranking	2018	Difference 2018 vs. 2015
LU	48%	0%	1	48%	2%
FR	51%	-3%	2	52%	-1%
NL	52%	-2%	3	51%	1%
BE	55%	-1%	4	52%	-1%
IE	56%	0%	5	49%	1%
AT	57%	-1%	6	53%	0%
FI	57%	2%	6	54%	0%
UK	64%	0%	7	69%	0%
SI	65%	1%	8	57%	1%
EL	66%	-2%	9	67%	-1%
DE	69%	0%	10	71%	0%
MT	70%	-2%	11	53%	0%
PL	70%	0%	11	66%	0%
SE	73%	0%	12	68%	0%
DK	75%	0%	13	73%	0%
ES	76%	-2%	14	80%	-1%
HR	76%	-1%	14	75%	0%
CY	78%	1%	15	77%	0%
LT	78%	1%	15	81%	1%
IT	80%	0%	16	74%	-2%
BG	83%	-1%	17	89%	-1%
LV	83%	3%	18	82%	2%
HU	84%	-1%	19	84%	0%
RO	84%	0%	19	82%	0%
PT	85%	0%	20	87%	1%
EE	86%	0%	21	86%	0%
CZ	89%	0%	22	88%	-1%
SK	94%	0%	23	94%	0%
EU-28	**80%**	**-2%**	**N/A**	**81%**	**-1%**

Source: Adapted from DG-AGRI

Data from the 2020 Farming Census, published in 2021 illustrates the mean farm size to be 33.4 hectares (Ha), with the highest concentration at 10-20 Ha (Table 2). Farm type and physical size have a direct relationship, as for many farm types viability is linked to scalability. The farm types with the greatest physical size are Tillage, Dairy, and mixed crops and livestock with over 64 Ha on average among those categories. These farm types will be negatively affected by Ireland's implementation of CRISS, which is set at a redistribution of 10% of the DP envelope to a maximum of 30 Ha. The majority of all other farm types benefit from this implementation of CRISS. It was not possible to perform a farm income comparison with data currently available. Teagasc National Farm Survey produces a financial record for farms in Ireland; however, it does not include approximately 40,000 small farms. This is a significant portion of the 135,000 farms in Ireland and this would skew the analysis and not accurately illustrate the true impact of redistribution.

Table 2: Number of farms by farm type and farm size, 2020

Farm type	Farm size (AAU) - hectares						Total	Mean AAU (hectares)	Median AAU (hectares)
	< 10	10 - 20	20 - 30	30 - 50	50 - 100	100 +			
All	**28,154**	**30,872**	**22,995**	**27,394**	**19,747**	**5,875**	**135,037**	**33.4**	**23.3**
Specialist tillage	423	587	643	957	1,186	771	4,567	63.6	42.1
Specialist dairying	56	543	1,413	4,506	6,697	2,104	15,319	65.1	55.1
Specialist beef production	14,044	20,896	15,522	15,429	7,159	1,109	74,159	26.9	21.2
Specialist sheep	5,570	4,365	2,478	2,656	1,596	770	17,435	28.9	16.6
Mixed grazing livestock	807	1,354	1,405	2,379	1,954	609	8,508	44.8	34.8
Mixed crops and livestock	42	142	233	481	574	287	1,759	64.9	49.2
Mixed field crops	6,279	2,709	1,131	786	426	185	11,516	16.2	9.3
Other	933	276	170	200	155	40	1,774	20.9	8.8

Predictive modelling for the first year of the new CAP, Scheme Year 2023 was carried out to analyse the redistributive effects and to examine distribution of payments by farm size. The farming population used for this modelling was scheme year 2020, this showed that the average Direct Payment per hectare (Ha) was ~€245.67 in 2027 for this population. In Table 3, all farms from 5Ha-50Ha in size had Direct Payment per hectare over the average. This illustrated good distribution amongst the majority of farm sizes below the average, receiving a payment higher than the national average value.

Table 3: Direct Payment per Hectare by physical Farm Size

HA W/O ANC	2022 Base D/P HA	2027 D/P HA	% Change
0-5 HA	€513	€406	-21%
5-10 HA	€241	€253	5%
10-20 HA	€234	€255	9%
20-30 HA	€237	€258	9%
30-50 HA	€247	€254	3%
50-75 HA	€257	€245	-5%
75-100 HA	€262	€240	-8%
100-150 HA	€258	€231	-11%
150-200 HA	€245	€223	-9%
200-250 HA	€247	€223	-10%
250-500 HA	€219	€211	-4%
500-1,000 HA	€175	€165	-5%
> 1,000 HA	€101	€112	11%
AVG	€249	€246	-1%

Farms in the category of 0-5 Ha had a disproportionately higher rate of DP/Ha, and this could be due to consolidation of payment entitlements in a previous CAP programme, illustrating a DP/Ha rate well above the national average.

The Max Unit Value will be set at €285. This measure aims to normalise payment entitlement values, without impacting those below the average. This maximum entitlement value will impact a small number of farmers that have high entitlement value between the range 0-5Ha.

At the opposite end of the scale, farms sized over 1000Ha had a lower DP/HA rate. This variation is due to the static population of the modelling parameters and could also be linked to farmers having more Ha than payment entitlements, extensive farming systems or lower value Payment Entitlements resulting in

the payment being diluted. Only 4.35% of farms are above >100 Ha, and fewer are above >1000Ha. This anomaly of an increase DP/Ha in >1000 Ha represents a very small portion of the farming population who have a DP/Ha rate below the national average.

In anticipating the period of CAP 2023-2027, it is evident that the trend to support farmers and provide a more equitable payment model will continue (Figure 1). Farmers below the average physical farm size will see an increase in DP support while those above will contribute this support, via redistribution mechanisms CRISS, Convergence and Capping.

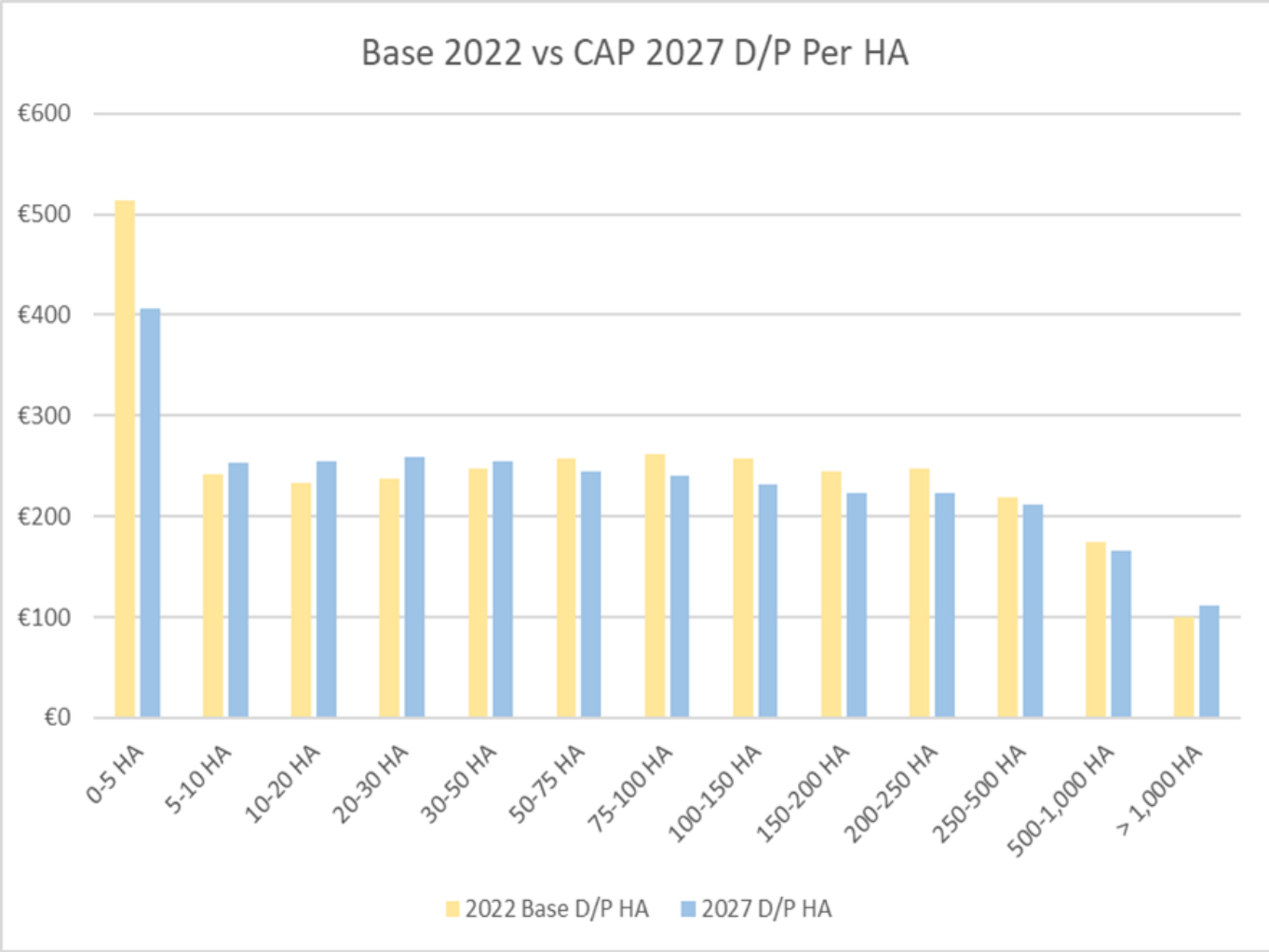

Figure 1: Direct Payment per Hectare by physical farm size for the CAP period (2023-2027).

Income support tools

Another income support tool in rural development was analysed, namely natural or other area-specific constraints (ANC). Farmers located in these areas face more constraints and are likely to show lower viability. Table 6 illustrates that those farmers below the national average were in receipt of a DP above the average and positive correlation was noted over the period 2023-2027.

Table 4: Direct Payment per Hectare including ANC payment profiles by physical farm size.

HA WITH ANC	2023 T/S HA	2024 T/S HA	2025 T/S HA	2026 T/S HA	2027 T/S HA
0-5 HA	€460	€459	€458	€457	€457
5-10 HA	€335	€336	€336	€337	€337
10-20 HA	€342	€343	€343	€344	€344
20-30 HA	€344	€345	€345	€346	€346
30-50 HA	€323	€323	€323	€323	€323
50-75 HA	€289	€288	€287	€286	€285
75-100 HA	€272	€270	€269	€267	€267
100-150 HA	€254	€253	€252	€250	€250
150-200 HA	€238	€238	€237	€237	€237
200-250 HA	€234	€235	€235	€236	€235
250-500 HA	€212	€214	€217	€219	€219
500-1,000 HA	€165	€167	€169	€170	€170
> 1,000 HA	€113	€113	€113	€113	€113
AVG	€299	€298	€298	€298	€297

The redistributive strategy implemented demonstrates a fairer distribution. This is supported by Results Indicator 6 & 7 with an increase target of support year on year, illustrating a more effective and efficient mechanism of targeting of income support.

The combined effects of all proposed income support tools on redistribution are captured in the modelling analysis on Redistribution to smaller farms (Result Indicator (R.I. 6) and Enhancing support to farms in areas with specific needs (Result Indicator 7).

In Table 5, the variables for calculating R.I. 6 are captured using the same static modelling population* as above. The redistributive supports to those below average farm size in 2023 are calculated at 104.19% and this increases over the period to 105.32%. As the indicator is above 100%, it implies that beneficiaries below average farm size receives, an amount per hectare exceeding the average.

Table 5: Calculation variables of Result Indicator 6

R6: Year & Type	Total Determined Area	DP	DP/ha	Below Average Farm Size
2023				
Total in 2023	4,638,668.17	€1,145,398,358.49	€246.92	
Below Average 2023	1,479,330.03	€380,602,045.62	€257.28	104.19%
2024				
Total in 2024	4,638,668.17	€1,143,951,603.75	€246.61	
Below Average 2024	1,479,330.03	€381,445,998.86	€257.85	104.56%
2025				
Total in 2025	4,638,668.17	€1,142,451,962.99	€246.29	
Below Average 2025	1,479,330.03	€382,290,000.40	€258.42	104.93%
2026				
Total in 2026	4,638,668.17	€1,140,897,892.97	€245.95	
Below Average 2026	1,479,330.03	€383,136,955.31	€258.99	105.30%
2027				
Total in 2027	4,638,668.17	€1,139,565,505.45	€245.67	
Below Average 2027	1,479,330.03	€382,754,022.83	€258.73	105.32%

In Table 5, the variables are presents for the calculation of R.I. 7 to enhance support to farms in areas with specific needs using a static modelling population*. As the indicator is above 100% in all years, starting at 103.35% in 2023 and reaching 104.18% in 2027 it implies that farms in areas with specific needs receive, an amount per hectare exceeding the average.

Table 6: Calculation variables of Result Indicator 7

R7: Year & Type	Total Determined Area	Total Support	Support/ha	In area with Specific Needs
2023				
Total in 2023	4,638,668.17	€1,385,100,681.53	€298.60	
In area Specific Need 2023	3,495,057.39	€1,078,552,047.14	€308.59	103.35%
2024				
Total in 2024	4,638,668.17	€1,383,653,926.79	€298.29	
In area Specific Need 2024	3,495,057.39	€1,080,213,830.73	€309.07	103.61%
2025				
Total in 2025	4,638,668.17	€1,382,154,286.03	€297.96	
In area Specific Need 2025	3,495,057.39	€1,081,840,021.84	€309.53	103.88%
2026				
Total in 2026	4,638,668.17	€1,380,600,216.01	€297.63	
In area Specific Need 2026	3,495,057.39	€1,083,423,985.00	€309.99	104.15%
2027				
Total in 2027	4,638,668.17	€1,379,267,828.49	€297.34	
In area Specific Need 2027	3,495,057.39	€1,082,635,495.40	€309.76	104.18%

Both Table 5 and Table 6 illustrate that Ireland have a fairer distribution and better targeting of direct payments to those below the average farm size and to those farms in areas with specific needs.

*As with all predictive modelling these forecasts are based on assumptions – i.e., based on the current holding in population, assuming full population receive eco-scheme payment and applicants in schemes continue for the duration of the CAP period. This modelling cannot predict a new entrant entering into a scheme for the first time and thus there is an underspend on the ceiling to allow for new entrants.

The tools to redistribute funds include convergence, CRISS and capping of payments. When these measures are examined in combination 11% (€131m) of the direct payments national ceiling will be redistributed annually.

Convergence should help resolve the issue of consolidation and narrows the range of payments per ha. In line with Article 24 of the CSP Regulation, all payment entitlements will have a value of at least 85% of the planned average unit amount for BISS for claim year 2026. Convergence will annually redistribute funds of €11.4m from payment entitlements above the national average to those below the national average.

In addition, as recommended by the Commission, the implementation of CRISS with 10% ring fenced means those with large numbers of entitlements because of farm size also see a reduced payment. CRISS will redistribute €118.6m of direct payments from larger to smaller to medium-sized holdings

Ireland will apply degressive capping under the strictest application of the provisions in the Regulation the BISS payment is effectively capped at €66,000, the product of capping is estimated to be circa €1.4m. Any product from capping will be redistributed through the CRISS scheme. An example of the mechanics of degressive capping is illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7: Mechanism of degressive capping

Ireland Capping Examples	BISS Payment (Pre Capping)	Capped 85% (Between 60-100k)	Capped 100% (Above 100k)	Total Capped Amount	New Capped BISS Payment
Farmer A	€66,000	€6,000 * 85% = €5,100	€0	€5,100	€60,900
Farmer B	€82,000	€22,000 * 85% = €18,700	€0	€18,700	€63,300
Farmer C	€102,000	€40,000 * 85% = €34,000	€2,000 * 100%	€36,000	€66,000

As evidenced with the Farmer C example, the maximum amount that degressive capping of 85% can apply to is €40k (difference between €100k and €60k) which results in €34k product of capping on that amount. As €100k minus €34k equals €66k then that effectively means that nobody can receive a payment greater than €66k.

The Table below illustrates the allocation of the CRISS Payment per physical size in hectares (HA). From this modelling analysis it can be seen that 70% of CRISS budget goes to those below 50 HA*. This illustrates more effective and efficient targeting of payments to farms with higher income support needs, with particular emphasis on physical size.

Ireland Size Range	CRISS Payment Per Range	% Share of CRISS
0-5 HA	€748,000.88	0.63%
5-10 HA	€3,751,925.54	3.16%
10-20 HA	€17,471,636.98	14.73%
20-30 HA	€23,958,038.17	20.20%
30-50 HA	€37,260,996.00	31.41%
50-75 HA	€19,478,736.00	16.42%
75-100 HA	€8,038,968.00	6.78%
100-150 HA	€5,183,604.00	4.37%
150-200 HA	€1,513,356.00	1.28%
200-250 HA	€563,748.00	0.48%
250-500 HA	€587,292.00	0.50%
500-1,000 HA	€54,936.00	0.05%
>1,000 HA	€5,232.00	0.00%
Total	**€118,616,469.57**	**100.00%**

*Hectare allocations as per guidance document on Result Indicators

Ireland has targets of R.I. 6 of 105.32% and R.I. 7 of 104.18% by year 2027. As per Section 2.1, Ireland has CRISS targets of redistribution that centres around physical farm size. In addition, Sector analysis highlighted that farm income varies considerably across farm systems, with specialist cattle (cattle rearing and cattle other) and sheep farming systems tending to be more reliant on direct income support. The sectors with specialist cattle will receive a significant proportion of the CRISS funding to ensure that the redistributive needs are addressed appropriately. In addition, examining the Result Indicator 6 by Sector breakdown illustrates that sheep farms will have the largest increase on payment by sector comparatively to 2022. Overall, this means a redistribution from those with higher overall payments to those with typically lower payments.

Justifications on the derogation related to second subparagraph of Article 29(1) and Article 98

N/A – CRISS 10%

3.5 Overview of the sector-related interventions

3.5.1 Fruit and Vegetables

Producer Organisation (PO) schemes for the fruit and vegetable sector

The Irish fruit and vegetable sector is a very dynamic industry that has always operated in an open market. The domestic market has become increasingly competitive and the main export market for mushrooms (UK) is now a third country, with increased barriers to trade. (Excluding mushrooms, Ireland does not produce sufficient fruit and vegetables to export in significant quantities.) As supply chains become increasingly integrated, market requirements and transactions cost have increased. The number of fruit and vegetable producers has reduced in the last five years as holdings are consolidated or producers leave the sector. By consolidating supply, POs can and have increased the bargaining power of producers.

POs can help reduce the burden of market transaction costs by strengthening and sharing investment costs and associated risk and providing technical assistance to producers in producing to required market specifications. The availability of such benefits and supports through POs allows smaller producers to be able to compete and remain viable.

Producer Organisations also offer the potential for producers to not only address challenges of the marketplace but also to work in a new and more collaborative way that supports producers to work collectively to mitigate climate change, manage risk better, improve knowledge sharing, engage in research and access finance.

Outside of the PO scheme there is extremely limited CAP funding for the fruit and vegetable sector in Ireland. Only field crop growers are eligible for BISS. There is some cross over with the Organics scheme to support the transition to organic production, but these actions can also form part of a PO's Operational Programme.

Despite the lack of alternative sources of funding, and as noted in the SWOT analysis, there is low level of POs in Ireland. This is due to a general reluctance among growers to collaborate or accept a (perceived) loss of independence. The initial start-up costs and bureaucracy are also seen as barriers to entry. With additional support for new groups and a more streamlined approach in the legislation it is hoped that more POs can be recognised and submit Operational Programmes.

Although there are only four Producer Organisations (POs), of which two are well established, in the Irish fruit and vegetables sector, the share of fruit and vegetable production marketed in Ireland by these POs in 2017 was 71%. It is expected that a 5th PO will be established by 2023 and will participate in this intervention.

In 2019, the EU Producer Organisation Scheme provided €4.2 million of support to POs in the fruit and vegetables sector specifically. Payments were provided to these POs to increase competitiveness, improve market development and support innovation and environmental sustainability. Actions included implementing lean processes and investments in new technology; supporting specialist marketing staff to market produce on behalf of the PO; and supporting market research and the production of insight data to help improve product quality. With regards to innovation and environmental sustainability, support was provided to allow POs to work in collaboration with specialist research institutions to undertake research in areas such as waste valorisation and on sustainable production methods.

The PO scheme is currently run under Ireland's National Strategy for Sustainable Operational Programmes which outlines actions for improving competitiveness, market development and innovation in the fruit and vegetables sector. It also focuses on delivering sustainable production and greater market orientation around consumer needs, assisting POs in developing new offerings and taking advantage of new opportunities. The establishment of POs in the fruit and vegetables sector has allowed primary producers to work together to better their position in the value chain.

Supporting the fruit and vegetable PO scheme delivers the following additional benefits to the Irish agriculture sector:

- Contributes to a more diverse agricultural land use and product mix
- 15%-of-funding commitment to climate mitigation actions by an already environmentally best practice led sector
- 2%-of-funding commitment to research and development for the sector.
- Specific support for risk management tools and financial planning

The intervention described in Section 5.2 of this plan is designed to encourage the development of Producer Organisations in the fruit and vegetable sector and part fund the Operational Programmes of existing fruit and vegetable POs. This will provide greater certainty for those growers. The intervention will build on the support provided under the existing EU funded Producer Organisation scheme implemented under the National Strategy 2017-2022

This intervention is complimented by the Section 5.3 intervention "Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations" in which additional financial support will be offered to groups of producers newly recognised as a Producer Organisation.

3.5.2 Apiculture products

Sectoral intervention: An Intervention in the Apiculture Sector

Following a needs assessment and consultation with beekeeping stakeholders, the need for baseline figures, training that takes into account the latest research findings and support for the dissemination of research findings were identified. In Objective 6 Need 1 of Ireland's Needs Assessment, the unfavourable or declining status of many of Ireland's habitats is outlined. Pollinators play an important role in the preservation of biodiversity and habitats, and the apiculture sector is supported through the National Apiculture Programme.

The intervention proposed for the Apiculture sector in section 5.2 of the CAP Strategic Plan will be an intervention under Article 55(1)(e) - Cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of research programmes in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products.

The financial allocation each year will be nationally co-financed at a rate of 50%, giving rise to an annual allocation of €123,280. The allocation for 2023 is slightly reduced to account for the use of the same envelope for measures implemented from August to December 2022 under the current apiculture programme.

This single intervention will build on the technical support provided by the past and current research and knowledge transfer being undertaken by the National Apiculture Programme. The programme is also complimentary to the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 – 2025 that sets targets in relation to Healthy Honey Bees, Better data, Education and Knowledge Transfer, Communication, Surveillance and Biosecurity and Conservation of the native honeybee strain, *Apis mellifera mellifera*.

The new 5-year long National Apiculture Programme will provide sufficient time for research actions to embed and to focus on providing information and exchange of best practice to beekeepers. The research and work funded will be of a "public good" nature, the results of which will be made freely available; proposals for the programme must demonstrate a strong emphasis on dissemination of findings to beekeepers and the wider scientific community. Preference will be given to programmes that involve inter-institutional collaboration and development of critical mass.

The operation of the National Apiculture Programme will including participation in the COLOSS Network. Irish colony losses fluctuate from year to year, however through Ireland's participation in the COLOSS Network there is evidence that the levels of Irish over-winter losses tend to be higher than other EU Member States. Further research is being undertaken to identify the stress factors that lead to these losses and cooperation with international specialised research bodies in the COLOSS Network.

Ireland's apiculture sector consists mainly of small-scale honey producers. There are over 4,400 beekeepers in Ireland. While there are many commercial beekeepers, the majority of beekeepers in Ireland are hobbyists with small apiaries. The median average number of hives per beekeeper is three full hives.

In recent years there has been an increased interest in taking up beekeeping. There are now three representative organisations for Irish beekeepers: Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Associations (FIBKA), the Irish Beekeeping Association (IBA), and The Native Irish Honeybee Society (NIHBS).

One of the biggest challenges facing beekeepers in Ireland is the weather. Irish honey production is significantly influenced by the weather and hence varies greatly from year to year. 2021 was another challenging year for all beekeepers due to inclement weather in Spring of 2021 which affected build up in colonies. A short period of good weather in July and August allowed a small recovery in honey production. Many beekeepers reported a reduction in the overall honey crop yield harvested in comparison to 2020. An average yield of 9.5kg of honey per hive was reported.

Irish honey is mainly produced as liquid honey, extracted and filtered to remove debris. There is a limited production of section honey and cut comb. There is strong consumer demand for Irish honey which tends to sell at a premium price compared to imported product. Most Irish honey is sold directly from the beekeeper to the final consumer or to local retailers supplying the final consumer.

The unpredictability of the Irish weather is also seen as one of the possible reasons Irish bees suffer higher levels of colony losses when compared to other EU Member States. It appears the level of Irish over-winter colony losses may be influenced by the weather in the preceding season. High colony losses in the past have resulted in certain beekeepers having to focus exclusively on rebuilding their colony numbers through queen rearing at the expense of honey production in the following season.

The programme, as a research programme which supports pollinators, does not have specifically targeted synergies with other schemes in the CAP Strategic Plan. Other interventions and elements of the CSP will also benefit pollinators, though with more direct means, such as GAEC 8, Eco-schemes, and measures in AECM and potential future EIPs. Any EIPs related to apiculture would have the intention to support wild pollinators and do not represent a risk of double funding with the research programme. The programme does not overlap, duplicate or conflict with any elements of other schemes in the CSP.

Description of an established reliable method for determining the number of beehives ready for wintering in the territory of the Member States between 1 September and 31 December each year

Article 37 of Regulation (EU) 2022/126 requires the number of beehives ready for wintering in the territory of the Member States between 1 September and 31 December to be calculated each year according to an established reliable method laid down in the CAP Strategic Plans. Ireland engages yearly with its two main beekeeping organisations to determine the number of beehives. A full detailed beekeeping census is conducted every three years with a smaller census to estimate an increase/ decrease on hives carried over the winter is carried out for the following two years – this cycle is then repeated. The last 'Full' Beekeepers Census was conducted for the year 2019 and therefore a 'Full' Beekeepers Census will be carried out later this year (2022). The 'full' survey includes the following information: Number of Beekeepers, Number of Colonies, Honey Production, Sales/ Utilisation of Honey and Factors affecting the development of the Beekeeping sector. The smaller follow up surveys carried out in the inventing years include the following information: Total Number of viable colonies of Bees carried into this winter, Number of which were full hives and Number of which were Nuclei. An annual notification of the number of beehives will be made in accordance with Article 38 of Regulation (EU) 2022/126.

In 2016 a full beekeeping was carried out in the Republic of Ireland. The 2016 census was the second census of beekeepers in the Republic of Ireland, the first census being conducted by the Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Associations (FIBKA) in 2011.

It was proposed after the 2016 Census that Ireland would conduct a census every third year with a representative survey in the two intervening years to represent any changes in hives numbers. A representative survey was conducted in the period 2016- 2017 and 2017-2018. These two surveys showed that there has been an increase in the numbers of hives in comparison to 2016, there was approximate increase of 8.3% in 2016/2017 and 14.6% in 2017/2018. This survey involves a representative sample (at least 5%) of FIBKA's active beekeepers at the time of the previous Census.

Following the acceptance of the proposal to conduct a survey every 3 years it meant a full census was due for Ireland for the period 2019/2020 (2019 colonies overwintering in 2020). The Beekeepers Census 2019 was conducted by the Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Associations (FIBKA) and the Irish Beekeepers Association (IBA) among the 4,462 members of their affiliated associations (as at September 2019). A total of 1,151 census forms were completed by beekeepers, and this data was used to extrapolate to the entire 4,462 membership. The 2019 Census showed that there were 4,462 beekeepers in Ireland and 27,040 bee colonies. These figures represented a 41% increase in the number of beekeepers since the previous census in 2016, and a 26% increase in the number of bee colonies.

Since the 2019 Full Beekeepers Survey, a Beekeeper's Colony Numbers Survey has been carried out in 2020 and 2021. The survey was circulated to the members of the Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Associations (FIBKA) and the Irish Beekeeping Association (IBA) The survey asked beekeepers to provide details on the total number of viable colonies of bees carried into this Winter (20/21 and 21/22). The results showed:

Total number of viable colonies 2020: 1303

Total number of viable colonies 2021: 4848

The 2020 number of beehives is estimated at 27,248 based on the 2020 hive survey in conjunction with the 2019 full census.

The next full beekeeping census will be carried out later this year (2022) and it is expected to show a further increase in the number of beekeepers and the number of bee colonies as the popularity of the sector increases.

The full beekeeping Census includes the following information: Number of Beekeepers, Number of Colonies, Honey Production, Sales/ Utilisation of Honey and Factors affecting the development of the Beekeeping sector.

An annual notification of the number of beehives will be made in accordance with Article 38 of Regulation (EU) 2022/126.

3.5.3 Wine

Ireland does not propose an intervention in the Wine sector within the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

3.5.4 Hops

Ireland does not propose an intervention in the hops sector within the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

3.5.5 Olive oil and tables olive

Ireland does not propose an intervention in the olive oil and tables olive sector within the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

3.5.6 Beef and veal

Ireland does not propose a sectoral intervention in the Beef and veal sector within the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

3.5.7 Milk and milk products

Ireland does not propose a sectoral intervention in the milk and milk products sector within the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

3.5.8 Sheep and goat

Ireland does not propose a sectoral intervention in the sheep and goat sector within the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

3.5.9 Protein crops

Ireland includes an intervention on protein crops in the Voluntary Coupled Support for Protein Aid intervention. All relevant information is included in that section, as a direct payments intervention.

The last CAP period first introduced Protein Aid and the aim for 2023-2027 is to increase the area grown in the intervention to 20,000 hectares. This is complimentary with other initiatives, particularly Farm-2-Fork, whose relevant aims which interact with protein crops are:

- A reduction of 20% in the use of chemical nitrogenous fertilisers by 2030
- A reduction of 50% in the use and risk of Plant Protection Products (PPP's) by 2030
- A reduction in the amount of nutrient losses from agriculture

In addition, current fertiliser costs and targets to increase protein area in the national Climate Action Plan will all contribute to a likely increase in the area of protein crops (legumes) by the end of the next CAP. Protein Aid cannot be looked at in isolation as a means of increasing area but other factors such as those listed above will play a significant role also. DAFM will monitor the progress in relation to the area grown and may consider future interventions to help achieve the ambitious target of 20,000 hectares.

It is also anticipated that our mandatory training for advisors to be "Farm Advisory System approved" will cover the growing of protein crops. Furthermore, Knowledge Transfer Groups can be set up to have a specific focus on growing protein crops, based on the groups' local needs and therefore has the potential to address Obj8.N6 (on farm diversification).

Teagasc has been provided with funding from DAFM to conduct research on protein crops. The results of this research will be disseminated by Teagasc through various public events, open days, publications etc. The findings from this research will also be disseminated to farmers by both Teagasc' advisory and education arms and also through private agricultural consultants through Ireland's Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS).

Teagasc Crops Advisory Service covers all crops including protein crops and their important role in crop rotations which is becoming more critical now than ever before in light of the Farm to Fork targets. It should be noted that Teagasc have already conducted research on crop rotations and have shown that benefits of protein crops (primarily beans) over the course of the rotation.

3.5.10 Sugar beet

Ireland does not propose a sectoral intervention in the sugar beet sector within the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

3.5.11 Other sectors

Not applicable.

3.6 Overview of the interventions that contribute to ensure a coherent and integrated approach to risk management, where relevant

Ireland currently provides a number of measures, both through CAP and nationally funded, aimed at reducing risk and which assist farmers in dealing with market crises. This risk management framework is underpinned by Direct Payments under CAP and Income Averaging under the national taxation system, complemented by loan schemes which facilitate investment by farmers to enhance the viability of their holding. Ad hoc schemes deployed to address catastrophic risk events demonstrate solidarity with affected farmers and are considered to be more cost effective than alternative risk management options.

Direct payments are a key risk management tool which provide an important income safety net. While there are significant variations in the payments under the Basic Payment Scheme, it provides €1.1bn per annum to approximately 137,000 farmers with an average BPS payment of €9,500. An important tool to manage income fluctuations, direct payments and supports under the Rural Development Programme have a secondary effect whereby they are seen by banks as a guarantee and thereby enable farmers to access finance.

Income Averaging under the Irish taxation system allows farmers to pay tax on the averaged profit and losses of their farming trade over a period of 5 years. Income averaging for farmers is a recognition that income in the sector is volatile and that the annual tax liability can vary significantly.

Opportunities to improve financial management and planning through Teagasc's *Getting Farm Financially Fit* initiative and schemes such as the *Dairy Efficiency Programme* and the *Development Programme for Dairying*, assist farmers to withstand price drops and ensure liquidity through adequate cashflow provision. This is in addition to formal financial management and planning training provided under the Knowledge Transfer Programme.

Food Vision, the new ten-year strategy for the agri food sector, launched by the Government in August 2021 proposes solutions and charts a pathway to sustainability in all its dimensions – environmental, economic and social. Setting out 22 goals under four high-level missions that the sector must achieve if it is to fulfil this ambition this will also provide the basis for the future competitive advantage of the sector (gov.ie - Food Vision 2030 - A World Leader in Sustainable Food Systems). The strategy has a strong focus on growth through value added rather than primary product volume. Mission 2 of the strategy is for "Viable and Resilient Primary Producers, with Enhanced Wellbeing"; There are four Goals in this Mission which involve improving the competitiveness and productivity of primary producers, increasing the creation of value and distributing it fairly, introducing greater diversification in production systems and incomes, and improving the social sustainability of primary producers across areas such as generational renewal, gender balance, health and safety, mental health and wellbeing and rural development.

The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine has funded a number of loan schemes which provide access to finance for famers in Ireland, enabling them to maintain liquidity and ensure they can take investment decisions tailored to their enterprise. Launched in 2017, the *Agriculture Cashflow Support Loan Scheme* provided low-cost flexible working capital finance to farmers. Fully subscribed, the loan scheme loaned over €145m to in excess of 4,000 farmers. The *Future Growth Loan Scheme* (FGLS) is a long-term loan facility (7-10 years) providing €800 million in investment loan funding to SMEs and small mid-caps, including farmers and fishers. The *Brexit Impact Loan Scheme* (BILS) provides loans to Brexit-impacted Irish businesses for working capital, investment and re-financing. Microfinance Ireland supports micro-enterprises, including farmers with loan finance, providing an important resource for micro enterprises who are finding it difficult to access finance through banks and other commercial lenders. These Schemes are now primarily aimed at all sectors, with DFAM funding ensuring access for farmers, fishers and food companies. A dedicated agri-food Scheme has not been launched as cross-Governmental schemes can cater for the sector's needs in a relatively small market such as Ireland, while offering administrative synergies.

Deployment of Common Agricultural Policy market support measures such as Intervention and Aid for Private Storage provides an important safety net, addressing seasonal imbalances and price drops below a benchmark level in EU Member States. The agriculture crisis reserve fund introduced by the 2013 CAP is designed to support the sector when crises affect production and/or distribution. The financial discipline mechanism is activated every year, ensuring the availability of a market crisis reserve in the event of a severe drop in farm prices and can be used to finance exceptional measures to counteract market disruption.

Over the course of the last number of years in response to weather related crises, a number of emergency measures were introduced at a cost of almost €11m. Delivered as state aid under the De Minimis and Agricultural Block Exemption Regulations (ABER), each was designed and implemented at short notice and funded by the Exchequer. While somewhat challenging for the administration, they do however provide a very effective mechanism to responding a very targeted way to emerging crises. Examination of previous ad hoc schemes indicates they provided support that is targeted at the sector where the crisis occurred and their cost at €11m over 9 years compares favourably to other risk management options and avoids leakage of funding to private operators and funds which could be disproportionately high in the Irish market.

A number of options for risk management were explored in the development phase of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan with the objective of providing a robust risk management framework for the farming sector, while also taking account of limited CAP resources and opportunity cost. The chosen policy option was to maintain the existing Risk Management Framework.

Risk management specific to Climate Change

Climate sensitivities were also considered as part of the CSP development. The needs assessment outlined the political and strategic requirements that any interventions should satisfy including the Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan and the objectives and actions outlined within. This process particularly highlighted interventions that had multiple co-benefits for adaptation, mitigation, water biodiversity, soil, etc.

As such, the CSP contains a variety of supports and incentives to encourage farmers to take proactive measures to reduce their vulnerability to the growing risks that the changing climate represents to agriculture in Ireland. In particular, the CSP includes support for the up-skilling of both agricultural advisors and farmers in relation to climate change challenges and adaptation practices. Continuous Professional Development for Advisors, for instance, is intended to ensure the provision of knowledgeable, professional, and competent advisors to support the sector on all agricultural matters, including on key challenges such as a changing climate. This, coupled with up-skilling of farmers through scheme-specific training on the AECM, on the suckler carbon efficiency scheme, provide farmers with the skills and knowledge to implement actions that will improve their capacity to take more environmentally friendly actions.

The SWOT analysis also identified the possibility of increasing the knowledge base of farmers on risk management tools and financial matters. This, as well as other financial management training, will be at least partially delivered through targeted knowledge and skills training on the Knowledge Transfer Programme. More specifically on training to support proactive measures to reduce vulnerability due to climate change, already identified priority topics in this programme include climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies. These priority topics are reviewed annually act as a form of continued professional development for farmers to encourage them to apply innovative practices on their own farms.

The Results Based Environment Agri Pilot Programme (REAP) pilot project has informed the agri-environment scheme. It will provide an opportunity and incentive for farmers to earn payments for managing their farmland in an environmentally friendly manner in tandem with the need to produce high quality and sustainable food. New approaches to environmental measures like REAP help to ensure long-term resilience and financial viability for farmers, thus contributing to climate adaptation.

The Straw Incorporation Scheme (SIM) will incentivise farmers to improve soil quality which is deemed as a priority impact/consequence to climate change.

Furthermore, and specifically referenced as a risk management tool, Agricultural Practice 7 of the eco-scheme (the planting of break crops) is a direct incentive to undertake practical risk management, from both a financial and an environmental perspective, on farms.

The European Innovation Partnership AGRI funds projects that allow farmers, scientists and other experts to collaborate together to develop new practices that are environmentally friendly and economically sustainable, while also looking to improve the resilience of the sector.

As detailed in section 2.1, and particularly in the justification section in respect of only partially addressing SO1 in the CSP, there are significant supports already available to farmers and advisors outside of the CSP ranging from Teagasc advisory services, and the Farm Options Programme to financial aspects such as the SBCI Future Growth Loan Scheme and income averaging options. Ireland believes there is sufficient incentive and support for farmers to reduce their vulnerability and to increase their adaptive capacity to a changing climate with the measures available both inside and outside the CAP.

3.7 Interplay between national and regional interventions

3.7.1 Where relevant, a description of the interplay between national and regional interventions, including the distribution of financial allocations per intervention and per fund

N/A

3.7.2 Where relevant, where elements of the CAP Strategic Plan are established at regional level, how does the interventions strategy ensure the coherence and the consistency of these elements with the elements of the CAP Strategic Plan established at national level

N/A

3.8 Overview of how the CAP Strategic Plan contributes to the objective of improving animal welfare and reducing antimicrobial resistance set out in point (i) of Article 6(1), including the baseline conditions and the complementarity

Animal Welfare and Anti-Microbial Restistance (AMR) in the CAP Strategic Plan Conditionality

Conditionality will set the baseline for animal welfare and will also contribute to reducing antimicrobial resistance, particularly SMRs 9, 10 and 11.

- SMR 9: Council Directive 2008/119/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves. Objective: The aim of this requirement is to ensure the welfare of calves (bovine animals up to six months old) by meeting minimum standards for their care and husbandry. These requirements apply to farmers who keep calves in addition to the other requirements for the Welfare of Farm Animals (SMR 11). Requirements under SMR 9 relate to freedom of movement; housing conditions; nutrition.
- SMR 10: Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs. Objective: The aim of this requirement is to protect the welfare of pigs by meeting minimum standards for their care and husbandry. These requirements apply to farmers who keep pigs in addition to the requirements for the Welfare of Farm Animals (SMR 11). Requirements under SMR 10 relate to freedom of movement; routine inspections; appropriate accommodation; appropriate nutrition; use of appropriate weaning procedures; controls regarding mutilations.

- SMR 11: Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes. Objective: The aim of this requirement is to protect the welfare of farmed animals by meeting minimum standards for their care and husbandry. These requirements apply to anyone keeping any species of farmed animal for farming purposes. Requirements under SMR 11 relate to staffing; inspection of animals; record keeping; freedom of movement; buildings, accommodation, and lighting; equipment; nutrition; controls regarding mutilations and breeding procedures.

Other national measures on key animal welfare issues

Routine Tail Docking in Pigs:

The issue of routine tail docking of pigs is a priority for Ireland. Ireland's Action Plan to reduce tail biting and the need for tail docking was recently substantially revised and includes a number of specific national measures aimed at improving pig welfare, including:

- Pig farmers can avail of a free Private Veterinary Practitioner (PVP) led risk assessment for tail biting, funded through the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, under the Targeted Advisory Service on Animal Health (TASAH). These assessments will identify farm-specific risk factors and the farmer and his/her PVP will identify up to three achievable measures to address identified risks, with the intention to progress to the point where batches of pigs are raised with intact tails.
- ·In tandem with this, a tailored national programme of official controls known as the Pig Welfare-Intact Tails Inspection Programme is being implemented by official veterinarians, aimed identifying welfare risks and monitoring progress towards reducing routing tail docking on the farms visited.
- In addition, a new pig building specification was launched under the Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS), funded under Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. It includes requirements aimed specifically at addressing the main tail biting risk factors including for example, requirements for space allowances above the legal minimum, minimum area of solid flooring to facilitate provision of meaningful enrichment material and requirements for pen design to facilitate normal pig behaviour. The specification also requires farrowing sows to be kept in loose pens during farrowing and lactation without any period of confinement (free farrowing). The aim of the specification is to facilitate farmers to rear pigs with intact tails, as well as future proofing new pig housing.

Within Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027, the use of the European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) model to progress the issue of routine tail docking of pigs is also key. Most commercial pig farmers in Ireland are reticent about rearing pigs with intact tails as the drivers are complex and multifactorial and many have no experience in doing so. The EIP-AGRI initiative will aim to facilitate progressive/experienced pig farmers in demonstrating their solutions for rearing pigs with intact tails.

Welfare of Male Dairy Calves

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine submitted a roadmap to the Commission, in April 2022, outlining how it aims to reduce Ireland's reliance on the long distance transport of unweaned calves.

The roadmap includes a comprehensive set of measures which aim amongst other things to reduce the number of male dairy calves being born (e.g. use of sexed semen), to improve the welfare of those that are transported and to increase the value and suitability of male dairy calves for the Irish market through a variety of projects aimed at improving the integration between the dairy and beef herds.

It is envisaged that the cumulative effect of these measures will, over time, improve both the welfare of male dairy calves and sustainability of the industry.

The Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS)

Investment support is available under this Rural Development Programme measure for animal housing. The specifications for such investments ensure that all animal housing being grant-aided supports the improvement of animal welfare on farms.

In particular, pig housing is designed to enable farmers to rear pigs without the need for routine tail docking and to enable the reduced usage of anti-microbials (as described above). Additionally, all farrowing places being grant-aided are required to be full free farrowing places, allowing the animals to move freely at all times.

Furthermore, the upgrading of insulation and ventilation systems will improve the internal air-quality in existing pig and poultry houses. The upgrading of heating systems in poultry and pig houses requires that only indirect heating systems are used, helping to further improve the internal air quality of the houses.

Additional information on Ireland's National Animal Welfare Strategy 2021-2025 is available at: https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/12d6a-animal-welfare-strategy/#

Reducing antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

In general, effective implementation of the requirements of the SMRs 9, 10 and 11 will contribute to the overall health of animals and a reduced requirement to use antimicrobials. The requirement to keep animal remedy records in accordance with SMR 11 and to observe appropriate withdrawal periods (SMR 5) facilitates a greater awareness among farmers of animal remedy interventions.

Such awareness and record keeping will contribute to lowering antimicrobial use and the associated risk of antimicrobial resistance. A reduction target for sales of antimicrobials has not yet been agreed but remains under consideration, notwithstanding that Ireland remains consistently below the target value of 59mg/PCU 2030 threshold set by the EU for 2030.

The national action plan to address AMR, iNAP, is now in its second iteration. It provides a mechanism to implement detailed actions to prevent disease and reduce overall sales and use of antimicrobials. It is expected that any reduction targets will be agreed through the iNAP platform, which will also oversee the delivery of actions to meet these targets.

CSP measures to support animal welfare improvement

A number of measures are proposed to build on the baseline Conditionality requirements. Those making the most significant contribution to Animal Welfare are set out under the respective headings below.

Sheep Improvement Scheme

The Sheep Improvement Scheme will provide support for a broad range of actions to improve ovine health and welfare. The scheme is targeting participation by ~66% of the national flock.

It will contribute to improved welfare and reducing the risk of anthelmintic resistance through targeted interventions in areas including parasite control, lameness control, flystrike control, and appropriate supplementation. In addition, the requirement for each participating farmer to purchase at least one genotyped "4 or 5 Star" ram will lead to genetic improvements across key health and welfare traits, including reducing the incidence rate of scrapie in the national flock through selection for scrapie resistance.

Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme

The Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme will provide support to farmers who undertake actions to improve the viability of male dairy calves in locally based production systems. The measure is proposed to support the use of high dairy beef index (DBI) sires in dairy herds. The aim is to improve the beef traits of calves from the dairy herd to facilitate the retention of the calves on the island and integration into local

production systems as a preference to live exports from a welfare perspective. The introduction of the High DBI bulls is to focus on a good welfare outcome for both the cow and the calf. The high DBI index focuses on an easy calving element for the cow minimiszing calf mortality at birth while also delivering a calf which will have a better carcass weight and confirmation and ultimately a better welfare outcome. There will be a demand for the progeny of the high DBI bulls from the beef systems and they are less likely to suffer from illness and poor thrive. According to a report from Teagasc, calf health is greatly dependent on the quality of the calf born.

Suckler Carbon Efficiency Measure

Every Participating farmer will undertake a mandatory training course which includes a livestock handling module. This scheme targets participation by 20,000 herdowners with an average herd size of 20 suckler cows.

In addition to its climate impacts, the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Measure will also contribute to improved animal welfare through recording of data associated with, for example ease of calving, calf vigour and cow, calf, and bull docility as well as culling reasons. This data will feed into Ireland's national bovine genetic evaluations to improve the accuracy of the health component of the bovine genetic index.

Organic Farming Scheme

As part of the CAP Strategic Plan, Ireland proposes to use the Organic Farming Scheme to significantly expand the area under organic farming from less than 2%, to 7.5% of utilisable agricultural area. This will have positive impacts for animal welfare and reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance.

The Organic Farming Scheme will cover conversion to, and maintenance of, certified organic status. Organic Farming Scheme participants will have to strictly adhere to EU organic requirements. In terms of animal welfare, certified organic farmers must abide by the relevant EU organic principle to **'***Respect high animal welfare standards and in particular meet animal's species-specific behavioural needs*.'

Organic livestock farmers must meet animal husbandry knowledge requirements and maintain a management plan. There are specific requirements pertaining to enhanced animal housing, access to pasturage and veterinary treatments all of which result in improved animal welfare.

As regards antimicrobial resistance, the use of chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products including antibiotics are strictly controlled on organic farms. These can only be used where necessary and under strict conditions, when the use of phytotherapeutic, homeopathic and other products is inappropriate. Specific restrictions with respect to courses of treatment and withdrawal periods are defined. These requirements combined with an increase in the area being farmed organically will reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance.

On-farm Capital Investment Scheme

The On-farm Capital Investment Scheme will support improved animal welfare by providing grant aid for the following investments:

- New animal housing – new housing provides more space, ventilation, and comfort, reducing the stress on the animal. Animals will be healthier reducing the need for antimicrobial treatment. The specifications for new animal housing will be aligned with the improved animal housing specifications in the TAMS scheme under the Rural Development Programme. These specifications ensure that all animal housing grant aided on farms helps to improve animal welfare.
- Upgrading of existing pig and poultry houses – creating benefits as for new housing outlined above.
- New or upgrades to pig and poultry feeding systems - allows for the targeted provision of medicated feed or water. This will avoid unnecessary treatment of all animals in a house thereby reducing the risk of antimicrobial resistance.
- Animal Handling facilities - good facilities assist the safe and easy handling and treatment of animals, and facilities supported with investment grant-aid often go beyond the baseline standard

required for acceptable animal husbandry. Good facilities allow for increased vaccination and preventative treatment thereby reducing the need for antimicrobial treatment.

Knowledge Transfer

The Knowledge Transfer Programme is based on support for the implementation of Knowledge Transfer Groups, drawing on the expertise of the advisors running the Groups, as well as allowing for shared learning between farmers participating in the Groups.

In each year of the programme, each Knowledge Transfer Group will be required to deliver four meetings from a list of 'Priority KT Topics'. Animal health and welfare, incorporating best practice in areas such as biosecurity and antimicrobial drugs/antibiotics will be included as one of the "Priority KT Topics'.

European Innovation Partnerships - AGRI

The European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) model offers potential for a range of actors in the sector to come together as an Operational Group to develop and test innovative solutions to challenges in the sector.

Within this intervention, support will be structured around the following two streams:

- Stream A – EIPs aimed at addressing wider competitiveness, modernisation and animal health and welfare challenges in the sector
- Stream B – EIPs aimed at addressing areas related to environmental, biodiversity and climate change challenges

This intervention is not fully prescriptive in terms of the themes which will form the basis for calls for proposals, however, the issue of animal welfare, most particularly the theme of rearing of pigs with intact tails is intended to be a specific themed EIP Call.

3.9 Simplification and reducing the administrative burden

As part of the CAP Strategic Plan intervention design process, the issue of simplification and the reduction of the administrative burden has been considered and addressed. The development of a coherent approach across interventions has been facilitated by the work of the CAP Strategic Plan project board set up to oversee the design and implementation process. This coordinated approach has facilitated the inclusion of a number of factors which will assist in alleviating the administrative burden for applicants, including building on lessons learned from the current programming period and continued facilitation of a common approach to the development and issuing of intervention application forms. Ensuring a consistent approach to the application process across a number of interventions will be of practical benefit to applicants. Ireland will be communicating extensively with beneficiaries during 2022 and into 2023 on all interventions in the Ireland's CSP to ensure beneficiaries have a full understanding of the requirements of interventions and to allow beneficiaries make any necessary changes e.g. reduce stocking rate in 2022 to meet extensive livestock production measure in Eco or increase stocking rate to meet active farmer check from 2023 onwards.

Applications for the majority of the Department's schemes are now online, resulting in improved efficiencies for farmers. The continued roll out of electronic application facilities across interventions will lead to a significant reduction in the administrative burden for applicants through the AgFood system – a portal through which farmers and/or advisors can make almost all intervention applications. For example, the online application process for the Basic Income Support for Sustainability facilitates early pre-checking of applications providing the opportunity to rectify errors without penalty. It will also lead to the more effective and efficient processing of applications by administrations resulting in the timely issuing of payments under the various interventions. Administrative burden in On Farm Capital Investments Scheme will be reduced by the availability of an online system for the applicant with a number of options available for selection based on eligibility of the applicant. Where, due to the bespoke nature of a scheme, digitisation is not possible, forms are being reviewed and rationalised to make them simpler.

Electronic submission can help improve efficiency in resolving queries. Monitoring data can also be made available to farmers which can then be used for informing husbandry decisions. There should be less penalties due to increased flexibility to amend applications and the facility to take action or submit evidence in response to “early warnings”. Assistance will also be available to farmers and advisors through our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) has led in the development of a geo-tagged photograph application (app) for use on Smartphone and mobile devices. The app, known as AgriSnap, will enable farmers and advisors/consultants to take geo-tagged photographs using their Smartphone and submit them securely to DAFM in an efficient and seamless manner.

The AgriSnap app has been developed as part of an exciting project called ‘New IACS Vision in Action’ (NIVA). The NIVA project has brought together paying agencies from across nine EU Member States, to explore how the use of innovative digital solutions and e-tools can aid in reducing the administrative burden for farmers and paying agencies alike. DAFM as one of the nine Paying Agencies involved in the NIVA Project committed to the development of a geo-tagged photograph application for use on Smartphone and mobile devices. The introduction of AgriSnap will allow farmers and advisors to upload a geotagged photograph using their Smartphone in a secure and prompt manner. This will facilitate a faster turnaround of queries by DAFM enabling payments to be expedited and decreased administrative costs as previously many of these query cases would have required a physical inspection.

DAFM has also introduced Checks by Monitoring (CbM) for the Protein Aid Scheme in 2021.It is the first step in the implementation of the Area Monitoring System (AMS) which will be compulsory in the new CAP. CbM is an automated and continuous process which will use Satellite data along with other data sources to determine the agricultural activity on all land parcels declared by farmers under the Protein Aid Scheme in 2021. The use of satellite data and technologies such as AgriSnap, for Checks by Monitoring, will have significant benefits for farmers. For example, CbM facilitates prior notification of Protein Aid Scheme applicants of non-compliances concerning crop type and provides the applicant with the opportunity to amend their claim accordingly without penalty. DAFM is also developing a new Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS). This database underpins payments to farmers under area-based schemes. The new LPIS gives farmers a more accurate representation of land parcel boundaries and is based on the most up-to-date technologies and Ordnance Survey Ireland mapping standard.

Ireland currently operates a three year update cycle for the Land Parcel Identification System. High resolution ortho-imagery is acquired on the basis of full coverage over the three years, revisions on foot of a review of this imagery are digitised in the Land Parcel Identification System and feed into the Single Application. The single application is a snapshot of the applicant's land at a point in time and reflects any updates that have occurred on the Land Parcel Identification System. For Force Majeure cases, Ireland will use the Area Monitoring System where applicable to determine the extent of natural disasters or severe meteorological events should they occur. New technologies including the Area Monitoring System and Geotagged photos will also be used where applicable for non-IACS measures. In accordance with Article 15 of the CSP Regulation, Ireland maintains a register of Farm Advisory Services (FAS) approved advisors. The FAS register is publicly available on DAFM website. In addition, advertisements related to FAS Advisor training are published in the Irish farming press – online and in print and DAFM social media. These outlets are accessible to beneficiaries, advisors and the wider public. The National CAP Network will also play an important role in connecting advisors to rural communities and making more farmers in Ireland aware of the FAS register, and where they can find it. It should be noted that FAS is well established in Ireland and farmers have a good awareness of the services providers.

Digital technology and modernisation is covered as a component of FAS training e.g. the Agrisnap app developed under the NIVA project will continue to be an element of FAS training. This type of training will be critical to facilitating the roll out of AMS. In addition, technologies introduced as a component of the next Capital Investment Scheme will include modernisation and digital technologies to improve

efficiencies. The Capital Investment Scheme and the related technologies will be an important topic covered by FAS training.

The approaches to training and technologies in the CSP have synergy with Ireland's National Digital Strategy, and it is recognised that the CSP regulation seeks development of an agri-digitalisation approach. To date, Agri-Digitalisation activities have involved bottom-up activities steered by, for example, strategic research and innovation agendas as indicated in the in CSP section 8.3 under 8 Modernisation: AKIS and digitalisation. DAFM has responsibility for the policy in this area and are considering changes to the approach to improve internal and external coherency, as recommended by Agri-Digitalisation CAP background paper. Internal considerations are ongoing, and this will include consideration of information on how applicants are informed about the Farm Advisory System, in particular on point 4(f) on digital technologies in agriculture and rural areas referring to modernisation.

Simplicity of the design of interventions. Examples of interventions that could be part of the simplification agenda

The experience of previous programming periods has facilitated the identification of best practices which can be utilised for other interventions. For example, the approach taken to information dissemination in relation to the launch of interventions and the requirements of beneficiaries in particular interventions has led to the identification of best practices including the provision of road show / information seminars including recorded webinars for applicants to outline the main provisions of interventions, the publication of clear terms and conditions and dissemination through Departmental offices, website and National CAP Network as well as briefing Advisory support services.

As part of the intervention design process, the potential to increase the use of simplified cost options, where appropriate, has been examined. Simplified cost option will simplify requirements for beneficiaries as well as increase efficiencies for the administration of interventions. Simplified cost options will be introduced where appropriate. For example, under Knowledge Transfer Intervention, the simplified cost option will be utilised to reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries in addition to the overall administration of the intervention. In KT, the beneficiaries (facilitators and participants) will receive an annual reimbursement based on actions completed using standardised costings for both. This will thus remove the need to submit individual reimbursement requests.

As operations to be financed under the EAFRD from the Local Development Strategy process, the possible uses of Simplified Cost Options will be further examined. Further details in relation to the use of Simplified Cost Options will be discussed with the Commission in advance of the launch of the LDS selection process.

In the context of the LEADER measure, streamlined processes will also be examined to ensure the administrative burden is minimised for beneficiaries. The new implementation system proposed to address issues around audit compliance will place the burden for ensuring such compliance on a competent body who will work constructively with the LAGS and beneficiaries to ensure the simplest application and payment processes possible.

3.10 Conditionality

3.10.1 Main issue: Climate change (mitigation of and adaptation to)

3.10.1.1 GAEC 1: Maintenance of permanent grassland based on a ratio of permanent grassland in relation to agricultural area

3.10.1.1.1 Summary of the farm obligation (e.g. prior authorisation system and reconversion obligation)

On an annual basis at national level Ireland will establish the Permanent Grassland area and Agricultural Area for previous year and compare ratio to the baseline established in 2018 using land use data submitted by applicants for area-based schemes allowing for any exemptions.

In order to avoid the decrease in the ratio exceeding 5%, changes in the ratio will be tracked on a National basis from year to year so that appropriate early remedial actions can be undertaken. If the decrease in the ratio exceeds 4.8% at National level compared to the baseline area (2018), Ireland will implement remedial actions. This will include a prior authorisation system for conversion of permanent grassland to tillage in the following year and a sanctioning/re-conversion system where required:

1. At a decrease in the National ratio of 4.8% in any year, a system of prior authorisation will be implemented on a National basis in the following year for the conversion of permanent grassland to tillage.

2. A sanction and/or reconversion to grassland will apply, as appropriate, should conversion occur without prior authorisation (where required) or where the area converted to tillage exceed the area stipulated in any prior authorisation

3.10.1.1.2 Territorial scope (national, regional, farm-level, group-of-holdings)

national

3.10.1.1.3 Value of the reference ratio (including calculation method)

Ratio **89.82**

Explanation

Maintenance of Permanent Grassland based on a ratio of Permanent Grassland in relation to Agricultural Area at national level in comparison to the reference year 2018.

The total agricultural area (AA) in 2018 = 4,633,730 ha
The total area of permanent grassland (PP) in 2018 = 4,161,908 ha

Therefore, ratio of PP to AA = 89.82%

Maximum decrease of 5% compared to the reference year.

3.10.1.1.4.Type of farmers concerned (all farmers that have permanent grasslands)

All farmers with Permanent Grassland.

3.10.1.1.5 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard

The main objective of the standard is: General safeguard against conversion to other agricultural uses to preserve carbon stock.

Carbon can be naturally captured from the atmosphere through biological processes and stored in the soil for a long period of time. Permanent grasslands absorb carbon dioxide during growth of the grass plants and store it in the different tissues. The majority of the above ground biomass will be eaten by grazing animals and the carbon will eventually return to the soil as manure or to the atmosphere via enteric fermentation. The remaining grass and roots will eventually decompose and the carbon will be stored in the soil organic matter.

Permanent grasslands store considerably more carbon in the soil organic matter than in the vegetation. Permanent grasslands are therefore considered to be a large contributor to mitigation of greenhouse gases and associated climate change. When permanent grasslands are ploughed and converted to arable, there is typically an associated loss of soil organic matter and over time the soil may turn from a sink into a net source of carbon. This GAEC aims to preserve permanent grassland and puts a ceiling on conversion to arable areas.

3.10.1.2 GAEC 2: Protection of wetland and peatland

3.10.1.2.1 Summary of the on-farm practice

Application of this GAEC is foreseen from claim year 2024 onwards, the description of the on-farm requirements and the types of agricultural areas present in the designated areas will be provided in an updated version of the CAP Strategic Plan prior to the first year of application of the GAEC.

3.10.1.2.2 Year of application of the GAEC

Please select year: **2024**

Justification

Ireland proposes this GAEC will be applicable from 2024 onwards as a lead time is required to define and map these areas.

Ireland has considered existing data sets to implement GAEC 2, however they have limitations because of scale issues which means that cannot be used to deliver a specific cartographic layer at parcel/farm level.

Ireland is one of four countries participating in the EU Commission's Joint Research Centre SEPLA (Satellite based mapping and monitoring of European peatland and wetland for LULUCF and agriculture) project. This project involves developing a methodology to identify and map 'candidate' peatland/wetland areas. Furthermore, it will assess methods and tools to support the creation of a carbon theme for conditionality and eco-schemes. Finally, it will define a prototype for Earth Observation (EO) based monitoring of peatland/wetlands. The timeline for completion of this project is April 2023 which should make implementation of this GAEC possible from 2024.

3.10.1.2.3 Territorial scope and area designated

Not applicable for year of application.

3.10.1.2.4 Type of farmers concerned

All beneficiaries with Wetlands/Peatlands falling under this GAEC.

Mainly livestock farmers, however the exact farms will not be known until all lands subject to the GAEC have been identified.

3.10.1.2.5 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard

The main objective of the standard is: the protection of carbon-rich soils.

This GAEC aims to protect both peatlands and wetlands, determined as agricultural areas and eligible hectares. Such areas are submitted by applicants as part of area-based schemes. Large quantities of carbon are stored in peatlands and wetlands and certain agricultural practices (e.g. ploughing) may have a negative impact on such soils with regard to carbon storage. The minimum standards established for management under this GAEC will be aimed at minimising carbon loss from such soils. Examples of appropriate minimum standards may include a ban on ploughing, or the use of min till/no till cultivation techniques; and these will be considered following the mapping and review process detailed in 3.10.1.2.2 above.

3.10.1.3 GAEC 3: Ban on burning arable stubble, except for plant health reasons

3.10.1.3.1 Summary of the on-farm practice

The burning of crop stubble and crop residues such as straw is prohibited except where there is a plant health reason.

Prior authorisation by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is required if burning is to take place due to a plant health reason. Where burning is permitted the farmer must comply with the prescribed burning code of practice.

3.10.1.3.2 Territorial scope

All arable land across the national territory.

3.10.1.3.3 Type of farmers concerned

All farmers growing cereal crops with stubble post-harvest. Straw is a valuable commodity and is normally collected (baled) for a variety of uses. Straw is also incorporated back into the soil in some situations.

3.10.1.3.4 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard

The main objective of the standard is: the maintenance of soil organic matter.

Besides causing air pollution, burning of straw leads to the loss of soil organic matter and essential nutrients, reduces microbial activities and leaves the land more vulnerable to soil erosion. The measure prevents these issues and encourages the incorporation of arable stubble into the soil which improves soil organic matter and soil health.

Burning arable stubble is prohibited thus preventing the direct release of CO_2 into the atmosphere. GAEC 3 also has an important role in maintaining soil organic carbon (SOC). SOC influences soil structure and stability, nutrient availability, and water infiltration and holding capacity. Soils are also significant carbon pools and therefore play an important role in the regulation of climate change.

GAEC 3 is only applicable to arable crops where stubble remains after crop harvesting. Based on 2020 data, this GAEC will apply to c. 6% of Ireland's total agricultural area.

3.10.2 Main issue: Water

3.10.2.1 GAEC 4: Establishment of buffer strips along water courses

3.10.2.1.1 Summary of the on-farm practice

Buffer zones in respect of spreading organic fertilizer:

-Water abstraction points: 200m to 25m*

-Lake shoreline or turlough likely to flood : 20m

-Exposed cavernous/ karstified limestone features: 15m

-Any surface watercourse where slope towards the feature exceeds 10%: 10m

-Any other surface water: 5m**

*Distance varies depending on the size of the population served by the abstraction point, or volume abstracted on a daily basis. Distance may be reduced subject to a Local Authority technical assessment.

**Increased to 10m for two weeks prior to the commencement of the prohibited spreading period, and again for two weeks after the cessation of the prohibited spreading period.

Buffer zones in respect of storage (during the permitted period) of farmyard manure in a field:

-Water abstraction points supplying $10m^3$ to $100m^3$ per day: 250m

-Other water supplies for human consumption: 50m

-Lake shoreline: 20m

-Exposed cavernous/ karstified limestone features: 50m

-Any other surface water: 20m

Buffer zones in respect of ploughing or cultivation:

-Ploughing or cultivating for non-grassland crops within 3m of watercourses that are identified on the modern 1:5,000 scale Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) mapping or better, is prohibited.

Buffer zones in respect of chemical fertilizer/pesticides application:

-All chemical fertilizers/pesticides: minimum 3m.

Buffer zone for late harvested/grazeable crops:
For late harvested crops and late harvested spring cereal crops, a minimum buffer of 6m shall be put in place to protect any intersecting watercourses.

An increased buffer strip of 4m applies beside watercourses if catch crops are being grazed in-situ (as per GAEC 6 details).

3.10.2.1.2 Minimal width of buffer strips (in m)

3

3.10.2.1.3 Territorial scope, including water courses definition

The entire territory of Ireland has been designated a nitrates vulnerable zone (NVZ). Consequently, those areas which are subject to buffer requirements, as defined under current the Good Agricultural Practice (GAP for Protection of Waters Regulations, include the following watercourses:

(a) any (or any part of any) river, stream, lake, canal, reservoir, aquifer, pond, watercourse, or other inland waters, whether natural or artificial,

(b) any tidal waters, and

(c) where the context permits, any beach, riverbank and salt marsh or other area which is contiguous to anything mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b), and the channel or bed of anything mentioned in paragraph (a) which is for the time being dry, but does not include a sewer.

Similarly, under conditionality, Ireland extends the SMR 1 and SMR 2 buffer areas, based on the above GAP definition of water courses, to GAEC 4.

3.10.2.1.4 Type of farmers concerned

All farmers with land adjacent to a watercourse(s) as defined in Section 3.10.2.1.3 above.

3.10.2.1.5 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard

The main objective of this standard is: the protection of river courses against pollution and run-off.

Buffers strips trap fertilizers, pesticides, pathogens, and heavy metals and slow water runoff, trap sediment, and enhance infiltration within the buffer.

A buffer strip is a strip of land that separates agricultural land from watercourses. The EU Nitrates Directive requires the establishment of buffer strips within the territory's Nitrates Vulnerable Zone (NVZ). The objective of these buffer strips is to limit and/or reduce nutrient discharge to surface waters, hence certain agricultural activities and nutrient applications are prohibited within these buffer strips. Under this GAEC, Member States are required to extend the buffer strip requirements already applied under NVZ to outside the NVZ. In Ireland, the entire national territory is designated an NVZ, and therefore the requirements under this GAEC are satisfied through the implementation of the proposed SMR 2.

3.10.3 Main issue: soil(protection and quality)

3.10.3.1 GAEC 5: Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient

3.10.3.1.1 Summary of the on-farm practice

Tillage management on grassland.

-If grassland is ploughed between 1st July and 15th October, the necessary measures shall be taken within 14 days of ploughing to provide for emergence of green cover from a sown crop. Do not remove sown green cover before 1st December by ploughing unless a crop is sown within 2 weeks of its removal.

-The ploughing of all grassland is prohibited between 16th October and 30th November. Furthermore, the ploughing of grassland land with a slope of 20% or more, between 1st December and 31st December, is prohibited.

Tillage management on arable land.

-Where arable land is ploughed between 1st July and 30th November the necessary measures, shall be taken within 14 days of ploughing to provide for emergence of green cover.

-The ploughing of arable land with a slope of 15% or more, between 1st December and 31st December, is prohibited.

-Do not remove sown green cover before 1st December by ploughing unless a crop is sown within 2 weeks of its removal.

-A rough surface shall be maintained prior to a crop being sown in the case of lands ploughed between 1st December and 15th January.

-For tillage the shallow cultivation of stubble ground must be undertaken within 7 days of baling of straw post harvest. Where straw is chopped shallow cultivation or sowing a crop must take place within 7 days of harvest. In all circumstances, shallow cultivation or sowing of a crop must take place within 14 days of harvesting. Due to variable Irish weather conditions and harvest dates this requirement may not apply in all years. To prevent damage to the soil or if the harvest runs too late for successful establishment of green cover, the national legislation provides that the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in discussion with the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, may advise when this should not apply.

Other requirements

-No bare soil for a period greater than 4 months.

-Avoid finely tilled soils not in the process of crop establishment.

-Use appropriate cropping practices and cropping structures.

-Use suitable machinery, vehicles and trailers and avoid damaging the soil structure in unfavourable weather conditions which can lead to soil erosion.

3.10.3.1.2 Territorial scope (including erosion risks areas and the slope gradient)

National - whole territory.

3.10.3.1.3 Type of farmers concerned

All farmers that have agricultural land as specified under the summary of on-farm practice at Section 3.10.3.1.1 above.

3.10.3.1.4 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard

The main objective of this standard is: Minimum land management reflecting site specific conditions to limit erosion.

The objective of this GAEC is to limit or reduce soil erosion. Soil erosion refers to the wearing away of a field's topsoil by the natural physical forces of water and wind, or through forces associated with farming activities such as tillage. Soil erosion is of concern across many European landscapes and is exacerbated by the interaction of many biophysical, climatic and management factors. In addition, soil with a high nutrient status poses a significant pollution risk where such soil becomes detached and enters water features. Bare soils, particularly on sloping ground, during periods of high rainfall and/or poor growth are most vulnerable to erosion.

Green cover helps to minimise soil erosion. This GAEC aims to prevent prolonged periods of exposed soils being subject to eroding forces (rainfall in the case of Ireland).

3.10.3.2 GAEC 6: Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soils in period(s) that are most sensitive

3.10.3.2.1 Summary of the on-farm practice (including the period concerned)

The most **sensitive period** for grasslands and arable is between 16th October and 30th November, and the following conditions (in combination with the GAEC 5 provisions) apply to protect soil both during and in the lead-up to this period.

Promoting minimum soil cover on grassland

-If applying a non-selective herbicide to grassland between 1st July and 30th November, take the necessary measures to provide for the emergence of green cover (either sown or natural regeneration) within 6 weeks of application.

-Do not remove sown green cover before 1st December by the use of non-selective herbicides unless a crop is sown with 2 weeks of its removal.

Promoting minimum soil cover on arable land

-If applying a non-selective herbicide to arable land between 1st July and 30th November, take the necessary measures to provide for the emergence of green cover (either sown or natural regeneration) within 6 weeks of application. In the case of seed crops and crops for human consumption, where a contract prohibits pre-harvest use of a non-selective herbicide, the requirement to provide green cover is reduced to 75% of the contracted area where the herbicide is applied after 15th October.

-Do not remove sown green cover before 1st December by the use of non-selective herbicides unless a crop is sown within 2 weeks of its removal.

-Do not plough or cultivate for non-grass crops within 3m of a watercourse.

Minimum soil cover and livestock management

-Manage overwintering livestock to prevent poaching e.g. moving feeders.

-Sacrifice paddocks are not permitted.

-Grazing catch crops in-situ – an adequate lie-back area must be provided. Furthermore, a grass buffer strip of at least 3m must be maintained around the external area of the parcel/area in catch crops. An increased buffer strip of 4m applies beside watercourses if catch crops are being grazed in-situ. Livestock must be excluded from repeated poaching of areas (bare soil) where the catch crop has been utilised.

-Do no overgraze or otherwise use sand dunes and/or grassland resulting in erosion.

-Use suitable vehicles and machinery to avoid rutting during periods of wet weather

Other requirements

-Avoid inappropriate land reclamation works, and other works, which lead to inadequate soil and ground cover

3.10.3.2.2 Territorial scope

All agricultural land as set out under the summary of the on-farm practice in Section 3.10.3.2.1 above.

3.10.3.2.3 Type of farmers concerned

All farmers that have agricultural land as defined under the summary of the on-farm practice in Section 3.10.3.2.1 above.

3.10.3.2.4 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard

The main objective of this standard is: the protection of soils in periods that are most sensitive.

The objective of this GAEC is to limit or reduce soil erosion. Soil erosion refers to the wearing away of a field's topsoil by the natural physical forces of water and wind, or through forces associated with farming activities such as tillage. Soil erosion is of concern across many European landscapes and is exacerbated by the interaction of many biophysical, climatic and management factors. In addition, soil with a high nutrient status poses a significant pollution risk where such soil becomes detached and enters water features. Bare soils, particularly on sloping ground, during periods of high rainfall and/or poor growth are most vulnerable to erosion.

Green cover will help to minimise soil erosion. This GAEC aims to prevent prolonged periods of exposed soils, particularly tilled soils, being subject to eroding forces (rainfall in the case of Ireland). As appropriate, this GAEC also covers other situations where management practices can minimise the risk of soil erosion, particularly with regard to livestock management.

3.10.3.3 GAEC 7: Crop rotation in arable land except for crops grown under water

3.10.3.3.1 Summary of the on-farm practice for crop rotation

The general rule is that crop rotation AND crop diversification will have to be implemented on arable lands:

Crop Rotation to be implemented at parcel level as follows:

· Crop Rotation will take place at parcel level based on a 4-year rotation cycle resulting in at least two different crops in years n, n-1, n-2, n-3.

· At farm level, there is a change of crop on a reasonable share of the arable land on a medium term.

· No later than in the 4th year, there has to be a change of the principle crop in each parcel (excluding secondary crops).

AND

Crop Diversification as follows on holdings with:

· 10 to 30 ha of arable land (2 crop rule): At least two arable crops must be grown and the main crop must not be more than 75% of the arable land.

· > 30 ha of arable land (3 crop rule): At least three arable crops must be grown and the main crop not more than 75% and the two main crops not more than 95% of the arable land.

As an alternative to the combined crop rotation AND crop diversification described above (or as an alternative to crop diversification, in cases where only crop diversification applies on a holding as described below), farmers may opt to implement only crop rotation with secondary crops (catch crops) as follows:

Crop Rotation at parcel level as follows:

· 50% of arable area at farm level in catch crops annually AND 100% of parcels sown in catch crops over the 4-year cycle

Note: The Catch crops must be sown by the 15th September and must remain in place until at least the 1st December. Further requirements will be specified in the terms and conditions.

The exemptions are the following:

A) Exemption from Crop Rotation only (Crop Diversification still applies)

10 to 50 ha where greater than 50% of arable area is sown in barley

B) Exemption from both Crop Rotation and Crop Diversification

- The exemptions listed in 3.10.3.3.4 below.

These requirements apply to arable land except multiannual crops, grasses and other herbaceous forage, and land lying fallow.

Organic farmers are deemed compliant with GAEC standard 7 in accordance with footnote 4 to Annex III of Regulation 2021/2115.

A tolerance will be integrated to manage offset cases of plot drawings, including in the case of parcel transfer situations. Tolerances will also be included for new parcels never declared in the CAP.

3.10.3.3.2 Summary of the farm practice for crop diversification

See section 3.10.3.3.1

3.10.3.3.3 Territorial scope

The arable sector in Ireland occupies c.7% of UAA with no significant regionalisation of the sector. Therefore, Ireland, for practical reasons, proposes to apply the above practices across the whole territory with no distinction being made for practices on a regional basis.

3.10.3.3.4 Type of farmers concerned

☐All farmers who have at their disposal arable land (no exemption)

☒Exemptions that apply

With a size of arable land up to 10 hectares (footenote 5 of annex III, point (1)(c))

Where more than 75% of the eligible agricultural area is permanent grassland (footnote of Annex III, point(1)(b))

Where more than 75% of arable land is used for the production of grasses or other herbaceous forage, is used for land laying fallow, cultivation of leguminous crops, or is subject to a combination of those uses (footnote of Annex III, point(1)(a))

3.10.3.3.5 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard (notably if MS has chosen crop diversification)

Ireland is implementing crop rotation/diversification to deliver on GAEC 7's objective of preserving the soil potential, taking into account the specificities of the arable sector in Ireland.

·The arable sector in Ireland occupies only **c.7% of UAA,** and this is the lowest proportion (by far) of any MS.

·Internal Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) analysis indicates that current crop diversification rules are delivering towards the achievement of a **crop rotation** on a significant percentage of the Irish arable area, including the integration of non-cereal break crops and temporary grassland with cereals, the benefits of which are evident in a recent independent Soil Organic Matter (SOM) analysis of arable soils in Ireland which shows that less than 1% of Irish arable soils are below a SOM threshold of 3.4%.

·There is an existing high-degree of poly-cultural activity among holdings that declare an arable crop in Ireland. Such diverse management systems create opportunities within the holding for activities which can have a **beneficial impact on preserving or improving the soil potential**, for example, the implementation of an arable/ grassland rotation and the incorporation of organic manures.

Ireland recognises the value of planned crop rotations towards improving, *inter alia*, soil quality and health. However, Ireland also recognises that crop rotations, in general, are both farm and site-specific, requiring careful species selection, and a sufficient degree of planning and flexibility to adjust for unforeseen circumstances such as poor weather events at the time of normal crop establishment. In addition, the typical small farm size, range and area of tillage crops, and dominance of cereal crops, grown in Ireland do not always lend themselves favourably to the implementation of an annual crop rotation on a LPIS basis.

Heavy clay soil types and Ireland's mild wet climate can often cause periodic difficulties with planting /harvesting especially in autumn, and this can have knock on impact on the already limited crop choices and places further limits on the potential crops grown. Barley crops are most suited to a range of soil types, and climatic conditions which can vary considerably in Ireland. In contrast alternative crops choices such as later harvesting crops or root crops can result in potentially more damage to the soil, if field operations take place in more difficult weather and field/soil conditions, hence farmers need flexibility to manage crop suitability at a holding level, and not be tied to a strict crop rotation which is not necessarily suitable for their soils or typical climatic conditions.

Furthermore, it is not always possible for farmers with barley to introduce a secondary crop in a simple rotation for a number of reasons:

(i) Ireland's weather frequently causes difficulties in planning sowing /harvesting operation having knock on impacts on the potential to sow cover crops for example Late harvesting (sometimes resulting from late sowing)- means cover crops can be difficult to establish in time (by mid-September – based on environmental practice.

(ii) Winter cereal rotations: there is no opportunity to plant a catch crop between winter cereal crops for example winter barley (harvested in July) followed by another winter barley crop (sown in Sept/Oct) – timeframe is too short 6-8 weeks for a catch crop to be effective/efficient.

(iii) There are potential crop disease risks with repeated use of certain catch crops species e.g. clubroot disease with having repeated cover crops mixtures containing brassica species, which tend to dominate commercial cover crop mixtures available in Ireland.

(iv) Winter stubble: It is not environmentally desirable to sow 100% of catch crops on a holding each year. There is a need to avoid unintended consequences to farmland birds by ensuring sufficient foraging habitat for a range of species, by avoiding a dominance of catch crop/ green cover and ensuring sufficient level of overwinter stubble. Over winter stubbles make a valuable foraging habitat for insects and hares throughout the autumn and winter. Cited as one of the most simple but effective measures to support farmland birds, the adaption of over winter stubbles as a winter food source for birds will deliver the greatest benefit when operated on a larger scale. Research shows that certain bird species prefer to forage on sprawling open stubbles rather than in tall, dense vegetations (provided by cover crops). Species such as skylark, yellowhammer, grey partridge, sparrow, finches, and pheasant, have a stronger preference to forage on weedy cereal stubbles while linnet specialises in exploiting stubbles after oilseed rape. Over winter stubbles contain spilled grains from the previous harvest along with broad-leaved weeds that germinate post-harvest thus providing a valuable winter food supply for seed eating birds.

Teagasc is Ireland's state agency providing research, advisory and education in agriculture, horticulture, food and rural development. Teagasc recently published a strategic plan to support native protein production in Ireland. The plan proposes an increase in protein crops from the current ~10,000ha per annum to 20,000ha per annum by 2030. Achieving this target will a have a positive impact on environmental health and soil quality, and it will incentivise rotation through the greater integration of protein crops in the arable rotation. This target aligns with the target set for Protein Aid coupled support within the CAP Strategic Plan.

It must also be noted that to grow a wider range of crops, farmers need to invest in more machinery to handle a wider range of crops i.e. higher clearance sprayers for oilseed rape or protein crops, specialist machinery for potato cultivation/planting/harvesting/processing. This can often be uneconomical for small and medium sized farmers in particular, and especially in the context of the lack of developed markets/processing capacity for these alternative crops.

Irelands climate is characterised as being mild and moist, average annual temperature is about 9°C ranging from 2-3°C winter average to 19°C summer average, with characteristic prolonged wet periods impacting on field operations and this can pose additional challenges regarding the annual planning of crops i.e. wet autumn can cause harvest difficulties and significantly impact on winter plantings.

This can limit the potential for strict annual crop rotations given that we already have a quite limited range of suitable crops for our soils and climate. Crop diversification offers more flexibility for certain

farm holdings in this regard, where between season effects can inhibit the annual planning between winter and spring crops, and limits the options for selection of alternatives in wet seasons where the impact of root crops or late harvested crops need to be taken into account as well as soil suitability.

Irish soils are quite diverse. This means that typically crop choices are heavily influenced by soil suitability, which can vary considerably between fields, farms, sub-regional and national basis, thus, there are no large area monocultures.

Summary:
Ireland recognises the value of crop rotations. The objective of preserving the soil potential can be met through a flexible combination of crop rotation/crop diversification approach in an Irish context. In addition, soil/climate factors, the typical small farm size, limited range and area of arable crops, dominance of cereal crops and lack of specialist machinery and lack of well-developed markets for alternative crops means annual crop rotation on a parcel basis is too restrictive for some holdings, therefore crop rotation with catch crops or crop diversification is more appropriate in certain scenarios.

The exemptions are of a limited scope:
The share of barley in the utilised agricultural area (UAA) that could potentially avail of the exemption is likely to be negligible, so the derogation for barley only applies to a very limited area (80,000 ha), due to the limited size of the sector in Ireland. The impact of the derogation for barley will be monitored and, if necessary, changes will be made to ensure that the derogation continues to apply only to a limited area.

The alternative of crop rotation with catch crops/secondary crops is of an even more limited scope:
The share of catch crop in the Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) that could potentially avail of this flexibility is likely to be negligible, as the catch crop equivalence provision under greening for crop diversification currently only applies to a very limited area (1,100 ha). The impact of the secondary crop usage will be monitored and, if necessary, changes will be made to ensure that the provision continues to apply only to a limited area.

3.10.4 Main issue: Biodiversity and landscape (protection and quality)

3.10.4.1 GAEC 8: Minimum share of arable land devoted to non-productive areas and features, and on all agricultural area, retention of landscape features and ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season

3.10.4.1.1 Summary of the in-farm practice

Standard of minimum share:

☐At least 4% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow.

☐At least 3% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow when the farmer commits to at least 7% of arable land devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow, under an enhanced eco-scheme in accordance with Article 31(5a).

☐At least 7% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow, and catch crops and nitrogen fixing crops, cultivated without the use of plant protection products, of which 3% shall be non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow. Member States should use the weighting factor of 0,3 for catch crops.

List of features (Indicative list of features and non-productive areas eligible for calculating the minimum share)

☐Buffer strips

☐Cairns

☒cultural features
Explanation

In Ireland's case cultural features under GAEC 8 are archaeological features. Archaeological features are areas or features of archaeological interest protected on farms which enhance the visual landscape. They have a historical, social, and cultural importance. **They are also designated as landscape features.**

Non-productive Feature	**Conversion Factor**	**Weighting Factor** **(If both factors are applied)**	**NPF** ✓ = Yes X = No	**Designated as a Landscape Feature for retention** ✓ = Yes X = No
Cultural Features:				
Archaeological Features	N/A	1	✓	✓

☒Ditches
Explanation

A drain/ditch is an open trench which is dug to improve the drainage of agricultural land. It generally starts within the holding and is linked directly or indirectly through other drains, to a stream or river which passes through or alongside the holding. It may contain water permanently or only following flash flooding and all states in between, but all are considered as landscape features under GAEC 8 requirements.

Drains have been identified and measured on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's online system using datasets from the Environmental Protection Area (EPA) and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi). Drain/ditches will also be a Landscape Feature.

Non-productive Feature	**Conversion Factor**	**Weighting Factor** **(if both factors are applied)**	**NPF** ✓ = Yes X = No	**Designated as a Landscape Feature for retention** ✓ = Yes X = No
Ditches:				
Ditches / Drains	5	2	✓	✓

☒Fiels margins, patches or parcelsbuffer strips
Explanation

Field margins
See space for nature grassland categories below

Patches or parcels/islands of biodiversity
These may consist of the following features:

- Habitats – An environment for plants, animals, and other organisms. Habitats can vary in physical characteristics and there is a broad range of habitat types in Ireland.

- Designated Habitats – Former REPS 4A Habitats which are now declared as designated habitats are also considered landscape features and are protected under the designation. Applicants are obliged to keep the areas fenced off and the only requirement is to leave the area concerned undisturbed and in its natural state. **These features will continue to be designated as Landscape features in CAP (2023-27).**

- Scrub is an area characterized by vegetation dominated by scrub/woody plants but may include grasses.

- Rock features have various benefits for biodiversity, including hosting plant species, serving as features for birds (acoustics and feeding/hunting perches etc.). Rock provides unique habitats comprised of materials hosting features of conservation value. Areas with rocky ground may also host invertebrate species such as viviparous lizard and other protected invertebrates.

Agricultural lands, particularly on the Western seaboard but not exclusively so, can contain rock scattered within grassland areas. These grassland habitats, particularly in the Burren region, are exceptionally important where the unique karst landscape has resulted in a wide range of unique plants developing within the fissures in the rocks. Livestock grazing in these areas maintains the habitats and the rock is a critical part of the environment.

Winter Bird Food – an area sown with a specific crop mix to provide feed for wild birds during the winter and a diverse range of flora with the desired effect of increasing the wild bird population. It cannot be used for production or grazing purposes.

-ASSAP Area/Features - A targeted intervention created under the ASSAP (Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme) or an equivalent programme, to help improve water quality. An example of such measures includes a riparian margin adjacent to a stream.

- Grassland Space for Nature – An area that will provide space for wildlife (including fenced field margins) to flourish and allow the development of vegetation structure of varying heights suitable for diversity of invertebrates. This grassland area must be fenced off and cannot be used for grazing or production purposes. This area cannot be used for an agronomic activity, however topping may be carried out once per year between September 1st and 28th February.

Buffer Strips

- Buffer Strips must be situated on arable lands along rivers/streams. These are identified and measured on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's online system and are based on Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) data. Under Conditionality requirements, applicants are obliged to leave a minimum of 3 meters of uncultivated ground between their crop and the watercourse. The buffer strips are measured from the top of the bank next to watercourses. There must be reduced production on Buffer Strips but the area can be grazed or topped and crops cannot be harvested.

Weighting and Conversion factors for these features are listed in the Table below.

Non-productive Feature	**Conversion Factor**	**Weighting Factor (if both factors are applied)**	**NPF** ✓ = Yes X = No	**Designated as a Landscape Feature for retention** ✓ = Yes X = No

Field margins, patches or parcels buffer strips:				
Field margins				
Field margins	N/A	N/A	X	X
Patches or parcels				
Habitats	N/A	1	✓	X
Designated habitats	N/A	1	✓	✓
Scrub	N/A	1	✓	X
Rock	*N/A*	*1*	✓	*X*
Wild Bird Cover	N/A	1	✓	X
ASSAP Areas	5	2	✓	X
Grassland Space for Nature	N/A	1	✓	X
Buffer Strips:				
Buffer Strips	6	1.5	✓	X

☒Hedgerows individual or group of treestrees rows
Explanation

A hedge or hedgerow is a line of closely spaced bushes/shrubs and/or tree species, planted and trained in such a way as to form a barrier or to mark the boundary of an area which may include scrub/bushes that has developed in the traditional manner at the base of the hedgerow/boundary. The hedgerow may vary in width depending on the management practices that are traditional to the area and farm practices. In Ireland, traditionally they were planted on a raised earthen bank formed by digging one or two shallow trench(s), with the dug material used to form the bank in the middle. In more recent years the hedge is generally planted on the flat. Gappy hedges where there is at least 20% of hedgerow species (including briars, gorse etc.) dispersed along the length of the hedge is considered a hedgerow. A hedge starts and ends at the nodes or intersection with another hedge. **Hedgerows will also be Landscape Features.** Briars on an earthen bank are also considered as a Landscape Feature; however earthen banks on their own are not.

Trees in a line is a line of tree species (excluding conifers), planted with or without hedgerow species in between. **Trees in a line will also be Landscape Features.**

Copse/group of trees is an area of trees. **Individual trees will not be considered for the calculation of the 4% requirement of non-productive features and areas.**

Other woody features/areas such as scrub can also be included. Scrub is an area characterized by vegetation dominated by scrub/woody plants but may include grasses.

Weighting and Conversion factors for these features are listed in the Table below.

Non-productive Feature	**Conversion Factor**	**Weighting Factor (if both factors are applied)**	**NPF** ✓ = Yes X = No	**Designated as a Landscape Feature for retention** ✓ = Yes
Hedgerows individual or group of trees, tree rows:				
Hedgerows / Trees in a Line	5	2	✓	✓
Group of Trees /Copse / Woodland (Subfeature)	N/A	1	✓	X
Individual trees	N/A	N/A	X	X
Scrub	N/A	1	✓	X

☒Land Lying fallow
Explanation

- Land lying fallow must be arable fallow lands. That means the lands must have been used for arable crop production during one or more of the previous 5 years.
- Weighting and Conversion factors are listed in the Table below.

Non-productive Feature	**Conversion Factor**	**Weighting Factor (if both factors are applied)**	**NPF** ✓ = Yes X = No	**Designated as a Landscape Feature for retention** ✓ = Yes X = No
Land Lying Fallow:				
Land Lying Fallow	NA	1	✓	X

☒Others
Explanation

Share (%) of arable land devoted to non-productive areas and features - 4%

However, please note, Ireland will be extending beyond the basic standard of applying this to arable farmers only and will apply option 1 to all farmers, except holdings with Commonage, Natura 2000, Forestry, GAEC 2, GAEC 9 areas. Ireland will ensure that arable land will meet the minimum 4% arable share requirement at farm level.

Exempted areas (from the 4% requirement)

Natura 2000 sites, Commonage, Forestry, land subject to GAEC 2 and land subject to GAEC 9. All of these areas have certain characteristics such as soil type, flora and fauna, water, landscape features and other relevant environmental factors by which they provide environmental benefits for biodiversity and eco-systems in the Irish Landscape.

- Natura 2000 sites –Natura 2000 areas are designated sites preserving both habitats and species. These are prime wildlife and biodiversity conservation areas considered to be important on a European as well as Irish level. The designation of a site as an SAC or SPA has implications for normal farming activities including restricting certain land use practices, for example actions requiring consent (ARC)). In addition, the prioritised action framework (PAF) outlines an established process in Ireland for preparing detailed site-specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) for a particular habitat or species that is based on setting targets for attributes that together define favourable conservation condition at site-level.

- Commonage's – Commonages represent a mosaic of habitats such as blanket bog, dry heaths, wet heaths and upland grasslands with varied conditions. Commonage Framework Planning is an initiative to assess and monitor the condition of commonages, in particular, to ensure overgrazing and undergrazing is not becoming a problem. A key aim of commonage framework planning is the conservation and sustainable management of commonages to preserve biodiversity and ecology. At farm level, a Commonage Framework Plan (CFP) is an assessment of the vegetation condition of an area of commonage based on a comprehensive site assessment, complemented by other pertinent data such as livestock numbers and types of habitat. The CFP sets out sustainable grazing practices for the commonage shareholders to follow and where necessary, destocking (removal of some of the stock kept on commonage) is prescribed in the CFP to ensure recovery of the vegetation and habitats.

- Forestry is a parcel with trees and provides shelter/habitat for a range of plant species and animals they attract. Forestry acts as an important wildlife corridor which is a key factor to enhancing biodiversity. Forestry is also an important habitat for a variety of bird species. Ireland's National Forestry policy aims to increase Ireland's forest cover on a permanent basis, recognising its importance to capture carbon and help climate mitigation, as well as the environmental and social benefits of new and existing forests.

- Land subject to GAEC 2 – As well as delivering on the climate changes objectives, GAEC 2 areas are important ecosystems for biodiversity especially birds.

- Land subject to GAEC 9 – The objective of GAEC 9 is the protection of habitats and species by protecting and maintaining environmental sensitive permanent grasslands (ESPGs). GAEC 9 recognises the importance of ESPG's as habitats for biodiversity especially birds.

Holdings with Natura 2000 sites, Commonages, Forestry, GAEC 2 and GAEC 9 areas will be exempted from the 4% GAEC 8 min. share requirement.

☒Small ponds

Explanation

A pond is a small body of surface water, together with the herbaceous or woody plants along its banks. Manmade ponds and ponds created by applicants that are participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Projects or other CAP interventions will be considered Non-Productive Features (NPF's) for the purposes of GAEC 8.

Small ponds will also be a Landscape Feature as well as non-productive features. The maximum area of a small pond is 0.2ha.

Concrete or plastic reservoirs will not be considered as NPF for the purposes of GAEC 8.

Weighting and Conversion factors for small ponds are listed in the Table below.

Non-productive Feature	Conversion Factor	Weighting Factor (if both factors are applied)	NPF ✓ = Yes X = No	Designated as a Landscape Feature for retention ✓ = Yes X = No
Small Ponds:				
Small Ponds	N/A	1.5	✓	✓

☐Small wetlands

☒Stonewalls
Explanation

Stonewalls
- A traditional stonewall is a line/boundary made of rock/stones, which is handmade, without mortar. These features mostly occur in grassland i.e. in grassland areas such as the Aran Islands/the Burren and other localised grassland areas etc. Other forms of stonewall will not count as a Non-Productive Feature .
- Weighting and Conversion factors for stone walls are listed in the Table below. Ireland will monitor the impact of these factors and make any adaptations, if necessary, early in the programming period.

Non-productive Feature	Conversion Factor	Weighting Factor (if both factors are applied)	NPF ✓ = Yes X = No	Designated as a Landscape Feature for retention ✓ = Yes X = No
Stonewalls:				
Stonewalls	5	2	✓	X

☐Streams

☐Terraces

List of features (for retention)
- **Ditches**
- **Fiels margins, patches or parcelsbuffer strips**
- **Hedgerows individual or group of treestrees rows**
- **Small ponds**
- **cultural features**

Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season (mandatory)

In Ireland, studies have found the populations of over 20% of bird species are in decline. To protect nesting and breeding birds, cutting, grubbing, burning or otherwise destruction of hedgerows and/or trees is prohibited during the bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August, inclusive). Restrictions on cutting hedgerows are set out in Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976 as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Heritage Act 2018. These Acts stipulate that it is an offence to destroy vegetation on uncultivated land between the **1st of March** and the **31st of August** each year.

Significant damage to hedgerows and trees can be caused by non-cutting actions, for example flattening with a digger or loading shovel. Under this GAEC, Ireland proposes to prohibit damage or destruction of hedges and tree by non-cutting means during the bird breeding and nesting season.

Controls will consist of checks for evidence of cutting, destruction and/or removal of trees and hedges during the bird nesting and breeding season.

Impact of proposed standard: Agriculture represents a significant threat to bird populations through loss of habitats and reduced availability of invertebrate prey. Prohibiting the destruction of hedges and trees, by cutting or other means, during the nesting and breeding season will serve to protect habitats which are critical to the lifecycle of a wide range of bird species.

Measures for avoiding invasive plant species

Invasive alien plant species present a significant risk to invaded habitats and native species. In Ireland, it has been reported that biodiversity loss and localised extinctions will occur in the absence of adequate controls.

Invasive native plant species or Noxious weeds, as defined under the Noxious Weeds Act 1936, can impact negatively on agriculture and biodiversity, as well being harmful to animals and humans.

Some of the core provisions of EU Regulation 1143/2014 which deal with keeping, breeding, transporting and placing on the market of species included on the list of invasive alien species of Union concern (the "Union list") came into force on the 3rd August 2016.

Under Cross Compliance invasive alien plant species and noxious weeds must be controlled by the landowner. The requirements in place under GAEC 7 for the 2014-2020 CAP Programme will not change for Conditionality in relation to the control of invasive species and noxious weeds.

Controls will involve checks for evidence of failing to control the proliferation of invasive alien species/noxious weeds.

Impact of proposed standard: Invasive species and noxious weeds represent a significant threat to biodiversity, the environment, and human and animal health on the island of Ireland. Controlling the growth and spread of invasive species and noxious weeds on agricultural lands will serve to protect ecosystems.

3.10.4.1.2 Territorial scope (applicable for the "minimum share" standard)

All farmers - Ireland propose to extend the 4% minimum share of non-productive features from arable to all farmers (with certain exemptions as mentioned above) which means this measure will apply to approximately 104,000 farmers compared to only approximately 6,000 arable farmers if restricted to only arable areas.

Ireland will not apply any of the exemptions provided for in Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 under footnote 1 for GAEC 8. This measure will apply to all Irish farmers.

3.10.4.1.3 Type of farmers concerned (applicable for the "minimum share" standard)

☒All farmers who have at their disposal arable land (no exemption)
☐Exemptions that apply

3.10.4.1.4 Explanation of the contribution to the main objective of the practice/standard

Main objective of the GAEC Standard: maintenance of non-productive features and areas, to improve on-farm biodiversity.

A number of requirements will contribute to this objective as set out under the headings below.

Minimum share of agricultural land devoted to non-productive areas and features

Biodiversity refers to all living organisms, plant and animal, which contribute to the health and functioning of ecosystems. Agricultural activity, particularly intensive production systems, may not be conducive to the maintenance and development of habitats which contribute to the overall biodiversity and functioning of ecosystems in the farmed landscape. GAEC 8 standards should aim to develop and maintain such habitats on all farmlands. Ireland has a relatively small area dedicated to arable farming with 7% of UAA in arable use, compared with an average of 22.2 % at EU level. If confined to arable farmers only, and applying the various possible exemptions under this GAEC, it is estimated that this standard would apply to 4% of Irish farmers, having minimal impact on biodiversity on a National basis. Accordingly, Ireland intends to implement this GAEC requirement for all farms receiving CAP farm payments,(with certain exemptions).

In effect the GAEC will be implemented by requiring:

Minimum share of at least 4% of arable land and/or 'agricultural area' at farm level devoted to non-productive features (NPF's), including land lying fallow.

Retention of landscape features

As set out in Section 3.10.4.1.1 of the CSP, a number of features (designated habitats, hedgerows individual or groups of trees, trees rows, small ponds, archaeological/cultural features, ditches) will be designated as landscape features for retention. Farmers will be required to retain and maintain these landscape features. However, some landscape features namely hedges/line of trees/ditches or drains may be removed, in exceptional cases and only to the length that is needed, provided a replacement hedge/line of trees/ditch or drain is planted/dug in advance of the removal.

For example, a farmer can remove a hedgerow once a new hedgerow has been pre-planted. Established landscape features have a greater value in terms of providing wildlife habitats, biodiversity and carbon sequestration relative to those that are newly established. To account for this, and to discourage removal of established landscape features, Ireland proposes that if a landscape feature is to be removed it must be replaced with twice the proposed removal length (e.g. if 100m of hedgerow is to be removed, 200m of hedgerow must be established prior to removal).

This "2X" requirement recognises the environmental value of existing hedgerows and also has a dissuasive effect. In addition to limit the impact in the local landscape Ireland has proposed that this new length of hedgerow must be as close as possible, within the farm/holding as declared on the farmer's BISS application, of the removed feature. Also, from a control perspective it should be noted that this removal of hedgerow cannot take place within the bird breeding season.

In addition to existing controls, the use of new technologies such as AMS, will strengthen enforcement and compliance with these requirements. It is anticipated the use of these new technologies will allow for more rapid and immediate detection of non-compliance and greater coverage within a shorter period, and this in turn should lead to a positive "preventative effect". Ireland's desire to use these new technologies

coupled with its increased requirements to apply “the 4%” to all agricultural areas under the CSP and commitment to review its EIA Regulations highlights Ireland’s ambition and commitment in this area.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening is required under the EIA Agriculture Regulations concerning certain thresholds of hedgerow removal and land consolidation. Certain restrictions may also apply in Natura 2000 sites. This Department has committed to a review of the current EIA requirements.

This review will focus on its thresholds for screening applications for prior authorisation of works with consideration given to reducing these thresholds as appropriate. However, the CSP provides that there is a requirement to plant a hedgerow in advance, of twice the length of hedgerow being removed.

Replacement trees or hedgerows planted to meet GAEC 8 requirements must be planted and established in accordance with the standard set for equivalent work under AECM/the Eco-Scheme. Features replaced to meet GAEC 8 requirements will not qualify for payment under the Eco-Scheme / AECM and planting that has been funded under the Eco-Scheme /AECM will not qualify as a replacement to meet GAEC 8 requirements.

Controls will involve checks for evidence of removal or damage of designated landscape features. Checks will be conducted on the timing and location of establishment of replacement landscape features, and on association with agri-environmental schemes.

Designation as a landscape feature will protect the features involved and the ecological and landscape values they provide.

Small ponds **must be retained**, retention of these features will contribute to maintaining landscape diversity, while providing a habitat for a wide range of wetland species. Similarly designated habitats **must be retained** due to the biodiversity value they provide.

For landscape features which can be replaced, increasing the area and applying restrictions on the timing and location of establishing replacement landscape features will discourage their removal while where necessary also contributing to the maintenance of local biodiversity.

Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season

Prohibiting the destruction of hedges and trees, by cutting or other means, during the nesting and breeding season will serve to protect habitats which are critical to the lifecycle of a wide range of bird species.

Measures for avoiding invasive plant species

Invasive species and noxious weeds represent a significant threat to biodiversity, the environment, and human and animal health on the island of Ireland. Controlling the growth and spread of invasive species and noxious weeds on agricultural lands will serve to protect ecosystems

3.10.4.2 GAEC 9: Ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland designated as environmentally-sensitive permanent grasslands in Natura 2000 sites

3.10.4.2.1 Summary of the on-farm practice

Following consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the current Environmentally Sensitive Permanent Grassland (ESPG) areas in Ireland are defined based on Annex I[1] grassland Habitats in Natura 2000 sites with "Qualifying Interests" (QI) that best meet the definition of ESPG.

Farmers must refrain from certain actions on ESPG. These include:

-Ploughing

-The growing of arable or permanent crops
-Construction

Note: Annex I habitats are those listed under Annex I of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)

This Department and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS - with responsibility for Natura 2000 areas) are in the process of reviewing the current ESPG designated areas. Additional areas for inclusion as ESPG will be considered as part of this review/assessment, and if/when the revised ESPG areas are available/updated they will be included in the CSP. DAFM will continue to engage with NPWS on this task, however it is not anticipated that this review will be completed in time for inclusion in the initial CSP.

Also, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening is required under the EIA Agriculture Regulations concerning certain thresholds of land consolidation in the restructuring of landholdings. Such areas proposed for restructuring often support sensitive or biodiverse grassland habitats so the EIA process is a safeguard for these habitats outside of Natura 2000 sites.

3.10.4.2.2 Territorial scope

Total indicative area of environmentally-sensitive permanent grasslands in Natura 2000 sites covered by the GAEC in ha: **30134.0**

3.10.4.2.3 Type of farmers concerned

All farmers who have agricultural land designated as Environmentally Sensitive Permanent Grassland (ESPG) in Natura 2000 areas.

The total area of the ESPG parcels in Ireland declared for BPS in 2019 was 30,134 ha in 3,906 parcels. This total area was claimed over 2,093 herds.

3.10.4.2.4 Explanation of the contribution to achieve the main objective of the GAEC standard

The main objective of this standard is: Protection of habitats and species.

Extensively managed grasslands in designated NATURA 2000 areas can contain diverse and stable vegetation covers, which in turn can provide a favourable habitat for terrestrial and soil fauna, leading to highly functioning ecosystems. Additionally, plant biomass turnover and extensive management practices, such as grazing, can contribute to improving the organic matter content of the soil in these areas.

The restructuring of these grasslands through ploughing can affect plant composition within these areas which can have a negative impact on associated fauna. Additionally, the ploughing of these grasslands can result in a decline in soil carbon stocks. Implementing safeguards within the ecological favourable sites, such as prohibiting ploughing, can help protect and maintain their conservation status.

The areas currently designated as environmentally sensitive permanent grassland in Natura 2000 sites are subject to the requirements of GAEC 9 to protect the habitats, species and soil on these lands.

3.10.5 Additional GAEC (if applicable)

N/A

4 Elements common to several interventions

4.1 Definition and minimum requirements

4.1.1 Agricultural activity

4.1.1.1 Definition of production

n/a

4.1.1.2 Definition of maintenance of agricultural area

4.1.1.2.1 Arable Land

An agricultural activity will be determined by the characteristics of the agricultural area. Clear and obvious signs of a maintenance activity within the agricultural parcel must exist that make it suitable for grazing or cultivation, without preparatory action going beyond the use of usual agricultural methods and machinery. This can include the following:

Topping
Mulching
Controlled Burning*
Spraying

This may also include clear and obvious signs of on-going maintenance activities on the Landscape Features that exist within the agricultural parcel. This can include the following:

Hedge cutting
Ditch cleaning

*Under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, growing vegetation cannot be burnt between 1 March and 31 August of any given year, on any land not yet cultivated.

Where land has been burned between the 1 March and the 31 August, it is not in a state suitable for grazing or cultivation and therefore is not eligible for the remainder of the year. The exception to this is where **controlled burning** has been carried out in full compliance with all relevant environmental legislative requirements and any other lawful requirements, having first consulted with and notified the Gardaí and the local fire service. In the case of Natura lands (lands designated as SAC and/or SPA), prior approval must be obtained through the Activities Requiring Consent (ARC) system as implemented by NPWS.

4.1.1.2.2 Permanent crops

An agricultural activity will be determined by the characteristics of the agricultural area. Clear and obvious signs of a maintenance activity within the agricultural parcel must exist that make it suitable for grazing or cultivation, without preparatory action going beyond the use of usual agricultural methods and machinery. This can include the following:

Topping
Mulching
Controlled Burning*
Spraying
Pruning

This may also include clear and obvious signs of on-going maintenance activities on the Landscape Features that exist within the agricultural parcel. This can include the following:

Hedge cutting
Ditch cleaning

*Under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, growing vegetation cannot be burnt between 1 March and 31 August of any given year, on any land not yet cultivated.

Where land has been burned between the 1 March and the 31 August, it is not in a state suitable for grazing or cultivation and therefore is not eligible for the remainder of the year. The exception to this is where **controlled burning** has been carried out in full compliance with all relevant environmental legislative requirements and any other lawful requirements, having first consulted with and notified the Gardaí and the local fire service. In the case of Natura lands (lands designated as SAC and/or SPA), prior approval must be obtained through the Activities Requiring Consent (ARC) system as implemented by NPWS.

4.1.1.2.3 Permanent grassland

An agricultural activity will be determined by the characteristics of the agricultural area. Clear and obvious signs of a maintenance activity within the agricultural parcel must exist that make it suitable for grazing or cultivation, without preparatory action going beyond the use of usual agricultural methods and machinery. This can include the following:

Topping
Mulching
Controlled Burning*
Spraying

This may also include clear and obvious signs of on-going maintenance activities on the Landscape Features that exist within the agricultural parcel. This can include the following:

Hedge cutting
Ditch cleaning

Once evidence of on-going maintenance is visible the height of permanent grassland within the agricultural parcel is not relevant.

*Under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, growing vegetation cannot be burnt between 1 March and 31 August of any given year, on any land not yet cultivated.

Where land has been burned between the 1 March and the 31 August, it is not in a state suitable for grazing or cultivation and therefore is not eligible for the remainder of the year. The exception to this is where **controlled burning** has been carried out in full compliance with all relevant environmental legislative requirements and any other lawful requirements, having first consulted with and notified the Gardaí and the local fire service. In the case of Natura lands (lands designated as SAC and/or SPA), prior approval must be obtained through the Activities Requiring Consent (ARC) system as implemented by NPWS.

4.1.2 Agricultural area

4.1.2.1 Elements of agroforestry systems when it is established and/or maintained on the agricultural area

4.1.2.1.1 Arable Land

The combination of arable land and forestry shall be deemed an agricultural area

A stocking rate of 400 - 1000 trees per hectare (equal spacing) is acceptable

A tree-to-tree width of 20 metres is required

Acceptable broadleaf species will include oak, sycamore and cherry. Other species, including conifers can be considered on a site-by-site basis.

Where a lower stocking density (i.e. <400 trees per hectare) the land will be classified as arable land.

4.1.2.1.2 Permanent crops

The combination of permanent crops and forestry shall be deemed an agricultural area

A stocking rate of 400 - 1000 trees per hectare (equal spacing) is acceptable

A tree-to-tree width of 20 metres is required

Acceptable broadleaf species will include oak, sycamore and cherry. Other species, including conifers can be considered on a site-by-site basis.

Where a lower stocking density (i.e. <400 trees per hectare) the land will be classified as permanent crops.

4.1.2.1.3 Permanent grassland

The combination of permanent grassland and forestry shall be deemed an agricultural area

A stocking rate of 400 - 1000 trees per hectare (equal spacing) is acceptable

A tree-to-tree width of 20 metres is required

Acceptable broadleaf species will include oak, sycamore and cherry. Other species, including conifers can be considered on a site-by-site basis.

Grazing by sheep or young domestic stock is permitted during the spring and summer months for the first 6-8 years, depending on tree growth, but trees must be protected and tree shelters checked regularly. Thereafter, when tree shelters are replaced with plastic mesh, larger animals may be introduced.

Fodder: Silage and hay production is permitted. It is important that appropriate machinery is used when cutting silage and/or hay so as to ensure that the trees are not inadvertently damaged.

Where a lower stocking density (i.e. <400 trees per hectare) the land will be classified as permanent grassland.

4.1.2.2 Arable land

4.1.2.2.1 Other comments relating to the definition of arable land

“Arable land” as per Article 4(3)(a) Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Where trees exist in combination with Arable crops at a lower stocking density (< 400 trees per hectare) than agro-forestry, and the land does not meet the national definition of forestry, the land will be classified as Arable

“Land lying Fallow” is land which has not been used for production of agricultural products in the current year. It may include lands that self-seed.

Lands that are fallow for up to 5 years remain as fallow. After 5 years the lands will revert to permanent grassland unless the lands are used to meet the holding obligations under GAEC 8

a "crop" means any of the following:

(a) a culture of any of the different genera defined in the botanical classification of crops;

(b) a culture of any of the species in the case of Brassicaceae, Solanaceae, and Cucurbitaceae;

(c) land lying fallow;

(d) grasses or other herbaceous forage

(e) winter or spring sowing are distinct crops

4.1.2.3 Permanent crops

4.1.2.3.1 Definition of nurseries

“nurseries" means the following areas of young ligneous (woody) plants grown in the open air for subsequent transplantation:

— vine and root-stock nurseries,
— fruit tree and berries nurseries,
— ornamental nurseries,
— commercial nurseries of forest trees excluding those for the holding's own requirements grown within woodland,
— nurseries of trees and bushes for planting in gardens, parks, at the roadside and on embankments (e.g. hedgerow plants, rose trees and other ornamental bushes, ornamental conifers), including in all cases their stocks and young seedlings;

4.1.2.3.2 Definition of Short Rotation Coppice

"short rotation coppice" means areas planted with tree species as set out below of CN code 0602 90 41 to be defined by Member States that consist of woody, perennial crops, the rootstock or stools of which remain in the ground after harvesting, with new shoots emerging in the following season and with a maximum harvest cycle of 10 years.

The initial planting density should be approximately 15,000 cuttings per hectare

Species

Alder - Alnus spp.

Poplar – Populus spp.

Ash - Fraxinus excelsior

Silver Birch - betula pendula

Hazel - Corylus avellana

Sweet Chestnut – Castanea sativa

Lime - Tilia cordota

Sycamore - Acer pseudoplatanus

Oak - Pendunculate

Sessile Willow – Silix spp.

4.1.2.3.3 Other comments relating to the definition of permanent crops

"Permanent Crops" as per Article 4(3)(b) Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Where trees exist in combination with Permanent Crops at a lower stocking density (< 400 trees per hectare) than agro-forestry, and the land does not meet the national definition of forestry, the land will be classified as Permanent Crops.

4.1.2.4 Permanent grassland

4.1.2.4.1 Definition of grasses and other herbaceous forage

"Grasses or other herbaceous forage" means all herbaceous plants traditionally found in natural pastures, for example rushes, or normally included in mixtures of seeds for pastures or meadows;

4.1.2.4.2 Decision to use 'ploughing' criterion in relation to permanent grassland classification

: **No**

4.1.2.4.3 Decision to use 'tilling' criterion in relation to permanent grassland classification

: **No**

4.1.2.4.4 Decision to use 'reseeding with different types of grasses' criterion in relation to permanent grassland classification and its description in case of affirmative reply

: **No**

4.1.2.4.5 Decision regarding the inclusion of other species such as trees and/or shrubs which produce animal feed, provided that grasses and other herbaceous forage remain predominant

: **No**

4.1.2.4.6 Decision regarding the inclusion of other species, such as shrubs and/or trees, which could be grazed and/or which produce animal feed, where grasses and other herbaceous forage are traditionally not predominant or are absent in grazing areas

Decision regarding the inclusion of other species, such as shrubs and/or trees, which could be grazed and/or which produce animal feed, where grasses and other herbaceous forage are traditionally not predominant or are absent in grazing areas : **Yes**

a) In case of affirmative, applicable to all MS/region? : **Yes**

b) in case of negative reply to question a), applicable only to land which forms part of established local practices? : **No**

c) in case of negative reply to question a), not limited to or applicable to other areas than established local practices? : **No**

4.1.2.4.7 Other comments relating to the definition of permanent grassland

Where trees exist in combination with Permanent Grassland at a lower stocking density (< 400 trees per hectare) than agro-forestry, and the land does not meet the national definition of forestry, the land will be classified as Permanent Grassland.

4.1.2.5 Other comments relating to the definition of agricultural area in general

With regard to 4.1.2.4.6, the other species relates to heather

4.1.3 Eligible hectare

4.1.3.1 Criteria how to establish the predominance of agricultural activity in case the land is also used for non-agricultural activities

The agricultural activity must be the predominant activity on the area. Where non-agricultural activities also occur, that area shall be considered to be used predominately for agricultural activities provided that the agricultural activities are carried out for more than 50% of the calendar year and can be exercised without being significantly hampered by the intensity, nature, duration and timing of the non-agricultural activities.

4.1.3.2 Criteria to ensure that the land is at the disposal of the farmer

Applicant must have a right to declare the land. The land can be owned, leased or rented or alternative contractual agreements may be entered into to allow the land to be declared. As per the current CAP, disposal will be checked on cases where a risk is identified due to the type of agricultural lands. This will involve all claims on commonage lands requiring supporting documentation to evidence that the applicant has the lands at their disposal. The second category will be dual claims.

4.1.3.3 Period during which an area has to comply with the definition of ‘eligible hectare’

An area must comply with the definition of the eligible hectare throughout the calendar year.

4.1.3.4 Decision to include areas used for agricultural activity only every second year

: **Yes**

In terms of agricultural activity where duly justified, for environmental, biodiversity -or climate-related reasons, the eligible hectare shall also include certain agricultural areas used for agricultural activities only every second year.

In circumstances where an applicant wishes for an activity every second year to be considered, they may have to provide evidence, setting out the basis for this approach. It may be considered in situations such as SAC or SPA lands where a reduced level of agricultural activity would assist in protecting/improving the habitat present on the holding. For example, hen-harrier nesting sites.

4.1.3.5 Decision regarding the inclusion of other landscape features (those not protected under GAEC), provided that they are not predominant and do not significantly hamper the performance of an agricultural activity due to the area they occupy

: **Yes**

Other landscape features, such as scrub, copse and woodland may occupy up to 50% of the reference parcel provided that they do not impact the agricultural activity. These features can be scattered throughout the reference parcel or can be confined to a particular area within the parcel. Other landscape features such as stonewalls can be considered part of the eligible hectare.

4.1.3.6 Decision as regards permanent grassland with scattered ineligible features, to apply fixed reduction coefficients to determine the area considered eligible

: **Yes**

As per the current LPIS system in Ireland, any artificial features (roadways etc.) plus any waterbodies (rivers, streams etc.) must be deducted in full. However, any sub-features that are beneficial features for

the environment will be deemed part of the eligible hectare once they are less than 50% of the reference parcel area minus deductions for any artificial features and waterbodies.

A list of beneficial sub-features, as per the Irish LPIS, is set out below:

Scrub
Trees
Woodland
Habitat
Rock

At sub-feature level the area to be deducted will be based on the actual area mapped within the sub-feature in question. These areas would then form the basis of a parcel level assessment and reductions would only be applied once the area is above 50%. No reduction coefficients will apply in the Irish LPIS from 2023.

With regard to the implementation within the LPIS, a LPIS reference parcel would be in one of three categories.

Reference Parcel Proposed Reductions

Category	% Qualifying	Reduction to be applied
1	0 up to 50	0
2	50 up to 70	Area Identified*
3	70 up to 100	100

Parcels would be assessed based on the various qualifying sub-features (e.g. scrub, habitat, etc.) that exist within the reference parcel.

The above categories would apply to Permanent Grassland only. Arable lands and Permanent Crops where the percentage exceeds 50% are deemed ineligible.

*An exemption to this will be applied in the Burren, which is a unique karst limestone

4.1.3.7 Decision to maintain the eligibility of previously eligible areas when they no longer meet the definition of ‘eligible hectare’ pursuant to paragraphs a) and b) of Article 4(4) of the SPR regulation as a result of using national schemes the conditions of which comply with the interventions covered by integrated system referred to in Art 63(2) of Regulation (EU) HzR allowing for the production of non-annex 1 products by way of paludiculture and which contribute to envi-clima related objectives of the SPR regulation

: **Yes**

Any scheme designed, managed and monitored by a national body with the intention of contributing to the national envi-clima related objectives shall result in lands maintaining eligible hectare status even if they no longer comply with the definition under a) and b) of Article 4(4) of the SPR regulation.

Furthermore, eligibility will be also maintained as a result of the undertaking of activities, duly justified by a competent individual, for environmental, biodiversity or climate related reasons,

In circumstances where an applicant wishes to be considered, they will have to provide evidence, setting out the basis for this approach. It may be considered in situations such as SAC or SPA lands where a

reduced level of agricultural activity would assist in protecting/improving the habitat present on the holding. For example, hen-harrier nesting sites.

4.1.4 Active farmer

4.1.4.1 Criteria to identify those who have minimum level of agricultural activity

Support shall only be granted to those farmers engaged in a minimum level of agricultural activity. This agricultural activity will be assessed on a holding basis and will require applicants to demonstrate the means by which the agricultural activity is carried out on their holding. For an applicant to be deemed active they must demonstrate how they bear the economic and agricultural risk with regard to the agricultural activity being undertaken.For the assessment of maintenance activity, some evidence elements such as invoices of ownership of machinery or proof of hiring services could be required.

The Active Farmer provisions will apply to all farmers in receipt of Direct Payments and all schemes under Articles 70 and 71 of the CSP Regulation.

For grassland farmers in the first instance, a minimum stocking rate of 0.10 LU/Ha, in the previous year, will be required. A farmer may also select to meet the minimum stocking rate in the current year.

However, where farmers can't meet this minimum due to grazing restrictions a lower stocking rate will be acceptable. For those grassland farmers who maintain the land by non-grazing means they will have to indicate how the land is maintained and evidence may be requested to support this declaration.

For farmers involved in tillage and / or permanent crops, a sample of herds will be checked administratively. This will involve applicants being requested to provide evidence of activity on their part. For tillage farmers this would likely be receipts for seed, fertiliser, pesticides etc. in the applicant's name. A valid share farming agreement is a legitimate means of demonstrating an activity on the part of the applicant.

While the primary method of confirming activity will be related to production agriculture, for example livestock and crops, it is equally acceptable to be assessed on the basis of maintenance activities that the farmer is carrying out on their lands. An example of an acceptable maintenance activity on would be topping or mulching of grasslands.

In all cases the minimum agricultural activity assessment will require farmers to provide evidence of a meaningful level of activity on lands, whether production or maintenance based. This means that any receipts or evidence of maintenance will have to be proportionate to the scale of the farming enterprise.

4.1.4.2 Decision to use a negative list of non-agricultural activities as a complementary tool

: **No**

4.1.4.3 Decision to set an amount of direct payments not higher than EUR 5 000 under which farmers shall in any event be considered as 'active farmers'

: **No**

4.1.5 Young farmer

4.1.5.1 Maximum age limit

Maximum age limit: **40**

4.1.5.2 Conditions for being 'head of the holding'

Is setting up a holding as head of the holding, solely or jointly, for the first time or has set up such a holding during the preceding five years. Head of the holding is defined as being registered on a

herd in sole name for the first time or being registered jointly by addition to an existing herd for the first time, or where the herd on which the farmer is registered to for the first time joins a legal person, or group of natural or legal persons.

Where a young farmer is registered jointly by addition to an existing herd for the first time, or where the herd on which the young farmer is registered to for the first time joins a legal person, or group of natural or legal persons, the following will be required to demonstrate the role of the young farmer as head of the holding solely or jointly:

- Young Farmer registered on herd;
- Young Farmer name on the bank account used for receipt of payments under the scheme;
- All persons who participate in the legal person or group of natural or legal persons must completed a Declaration confirming that the young farmer has effective control, either solely or jointly with the other members of the legal person or group of natural or legal persons. This Declaration must be signed by all members of the legal person or group of natural or legal persons, must clearly nominate the young farmer, and be signed and stamped by a Solicitor.
- For a young farmer in a Company, the young farmer must be a Director of the Company and also a minimum 20% shareholder in the Company.

4.1.5.3 Appropriate training and/or skills required

All Young Farmers must meet a standard of a recognised course of education in agriculture giving rise to an award at Level 6 or equivalent on the National Framework of Qualifications.

4.1.5.4 Other comments relating to Young farmer definition

No comments.

4.1.6 New farmer

4.1.6.1 Conditions for being 'head of the holding' for the first time

Is setting up a holding for the first time or during the preceding three years.

Head of the holding is defined as being registered on a herd for the first time, or where the herd on which the farmer is registered to for the first time joins a legal person or group of natural or legal persons, the natural person or persons in control of the legal person are also in control as head of the holding for the first time'.

The definition of New Farmer was created to be consistent with the definition of 'Farmers commencing their agricultural activity' at Article 30(11)(b) of Regulation 1307/2013. This is to provide consistency and certainty for prospective applicants in their understanding of the categories supported under the National Reserve.

Where a New Farmer joins a legal person or group of natural or legal persons, all persons in control of the legal person or group of natural persons must meet the definition of New Farmer.

4.1.6.2 Appropriate training and skills required

All new farmers must meet a standard of a recognised course of education in agriculture giving rise to an award at Level 6 or equivalent on the National Framework of Qualifications.

4.1.7 Minimum requirements for receiving direct payments

4.1.7.1 Threshold

Threshold in ha:
Threshold in EUR: **100**

4.1.7.2 Explanation

Farm payments are critical to ensuring the viability of family farms in Ireland. Therefore, the Irish Authorities are proposing that the €100 minimum threshold would apply to ensure the maximum number of farmers receive the payments that they are eligible to draw down, while also balancing this with the administrative costs involved in managing the various schemes. Where applicants are entitled to a payment of less than €100, the administrative cost of processing such payments outweighs any benefit delivered by such payments. The minimum requirement to receive direct payments of €100 simplifies administration for both applicants and the Irish Authorities.

Based on experience of previous CAP periods, the number of farmers expected to be impacted by this minimum requirement is very low, at circa 70 farmers. It should be noted that the average farm size in Ireland is 33.4 hectares. Very few farmers have a farm size of less than 2 hectares. The proposed payment rates under the direct payments interventions in additional to structure of farming in Ireland demonstrates that very few farmers will be impacted by the minimum payment of €100. In addition, it is not proposed to apply the €100 minimum threshold to ANC Offshore Island Land, as island holdings are generally small and fragmented and farming on the offshore islands off Ireland is in continuous decline.

4.1.8 Other definitions used in the CAP Plan

Title	Description
Agricultural Parcel	Agricultural Parcel: agricultural parcel means a continuous area of land, declared by one farmer, which does not cover more than one single crop. Ireland may elect to add further definitions to be used at MS level.
Woman Farmer	Any individual farmer not meeting the definition of a young farmer that identifies as a woman and: 1. ·Can demonstrate that they are a woman via one of the forms of personal identification listed in the terms and conditions for the On-farm Capital Investment Programme (to include at least Passport, Gender Recognition Certificate, and Birth Certificate). 2. Meets the definition of an Active Farmer and, 3. Is registered as a woman in the Department's Corporate Client System (CCS).

4.2 Element related to Direct Payments

4.2.1 Description of the establishment of the payment entitlements, if applicable, and functioning of the reserve

4.2.1.1 Entitlements

Do you keep using entitlements at least for the first year of application of the [CAP Plan regulation]? : **Yes**

If yes, do you plan to stop using entitlements during the period? : **No**

4.2.1.2 Territorialisation

Do you apply the territorialisation of the BIS?(art 22(2)) : **No**

Do you differentiate the system of entitlements according to the group of territories? : **No**

Definition of the group of territories	Do you use entitlements in that group of territories?	Do you plan to stop using entitlements during the new programming period post-2020 (Art. 19(2))?	If yes, what is the first year without entitlements (Art. 23(2))?	Explanation

4.2.1.3 System of internal convergence

Do you differentiate the method of internal convergence according to the group of territories? : **No**

Do you implement 'flat rate' from the first year : **No**

Convergence Method Code

Target Year for the maximum level for the value of entitlements (Art. 24(3)) in EUR/entitlement **2026**

Maximum level for the value of entitlements (Art. 24(3)) **285.0**

Target Year for the minimum convergence percentage (Art. 24 (5)) **2026**

Minimum unit value as % of the average planned unit amount for BIS for the target year (Art. 24 (5)) **85.0**

Convergence steps (Art. 24 (4)) **2026, 2025, 2024, 2023**

Financing of convergence (Art. 24 (6))

It is proposed that the convergence funding mechanism will be similar to the current system where payment entitlements with values above the average are reduced to fund the convergence.

In practical terms it would be 2022 payment entitlement unit value + greening = provisional 2023 payment entitlement unit value.

Provisional 2023 payment entitlement unit value * representative ceiling proportional amount = 2023 payment entitlement unit value.

With the target of 85% minimum by 2026, the intention is to increase all payments below the average by one third of the difference between where they are now and 90 % of the average. A static category will exist between and 90 and 100%. We will finance the increases needed by denoting a portion of entitlement value above their average. To entitlements which are above the average value, we would apply a reduction to the portion of entitlements that is above the average. We will apply convergence in equal steps.

Do you apply the reduction to only a part of the payment entitlements exceeding the average planned unit amount (Art. 20 (6 2nd §))? : **Yes**

Explanation

It is estimated that we would require approximately 12 million annually to be deducted off Payment Entitlements exceeding the national average, with rates of reduction (LRPC) of circa 12% in 2023, 14% in 2024, 16% in 2025 and 20% in 2026. This reduction is applied to the portion of the Payment Entitlement above the average value, similar to the current calculation method. This would result in the same amount being deducted every year to fund increases in value of Payment Entitlements below the average.

The Max Unit Value in 2026 will be €285 and any funds will finance convergence in advance of lowering the Unit value of entitlements above the average. The justification for the Max Unit Value is that farmers with historic high production will experience a significant reduction in payments. In addition, as highlighted by the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, food security is a significant concern and Ireland wants to avoid undue disruption to the ability of those food producers to continue contributing to a sufficient food supply.

All payment entitlements will have a value of at least 85 % of the planned average unit amount in CY 2026

If the 2023 PE value is below 90% then the PE value will be increased by 1/3 the difference between the 2023 PE value and this PE value, in four equal steps, unless such increases fail to reach 85% of the BISS national average PE value by 2026.

If convergence increases, as set out above, do not result in the PE value reaching 85% of the BISS national average PE value then the PE value will be increased, in four equal steps, by the difference between the 2023 PE value and this value.

If the 2023 PE value is between 90% and 100% of the BISS national average PE value then the PE value will remain static across 2023-2026.

If the 2023 PE value is above the BISS national average PE value then the value in excess of the BISS national average PE value is subject to annual reductions.

Do you apply maximum decrease of unit value of entitlement? (Art. 24(7)) : **No**

If flat rate reached by the target year, what is the flat rate value? (Art 24(4)) in EUR/entitlement

Explanation

Possible additional explanation on convergence rules

N/A

4.2.1.4 Functioning of the reserve

Do you apply a reserve in each group of territories (Art. 26 (2))? : **No**

Do you differentiate the method for the establishment of the reserve according to the group of territories? : **No**

Description of the system for the establishment of the reserve

The National Reserve will be funded by an annual allocation from the BISS ceiling of €35million. With a projected annual spend of approximately €7m from the National Reserve, this allocation represents a substantial increase on current spending, and this is due to removal of some of the current eligibility criteria and changes to clawback on sales of payment entitlements.

This financial allocation could be in excess of what would be required to allocate or increase the value of payment entitlements to our priority categories of young farmers and new farmers. Ireland will reallocate any unspent funds through other direct payment interventions using the flexibility permitted under Article 101 Indicative Financial Allocation, where financial allocations for interventions in the forms of direct payments are used for other interventions in the form of direct payments.

This will ensure maximum stability of income support for all payment entitlement holders, whist also ensuring adequate funds are available to our priority categories in the National Reserve.

Categories of eligible farmers and other rules on allocations from the reserve. (Art. 26)

Title of the category	Description	Rules	Priority
Young Farmers	Set up a holding for the first time or during the three years preceding the first submission of a National Reserve application. For other requirements refer to the definition of young farmer.	/ Allocation of new entitlements/ Increase of value of existing entitlements	1
Court Ruling/Administrative	Farmers who are entitled to an allocation by virtue of a definitive court ruling or definitive administrative act.	/ Allocation of new entitlements	2
New Farmers	Set up a holding for the first time or during the three years preceding the first submission of a National Reserve application. Meet same education criteria as young farmer.	/ Allocation of new entitlements/ Increase of value of existing entitlements	1

Rules on financial replenishment of the reserve

In cases where the reserve is insufficient to cover the compulsory (i.e. priority) allocation of payment entitlements, the reserve will be replenished by a linear reduction of the value of all payment entitlements. Additionally, the reserve shall be replenished by amounts resulting from:

a) Payment entitlements not giving right to payments during two consecutive years;
b) Unduly allocated payment entitlements;
c) Payment entitlements voluntarily returned by farmers;
d) Clawback on a percentage of entitlements in cases of sales without land.

Rules on Payment Entitlements expiration and reversion to reserve

Usage Conditions

Starting in 2023, all entitlements allocated under BISS, and the National Reserve will be subject to a two-year activation rule. If a farmer has non-activated entitlements for a period of two consecutive years, the lowest value entitlements held by that farmer, whether owned or leased, shall expire, and revert to the National Reserve, except where their activation has been prevented by force majeure or exceptional circumstances. As such, reversion of expired payment entitlements to the National Reserve shall occur no sooner than CY 2024.

Any payment entitlements unduly allocated to a farmer may be recovered and allocated to the National Reserve. Where such payment entitlements have been transferred to another farmer the transferee must relinquish the unduly allocated entitlements to the National Reserve.

Clawback Mechanisms

The sale of entitlements without land will be subject to a “clawback” of 20% in 2025,2026 and 2027 meaning 20% of the number of entitlements sold without land, with the product of the clawback relinquished to the National Reserve. For example, seller sells 50 entitlements @ €100 each. Buyer receives 40 entitlements @ €100 each. 10 entitlements will be relinquished to the National Reserve. To be considered as a sale of entitlements with land, one hectare of land must be sold per entitlement and the clawback will only apply to the portion of entitlements not supported by land.

The primary objective of this rule is to support active farmers. By removing the clawback on sales of entitlements should encourage permanent transfer of entitlements to active farmers.

By taking steps to further encourage the permanent transfer of entitlements this demonstrates positive action in the support of active farmers as it is through such long-term arrangements that greater security of tenure is offered, which in turn supports greater feasibility and viability.

Other elements related to reserve

1. Ireland proposes to limit allocations from the reserve to one per successful applicant from 2023-2027, with a maximum allocation of 50ha.

The justification for this rule is based on the average holding size in Ireland is approximately 36 hectares*. This is consistent with the level of allocations under the National Reserve in Ireland since 2015. In order to protect the funding available for successful applicants under the National Reserve from 2023, and to avoid applicants with large areas of land without entitlements from drawing down very large allocations from the reserve and depleting the resources available to support young farmers and new farmers entering the sector, it is proposed to introduce a maximum area of 50 hectares on which an allocation can be made.

This maximum allocation would apply equally to applicants under the young farmer and new farmer categories. The maximum area of 50 hectares is also consistent with the maximum area of 50 hectares proposed for support under the Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers. At present, there is a continued erosion of small and medium sized farms, and this continuation of policy would aid their survival, ensure sustained economic activity and employment in rural areas.

Furthermore, Ireland believes that without the introduction of a maximum allocation from the reserve per successful applicant there will be a disproportionate and discriminatory impact on the level of rented and leased lands available to farmers from the more vulnerable sectors of agricultural production such as cereal farmers and beef farmers who are heavily reliant on leased and rented lands. The loss of the rented-in lands could result in curtailed production to the detriment of these farmers.

Additionally, the conacre system of 11-month land leasing common in Ireland would be particularly vulnerable to land market distortion without the safeguard of the proposed maximum allocation from the reserve. Moreover, allocating more than 50 entitlements in a country where the average farm size is ~36 hectares* is contradictory to the aims of redistribution which has been a central part of the regulations and Commission advice to Ireland.

*Figure based off a total farmer modelling population that includes non-entitlement holders

2. Ireland proposes to only allocate from the BISS national reserve to those who have not received an allocation from the BPS national reserve. This would mean excluding a successful applicant under the BPS reserve from receiving an additional allocation under the BISS reserve.

Justification:

The function of the reserve is to support new entrants and young farmers setting up for the first time and does not warrant repeat allocations. A young farmer who received an allocation from the BPS reserve has already received support for the setting up of the holding for the first time and cannot be regarded as setting up for the first time under the BISS reserve. While the new farmer may have had agricultural activity more than 5 years prior to the most recent agricultural venture, if this farmer has already received an allocation from the BPS reserve, such support was received in respect of the establishment of the original holding and should not be repeated under the BISS reserve.

3. Where the applicant is registered on the herd number in sole name for the first time, or registered jointly by addition to a herd number for the first time, or where this herd joins a single herd number Registered Farm Partnership or a Company, the young farmer or new farmer(s) make the entity eligible. As the application is submitted under the herd number, and the land is declared under the herd number, the reserve allocation will apply to the entity subject to a max of 50, irrespective of the number of eligible young farmers or new farmers within the entity.

Justification:

To maintain consistency with existing rules governing the reserve.

4. For an application from a group of natural or legal persons, such as a Registered Farm Partnership comprising two or more herd numbers A and B where there is an eligible young farmer or new farmer(s) under herd number A and a separate eligible young farmer or new farmer(s) under herd number B, both young farmers or new farmers are eligible for an allocation from the reserve on the eligible lands under their respective herd numbers.

Justification:
Both young farmers or new farmers are setting up for the first time within the Registered Farm Partnership.

5. Where a second or subsequent young farmer joins an entity that has already benefitted under the reserve, either as a sole herd or as part of a group of natural or legal persons, this entity cannot be regarded as 'setting up for the first time' and is therefore ineligible for a reserve allocation.
Justification:
This entity cannot be regarded as setting up for the first time and the young farmer may have been added for the sole purpose of submitting an application for support under the reserve.

6. Where a second or subsequent young farmer who holds his/her own herd number and own lands and has not previously received a reserve allocation joins a group of natural or legal persons, such as a multi-herd number Registered Farm Partnership, this young farmer is eligible for an allocation from the reserve on eligible lands and/or low value entitlements under his/her herd number.
Justification:
If this eligible young farmer operated independently outside the Registered Farm Partnership, s/he would be eligible for a reserve allocation and should not be disadvantaged by joining the multi-herd number Registered Farm Partnership.

4.2.1.5 Rules related to transfers of payment entitlements (if any)

Implementation of measures to support active farmer with lifting of the 20% clawback on the sale of entitlements without land for years 2023 and 2024 only, to provide an opportunity for payment entitlement holders to exit farming, due to retirement or personal circumstance.

4.2.2 Reduction of direct payments

4.2.2.1 Description of the reduction and/or capping of direct payments

Do you apply the reduction of payments? : **Yes**

Reduction	**Tranches**	
Cut rate (in %)		
85.0	60000.0	100000.0

85.0 - 60000.0 - 100000.0

Ireland will apply degressive capping under the strictest application of the provisions in the Regulation the BISS payment is effectively capped at €66,000. An example of the mechanics of degressive capping is illustrated in the below table.

Table: Mechanism of degressive capping

Ireland Capping Examples	BISS Payment (Pre Capping)	Capped 85% (Between 60-100k)	Capped 100% (Above 100k)	Total Capped Amount	New Capped BISS Payment
Farmer A	€66,000	€6,000 * 85% = €5,100	€0	€5,100	€60,900
Farmer B	€82,000	€22,000 * 85% = €18,700	€0	€18,700	€63,300
Farmer C	€102,000	€40,000 * 85% = €34,000	€2,000 * 100%	€36,000	€66,000

As evidenced with the Farmer C example, the maximum amount that degressive capping of 85% can apply to is €40k (difference between €100k and €60k) which results in €34k product of capping on that amount. As €100k minus €34k equals €66k then that effectively means that nobody can receive a payment greater than €66k.

Do you apply capping (i.e. 100% reduction)? : **Yes**

Explanations

Threshold	**Capping**

	Reduction rate (in %)	Explanations optional Possibility to upload document (doc, xls, etc)]
100 000 EUR (pre-filled, MS must not modify)	100% (pre-filled, MS must not modify)	

4.2.2.2 Subtraction of labour costs

Do you apply the subtraction of labour costs? : **No**

4.2.2.3 Estimated product of the reduction of direct payments and capping for each year

Claim year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Explanations
Financial year	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	
Total annual estimated product (EUR)	1400000	1400000	1400000	1400000	1400000	Payment is Capped at the maximum level on BISS payments.
- use for redistributive payment (EUR)	1400000	1400000	1400000	1400000	1400000	As per regulations 15.3 “The estimated product of the reduction of payments shall primarily be used to contribute to the financing of the complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability
- use for other Direct Payments interventions (EUR)	0	0	0	0	0	
- transfer to EAFRD (EUR)	0	0	0	0	0	

4.2.3 Application at the level of members of legal persons or groups/ at the level of group of affiliated legal entities (Article 110)

- Application of thresholds/limits set-up in the [SPR] or [HZR] at the level of members of legal persons or groups:

Article 17(4) of [SPR] Reduction of payments

Apply threshold : **Yes**

Please justify your decision

Threshold for multi herd number entities

For a group of natural or legal persons, such as a multi -herd number Registered Farm Partnership comprising two or more herd numbers (e.g., A and B) capping and degressivity of payments will be applied at the level of the members of the groups, as the individual members assume rights comparable to those of individual farmers who have the status of a head of holding.

Justification:

If either herd number A or herd number B operated independently outside the Registered Farm Partnership, they would be assessed and have capping and degressivity of payment applied to each entity and should not be disadvantaged by joining the multi-herd number Registered Farm Partnership.

Threshold for single herd number entities

For a single herd number registered farm partnership such as a company, the reduction referred to in Recital Article 17 of 2021/2115 will be applied at the level of the group.

Justification:

With a single herd number identifier these groups are considered one unit and are treated as a single entity.

Article 29(6) first subparagraph of [SPR] CRIS

Apply threshold : **Yes**

Intervention:

51CRISS - Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability

Please justify your decision

Threshold for multi herd number entities

For a group of natural or legal persons, such as a multi -herd number Registered Farm Partnership comprising two or more herd numbers (e.g., A and B) the maximum number of hectares for CRISS payments will be applied at the level of the members of those groups, as the individual members assume rights comparable to those of individual farmers who have the status of a head of holding.

Justification:
If either herd number A or herd number B operated independently outside the Registered Farm Partnership, they would be assessed and have a CRISS payment applied to each herd number and should not be disadvantaged by joining the multi-herd number Registered Farm Partnership.

Article 30(4) of [SPR] CISYF
Apply threshold : **Yes**
Intervention:
51CISYF - Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers
Please justify your decision

In a case where two or more young farmers are registered on separate herd numbers within a multi-herd number Registered Farm Partnership, and the land is declared under the separate herd numbers on which the individual young farmers are registered, the maximum number of hectares may be applied in respect of the number of the members of such entities as per Article 30(4).

Justification:
Consideration of the proposal to apply the maximum number of hectares in respect of the number of the eligible members of these entities acknowledges the provisions set down in Article 30(4).

Article 17(1) of [SPR] Financial discipline
Apply threshold : **No**

- Where thresholds/limits set-up by the MS, application of these thresholds/limits at the level of members of legal persons/groups:
Article 28 of [SPR] Payment for small farmers
Apply threshold : **Yes**
Intervention:
51BISS - BISS
Please justify your decision

n/a

Article 31 of [SPR] Eco-Schemes
Apply threshold : **Yes**
Intervention:
51ECO - Eco-Scheme
Please justify your decision

<u>Threshold for multi herd number entities</u>
For a group of natural or legal persons, such as a multi -herd number Registered Farm Partnership comprising two or more herd numbers (e.g., A and B) Financial Discipline mechanism as per Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 will be applied at the level of the members of the groups, as the individual members assume rights comparable to those of individual farmers who have the status of a head of holding.
Justification:
If either herd number A or herd number B operated independently outside the Registered Farm Partnership, they would be assessed and have the financial discipline applied to each entity.

Threshold for single herd number entities

For a single herd number registered farm partnership such as a company, the Financial Discipline mechanism as per Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 will be applied at the level of the group.

Justification:

With a single herd number identifier these groups are considered one unit and are treated as a single entity.

Article 32-34 of [SPR] CIS
Apply threshold : **No**

Article 70 of [SPR] Environmental, climate and other management commitments
Apply threshold : **Yes**
Intervention:
53SIM - Straw Incorporation Measure
53SIP - Sheep Improvement Scheme
53AECMCP70 - Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option
53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme
53SCEP - Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme
53AECMGEN - AECM General
53DBWS - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme
53GR - AECM Genetic Resources
Please justify your decision

Threshold for multi herd number entities

For a group of natural or legal persons, such as a multi -herd number Registered Farm Partnership comprising two or more herd numbers (e.g., A and B) capping and degressivity of payments will be applied at the level of the members of the groups, as the individual members assume rights comparable to those of individual farmers who have the status of a head of holding.

Justification:

If either herd number A or herd number B operated independently outside the Registered Farm Partnership, they would be assessed and payment of the associated intervention applied to each entity and should not be disadvantaged by joining the multi-herd number Registered Farm Partnership.

Threshold for single herd number entities

For a single herd number registered farm partnership such as a company, the maximum capping of payments will be applied at the level of the group.

Justification:

With a single herd number identifier these groups are considered one unit and are treated as a single entity.

Article 71 of [SPR] Natural and other area-specific constraints
Apply threshold : **Yes**
Intervention:
53ANC - ANC
Please justify your decision

Threshold for multi herd number entities

For a group of natural or legal persons, such as a multi -herd number Registered Farm Partnership comprising two or more herd numbers (e.g., A and B) Natural or other area-specific constraints payments

will be applied at the level of the members of the groups, as the individual members assume rights comparable to those of individual farmers who have the status of a head of holding.

In addition, the overall livestock units held by all members of a multi herd partnership will be taken into account when determining the eligibility for payment for individual members of the partnership.

Justification:

If either herd number A or herd number B operated independently outside the Registered Farm Partnership, they would be assessed and have the Natural or other area-specific constraints payments applied to each entity.

Threshold for single herd number entities

For a single herd number registered farm partnership such as a company, Natural or other area-specific constraints payments will be applied at the level of the group.

Justification:

With a single herd number identifier these groups are considered one unit and are treated as a single entity.

Article 72 of [SPR] Area-specific disadvantages resulting from certain mandatory requirements
Apply threshold : **No**

Article 73 of [SPR] Investments
Apply threshold : **Yes**
Intervention:
53AECMNPI - Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure
53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments
Please justify your decision

For a group of natural or legal persons, such as a multi -herd number Registered Farm Partnership comprising two or more herd numbers (e.g., A and B) the maximum ceiling for the On-Farm Capital Investments intervention will be applied at the level of the members of those groups, as the individual members assume rights comparable to those of individual farmers who have the status of a head of holding.

Justification:

If either herd number A or herd number B operated independently outside the Registered Farm Partnership, they would be assessed and have an On-Farm Capital Investments intervention ceiling applied to each herd number and should not be disadvantaged by joining the multi-herd number Registered Farm Partnership.

Threshold for single herd number entities

For a single herd entity including a company, the maximum ceiling for the On-Farm Capital Investments intervention should will be applied at individual level.

Justification:

With a single herd number identifier these groups are considered one unit and are treated as a single entity.

CSP On-Farm Capital Investments	**Investment Ceiling**	
	Individual, Company, JV	Registered Farm Partnership
non - LESS	90,000	160,000

PPIS (Max non LESS ceiling)	200,000	200,000
LESS	40,000	60,000

Article 75 of [SPR] Installation of young farmers and rural business start-up
Apply threshold : **No**
- Application of thresholds/limits set-up in the [SPR] at the level of group of affiliated legal entities:

Article 29(6) second subparagraph of [SPR] CRIS
Apply threshold : **Yes**
Intervention:
51CRISS - Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability
Please justify your decision

Threshold for single herd number entities
For a single herd number registered farm partnership such as a company, the maximum number of hectares will be applied at the level of the group.

Justification:
With a single herd number identifier these groups are considered one unit and are treated as a single entity.

4.2.4 Contribution to risk management tools
Do you apply the option to condition up to 3% of direct payments to the fact that this amount is used for contribution to a risk management tool? : **No**
What is the percentage?
Main elements

4.3 Technical Assistance

4.3.1 Objectives

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, as the Managing Authority, will use a proportion of the EAFRD for Technical Assistance [€2,438,200]. This funding will be used to fund a range of activities associated with the development, improved implementation, monitoring, evaluation, information and communication and networking of the CAP Strategic Plan.

The use of Technical Assistance funding will provide valuable support to underpin the effective implementation of the CAP Strategic Plan including activities relating to both the EAFRD and the EAGF.

4.3.2 Scope and indicative planning of activities

During the lifetime of the CAP Strategic Plan, it is expected that technical assistance from the EAFRD will fund the following activities:

- The National CAP Network.
- An Innovation Hub providing innovation support services.
- Ex-post evaluation of the RDP 2014-2022.
- Mid-term evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.
- Ex-ante evaluation of the successor to the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

- Any external expertise or projects which may be required in relation to the evaluation, monitoring, and data collection for the CSP 2023-2027.
- Managing Authority information, publicity, translation.
- Expenses incurred in the operation of the National Monitoring Committee.

The proposed funding of the National CAP Network will facilitate the delivery of their agreed Action Plan which will assist in addressing strategic policy issues identified during the SWOT analysis undertaken as part of the development of the CAP Strategic Plan. Taking account of the lessons learned from the National Rural Network and the opportunity to better disseminate research and learning from the EIP-AGRI operation groups, LIFE and HORIZON projects it is proposed to establish an innovation hub within the Network. In addition, further details on the role of the Innovation Hub and the Network are outlined in Section 4.4.

4.3.3 Beneficiaries

This range of actions will incorporate a number of beneficiaries as follows:

- Some elements of the evaluative work supporting the CAP Strategic Plan may be carried out by externally appointed evaluators.
- Some of the Managing Authorities costs incurred in operating the Monitoring Committee, sub-committees and implementing publicity actions.
- The National CAP Network will be a beneficiary to be appointed by a competitive process.
- The innovation hub/ support services will be a beneficiary to be appointed by a competitive process.

In relation to the National CAP Network, it is envisaged that eligible costs here will include administrative costs, the costs associated with carrying out particular evaluation projects, publicity costs, costs associated with organising and hosting Network events, and costs associated with attending relevant EU meetings and other costs, as appropriate. The Innovation Hub may also incur additional expenditure for example, arising from attendance at EU meetings, including EIP events.

In relation to evaluation projects to be awarded via competitive process, eligible costs will include the staffing costs involved in delivering projects as well as any associated research or field work costs. The Managing Authority will ensure appropriate control systems are in place. In addition, any procurement procedures will adhere to public procurement guidelines.

The MA will not cover the costs of the Certification Bodies as outlined in Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/2116. The finance tables in Section 6 provide details of the funding planned to be directed towards Technical Assistance activity.

4.3.4 Rate

Indicate the percentage of total EAFRD contribution to the CAP Strategic Plan to be used to finance the actions of Technical Assistance. A single percentage over the period (up to 4%/up to 6% for BE, DK, EE, CY, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, SI, SE) **0.1565391**

4.4 CAP Network

4.4.1 Summary overview and objectives of the National CAP Network, including activities to support EIP and knowledge flows within the AKIS

The National CAP Network (NCN) will play an instrumental role in facilitating the increased involvement of a range of stakeholders in improving the quality of the implementation of the interventions outlined in the CAP Strategic Plan. The SWOT analysis highlighted the importance of a well-functioning Agriculture, Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) and the NCN will contribute to

this by facilitating increased flows of knowledge exchange and innovation through its activities. The NCN will also play a key role in highlighting the availability of CAP, Horizon Europe and other funding to potential beneficiaries as well as the benefits of CAP funding to the wider public.

The National CAP Network will have an increased focus on fostering innovation in agriculture and rural development and support the inclusion of, and the interaction between, all stakeholders in the knowledge-exchange and knowledge-building process of initiatives.
The activities of the NCN will be outlined in their Action Plan which will be designed to take account of the challenges and opportunities identified during the development of the CSP. To allow maximum flexibility and adapt to new priorities, the Action Plan will be agreed annually.

While the Action Plan will be based on the regulatory requirements, activities would, at a minimum, be expected to include:

- Facilitation of thematic and analytical exchanges between stakeholders to support the sharing and dissemination of findings.
- Networking for advisors and innovation support services to strengthen the links between research, advisors, education, the farming community and interactive innovation projects.
- Encouraging the wider use of available innovation measures including digital technology and data-based decision support tools.
- Support the collection of individual grassroots innovative ideas and informing the scientific community about the research needs of the farming sector.
- Disseminating content for knowledge transfer facilitators and the Farm Advisory Service.
- Facilitate peer to peer learning including EIP- Agri networking events.
- Attendance at EU Networking events including EIP-Agri events.
- Collation and dissemination of examples of best practice projects covering all priorities of LEADER to help in identifying and analysing good transferable practices.
- Training and networking for LAGs.
- Sharing and disseminating of monitoring and evaluation findings.
- Drawing up a communication plan including publicity and information concerning the CSP.
- Supporting Monitoring and Evaluation as outlined in Section 7.2 of the plan.

4.4.2 Structure, governance and operation of the National CAP Network

Structure

The NCN will be supported by a Network Support Unit (NSU), which will be functionally independent of, but managed by the MA and be part of the coordinated approach to AKIS. The Irish Managing Authority's (MA) aim is to have the new NCN in situ to coincide with the commencement of the new programming period in 2023.

The NSU is the permanent structure required for the: effective running of the network; to facilitate the networking process; and the engagement of all stakeholders active in the AKIS. The NSU will have responsibility for the establishment of the necessary structure required for the effective running of the NCN. The NCN will also include an innovation hub which will provide innovation support services to help build innovation capacity in the agri-food sector, including farmer led innovation.

The NSU, including the requirement for an Innovation Hub, will be selected through a competitive tendering process in line with public procurement guidelines. The requirements for the NCN and the requirements for the innovation hub will be outlined in the tender documents.

In order to efficiently facilitate the networking processes, particular skills, qualifications and other requirements will be elaborated in the tender document. Any organisation tendering will be required to demonstrate that they will be sufficiently resourced to provide the required standard of service. While these requirements will be developed more fully as part of the tendering process, some of the key requirements for the NSU will include:

- adequate resources to deliver a fully functional and efficient network
- adequate resources to initiate and maintain an Innovation Hub
- a wide range of competencies in order to establish, maintain and promote the NCN, including social media expertise·
- contacts with Teagasc, Bord Bia, EPA, the European CAP Network, other CAP networks, EIP AGRI networks, research institutes, resource centres and political spheres to enable a horizontal approach to the network

Innovation Hub

The innovation hub will seek to have an increased focus on fostering innovation in agriculture and rural development and support the inclusion of, and the interaction between, all stakeholders in the knowledge-exchange and knowledge-building process of initiatives.

The innovation support hub will examine the development of the following options for its structure:

• Structuring and mobilising an innovation support service including creating roles within the national CAP network for innovation intermediaries with the role to help build synergies in agricultural and rural development innovation ecosystem as outlined in Article 126 (4) of Regulation (EU) No 2021/2115 including the application of knowledge transfer methodology to move knowledge from its source to targeted potential users of the knowledge

a. includes actions which aim to capture, organise, assess and transmit knowledge, skills and competences from those who generate them to those that can use them.

b. encouraging the wider use of available innovation measures.

c. supporting the garnering of individual grassroots innovative ideas and informing the scientific community about the research needs of farming practice

• Provide guidance for the content of the upskilling of advisors.

• Supports a critical mass of dedicated innovation experiments that road-test new ideas and practices which can then be used more widely by farmers & rural entrepreneurs:

a. address the adoption of challenge-based solutions for productive and sustainable agriculture, food and circular biobased systems.

b. focus would be on innovative solutions that would need to be customized, integrated, tested and validated not only by solution developers but also the farming community.

c. adopting new concepts linked to innovative agri-business and/or value chains and business models, and connecting them with actors that can provide access to finance, advanced training skills, knowledge and needs of the farming community.

Governance

The MA will have overall responsibility for the management of the NCN and the NSU. The MA will establish a Steering Group for the oversight of the activities of the NCN including the approval of the annual Action Plan with the NSU. The Steering Group will be chaired by the MA and will comprise of representatives of the MA, the Department of Rural and Community Development (responsibility for LEADER) and the NSU. The activities of the NCN will also be reported annually to the Monitoring Committee. The NSU will be a part of the AKIS Coordination Structure.

Operation

The MA will ensure a continuity of activities between the RDP 2014-2022 and the CSP 2023-2027. Effective networking is based on inclusiveness, openness, and active engagement. Membership of Ireland's NCN will be based on partnership principles. The NSU will be expected to actively recruit new members from all organisations and administrations and individuals involved in agriculture and rural development. There will not be a formal or payment process to gain membership. However, in accordance with the regulations, some groups, such as those involved in the Monitoring Committee will be invited to join. A wide membership of the NRN will be encouraged through promotion and publicising of the network through various channels.

Technical Assistance

The establishment and operation of the new National CAP Network will be financed from the technical assistance budget under the EAFRD. Appropriate budgetary resources will be available to the NCN, in line with the requirements in the regulations, split between running, administrative and capital costs; the exact amount will be formulated as part of the tender process

The indicative technical assistance funding allocated to CAP Network is €3.3 million.

Monitoring Tools and Indicators

The annual action plan will set out agreed targets. While no specific indicators are required for the CAP Networks the result indicators related to AKIS related interventions are outlined in Section 2.1 of the plan. The following result indicators are relevant in this regard:

R.1 (Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation: Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance

R.2 (Linking advice and knowledge systems: Number of advisors receiving support to be integrated within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)

R.28 (Environmental/climate performance through knowledge and innovation: Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental- climate performance is also included in the Cross-Cutting Objective under AECM Training).

4.5 Overview of the coordination, demarcation and complementarities between the EAFRD and other Union funds active in rural areas

There is a range of EU funds available to Member States including funds under shared management, for example, the ERDF, ESF+ and AMIF, and those under direct management, such as Horizon Europe and Erasmus+. It is essential to ensure coordination between the Funds under shared management in the CPR, as well as complementarity with other Union instruments in order to maximise the impact of available funding.

The basis for the complementarities between the EAGF, EAFRD and other union funds active in rural areas should be considered in the context of the contribution they make to the key objectives outlined in the CPR:

(a) a smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation.

(b) a greener, low-carbon Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk prevention and management.

(c) a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity.

(d) a more social Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights.

(e) a Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives.

Synergies between different EU instruments will be encouraged through the strategic planning process, which will identify common objectives and common areas for activities across different programmes, e.g. with the CAP, Horizon Europe, the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the Digital Europe Programme (DEP), the Erasmus+ Programme, the InvestEU Fund, LIFE, Erasmus+. Indeed, Ireland intends to pursue further LIFE applications to address specific needs identified. There is a strong coherence and engagement between other Government Departments and Agencies on applications and project roll out. This will continue and will ensure any issues of double funding do not arise through the formal CAP Monitoring Committee and Agriculture, Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) Steering Group and other partnership structures. It will also ensure that the CAP or other funding will be complementary to the achievement of the specific goals and the research and learnings from these projects are disseminated and scaled up as appropriate. The CAP Network and Innovation Hub will have a key role to pay in this regard.

Currently, the Department is supporting a number of LIFE projects and applications for new projects in collaboration with other Government Departments and agencies. For Example, Wild Atlantic Nature LIFE Integrated Project (IP) is a nine-year environmental project (2021-2029) led by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in Ireland. This project brings together the experience and knowledge of associated partners including the DAFM. Appropriate mechanisms are in place to avoid the risk of double payments, in Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-Environment Scheme (GLAS), Results Based Environment Agri Pilot Programme (REAP) and this project.

Another example is LIFE On Machair project. With a total budget of €7.4m (of which €5.7m million is EU LIFE Programme funding), this project seeks to improve the conservation condition of Ireland's machair habitats and the ecological conditions for the species it supports by working positively with local farming communities. Working with project partners the DAFM, Teagasc and Fáilte Ireland, the LIFE On Machair project will seek to build on the successes of locally adapted programmes, including European

Innovation Partnerships (EIP-AGRI), in assisting farmers and other stakeholders to create resilience within rural communities.

Similarly, the LIFE-IP Waters of Life programme (2020-2026) aims to protect and restore high ecological status water bodies in Ireland. LIFE-IP Waters of Life will act as a river basin-scale demonstration project, testing the effectiveness of the plan's 'best practice' measures across a range of landscapes.This will include outcome based payments for participants in six project catchments (inclusive of one control catchment). The project will run to December 2026 and will benefit from over €9m in EU-funding and over €10m in State co-funding of which approximately €3.5m is committed from DHLGH.

The interventions outlined in the CAP Strategic Plan and supported through the EAGF and the EAFRD will be implemented in a coordinated manner to create synergies and avoid duplication of funding with the other ESI funds. This demarcation will be addressed in a number of ways and is outlined in the following sections

CAP Strategic Plan

As part of the development of the CAP Strategic Plan, DAFM (MA) established a CAP Consultative Committee (CCC) to keep stakeholders informed of the negotiations as they progressed and to be actively involved in the development of the CAP Strategic Plan. The CCC included representatives of the Department of Rural and Community Development who have overall policy responsibility for the promotion of rural and community development to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland and administer the LEADER programme under delegated authority. The CCC also included representatives of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as well as the Department of Environment, Climate Action and Communications.
Communication within DAFM between its Research Divisions and other implementing Divisions, for example, Knowledge Transfer or EIP-AGRI interventions will continue on from the design phase into the implementation phase including through the AKIS Steering Group.

The RDP 2014-2020 Monitoring Committee has also been kept abreast of developments on the CSP and the new CAP Monitoring Committee will be established in due course as required in the legislation.

Common Provisions Regulation funds

In accordance with CPR Article 8 and multi-level governance, Ireland has put in place suitable mechanisms that will ensure coordination between the funds and other EU and national instruments. At the National level a Partnership Process Steering Group (PPSG) of the CPR Funds has been established to assist and advise the programme authorities throughout the development process for the Partnership Agreement, including identifying synergies and common themes across programmes. For example, the Common Agricultural Policy, the Recovery and Resilience Plan and the Brexit Adjustment Reserve are all represented at the PPSG.

Ireland is keen to ensure consistency at programming and implementation stages between interventions supported by the Funds and the objectives of other Union policies. The Irish Authorities will seek to identify and exploit complementarities between different Union instruments, optimise existing structures and where necessary, establish new ones, avoid duplication of effort, and identify areas where additional financial support is needed to deliver coherent and streamlined funding opportunities for beneficiaries.

To that end in April 2021, a one day workshop was held with both the Cohesion Funds and other EU Instruments, including the Common Agricultural Policy in Ireland, examining complementarities and

synergies.Building on the momentum, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) facilitated a number of bilateral meetings across funds in November 2021 and a further workshop took place in December 2021 further exploring the complementarities and synergies across EU programmes in Ireland. Possible delivery mechanisms for these potential complementarities and synergies for the new programming round were also explored.

Complementarities are now a standing item on the Partnership Process Steering Group agenda, and regular bilateral meetings are occurring between the various EU funds. A further recommendation was to consider setting up a 'Practitioners Network' to examine cross cutting issues and facilitate peer to peer learning across the funds.

LEADER is a community-led local development approach to the delivery of Rural Development Interventions. Such interventions will be delivered based on the design and implementation of tailored sub-regional development strategies that are based on identified needs at a sub-regional level. Local Development Strategies (LDS) will be developed on the basis of comprehensive analysis of the development needs and potential of sub-regional areas and will contain a detailed outline of how the needs are to be addressed using EAFRD funding. The support provided to achieve the aims and objectives of the LDS will be in the form of grant aid. The beneficiaries will be Local Action Groups (LAG) and other local actors, particularly community groups and including private investors. Detailed systems of demarcation will be in place to avoid overlap and double funding. Operational guidance will be issued to LAGs setting out the activities that are not eligible so as to ensure that no double funding occurs. The systems implemented will be outlined in detail in the LEADER operating rules and projects will be fully monitored to ensure compliance with relevant regulatory requirements. The ultimate aim is to address the needs of the sub-regional area and that are complementary to other development processes at sub-regional, regional, national and European level.

Complementarity/coherence with other Union funds that are active in rural areas such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Just Transition Fund (JTF), the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFAF) lies in the contribution of LEADER across a range of the thematic objectives, including:

• supporting sustainable economic development.

• support for the development of Smart Towns and Villages.

• supporting the shift to a low-carbon economy, promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

• promoting social inclusion.

The clear challenge is to ensure that the interventions supported through LEADER will be implemented in a coordinated manner so as to avoid duplication of funding and create synergies with the other EU funds and to ensure an integrated use of the funds.

Examples of complementarity include:

- ERDF support for innovation, digitisation, economic transformation and small and medium-sized businesses is in keeping with the overarching Smart Village Strategy of LEADER.
- JTF may support potential linkages with identifying/developing remote working hubs. Also, by providing resources to businesses/community facilities for a transition to a low or net zero carbon economy.

- RRP priorities include; advancing the green transition, accelerating and expanding digital reforms and transformation, as well as social and economic recovery and job creation. Investments in the Green Skills Action Programme, which aims to progress the green transition and support climate action, will potentially compliment the Climate Change Capacity Building and Adaptation measures in LEADER.
- Investment via the ERDF and the EAFRD will dovetail in an integrated approach to overall national development goals - the requirement that ERDF resources be allocated to integrated urban development will complement the focus on integrated rural development of LEADER.
- Similarly, the ESF investment in social inclusion measures will offer an opportunity for complementary support which will emerge via Local Development Strategies in LEADER.
- In certain cases, beneficiaries under the EAFRD will be in coastal communities which will also be the focus of EMFAF support. Possible synergies here include the coordination of activities between LEADER Local Action Groups and Fisheries Local Action Groups.

Just Transition Fund (JTF)

Just Transition Fund seeks to support the transition to a low carbon economy and to support individuals, businesses or the local community. It has the potential to create economic opportunities driven through climate action while meeting Ireland's just transition objectives. This fund is initially being targeted at the Midlands area, which the Government deem worst affected by the Bord na Móna plant closures. The Fund will support local projects with a just transition focus in three areas: Employment and Enterprise Supports, Training Supports and Community Transitioning Supports.

National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP)

The overall objective of Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) is to contribute to a sustainable, equitable, green and digital recovery effort, in a manner that complements and supports the Government's broader recovery effort. Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan is based on twenty five investment projects and reform measures spanning three priority areas addressing green and digital transition along with social and economic recovery and job creation. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan represents a first step to significantly reform and direct relevant funding towards decarbonising projects such as retrofitting, ecosystem resilience and regeneration, climate mitigation and adaptation, and green data systems.

Ireland will receive a total of €1,139 million (in 2018 prices) in Cohesion Policy Funds for the 2021 – 2027 programming period, comprised of:
· €351 million for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);
· €451 million for the European Social Fund + (ESF+);
· €260 million for European Territorial Cooperation (including PEACE PLUS);

and · €77 million under the Just Transition Fund (JTF).

In addition, Ireland will receive €84 million for the current programmes in 2021 under REACT-EU (additional funding to help with Ireland's recovery), to be supplemented by a further allocation in 2022.

Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion (2021-2027). It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and boosts the EU's competitiveness and growth. The programme facilitates collaboration and strengthens the impact of research and innovation in developing, supporting and implementing EU

policies while tackling global challenges. It supports creating and better dispersing of excellent knowledge and technologies.

DAFM promotes and supports the implementation of Cluster 6: Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment, the Mission area: A Soil Deal for Europe and the Candidates for European Partnerships in this cluster on Agriculture of Data; Accelerating farming systems transition: agroecology living labs and research infrastructures; Animal health; Water Security for the Planet (Water4All); Rescuing biodiversity to safeguard life on Earth; Safe and Sustainable Food Systems; and Circular bio-based Europe.This support is provided through the National Delegate and National Contact Point and respective Research Division officials who act as contact points for the respective Mission area and European Partnerships. The Research Division in DAFM operates the National Delegate and National Contact Point service in coordination with all National Delegates and Contact Points as part of national approach under the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment and Enterprise Ireland. The Horizon Europe activities and the CAP Strategic Plan developments are interlinked through National Coordination efforts on the Agricultural Knowledge & Innovation System. There are numerous complementarities but in particular the Cluster 6 destination on Innovative governance, environmental observations and digital solutions provides significant opportunities to support the CAP Strategic Plan and implementation of its objectives. In particular the topics offered in this destination could allow enhanced coordination and collaborative decision-making through the development of networks that would provide readily available insight, data and information coming from different sources.

NIVA4CAP (Horizon 2020 project): To support modernisation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and how the CAP will stimulate and benefit from ongoing digitisation of the agricultural sector is considered in the NIVA4CAP project. The project aims to reduce administrative burden and increase digitalisation to improve sustainability and competitiveness. The project examines the operationalisation of the Copernicus satellite programme and the use of Earth Observation data for agriculture. Ireland, through DAFMs engagement in the project with Waterford IT and Teagasc have developed the AgriSnap application (see training video) that allows for geotagged photos be used by Irish farmers to update their LPIS maps and for use in CAP related Agri-environmental schemes.

AGRICHEMWHEY (Horizon 2020 project): AgriChemWhey will seek to build a first-of-a kind, industrial-scale bio-refinery which will take by-products from the dairy processing industry – excess whey permeate (WP) and delactosed whey permeate (DLP) – and convert them into cost competitive, sustainable lactic acid. This lactic acid can in turn be used to make value-added bio-based products for growing global markets, including biodegradable plastics, bio-based fertiliser and other minerals. This Flagship project that will seek to prove the techno-economic viability of the innovative WP/DLP-to-lactic acid bio-refinery technology and will provide both the dairy industry and wider society with an opportunity for greater resource efficiency – less food waste, more products from the same starting material (milk), and integration of food and non-food material production.

The Partnership on Sustainable food systems for people, planet and climate

DAFM is engaged in the development of a range of Horizon Europe partnerships on: accelerating farming systems transition: agroecology living labs and research infrastructures; Animal health; Agriculture of data; rescuing biodiversity to safeguard life on Earth; Safe and Sustainable Food Systems; Water Security for the Planet; and Circular bio-based Europe. In the main, the partnerships are at an under-developed stage. It is the aim that Ireland will invest in the EU partnerships, depending on their coherent development, using national exchequer funding allocated through the DAFM Competitive Research budget. In due course, it will be assessed how the outputs from the partnership have the potential to inform various CAP AKIS measures such as CPD for Advisors, Knowledge Transfer, the Innovation Hub and Cooperation opportunities.

Ireland's stakeholder-led Food Vision 2030 Strategy was launched by the Government during the summer of 2021. Its central vision is that Ireland will become "A World Leader in Sustainable Food Systems". This should deliver significant benefits for the Irish agri-food sector itself, for Irish society and the environment. By adopting an integrated food systems approach, Ireland will seek to become a global leader of innovation for sustainable food and agriculture systems, producing safe, nutritious, and high-value food that tastes great, while protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural resources and contributing to vibrant rural and coastal communities and the national economy.

The Strategy will provide a coherent policy framework for Ireland to make an important contribution to the international discussion taking place on food systems over the coming years, and in particular the UN Food Systems Summit (FSS). The strategy very well aligns with the nine specific objectives of CAP. There are clearly synergies between CAP and Agri Food Strategy.

In line with the Commission's long term Vision for the EU's rural areas, the LEADER intervention of the CAP SP, together with coordination of other EU funds, can be a key driver to address the challenges and concerns identified in rural areas. This can be achieved by building on the emerging opportunities to make a transition to a greener Europe as set out in the European Green Deal, as well as supporting initiatives in the four action areas that will promote sustainable, cohesive and integrated rural development.

In order to ensure that all needs outlined in the needs assessment are addressed, the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM) prepared a document entitled 'Supports Outside the CAP', that identified projects, research initiatives, and policy instruments existing outside the CSP that contribute to addressing each of the needs contained in the CSP. Section 2.1 of Ireland's CSP lists all of the needs that are partially addressed or not addressed by the CSP. The 'Supports Outside the CAP' document provided a non-exhaustive but comprehensive list of measures that were used to populate this section.

The CAP Strategic Plan provides a clear overview of the demarcation, complementarities, synergies and coordination between the CAP Strategic Plan and other interventions funded by other Union funds active in rural areas and/or addressing similar beneficiaries, actors and/or areas of work. Where potential overlaps exist, for example double funding, these are adequately addressed by the coordination and demarcation mechanisms proposed above.

4.6 Financial instruments

4.6.1 Description of the financial instrument

Not applicable

4.7 Common elements for Rural Development types of interventions

4.7.1 List of non eligible investments

- Investments in large-scale infrastructure as determined by Member States in the CAP Strategic Plan, not being part of the community-led local development strategies set out in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, except for broadband and flood or coastal protection preventive actions aimed at reducing the consequences of probable natural disasters, adverse climatic events or catastrophic events, such as excavation plant or equipment (bulldozers, diggers etc)
- Construction plant or equipment (cranes, road rollers, cement mixers etc)
- Purchase of land for an amount exceeding 10% of the total eligible expenditure for the operation concerned, with the exception of land purchase for environmental conservation and carbon-rich soil preservation or land purchased by young farmers through the use of financial instruments; in

the case of financial instruments, that ceiling shall apply to the eligible public expenditure paid to the final recipient, or, in the case of guarantees, to the amount of the underlying loan; Art 73. 3 (c)

- Leasing of lands
- Purchase of payment entitlements; Purchase or lease of entitlements Art 73. 3 (b)
- Purchase of animals, annual plants and their planting for a purpose other than (i) restoring agricultural or forestry potential following natural disaster, adverse climatic events or catastrophic event, (ii) protecting livestock against large predators or being used in forestry instead of machinery, (iii) rearing endangered breeds as defined in Article 2(24) of Regulation (EU) No 2016/1012 under the commitments referred to in Article 70 or (iv) preserving plant varieties under threat of genetic erosion under the commitments referred to in Article 70; Art 73. 3 (d)
- Interest rate on debt, except in relation to grants given in the form of an interest rate subsidy or guarantee fee subsidy; Art 73. 3 (e)
- Field irrigation systems
- Purchase of Domestic living accommodation
- Purchase of Non agriculture buildings or equipment

Note: Ireland is not funding investments in afforestation under the CAP Strategic Plan.

4.7.2 Definition of rural area and applicability

Ireland has a much higher percentage of its territory and population living in rural areas relative to the EU27 average. The significance of rural areas in Ireland is confirmed in published Commission data. However, because there is no single agreed definition of 'rural' as a concept, different definitions are used by different bodies.

Our Rural Future (2021-2025), Ireland's rural development policy is cognisant of this and highlights the need for a flexible approach to address the needs of different rural areas in a meaningful way. The policy recognises the reality that many medium and large towns are intrinsic to sustaining viable rural communities while also having an interdependence with their rural hinterlands.

The Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) defined rural Ireland as 'all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities' - therefore the term 'rural areas' was used to encompass open countryside, as well as small, medium and large towns. This definition is consistent with Our Rural Future's requirement to adopt a holistic and place-based approach to rural development.

4.7.3 Additional elements common for Sectoral interventions, for rural development interventions, or common for both Sectoral and Rural Development interventions

<u>Termination or area adjustment of commitments</u>

DAFM may authorise a commitment supported under Article 70 of Regulation 2021/2115 to be terminated or its area adjusted before its normal end date without penalty or full reimbursement of funding already paid out, during its period of operation, under certain limited circumstances as follows:

(i) The beneficiary subscribes to a new commitment considered of equal or higher benefit to the environment and/or climate, and

(ii) The existing commitment is completed for an appropriate minimum period, and

(iii) The proposed new commitment is part of Ireland's EU-approved National Forestry Programme.

<u>Aid schemes and activities falling outside the scope of Article 42 of the TFEU:</u>

For aid schemes and activities falling outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU, no aid shall be granted to undertakings in difficulty, as defined in the relevant State aid rules, or to undertakings which have not yet repaid aid declared unlawful and incompatible with the common market by a Commission decision, unless otherwise provided by the relevant State aid rules.

4.7.4 Contribution rate(s) applicable to Rural Development interventions

National contribution rate(s)

Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
155(2)(c) - Early retirement		20.00%	43.00%
91(2)(a) - Less developed regions		20.00%	85.00%
91(2)(b) - Outermost regions and in the smaller Aegean islands		20.00%	80.00%
91(2)(c) - Transition regions within the meaning of Article 108(2), first subparagraph, point (b), of Regulaton (EU) 2021/1060		20.00%	60.00%
91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%
91(3)(a) - Payments for natural or others area-specific constraints under Article 71		20.00%	65.00%
91(3)(b) - Payments under Article 70, payments under Article 72, support for non-productive investments referred to in Article 73, support for the projects of EIP operational groups under Article 77(1), point(a), and LEADER under Article 77(1), point(b)		20.00%	80.00%
91(3)(b) - 70 - Payments under Article 70		20.00%	80.00%
91(3)(b) - 72 - Payments under Article 72		20.00%	80.00%
91(3)(b) - 73 - Support for non-productive investments referred to in Article 73		20.00%	80.00%
91(3)(b) - 77(1)(a) - Support for the European Innovation Partnership under Article 77(1), point(a)		20.00%	80.00%
91(3)(b) - 77(1)(b) - LEADER under Article 77(1), point(b)	43.30%	20.00%	80.00%
91(3)(c) - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 70 - Operations, under Article 70, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 71 - Operations, under Article 71, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 72 - Operations, under Article 72, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 73-74 - Operations, under Articles 73-74, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 75 - Operations, under Article 75, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 76 - Operations, under Article 76, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 77 - Operations, under Article 77, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%
91(3)(c) - 78 - Operations, under Article 78, receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in accordance with Articles 17 and 103		20.00%	100.00%

Regional contribution rate(s)

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate

5 Direct payments, sectoral and rural development interventions specified in the strategy

Fund	Form of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Intervention Code (MS) - Name	Common Output Indicator	Gen. Renewal	Env.	ES rebate system	LEADER
EAGF	Decoupled Direct Payments	BISS(21)	51BISS - BISS	O.4				
EAGF	Decoupled Direct Payments	CRISS(29)	51CRISS - Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability	O.7				
EAGF	Decoupled Direct Payments	CIS-YF(30)	51CISYF - Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers	O.6				
EAGF	Decoupled Direct Payments	Eco-scheme(31) / Art. 31(7)(b) - Compensatory payment	51ECO - Eco-Scheme	O.8				
EAGF	Coupled Direct Payments	CIS(32)	51VCS - Protein Aid	O.10				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	INVRE(47(1)(a))	52FVPO01 - Investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and analysis/forecasting/coordination	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ADVI1(47(1)(b))	52FVPO02 - Advisory Services and Technical Assistance	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRAINCO(47(1)(c))	52FVPO03 - Training; Including Personalised Advice and Best Practices	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ORGAN(47(1)(d))	52FVPO04 - Organic or Integrated Production	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRANS(47(1)(e))	52FVPO05 - Increase sustainability and efficiency of transport and storage of products	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	PROMO(47(1)(f))	52FVPO06 - Promotion, Communication and Marketing	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	QUAL(47(1)(g))	52FVPO07 - Implementing Union and national quality schemes	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	TRACE(47(1)(h))	52FVPO08 - Implementation of traceability and certification systems	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	CLIMA(47(1)(i))	52FVPO09 - Climate change mitigation	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	SETUP(47(2)(a))	52FVPO10 - Mutual Funds	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	ORCHA(47(2)(d))	52FVPO11 - Replanting Orchards	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	WITHD(47(2)(f))	52FVPO12 - Free Distribution	O.35				

EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	HARIN(47(2)(i))	52FVPO13 - Harvest and Production Insurance	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	COACH(47(2)(j))	52FVPO14 - Coaching For Risk Management	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	3COUN(47(2)(k))	52FVPO15 - Phytosanitary and sanitary requirements	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Fruit and Vegetables	COMM(47(2)(l))	52FVPO16 - Communication Actions	O.35				
EAGF	Sectoral - Apiculture products	COOPAPI(55(1)(e))	52API - Sectoral Intervention for the Apiculture Sector	O.37				
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53AECMCP70 - Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option	O.14	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53AECMGEN - AECM General	O.14	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53DBWS - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme	O.14	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53GR - AECM Genetic Resources	O.19	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme	O.17	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53SCEP - Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme	O.14	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53SIM - Straw Incorporation Measure	O.14	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ENVCLIM(70)	53SIP - Sheep Improvement Scheme	O.18	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	ANC(71)	53ANC - ANC	O.12	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	INVEST(73-74)	53AECMNPI - Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure	O.21	No	Yes	No	No
EAFRD	Rural Development	INVEST(73-74)	53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments	O.20	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	COOP(77)	53AECMCP77 - AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77	O.32	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	COOP(77)	53CFG - Collaborative Farming Grant	O.30	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	COOP(77)	53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships	O.1	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	COOP(77)	53ESSPO - Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations	O.28	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	COOP(77)	53LEADER - LEADER	O.31	No	No		Yes

EAFRD	Rural Development	KNOW(78)	53AECMTR - Training to Implement Agri-Environment-Climate Measure	O.33	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	KNOW(78)	53CPDA - CPD For Advisors	O.33	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	KNOW(78)	53KT - Knowledge Transfer Programme	O.33	No	No		No
EAFRD	Rural Development	KNOW(78)	53SCT - Training to Implement Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme	O.33	No	No		No

5.1 Direct Payments Interventions

BISS(21) - Basic income support for sustainability

51BISS - BISS

Intervention Code (MS)	51BISS
Intervention Name	BISS
Type of Intervention	BISS(21) - Basic income support for sustainability
Common Output Indicator	O.4. Number of hectares benefitting from for basic income support

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO1 Support viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector across the Union in order to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the Union
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj1.N1	Support family farm income and address income disparities	Highest priority SO1	Yes
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.4 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality
R.6 Percentage of additional direct payments per hectare for eligible farms below average farm size (compared to average)
R.7 Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

This intervention is designed to provide a direct income support to Irish farmers to underpin their continued sustainability and viability. By supporting viable farm incomes, this intervention supports farmers in the continuation of a secure food supply. The vital role that direct payments play in supporting viable farm incomes and resilience is evidenced by Teagasc National Farm Survey data. For example, the 2019 National Farm Survey shows that on average direct payments make up 78% of Family Farm Income. Similarly, the SWOT analysis identifies low-income levels in the agri-food sector compared to other sectors of the economy as a weakness and highlights the role of direct payments in supporting viability. Support is provided to farmers who undertake an agricultural activity based on the definitions set out in Section 4.1 of this Strategic Plan.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary, the area and, when applicable, other relevant obligations

Eligible Beneficiaries : 127,000 Active Farmers

To receive a support under BISS, eligible beneficiaries must:

- submit a BISS application each year via the online application system, declaring their land located within the jurisdiction of Ireland;
- meet the minimum requirements to receive a direct payment as per Article 18 of the CSP Regulation. In this regard, support under BISS is not granted for amounts lower than €100;
- meet the definition of a "active farmer".
- Hold one BISS payment entitlement for each eligible hectare claimed

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Range and amounts of support

Description

Support is based on payment entitlements in accordance with Articles 23 to 27 of the CSP Regulation. Support is thereby based on the size of a holding (the number of eligible hectares) and the number and value of entitlements held. In relation to convergence of the value of payment entitlements, all payment entitlements will have a value of at least 85% of the planned average unit amount i.e. 85% of €158.68as indicated below by 2026 (€134.88).

The planned minimum, average and maximum unit amounts are justified on the basis of the economic and income challenges as set out above and in the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment. Furthermore, it should be noted that the average agricultural entrepreneurial income in Ireland was 39.2% of the national average income in 2019 (based on €/hour worked). The planned average unit amount under this intervention is €158.68 per Payment per activated entitlement. Taking the number of expected activated Payment Entitlements as 4,407,042 at an average planned unit amount of €158.68 would lead to an annual financial allocation of €693,439,838, with an allocation of 35million allocated to the National Reserve Annually.

This annual allocation to the National Reserve is used to fund allocations of new Payment Entitlements and top-ups to existing lower value Payment Entitlement. A lower rate of payment, down to the minimum unit amount of € 126.94 per activated entitlement, may be utilised in years, where necessary, to prevent an excess of the financial allocations for types of interventions in the form of direct payments referred to in Article 85. A higher rate of payment, up to the maximum unit amount of €190.42 per activated entitlement, may be utilised in years, where necessary, to avoid unspent funds. Any deviation from the planned average unit amount, with the range of the minimum and maximum unit amounts would not change the individual entitlement values, as per the third subparagraph of Article 101. As a result, the planned unit amounts and indicative financial allocation are appropriate to achieve the planned output of 4,407,042 ha benefitting from Basic Income Support.

8 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

Is this BIS intervention a Payments for small farmers? (Art. 28)

☐ Yes ☒ No

Which form of support do you use Payments for small farmers? (Art. 28)

☐ Lump sum(s) ☐ Payment(s) per hectare

What is the maximum amount for the Payments for small farmers? (Art. 28)

Do you have any other comments or explanations for the Payments for small farmers?

9 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 6 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Design of Decoupled Direct Payments in accordance with the requirements of the CAP SPR Regulation ensures compliance with the relevant criteria of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (Green Box)

11 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)
53BISS01 - Planned average unit amount per entitlement	Average		R.4; R.6; R.7;

Explanation and Justification (including the flexibility)

53BISS01 - Planned average unit amount per entitlement

An average unit amount is utilised for this intervention, as due to the nature of the nature of the intervention i.e. payment entitlements, it is not possible to programme uniform unit amounts.

On average, the total direct payment (this includes many direct payments, rural development schemes and other nationally funded scheme) received per farm in 2020 was €17,842. It should be noted that Pillar 1 Direct Payments accounted for between 53% - 80% of all payments in 2020, depending on the farming system involved (circa. €9,500-€14,000). The National Average direct payment for a farmer in Ireland from 2023, based on the average holding size and meeting eligibility under BISS, Eco Scheme and CRISS, will be in the region of €8,500. The data indicates that market income (before direct payments are included) indicates that farmers are heavily dependent on financial support, as direct payment contribute 70% of Family Farm Income (National Farm Survey, 2020). The actual figure and overall contribution to FFI varies greatly across farming systems. The data indicates that market income is less than zero on Drystock farms, indicating that on average, these farms do not make a profit from production and are heavily dependent on financial support. Furthermore, it should be noted that the average agricultural entrepreneurial income in Ireland was only 39.2% of the national average income in 2019 (based on €/hour worked). The planned unit amount for BISS (€158.68) is based on the number of Payment Entitlements (4,407,042) and the annual financial allocation for BISS (€693,439,838 with an allocation of €35,000,000 allocated to the National Reserve) is appropriate as the income needs are substantial i.e. direct payments are 53%-80% of all payments, all payments contribute 70% of Family Farm Income and agricultural income is less than 40% of national average income in Ireland.

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
53BISS01 - Planned average unit amount per entitlement	Planned unit amount	158.68	158.68	158.68	158.68	158.68	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	126.94	126.94	126.94	126.94	126.94	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	190.42	190.42	190.42	190.42	190.42	
	O.4 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.4 (unit: Hectares)	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	22,035,210.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	3,642,474,190.00

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article 31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						

CRISS(29) - Complementary redistributive income support for sustainability

51CRISS - Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability

Intervention Code (MS)	51CRISS
Intervention Name	Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability
Type of Intervention	CRISS(29) - Complementary redistributive income support for sustainability
Common Output Indicator	O.7. Number of hectares benefitting from complementary redistributive income support

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO1 Support viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector across the Union in order to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the Union
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj1.N1	Support family farm income and address income disparities	Highest priority SO1	Yes
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.4 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality
R.6 Percentage of additional direct payments per hectare for eligible farms below average farm size (compared to average)
R.7 Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

The SWOT analysis sets out that Direct Payments are a valuable source of income support for all farmers across the agri-food sector; and notes that these payments are of particular importance to small and medium sized farms. In the absence of off-farm employment opportunities, some 63% of farm households in the Teagasc NFS sample and over 80% of small farms would be economically vulnerable. Without direct support, these small-medium farms may not be viable and this could lead to the abandonment of agricultural land which would damage the rural economy and the future viability of the agri-food sector.

This intervention is designed to ensure redistribution of direct payments from larger to smaller to medium-sized holdings by providing for a redistributive income support in the form of an annual decoupled payment per eligible hectare to farmers who are entitled to a payment under the basic income support referred to in Article 21 of the Draft CSP Regulation.

Support is provided per hectare up to a maximum of 30 hectares, in accordance with Article 29 of the CSP Regulation. Member States must set a maximum number of hectares per farmer for which the redistributive income support shall be paid. Following extensive modelling of various parameters, it was

determined that 30 hectares was the optimum range of hectares to benefit the majority of farmers. Approximately 75% of farmers would benefit financially from the inclusion of CRISS at 30 hectares.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary, the area and, when applicable, other relevant obligations

Eligible beneficiaries are required to:

- meet the definition of a "active farmer".
- meet the minimum requirements to receive a direct payment as per Article 18 of the CSP Regulation.
- submit a BISS application each year via the online application system, declaring their land located within the jurisdiction of Ireland;

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Range and amounts of support

Description

The planned average unit amount under this intervention is €43.14 per Payment per hectare. The minimum and maximum unit amounts for the intervention are €40.98 and €45.29 per hectare, up to a maximum of 30 hectares respectively. The planned average, minimum and maximum unit amounts are justified on the basis of the economic and income challenges as set out above and in the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment for small to medium sized farmers.

Small-medium farms will receive support per hectare for all eligible hectares i.e. if their farm size is less than 30 hectares. Furthermore, farmers with more than 30 hectares will receive support for the first 30 hectares only. In 2019, circa 67,000 farms had a farm size of less than 30 hectares and a further 55,000 farms are eligible for support on their first 30 hectares, once farmers are entitled to a payment under the basic income support referred to in Article 21 of the CSP Regulation. Based on this historical information in relation to farm sizes, it is expected that the number of hectares planned to be supported will be 2,750,000 hectares. Taking the number of expected hectares as 2,750,000 at a planned average unit amount of €43.14 would lead to an annual financial allocation of €118,628,200.

Research indicates that Ireland does not face the same extent of decline in below-average farms as many other Member States (1). Ireland has approximately 54% of farmers below the average farm size of 36.02* hectares, as such, within the classification of small to medium size farms. However, the challenges of cost-effective production are often more acute within this group, with an identifiable correlation between farm size and income. Research indicates that Cattle Rearing represents, on average, the sector with the lowest average farm size at 30.7ha and the lowest average income per hectare at €295 per ha (2). This is in contrast to Dairy, which, on average, represents the largest average farm size at 60.7ha and an average income per ha at €1,223 (2).

As such, Ireland determined that to maximise the redistributive impact on those with the greatest need for income support, payment should be limited under CRISS to a maximum of 30ha. This results in the planned unit amount rate of €43.14 per ha when taking into account all estimated eligible land and the CRISS ceiling of €118,628,200.

It should be noted that Ireland still operates an entitlements-based system and the impact that redistribution under CRISS has on entitlement values and the BISS payment has been taken into consideration when deciding on the funding available for CRISS. As such, the planned unit amount of €43.14 has been arrived at following an assessment of the anticipated impact of the various direct payment interventions and was deemed to be the optimum amount in terms of offering sufficient levels of redistribution to small and medium size farms in terms of the allocated funding and total anticipated eligible hectarage. Whilst recognising the benefits of redistribution, it was also acknowledged that an

increase in the planned unit amount above that stated would need to be facilitated by a greater portion of the national ceiling than the 10% allocated, which would compromise the efficacy of the other direct payment interventions. As such, to offer a balance of supports, €43.14 is determined to be the optimum value.

In real terms, this equates to a proportional per ha rate** of €43.60 for those below the average farm size and €20.96 for those above the average farm size. Which represents a measure of the efficacy with which the intervention addresses the needs of CRISS as a redistributive intervention.

As Ireland has no past experience of implementing the CRISS intervention then accurately measuring potential under-execution is difficult. However, although not expected, it is acknowledged that there may be under-execution and as such a maximum amount for the planned unit amount has been estimated at €45.29 to account for such a scenario.

Likewise, potential over-execution of the intervention is acknowledged in the form of the minimum amount for the planned unit amount at €40.98. The figures are based upon calculating the impact on the CRISS fund of varying eligible hectares and represent a commitment to maintaining 30ha of payable support, a key level of support which Ireland determines to offer the optimum approach to providing sufficient income support to those that this intervention is intended to address.

(1) The Future of the European Farming Model
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU(2022)699620

(2) Teagasc National Farm Survey Report
https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2021/Teagasc-National-Farm-Survey-2020.pdf

*Figure based off a total farmer modelling population that includes non-entitlement holders

**Proportional per ha rate is calculated by taking the allocation of the CRISS fund under/ over 30ha divided by the applicable eligible ha

8 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

Do you apply the territorialisation for the CRISS?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Do you apply different amounts for different ranges of hectares? (Art. 29(3))

☐ Yes ☒ No

What is the maximum number of hectares per farmer to which CRIS is paid? (Art. 29(3))

30.00

-Do you exclude farm holdings from CRIS on the basis of their physical size?

☐ Yes ☒ No

- Additional rules and/or explanations related to CRIS

N/A

9 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 6 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Design of Decoupled Direct Payments in accordance with the requirements of the CAP SPR Regulation ensures compliance with the relevant criteria of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (Green Box)

No further detail needed

11 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)
51CRISS01 - CRISS Payment per Hectare	Average		R.4; R.6; R.7;

Explanation and Justification (including the flexibility)

51CRISS01 - CRISS Payment per Hectare

See Justification in 7 Range and amounts of Support

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
51CRISS01 - CRISS Payment per Hectare	Planned unit amount	43.14	43.14	43.14	43.14	43.14	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	40.98	40.98	40.98	40.98	40.98	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	45.29	45.29	45.29	45.29	45.29	
	O.7 (unit: Hectares)	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	
	Planned output * Planned unit amount	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	593,175,000.00
TOTAL	O.7 (unit: Hectares)	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	13,750,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	593,140,998.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article 31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						

CIS-YF(30) - Complementary income support for young farmers

51CISYF - Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers

Intervention Code (MS)	51CISYF
Intervention Name	Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers
Type of Intervention	CIS-YF(30) - Complementary income support for young farmers
Common Output Indicator	O.6. Number of hectares benefitting from complementary income support for young farmers

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj1.N1	Support family farm income and address income disparities	Highest priority SO1	Yes
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.36 Number of young farmers benefitting from setting up with support from the CAP, including a gender breakdown
R.37 New jobs supported in CAP projects
R.4 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality
R.6 Percentage of additional direct payments per hectare for eligible farms below average farm size (compared to average)
R.7 Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

The intervention is designed to encourage and facilitate educated young farmers setting up for the first time as the head of an agricultural holding solely or jointly. In line with the requirements under the CSP regulation for the operation of the CISYF, eligible applicants must first be entitled to a payment under the Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS).

As noted in the SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, there is an opportunity to build on the current suite of supports for educated young farmers to enhance the future competitiveness of the agri-food sector and help guarantee food supplies and rural sustainability into the future. Attracting young farmers into the sector also helps to address the issue of an ageing farming population.

The intervention is designed to provide support to educated young farmers entering the agriculture sector in the early years immediately following the young farmer setting up as head of the holding solely or jointly. The intervention will also aim to provide certainty in terms of the level of income support for

eligible applicants for up to 5 years, which is an important factor in financial planning in respect of the business. Support under CISYF builds on the support available under the Young Farmers Scheme from 2015 to 2022.

Eligible beneficiaries are subject to all the elements of GAEC and SMRs as set out in Title III, Section 2 of the CSP Regulation.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary, the area and, when applicable, other relevant obligations

Young farmers meeting the following conditions:

Aged no more than 40 years of age at any time during the calendar year in which s/he first submits an application under CISYF;

Is setting up a holding as head of the holding, solely or jointly, for the first time or has set up such a holding during the five years preceding the first submission of an application under CISYF;

Has successfully completed a recognised course of education in agriculture giving rise to an award at Level 6 or equivalent on the National Framework of Qualifications;

Entitled to payment under the Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS) as provided for at Article 17 of the CSP regulation.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements
(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Range and amounts of support

Description

Based on the projected increase in the number of beneficiaries during the term of the operation of the scheme from 2023-2027, and the level of funding remaining consistent at 3% of the Direct Payments envelope providing €35.58m per year, a rate of €196 per eligible hectare would apply in 2023, reducing each year to a rate of €161 in 2027, subject to a maximum of 50 hectares per eligible applicant. Ireland proposes to grant support under the Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers to farmers who have received support under the Young Farmers Scheme for the remainder of the period of eligibility under that scheme. The proposed level of support under the Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers will build upon the significant progress made since 2015 in facilitating generational renewal in Irish agriculture by providing support in the crucial years immediately following the young farmer setting up within the holding.The estimated number of beneficiaries in 2023, and increase in the number of beneficiaries over the lifetime of the operation of the scheme to 2027, is based on trends in the number of students enrolled on agricultural educational courses delivered by the main course provider in Ireland. It is also anticipated that the level of payment under the scheme will attract an increasing number of young farmers into the sector to help address the issue of an ageing farming population.

Planned unit amount(s) or financial allocation	2021	2022	2023	2024
€196 in 2023, reducing to			€196 per ha	€187 per ha

€161 in 2027, per eligible hectare, subject to a maximum of 50 hectares per eligible applicant.				

Justification of the amounts:

In order to help address the issue of an ageing farming population in Ireland and to attract young farmers into the sector, the proposed amounts will provide some €178m to young farmers under Pillar I payments from 2023-2027.A maximum payment of €220 and a minimum payment €145 per eligible hectare provide flexibility to accommodate a higher or lower number of actual applicants each year. The payment amount will build on the significant progress made since 2015 under the Young Farmers Scheme (YFS). Planned output is based on an average of 33 hectares per successful beneficiary (based on YFS allocations 2015-2020) ranging from 181,500 hectares supported in 2023 to 220,770 supported in 2027.

Maximum payment of €220 per eligible hectare and minimum payment of €145 per eligible hectare.

8 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

The intervention gives support to young farmers for how many years? **5**

What are the conditions applied for the definition of newly setting-up?

Is setting up a holding as head of the holding, solely or jointly, for the first time or has set up such a holding during the five years preceding the first submission of an application under CISYF.

What form the support does take: **an annual decoupled payment per eligible hectare**

What is the amount of aid per hectare/lump-sum? **178**

Do you set a maximum in terms of number of ha? Y/N

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what is the maximum number of ha? **50**

Other comments on thresholds?

N/A

Do you apply a continuity with the previous scheme (Young Farmer Payment)?

Yes. Ireland proposes to grant support under the Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers to farmers who have received support under the Young Farmers Scheme for the remainder of the period of eligibility under that scheme.

Other comments

The amount of aid per hectare shall be EUR 196 in 2023, reducing to EUR 161 in 2027, per eligible hectare per eligible applicant. This shall average EUR 178 over term 2023-2027.

9 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 6 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Design of Decoupled Direct Payments in accordance with the requirements of the CAP SPR Regulation ensures compliance with the relevant criteria of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (Green Box)

11 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)
51CISYF01 - CISYF Support Per Hectare	Average		R.4; R.6; R.7; R.36;

Explanation and Justification (including the flexibility)

51CISYF01 - CISYF Support Per Hectare

Based on the projected increase in the number of beneficiaries during the term of the operation of the scheme from 2023-2027, and the level of funding remaining consistent at 3% of the Direct Payments envelope providing €35.58m per year, a rate of €196 per eligible hectare would apply in 2023, reducing each year to a rate of €161 in 2027, subject to a maximum of 50 hectares per eligible applicant.

The National Average direct payment for a farmer in Ireland from 2023, based on the average holding size and meeting eligibility under BISS, Eco Scheme and CRISS, will be in the region of €8,500. Based on planned unit amounts under CISYF an eligible young farmer with an average holding size can receive an additional payment ranging from €6,200 to €5,100 from 2023 to 2027. This is a significant additional direct payment income to provide support in the early years following the establishment of the holding, ensuring generational renewal in Irish agriculture.

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
51CISYF01 - CISYF Support Per Hectare	Planned unit amount	196.00	186.70	177.77	169.15	161.16	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	145.00	145.00	145.00	145.00	145.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	220.00	220.00	220.00	220.00	220.00	
	O.6 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.6 (unit: Hectares)	181,500.00	190,575.00	200,145.00	210,210.00	220,770.00	1,003,200.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article						

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
	31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						

Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare

51ECO - Eco-Scheme

Intervention Code (MS)	51ECO
Intervention Name	Eco-Scheme
Type of Intervention	Eco-scheme(31) - Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare / Art. 31(7)(b) - Compensatory payment
Common Output Indicator	O.8. Number of hectares or of livestock units benefitting from eco-schemes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO1 Support viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector across the Union in order to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the Union
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

CAP AREAS OF ACTION Code + Description
AOA-A climate change mitigation, including reduction of GHG emissions from agricultural practices, as well as maintenance of existing carbon stores and enhancement of carbon sequestration
AOA-B climate change adaptation, including actions to improve resilience of food production systems, and animal and plant diversity for stronger resistance to diseases and climate change
AOA-C protection or improvement of water quality and reduction of pressure on water resources
AOA-D prevention of soil degradation, soil restoration, improvement of soil fertility and of nutrient management [and soil biota]
AOA-E protection of biodiversity, conservation or restoration of habitats or species, including maintenance and creation of landscape features or non-productive areas

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants	Highest priority SO5	Yes

	arising from agriculture, particularly a		
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.12 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to improve climate adaptation
R.19 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)
R.21 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies
R.22 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management
R.31 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including high-nature-value farming practices
R.34 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees
R.4 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality
R.6 Percentage of additional direct payments per hectare for eligible farms below average farm size (compared to average)
R.7 Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Ireland is proposing a single Eco-Scheme that will reward farmers for undertaking actions beneficial to the climate, biodiversity, water quality and the environment.

This intervention will be implemented annually, with active farmers having the opportunity to opt in or out on an annual basis. Farmers will undertake agricultural practices that will deliver environmental benefits. To ensure maximum environmental benefit, there is a need to seek to encourage the maximum number of active farmers to participate in the scheme. Therefore, the Eco-Scheme is designed to be relatively straightforward to operate for both the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and for participants and is likely to attract high levels of uptake. This practical and standardised approach is likely to incentivise high participation, and therefore good or improved environmental practices on the highest number of farms possible.

The “Eco-Scheme for all farmers” concept is a key element of Ireland’s Green Architecture, as it builds on enhanced Conditionality and allows for even higher environmental ambition to be achieved through Pillar 2 interventions. In designing the Eco-Scheme, Ireland has been conscious to avoid overlaps that could cause double-funding issues with Pillar 2 interventions, in particular the Organic Farming Scheme and the new AECM.

Targeting of relevant Eco-Scheme practices to the most appropriate farmers will be used to ensure the most appropriate practices are taken up by a specific group(s) of farmers. The targeted cohort is detailed under each agricultural practice. Some practices are targeted at all farmers as these are measures that can be delivered by any participant and will deliver an environmental benefit. There are also specific practises targeted at the livestock sector, the tillage sector and at more intensive farmers.

Having practices that suit all farming sectors and intensities is key to driving participation levels. As per the Commission's guidance document (*Q&A, Eco Schemes V4 4th November 2021*), Ireland's Eco-Scheme will encourage farmers to modify their management practices in an environmental sense where appropriate while at the same time encouraging farmers to maintain environmentally friendly operations and sustainable farming systems.

As the Eco-scheme approach is a very new concept for farmers, the relative uptake and impact of the different practices will evolve as experience is gained during implementation, and as farmers get more engaged and experienced with these practices. The uptake of Eco-Scheme practices will be monitored closely during implementation, with the possibility of adjusting individual practice parameters, if appropriate, to ensure the environmental objectives are achieved.

Description of commitments for eco-scheme

Ireland is proposing a single Eco-Scheme that will reward farmers for undertaking actions beneficial to the climate, biodiversity, water quality and the environment.

This intervention will be implemented annually, with active farmers having the opportunity to opt in or out on an annual basis. Farmers will undertake agricultural practices that will deliver environmental benefits. To ensure maximum environmental benefit, there is a need to seek to encourage the maximum number of active farmers to participate in the scheme. The Eco-Scheme is designed to be relatively straightforward to operate for both the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and for participants and is likely to attract high levels of uptake. This practical and standardised approach is likely to incentivise high participation, and therefore good or improved environmental practices on the highest number of farms possible.

The "Eco-Scheme for all farmers" concept is a key element of Ireland's Green Architecture, as it builds on enhanced Conditionality and allows for even higher environmental ambition to be achieved through Pillar 2 interventions. In designing the Eco-Scheme, Ireland has been conscious to avoid overlaps that could cause double-funding issues with Pillar 2 interventions, in particular the Organic Farming Scheme and the new AECM.

Targeting of relevant Eco-Scheme practices to the most appropriate farmers will be used to ensure the most appropriate practices are taken up by a specific group(s) of farmers. The targeted cohort is detailed under each agricultural practice. Some practices are targeted at all farmers as these are measures that can be delivered by any participant and will deliver an environmental benefit. There are also specific practises targeted at the livestock sector, the tillage sector and at more intensive farmers.

Having practices that suit all farming sectors and intensities is key to driving participation levels. As per the Commission's guidance document (*Q&A, Eco Schemes V4 4th November 2021*), Ireland's Eco-Scheme will encourage farmers to modify their management practices in an environmental sense where appropriate while at the same time encouraging farmers to maintain environmentally friendly operations and farming systems.

Active farmers wishing to receive an Eco-Scheme payment will undertake at least two of the following eight proposed Agricultural practices:

Agricultural Practice 1	**Space for Nature (Non-productive areas) and landscape features** **(building on GAEC 8)**
Objective	To maintain all habitats present on the farm to contribute to diversity in the landscape.

	Payment for building on GAEC 8 requirements.
Environmental Target	This action is targeted to deliver on the themes of biodiversity, climate and water quality.
Requirements	Under GAEC 8, a minimum share of at least 4% of arable land at farm level must be devoted to Space for Nature (non-productive areas and features, including land lying f allow). As part of Conditionality, Ireland is proposing that this would apply to all farmers,(with certain exceptions),not just arable farmers. The Eco-Scheme will reward farmers that go beyond Conditionality requirements by allocating at least 7% of their land to these features. **Enhanced Option:** Farmers may also choose to devote a total of 10% of their land to Space for Nature (non-productive areas and landscape features), which would count as two practices under the Eco-Scheme and would qualify for full payment.
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at all farmers

Agricultural Practice 2	**Extensive Livestock Production (low stocking rate, not no stock)**
Objective	To promote traditional grassland farming practices at extensive animal stocking rates.
Environmental Target	This action will encourage farmers to maintain environmentally friendly operations and sustainable farming systems. Farms that are extensively stocked provide a greater environmental return in terms of biodiversity, soil structure and water quality. Such extensive farming systems also benefit pollinators and are important in the maintenance of the rural landscape. Supporting extensive farming systems are critically important to maintain biodiversity and managing agricultural landscapes, thus these practices will support some farmers to continue existing practices, incentivise other farmers to reduce their stocking rate to meet these criteria while mitigating/disincentivising other farmers from intensifying their production level. An enhanced option is included to further recognise the importance and contribution

	of very extensively managed lands to meeting these environmental objectives.
Requirements	a. An overall maximum stocking rate of 1.4 livestock units per hectare per annum. This will be based on the previous year's stocking rate to allow payment in current year. b. Applicants must maintain at least an annual minimum average of 0.10 livestock units calculated over the 12 months of the calendar year. c. Applicants must own, possess, hold and maintain for at least seven consecutive months of the year, the livestock required to maintain the minimum stocking level. **Enhanced Option:** An overall maximum stocking rate of 1.2 livestock units per hectare per annum. This would count as two practices under the Eco-Scheme and would qualify for full payment.
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at all livestock farmers.

Agricultural Practice 3	**Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage**
Objective	To promote low usage of chemical nitrogen.
Environmental Target	The improvement of water quality and meeting our climate challenges are key to improving our environment. Nitrogen management is a key theme across all of our environmental challenges and limiting all nitrogen inputs, including chemical fertilisers, will deliver environmental and climate benefits. This practice has been designed to accommodate both grassland farmers and tillage farmers and seeks to effect change at different intensity levels. It rewards farmers for going beyond the baseline requirements under Nitrates Regulations, by further reducing the limit of Chemical Nitrogen a farmer can spread. This Agricultural practice also rewards existing farmers with lower N use and discourages further intensification / transfers to more intensive production systems.
Requirements	Each farmer will be presented with their chemical nitrogen limit based on their stocking rate in the previous year.

Grassland stocking rate in 2022 (kgs organic nitrogen per ha)	Max permitted application of chemical Nitrogen in 2023 (kgs per ha)
<90	73
91-130	89
131-170	165
171-210	240
>210	214
For example, where a farmer who was stocked at for example 100 kgs of Organic Nitrogen per hectare in 2022 wishes to avail of this Eco-Scheme practice in 2023, they must ensure they do not apply more than 89 kgs of chemical Nitrogen per hectare in 2023. There will also be a maximum limit of chemical nitrogen for tillage farmers to undertake this measure, which will be 10% below the national average i.e. 139.41 kg/ha. Application levels for 2023 will be checked using the Department's Fertiliser Register in Quarter 4 2023.	
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at all farmers who are permitted to use chemical nitrogen fertiliser, with different options offered depending on the previous year's stocking rate.

Agricultural Practice 4	**Planting of Native Trees/Hedgerows**
Objective	To promote the planting of native trees and hedgerows to enhance ecosystem services, contribute to protection of biodiversity, providing shade and shelter for livestock and crops, sequester carbon and enhance the visual appearance of the countryside.
Environmental Target	Planting of native tree species/hedgerows on farms promotes our native biodiversity, enhances associated populations of flora and fauna and provides a wide range of ecological benefits; providing food, shelter and breeding sites for a range of species.
Requirements	

1. Farmer will select to plant trees or hedgerows from a specified approved list of species under this practice.

1. A minimum of 3 native trees OR 1 metre of hedgerow must be planted per eligible hectare per annum.

1. Trees/Hedgerows must be planted in the year of the commitment being undertaken. Depending on availability of planting material, in the first year they select this option, a farmer may be allowed plant sufficient trees/hedgerow to meet their commitments under this practice for a number of years of eco-scheme participation.

1. Trees and hedgerows must be maintained for the duration of the CAP Programme.

1. Hedgerows and trees cannot be used to comply with AP1/GAEC 8 during the planting year. Also, trees and hedges planted under Ireland's AECM will also NOT count towards a farmers GAEC 8/Space for Nature percentage.

Enhanced Option: Increasing the planting rate to 6 native trees OR 2 metres of hedgerow per eligible hectare per annum, will qualify as two practices under Eco-Scheme and will qualify a farmer for the full Eco-Scheme payment.	
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at all farmers

Agricultural Practice 5	**Use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreaders/sprayers**
Objective	Precision agriculture will promote more sustainable ways of farming, will trigger societal changes, and requires the learning of new skills.
Environmental Target	To reduce carbon emissions, reduce inputs and reduce environmental impact. The use of precision technology including variable rate technology, GPS precision techniques and calibration of fertiliser spreading equipment will assist in the accurate and even application of inorganic compounds. Precision Agriculture methods promise to increase the quantity and quality of agricultural output while using less input (water, energy, fertiliser and pesticides etc). This action aims to reduce fertiliser and plant protection product use. A small number of Irish farmers have invested in their own GPS controlled fertiliser spreader/sprayer; however, for the vast majority the capital costs are prohibitive. This Eco-Scheme practice is to encourage farmers to make the transition to using precision machinery for application of chemical fertiliser and/or plant protection products.
Requirements	Application of 100% of chemical fertiliser (whether compound or liquid) or plant protection products to be applied with a GPS controlled fertiliser spreader/sprayer.
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at all farmers who are permitted to use chemical fertiliser.

Agricultural Practice 6	**Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming**
Objective	To provide farmers with comprehensive details on the nutrient and lime status of their soils.
Environmental Target	Soil sample analysis can be used to target soil management and farming practices to achieve economic and environmental sustainability on farms. By taking soil samples and using the analysis correctly, it will allow a farmer to apply nutrients where they are required, avoid wasting nutrients by applying them where they are not needed and avoid causing a pollution risk by applying excessive nutrients to a field where they are not required. Where appropriate, Liming neutralises soil acidity and reduces the availability of harmful heavy metals to plants which are present in acidic soils. By neutralising soil acidity, the availability of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), potassium (K), sulphur (S) and calcium (Ca) increases.
Requirements	Undertake soil sampling (**can only take this eco-scheme agricultural practice once every three years**) and apply lime if recommended in the soil sample recommendation on all eligible hectares. *e.g., farmer selects it in 2023, would only present it again to that farmer in 2026 as a viable Eco scheme agricultural practice.* Soil samples taken under the pilot soil sampling programme are not eligible for AP 6.
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at all farmers who are not obliged to take soil samples for some other requirement.

Agricultural Practice 7	**Planting of a Break Crop**
Objective	To promote the planting of a break crop as part of enhanced crop diversification.
Environmental Target	A diverse mix of crops in a rotation reduces disease burden and is beneficial for the soil and is a risk management tool. A diverse rotation also increases nutrient use efficiency as underlying diseases related to continuous cereals are reduced, allowing crops reach a higher yield for a given level of fertiliser input. Cereal yields after break crops are also typically higher.
Requirements	The Eco Scheme will require that at least 20% of the arable area of the holding in the year of the commitment is planted to a prescribed break crop *of either Oilseed Rape, Oats, Peas and Beans or a combination of one or more of these crops.* Further break crops could be added in future years of Eco scheme if warranted.
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at arable farmers.

Agricultural Practice 8	**Planting of Multi-Species Sward**
Objective	To establish a mixed species sward comprising a range of grass species, legumes and herbs.
Environmental Target	Mixed species swards can maintain a steady growth rate with reduced fertiliser application and may allow fertiliser application to be reduced by more than half in the summer months. They also result in better nitrogen use by animals and have been shown to improve animal performance, reduce days to slaughter and reduce the requirement for anthelmintic use. They also have the potential to improve the mineral content in the diet, provide dietary protein from legumes and their diverse root structure can improve the uptake of plant minerals and water, soil structure and nutrient cycling within the soil. A diverse mix allowed to flower will also aid local insect populations and increase biodiversity. Mixed species swards are less affected by drought than mono-cultures and will also recover quicker once they receive moisture.
Requirements	Sow multi-species swards on at least 7% of the eligible hectares within the year, the farmer selects this agricultural practice as one of their two Eco scheme actions. e.g., a farmer with a 32-hectare holding must sow at least 2.24 hectares in a multi-species sward. If the farmer selects this action in a subsequent year, they must sow a further 7% of their eligible hectares.
Costing	Costing based on Income Foregone and Costs incurred.
Targeted at	This practice is targeted at all farmers but is likely to see greater uptake by more intensive farmers.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary, the area and, when applicable, other relevant obligations

The scheme will be open to all active farmers in the country; or groups of active farmers. Eligible beneficiaries will be required to submit a BISS application in each year of participation in the Eco-Scheme. Eligible beneficiaries will have to opt in or out of the Eco-Scheme on an annual basis.

Specific eligibility criteria are set out in table above that outlines the Eco-Scheme practices under the heading “Description of the commitments for eco-schemes”

Payment under the Eco-Scheme will only be for actions going beyond Conditionality and legislative requirements. The relevant baseline for each proposed action is set out below in Section 5.1.6.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description

GAEC07	Crop rotation in arable land, except for crops growing under water
GAEC08	Minimum share of agricultural area devoted to non-productive areas or features.Minimum share of at least 4% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow. Where a farmer commits to devote at least 7% of his/her arable land to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow, under an enhanced eco-scheme in accordance with Article 28(5a), the share to be attributed to compliance with this GAEC shall be limited to 3%.Minimum share of at least 7% of arable land at farm level if this includes also catch crops or nitrogen fixing crops, cultivated without the use of plant protection products, of which 3% shall be land lying fallow or non-productive features. Member States should use the weighting factor of 0,3 for catch crops.Retention of landscape features.Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season.As an option, measures for avoiding invasive plant species
SMR02	Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources: Articles 4 and 5

List of relevant mandatory national standards

None.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the eco-scheme (explain how the eco-scheme goes beyond the baseline, notably for SMR and national standards)

Action	**Relevant baseline element** **·Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition 'GAEC'** **·Statutory Management Requirement 'SMR'**	**The way in which the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements**
Space for Nature (non-productive areas) and landscape features	GAEC 8 – minimum 4% Space for Nature (non-productive) and Landscape Features are required across all Irish farms (with certain exceptions)	Action will require at least 7% Space for Nature (non-productive) and Landscape Features across participating Irish farms (even those with exceptions, if they wish to select this action).
Extensive Livestock production	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage	SMR 2 – Nitrates Directive	Requirements regarding SMR 2 may change following finalising of the fourth review of Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme which is currently on going. If necessary, requirements under this eco-practice will be adjusted to ensure it will build on Conditionality requirements.
Planting of Native Trees or Hedgerows	Not Applicable; these trees/hedgerows will not count towards GAEC 8	Not Applicable

	requirements in the year of application.	
Use of GPS controlled fertiliser spreaders/sprayers	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Soil Sampling and Appropriate Liming	SMR 2 – Nitrates Directive	Already required for nitrates derogation farmers. Farmers who are obliged to complete soil sampling as part of Ireland's Nitrates Action Plan will not be offered this option under the Eco-Scheme.
Planting of a break crop	GAEC 7	To go beyond baseline, Eco Scheme will require that at least 20% of the arable area of the holding is planted to a break crop(s) from a prescribed list in the year of the commitment.
Planting of Multi Species Swards	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

7 Range and amounts of support

Description

Farmers will receive an annual payment which will be a uniform unit amount. Payments will be based on additional costs incurred and income foregone in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b) of the CAP Strategic Plan Regulation. Income foregone will be calculated on Teagasc National Farm Survey data for the years 2016-2020. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

The eco-scheme budget has been ring fenced at 25% of Ireland's Direct Payments allocation. The annual indicative allocation for this intervention is €296,570,499, amounting to a total indicative financial allocation of €1,482,852,495 over the period 2023-2027.

The rates of payment will vary depending on uptake of the eco-scheme each year.

If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).**

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme.

[Figures subject to rounding.]

8 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

9 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

In accordance with Point (a), eligibility criteria for Eco-Scheme are clearly defined as all active farmers in the country; or groups of active farmers. Eligible beneficiaries will be required to submit a BISS application in each year of participation in the Eco-Scheme. Eligible beneficiaries will have to opt in or out of the Eco-Scheme on an annual basis. In order to qualify for payment, participants will have to achieve criteria specified in at least two agricultural practices.

In accordance with Point (b), Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

11 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)
51ECO01 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features	Uniform		R.19; R.22; R.31; R.34;
51ECO02 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features (enhanced)	Uniform		R.31; R.34;
51ECO03 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production	Uniform		R.22; R.31;
51ECO04 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for limiting chemical nitrogen	Uniform		R.22;
51ECO05 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of native trees/hedgerows	Uniform		R.31;
51ECO06 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of native trees/hedgerows (enhanced)	Uniform		R.31;
51ECO07 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha use of GPS Controlled Spreader/Sprayer	Uniform		R.19; R.22;
51ECO08 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for soil sampling and appropriate liming	Uniform		R.19; R.22;
51ECO09 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for enhanced crop diversification	Uniform		R.19; R.22;
51ECO10 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting a multi-species sward	Uniform		R.22;
51ECO11 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production (enhanced)	Uniform		R.22; R.31;

Explanation and Justification (including the flexibility)

51ECO01 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO02 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features (enhanced)

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO03 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO04 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for limiting chemical nitrogen

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of

payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO05 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of native trees/hedgerows

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO06 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of native trees/hedgerows (enhanced)

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO07 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha use of GPS Controlled Spreader/Sprayer

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands

(c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO08 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for soil sampling and appropriate liming

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO09 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for enhanced crop diversification

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO10 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting a multi-species sward

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme.

All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme.

Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7. The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare.

The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (**minimum rate of payment**). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 **(maximum rate of payment).** This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices.

The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (**planned rate of payment).** This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

51ECO11 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production (enhanced)

Costings for the individual actions which make the up the Eco-Scheme were developed in accordance with Article 31 (7) (b). They are based on the costs incurred by the farmer and income foregone as a result of participating in the Eco-Scheme. All actions have been costed on an income foregone/cost incurred basis using Teagasc National Farm Survey 2016-2020 data. These costings will be evaluated for adequacy and accuracy by an external independent agency (Teagasc), in accordance with Article 82.

Eco-Scheme participants will be compensated/partially compensated for the income foregone/cost incurred associated with a measure depending on uptake levels. Eco-Scheme participants will not receive more than the maximum costings of an agricultural practice regardless of uptake of the scheme. Values may be adjusted from year to year as described in Section 5.1.7.

The planned rate of payment (unit amount) will be €77 per hectare. The minimum rate of payment will be €66 per hectare. The maximum rate of payment will be €131 per hectare. The Eco-Scheme is a new intervention that each farmer will be able to opt in or opt out of each year. As such the number of hectares that will submitted for the scheme are not yet known. If all eligible farmers (c. 129,000 based on 2021 BPS applications) partake in the scheme and bring in all their eligible lands (c. 4.516 million hectares), the average rate of payment per hectare could be c. €66 (minimum rate of payment). If uptake is only half that (c. 65,000 farmers) bringing in 2.258 million hectares, the average payment rate per hectare could be c. €131 (maximum rate of payment). This maximum rate of payment will not exceed full compensation for the costs incurred and income foregone regardless of a farmer's choice within the list of available eco-scheme practices. The planned Eco-Scheme payment amount will be €77 per hectare (planned rate of payment). This is based on the assumption of an uptake of 85% of farmers participating in the Eco-Scheme. In light of recent stakeholder feedback and feedback from the European Commission, a further degressive rate of payment above a certain area may be developed.

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	**Financial Year**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total 2024 - 2028**
	Calendar Year	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**Total 2023 - 2027**
51ECO01 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
51ECO02 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features (enhanced)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO03 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO04 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for limiting chemical nitrogen	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO05 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of native trees/hedgerows	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
51ECO06 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of native trees/hedgerows (enhanced)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO07 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha use of GPS Controlled Spreader/Sprayer	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO08 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for soil sampling and appropriate liming	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO09 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for enhanced crop diversification	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO10 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting a multi-species sward	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO11 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production (enhanced)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.8 (unit: Hectares)	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	19,193,170.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	1,482,852,495.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						

CIS(32) - Coupled income support

51VCS - Protein Aid

Intervention Code (MS)	51VCS
Intervention Name	Protein Aid
Type of Intervention	CIS(32) - Coupled income support
Common Output Indicator	O.10. Number of hectares benefitting from coupled income support

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj1.N1	Support family farm income and address income disparities	Highest priority SO1	Yes
Obj1.N3	Support coupled income support for protein crops to encourage an increase in the domestic production	3rd Highest SO1	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.4 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality
R.6 Percentage of additional direct payments per hectare for eligible farms below average farm size (compared to average)
R.7 Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)
R.8 Share of farms benefitting from coupled income support for improving competitiveness, sustainability or quality

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

This intervention is designed to provide a direct financial support for Irish farmers growing eligible protein crops, thus providing greater certainty for growers of these crops, thereby improving the competitiveness of nationally grown legumes. As per Article 32(2) of the CSP Regulation, Member States shall not be required to demonstrate the difficulties encountered in relation to protein crops, as it is widely recognised that the production of protein crops is encountering serious difficulties in the Union.

The area of soya grown in Ireland is not expected to increase in the medium-term. Commercial trials were carried out in recent years but have not continued due to many problems with growing the crop here, not least climate and lack of available Plant Protection Products. In 2019, the area of soya reached 14 hectares but dropped back to 1ha in 2021. This reflects the serious challenges of growing the crop in Ireland.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary, the area and, when applicable, other relevant obligations

Eligible beneficiaries is defined as any BISS applicant that grows the crops eligible for support under the intervention. Eligible beneficiaries are required to submit a BISS application in each year of application, declaring the areas in which they are planting the eligible crops. The eligible crops for support under this intervention are peas, beans, lupins, soya and mixed cropping (protein/cereal mix).

The eligible crops are Beans (Vicia faba to include both Winter Beans and Spring Beans), Peas (Pisum sativum), Lupins (genus Lupinus) and Soyabean (Glycine max).

The Protein/Cereal Mix Crop is a crop that has a seed mix with protein crop seed accounting for at least 50% of the seeding rate and the remainder made up of a cereal seed. Eligible crops for the protein element of the seed mix are Beans, Peas and Lupins while eligible cereals are wheat, oats, barley, rye and triticale. A tolerance of 10% in absolute terms of a lower protein crop seed inclusion rate (i.e. not less than 40% protein crop element) will be permitted. Currently much of the seed for these crops are bought as straights and mixed by the farmer on the farm i.e. for a pea-barley mix the farmer would buy the peas and barley separately and mix on the farm. While information is limited, the range in sowing rates for the protein component is generally circa 50% of total weight of seed in the mix. There are a small amount of "ready to sow" protein/cereal mix crop seed on the market but availability has decreased significantly since Brexit due to cessation of imports from Britain. Along with field inspections, it would be a requirement to hold records of seed purchases as part of checks for protein/cereal mix crop to determine eligibility for the Protein Aid Scheme. It is proposed that protein/cereal mix crop would attract a payment of 50% of that for a full protein crop.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Range and amounts of support

Description

Financial support under this intervention is justified by the current economic returns for growing plant proteins. For example, these returns are not a competitive option when compared to the returns for native grown cereals and when compared to protein imports. In addition, experience of growing these crops in Ireland has shown that they can be particularly susceptible to poor returns on foot of external factors such as unfavourable weather conditions. For example, the 2017 production of peas, beans and lupins was almost 14,000 hectares. However, on foot of difficult weather conditions this area dropped to 8,400 hectares in 2018 and the area did not increase again in 2019. The area increased to approximately 13,735ha in 2020. However, this was due to very low winter sowings and a sharp demand for seed of all spring crops including, protein crops. Preliminary 2021 data is indicating a drop in the area sown to protein crops to just under 10,000ha. This variability in production levels is one of the factors in providing support under this intervention.

Given the experience with growing protein crops in recent years and the focus on the importance of such crops as referenced in *Ag Climatise*, it would be expected that the area grown will increase over the programming period. The target of 20,000 hectares is set in the context of what is achievable in the lifetime of this CAP programming period with reference to the overall total area which may theoretically be achievable in the longer term across the sector. As per Article 11 of the CSP Regulation, it is estimated that support will be provided under this intervention to not more than 50 hectares of soya per annum over the life of the CSP under this intervention.

The planned unit amount is justified on the basis of the competitiveness and production challenges as set out above, in addition to the range of benefits which underpin the logic for the intervention. The variability in production levels referenced above is also a relevant factor in relation to the envisaged

support rates for this intervention. The planned unit amount under this intervention varies from €583 to €350 per hectare for peas, beans, lupins, soya crops over the course of the intervention, and the protein/cereal mix crop will be paid at 50% rate of the full protein crops rate. The area of protein/cereal mix crop is relatively low and mainly adopted by the organic sector but there is scope to expand the area where support is provided. The area of protein/cereal mix crop to be supported is expected to be quite low, and as a result a separate output value is not planned (as per Article 102(5)). Taking the estimate/target of 12-20,000 hectares per year with an average planned rate of €583-€350 per hectare would lead to an increased budget of €7 million. A higher rate of payment, up to the maximum unit amount, would be utilised in years where the outputs does not reach the planned 20,000 hectares. In the earlier years of the intervention, the outputs are expected to be lower than 20,000 hectares

The maximum amount payable in a given year under this intervention varies per year is based on a flexibility of approximately 20%. The maximum unit amount is justified on the basis of high variable costs and low gross margins for such protein crops. In recent years, input costs for Spring Beans (Ireland's main protein crop) have not increased dramatically in comparison to other crops, primarily due to zero requirement for chemical nitrogenous fertilisers, which have increased hugely in cost. There is a chemical nitrogen requirement for Spring Malting Barley which has increased costs significantly. The value of output for beans has increased to €370/tonne while malting barley has increased to €380/tonne. However, as a result of output in terms of tonnes/ha for the bean crop being significantly lower than Spring Malting Barley, the gross margin for Spring Beans is consequently significantly lower. Please see table below where Gross margin has increased from €423 in 2020 to €718 in 2022 (May) between both crops. Fertiliser (input) prices have been taken into account above as have feed/food (output) prices and the gross margin is reflective of these changes.

	2021 Malting Barley (Incl straw)	2021 Spring Beans	2021 Beans - Barley	2021 Malting Barley (Incl straw)	2021 Spring Beans	2021 Beans - Barley	2022 Malting Barley (Incl straw)	2022 Spring Beans	2022 Beans - Barley
Total variable costs €/ha	1001	951	-50	1006	923	-83	1355	1008	-347
Gross margin (excl. Protein Payment)	599	176	-423	706	-232	-474	1745	1027	-718
Gross Margin (Incl. Protein Payment €500)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1745	1527	-218

The maximum rate for 2023 is the planned unit amount (€583) +20% = €700. This maximum unit amount is still less than the €718 gross margin from the above table. DAFM will review the maximum unit amount on an ongoing basis, taking expected gross margin figures into account.

The higher planned unit amount in 2023 is justified based on the above gross margin figures. The effect of this very large difference in gross margin of €718/ha, means that farmers will grow Spring Barley and not sow Spring Beans because Spring Barley is more profitable. The proposed planned unit amount of €583/ha in 2023 is to encourage farmers to sow protein crops such as Spring Beans.

The minimum unit amount payable in a given year is €300 per hectare for peas, beans, lupins, soya crops and €150 per hectare for protein/cereal mix crop. The minimum unit amount is justified on the basis of ensuring prudent financial management and the necessity to stay within the financial allocation.

8 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

Justification of the difficulty(ies) that the targeted sector(s)/production(s) or type(s) of farming therein undergo.

N/A

What is the aim of the intervention with regard to the targeted sector(s)/production(s) or type(s) of farming therein?

☒ to improve competitiveness

☐ to improve quality

☒ to improve sustainability'

How will the intervention address the identified difficulty(ies) by this aim (i.e. explanation about the targeting)?

This intervention is designed to provide a direct financial support for Irish farmers growing eligible protein crops, thus providing greater certainty for growers of these crops, thereby improving the competitiveness of nationally grown legumes.

Furthermore, knowledge and innovation related interventions will accompany the CIS intervention in order to address the identified difficulties (see section 3.5.9).

Supporting the production of protein crops builds on the range of environmental sustainability advantages linked to these crops, including: reduced reliance on imported protein sources; protein crops serve as a very valuable break crop in tillage crop rotations, and legumes play an important role in fixing nitrogen from the atmosphere resulting in reduced chemical nitrogen fertiliser usage.

What is (are) the sector(s) concerned?

Protein crops

Justification of the importance of the targeted sector(s)/production(s) or type(s) of farming therein

Currently the EU is heavily dependent on imports of plant proteins and according to the EU Agricultural Outlook for Markets and Income 2018-2030, demand for protein rich crops will be strong out to 2030. The European Commission's 2019/2020 EU Feed Protein Balance Sheet showed EU demand for crude protein at 84.4 million tonnes of which 18 million tonnes are imported annually.

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment highlight the need to support family farm income and address income disparities between agri-food systems. The SWOT analysis further noted that average income levels differ significantly across agricultural systems. Dairy farms recorded the highest average income levels at €66,828 in 2019, compared to €32,700 for tillage farms. The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment also point to the environmental credentials of the tillage sector and identify the climate action commitment to increase the area under tillage production above the current area of 300,000 hectares by 2030, producing more native grown grains and legumes for the livestock industry.

As noted in the SWOT analysis, Ireland currently has a particular reliance on imports of high protein feed materials, of which there is a significant deficit nationally. Therefore, potential exists for Ireland to support domestic production of protein crops such as legumes, which can be used to supply a greater proportion of the feed materials included in animal feed rations, ultimately reducing Ireland's reliance on imported feed materials. Supporting the production of protein crops builds on the range of advantages linked to these crops, including:

- Reduced reliance on imported protein sources: Generally, feed materials included in animals feed rations have some protein content ranging from low levels of 0.4% in vegetable oils and fat to 64.4% in fishmeal. The most commonly used high protein source in Irish feed mills is various forms of soya (up to 47% crude protein content). Ireland's *Roadmap towards Climate Neutrality – Ag Climatise* recognises the importance of supporting native grown legumes for the livestock industry.
- Protein crops serve as a very valuable break crop in tillage crop rotations.
- Protein crops provide an essential protein source for animal feed free from GMOs, thus underpinning the security of food production in the sector
- Legumes play an important role in fixing nitrogen from the atmosphere resulting in reduced chemical nitrogen fertiliser usage. This is consistent with the Farm to Fork strategy which targets reduction in fertiliser usage by 2030. Legumes do not require nitrogenous fertilisers while nitrogenous fertiliser usage can be reduced in subsequent crops due to residual Nitrogen being left in the soil from the legume crop.

Explanation how the intervention is consistent with the Water Framework Directive (i.e. 2000/60/EC).

The eligible crops for the protein scheme are all legumes which means they are nitrogen fixing crops. They have no requirement for nitrogenous chemical fertilisers which will reduce usage. The main crop competing with Spring Beans, Ireland's main protein crop, is Spring Barley which has a Nitrogen requirement of 165Kg Nitrogen per hectare (mostly supplied by chemical fertiliser). Protein crops also leave residual nitrogen in the ground after harvest thereby reducing the chemical nitrogen requirement in subsequent crops also.

If successful in the aims to maintain current areas and to increase protein area further to 20,000 hectares, then this will reduce overall chemical nitrogenous fertiliser usage and thereby helping to achieve the goals for reduction in nitrogen fertiliser usage.

The inclusion of protein/cereal mix crop would make organic farming more attractive to new entrants. Organic farming does not use chemical nitrogenous fertilisers.

This reduction in fertiliser usage has the potential to positively impact on water quality but the impact is extremely difficult to quantify because there are so many variables not least the weather. The tillage sector is the most efficient in terms of nitrogen use efficiency but there are still undoubtedly potential benefits to water quality in terms of potential reduction of Nitrate leaching into waterways etc.

EU WTO schedule limits on oilseeds (Blair House Agreement): Does the intervention target any of the crop(s) covered by the agreement (i.e. soybean, rapeseed, sunflower seed)?

☒ Yes ☐ No

	Claim Year				
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
rapeseed/colza					
sunflower (excluding confectionary sunflower seed)					
soya beans	50	50	50	50	50

Is the intervention financed, partly or completely, from the protein crop top up (maximum 2% in total) in accordance with Art. 96(3) of SPR?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If the intervention targets a mix between legumes and grasses: please indicate the minimium percentage of legumes in the mix.

N/A

Coupled income support granted to silkworms is an animal based support, where the use of 'head' as the support's basic unit requires prior clarification of the followings:

please clarify the conversion rate between this unit and 'head' (i.e. how many of this unit corresponds to '1 head'?) for the purpose of e.g. indicators.

N/A

It is possible to give further clarification in comment (e.g. the weight of eggs that a box must contain)

9 WTO compliance

Amber Box

Explanation of whether and, if so, how the intervention respects relevant provisions of Article 6.5 or Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (Blue Box)

Amber Box: No WTO conditions attached which would need to be specified in the CAP Plan.

11 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)
51VCS01 - Average payment per hectare in Protein Aid	Average		R.4; R.6; R.7; R.8;
51VCS02 - Average payment per hectare in Protein/Cereal Mix Crop	Average		R.4; R.6; R.7; R.8;

Explanation and Justification (including the flexibility)

51VCS01 - Average payment per hectare in Protein Aid

The planned unit amount is justified on the basis of the competitiveness and production challenges as set out above, in addition to the range of benefits which underpin the logic for the intervention. The variability in production levels referenced above is also a relevant factor in relation to the envisaged support rates for this intervention. The planned unit amount under this intervention is varies from €583 to €350 per hectare for peas, beans, lupins, soya crops over the course of the intervention. Taking the estimate/target of 12-20,000 hectares per year with an average planned rate of €583-€350 per hectare would lead to an increased budget of €7 million.

51VCS02 - Average payment per hectare in Protein/Cereal Mix Crop

The planned unit amount for the protein/cereal mix crop will be paid at 50% rate of the full protein crops rate (which varies between €583 to €350 per hectare for peas, beans, lupins, soya crops). The area of protein/cereal mix crop is relatively low and mainly adopted by the organic sector but there is scope to expand the area where support is provided. The area of protein/cereal mix crop to be supported is expected to be quite low.

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
51VCS01 - Average payment per hectare in Protein Aid	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	700.00	600.00	480.00	420.00	420.00	
	O.10 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
	Planned unit amount	583.00	500.00	400.00	350.00	350.00	
51VCS02 - Average payment per hectare in Protein/Cereal Mix Crop	Planned unit amount	291.50	250.00	200.00	150.00	175.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	350.00	300.00	240.00	210.00	210.00	
	O.10 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.10 (unit: Hectares)	12,007.00	14,000.00	17,500.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	83,507.00

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total 2024 - 2028
	Calendar Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	35,000,000.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article 31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						

5.2 Sectoral Interventions

Fruit and Vegetables

Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)
52FVPO01 - Average payment per Operational Programme	Average		R.10; R.11;

Description

52FVPO01 - Average payment per Operational Programme

Planned unit amount value for 2023 in euros: 1.6 million

Planned Unit Amounts - financial table with output

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
52FVPO01 - Average payment per Operational Programme	Planned unit amount (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	766,756.05	2,555,853.51	2,555,853.51	2,117,943.66	2,117,943.66	
	O.35 (unit: Operational Programmes)	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	3,067,024.21	10,223,414.03	10,223,414.03	10,589,718.32	10,589,718.32	44,693,288.91

INVRE(47(1)(a)) - - investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and other actions

52FVPO01 - Investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and analysis/forecasting/coordination

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO01
Intervention Name	Investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and analysis/forecasting/coordination
Type of Intervention	INVRE(47(1)(a)) - investments in tangible and intangible assets, research and experimental and innovative production methods and other actions
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland
NL	Nederland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland’s existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member based in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
BOOST(46(g)) boosting products' commercial value and quality, including improving product quality and developing products with a protected designation of origin or with a protected geographical indication or covered by Union or national quality schemes recognised by Member States
CLIMA(46(f)) contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
CONC(46(b)) concentration of supply and placing on the market of the products, including through direct marketing
EMPL(46(k)) improving the conditions of employment and ensuring compliance with the employer obligations as well as occupational health and safety requirements in accordance with Directives 89/391/EEC, 2009/104/EC and (EU) 2019/1152
PROD(46(a)) planning and organisation of production, adjusting production to demand, in particular with regard to quality and quantity, optimisation of production costs and returns on investments, stabilising producer prices
PROMO(46(e)) promoting, developing and implementing: (i) production methods and techniques that are respectful of the environment; (ii) pest and disease resilient production practices; (iii) animal health and welfare standards going beyond minimum requirements established under Union and national law; (iv) reduction of waste and environmentally sound use and management of by-products, including their re-usage and valorisation; (v) protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, in particular protection of water, soil and air.
REDE(46(d)) research into, and development of, sustainable production methods, including pest resilience, animal disease resistance and climate change resilience and mitigation, innovative practices and production techniques boosting economic competitiveness and bolstering market developments

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy

SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N1	Increase efficiency and competitiveness thru on farm investment + the adoption of new technologies	Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N2	Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce	2nd Highest SO3	Yes
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N5	Increase EE thru uptake of new technologies + facilitate the production of renewable energy sources	5th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

1) Investments in tangible and intangible assets to meet agri-environmental-climate objectives in the following areas:

(i) soil conservation, including the enhancement of soil carbon and soil structure, and the reduction of contaminants;

(ii) improvement of the use of and sound management of water, including water saving, water conservation and drainage

(iii) preventing damage caused by adverse climatic events and promoting the development and use of varieties, breeds and management practices adapted to changing climate conditions;

(iv) increasing energy saving, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy;

(vii) reducing emissions and waste, improving the use of by-products, including their reuse and valorisation, and the management of waste;

(viii) improving resilience against pests and reducing risks and impacts of pesticide use, including implementing Integrated Pest Management techniques;

(x) creating and maintaining habitats favourable to biodiversity;

e.g.

- replacement of existing energy generating/using/recovery systems (e.g. boilers, coolers) with a more efficient system or one using cleaner fuel (e.g., moving from oil to gas) or renewable energy
- increased insulation in production units, e.g., thermal screens in glasshouses, in mushroom houses or in packing sheds and / or offices.
- installation of solar panels and/or photovoltaic panels
- installation of wind turbines
- installation of Geothermal systems designed to reduce the overall requirement for other fuels for heating and/or cooling.
- installation of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) units
- installation of heat recovery systems and heat pump systems
- replacing existing energy generating or recovery system with a more efficient one
- upgrading of existing glasshouses, mushroom houses and other buildings such as chillrooms, PO offices/packhouses to the use of new low energy light technology.
- Investment in low/zero carbon farm construction

- replacement of existing pumps or fans that have fixed speed motors with pumps or fans that have variable speed on/off motors.
- Investment in machines and vehicles (ie those powered by internal combustion engines) (vehicles for internal use only) with appropriate devices that lead to a reduction in emissions e.g. replacement of a diesel forklift with an electric forklift
- Purchase of pheromones, predators, parasites and other biological agents to control pests
- Investment in sensor technology and cameras/in combination with drones for pest detection and in the context of crop health
- Investment in grafted plants to confer disease resistance and/or the use of disease resistant varieties
- Investment in disease resistant seed and plant material as well as varieties adapted to the site
- Investment in physical methods of weed control
- Investment in specialist ultra-low volume (ULV) crop sprayers
- The purchase of plant, biodegradable or reusable mulch
- Purchase of specific materials to improve soil quality and health.
- Investment in machinery for the collection, sterilisation and re use of mushroom casing
- The installation and/or improvement of systems that allow better management of water resources; e.g. Capture, treatment and reuse of excess irrigation water draining from glasshouse growing systems (or other buildings), installation of water-efficient irrigation systems, modernisation of existing irrigation systems, installation of water bunds etc
- Investment in equipment for the valorisation of waste streams
- Use of agricultural waste fertilization in the greenhouse to reduce the use of chemical-synthetic fertilizers e.g. Compost, green manure, "compost tea" (plant extract), etc.
- Purchase of equipment for irrigation
- Investment in modern high-performance technologies to reduce fertiliser use
- Investment in meters and sensors for site-specific application of fertilisers (e.g. purchase of chlorophyll meters / nitrogen sensors)
- Investment in alternative labelling machinery that can save packaging material
- Investments in the processing of plant residues such as composting plants, biodigesters, biomass composting plants and compost turners
- Acquisition of equipment to convert fruit and vegetable waste into raw materials to improve the circular economy

Such investments shall pursue the aims in Article 12(1) of 2022/126[BL(1] and objectives (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), (g) and (i) in Article 46 of 2021/2115.

Such investments will contribute to a number of result indicators. A final list of result indicators and associated target values will be notified once OPs are approved. The CSP will be amended based on the content of these OPs, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included.

These investments will contribute to addressing Obj4.N1 Obj4.N4 Obj4.N5. identified in Ireland’s Needs Assessment. Such investments will also contribute to the sectoral objectives set out in Art.46(e) and (f).

2) Investments in tangible and intangible assets in areas to meet a PO’s commercial objectives i.e.
(xi) improving product quality e.g.

- investments in pack-houses, handling facilities and market preparation facilities
- investment in and personnel costs associated with use of outdoor fleece, foil or foil tunnel systems

- purchase of computer equipment and of software (including mobile elements) aimed at maintaining or improving product quality

and other areas specified as:

(xiv) enhancing market orientation both in the short and long term e.g.

- Investment in product-specific washing, sorting and packaging systems
- Investment in combined harvesting, sorting and packaging machines
- The creation and/or development of a marketing department at the PO.
- Purchase of weighing and labelling machines
- Investment in of equipment for processing fruit and vegetables
- Purchase of fruit and vegetable processing equipment
- Purchase of freezing and drying equipment
- Investment in containers for harvesting, internal transport and storage of produce.
- Investment in websites and leaflets, social media campaigns
- IT systems investments, development or adaptation of software for marketing purposes
- Investments in shares of companies contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the PO;

(xv) planning of production and optimising production costs e.g.

- purchase of computer equipment and of software (including subscription-based software) for production planning
- construction of glasshouses, polytunnels, production/processing facilities, collective storage facilities and mushroom tunnels
- establishing new orchards
- raising mushroom tunnel height to install additional shelves
- investment in fruit and vegetable processing equipment
- investments in growing systems

(xvi) training facilities and courses e.g.

- Equipping of dedicated training facilities for members (furnishings, audio visual presentation equipment, demonstration units)
- hiring of suitable premises as required for specific courses
- Creation of bespoke personnel training material e.g. to improve production, quality etc.

(xvii) robotics and labour-saving devices e.g.

- Purchase of equipment which leads to the automation of/automates the picking, packing and/or processing of the product

These investments will contribute to addressing Obj.2 N1 and Obj.3 N2 identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment. Such investments will also contribute to the sectoral objectives set out in Art.46(a), (b), (c), (g), (h), (i) and (f).

3) Actions in research and experimental and innovative production methods in the areas of:

(i) soil conservation, including the enhancement of soil carbon and soil structure, and the reduction of contaminants e.g.

- developing new substrates

(ii) improvement of the use of and sound management of water, including water saving, water conservation and drainage;

(iii) preventing damage caused by adverse climatic events and promoting the development and use of varieties, breeds and management practices adapted to changing climate conditions;

(iv) increasing energy saving, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy;

(v) ecological packaging

(vii) reducing emissions and waste, improving the use of by-products, including their reuse and valorisation, and the management of waste; e.g.

- Valorisation of spent mushroom compost

(viii) improving resilience against pests and reducing risks and impacts of pesticide use, including implementing Integrated Pest Management techniques;

(x) creating and maintaining habitats favourable to biodiversity;

(xi) improving product quality e.g.

- Improvements in storage procedures

(xii) improving genetic resources;

(xvii) robotics and labour saving devices; e.g.

- Automated mushroom pickers
- development of bespoke processing equipment

Such actions to include participation in conferences and seminars, purchase of reports in order to inform research activities and trialling e.g. trialling new production methods including sustainable production methods, new products and trialling potential labour saving devices for suitability.

Actions in research and experimental and innovative production methods in areas (i) to (v), (vii), (viii), and (x) may contribute to either the 2% R&D ringfencing or 15% expenditure on agri-environmental-climate objectives at the discretion of the PO.

Research actions may be outsourced.

These actions will contribute to addressing Obj.2 N1, Obj.3 N2 Obj4.N1 Obj4.N4 and Obj4.N5 identified in Ireland's Needs Assessment. Research actions will also contribute to the sectoral objective set out in Art.46(d), (e), and (f).

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

The expected reduction in energy used will be assessed ex-ante on the basis of technical specifications; the expected reduction in energy use must be at least 15%.

Support for investments in tangible assets consisting of systems which generate energy are eligible provided that the amount of energy generated does not exceed the amount of energy that can be used on a yearly basis for the normal activities of the beneficiary, such calculation to be checked at the end of the OP.

In cases of investment relating to irrigation for any new or upgrade of existing irrigation equipment that is funded, water meters must be installed to monitor the amount of water usage. Water consumption must be monitored by the applicant and a log of this must be retained for a period of five years.

An investment in an improvement to an existing irrigation installation or element of irrigation infrastructure is eligible only if it is assessed before aid is awarded as offering potential water savings of a minimum of between 5% and 25% according to the technical parameters of the existing installations or infrastructure, a technical report must justify this claim and be submitted with your application.

Investments in tangible and intangible assets to meet agri-environmental-climate objectives and Investments in tangible and intangible assets in areas to meet a PO's commercial objectives must be made at the premises of the PO or, where relevant, the member of the PO.

The expected benefit and additional impact of Investments in tangible and intangible assets to meet agri-environmental-climate objectives must be demonstrated ex ante and presented with the submission of the OP or any submitted amendment.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

Support for investments in tangible and intangible assets, including those under leasing contracts, may be financed in one amount or in instalments that were approved, where relevant, in the operational programme.

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of a particular supported intervention or action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Investments in tangible and intangible assets may be sourced from Third Countries.

Specific Additional Costs limitations as per EU 2022/126 Annex II (1) do not apply to Research actions to meet agri-enviro-climate or quality objectives

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

The fiscal depreciation period for Investments in tangible and intangible assets to meet agri-environmental-climate objectives and Investments in tangible and intangible assets in areas to meet a PO's commercial objectives shall be 5 years for moveable items and 30 years for buildings.

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Investments in tangible and intangible assets and research and experimental and innovative production meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. Additionally, payments cover only costs incurred/income forgone under the relevant paragraph 12 of WTO Annex 2.

ADVI1(47(1)(b)) - - advisory services and technical assistance, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the conditions of employment, employer obligations and occupational health and safety

52FVPO02 - Advisory Services and Technical Assistance

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO02
Intervention Name	Advisory Services and Technical Assistance
Type of Intervention	ADVI1(47(1)(b)) - advisory services and technical assistance, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the conditions of employment, employer obligations and occupational health and safety
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland’s existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
BOOST(46(g)) boosting products' commercial value and quality, including improving product quality and developing products with a protected designation of origin or with a protected geographical indication or covered by Union or national quality schemes recognised by Member States
CLIMA(46(f)) contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
CONC(46(b)) concentration of supply and placing on the market of the products, including through direct marketing
PROD(46(a)) planning and organisation of production, adjusting production to demand, in particular with regard to quality and quantity, optimisation of production costs and returns on investments, stabilising producer prices
PROMO(46(e)) promoting, developing and implementing: (i) production methods and techniques that are respectful of the environment; (ii) pest and disease resilient production practices; (iii) animal health and welfare standards going beyond minimum requirements established under Union and national law; (iv) reduction of waste and environmentally sound use and management of by-products, including their re-usage and valorisation; (v) protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, in particular protection of water, soil and air.
REDE(46(d)) research into, and development of, sustainable production methods, including pest resilience, animal disease resistance and climate change resilience and mitigation, innovative practices and production techniques boosting economic competitiveness and bolstering market developments

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
ObjAKIS.N2	Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition	2nd Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

1)Provision of advisory services or technical assistance on

- Optimising inputs;
- Improving quality;
- Planning of production

- Promotional and Communication best practices
- Enhancing market orientation both in the short and long term
- Plant health issues;
- Food safety and hygiene issues;
- Preparing for certification under quality assurance schemes;
- Harvesting;
- Human resource management;
- Environmental issues, such as irrigation, heating, use of fertilisers and plant protection products;
- Sustainable use of crop protection products;
- Adaptation and mitigation of climate change;
- Varieties suitable for organic production in Irish conditions and organic production methods;
- Integrated production methods;
- Development of business plans and/or marketing strategies.
- Farm succession planning
- Health and safety for employees

2)Energy audits

Such actions may be outsourced to consultancies or service providers headquartered in the EU or provided by employees of the PO or its members. Where actions are provided by employees of the PO or its members, such employees must be suitably qualified.

Such actions will contribute to a number of result indicators. A final list of result indicators and associated target values will be notified once OPs are approved. The CSP will be amended based on the content of these OPs, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included.

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or

action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

Not applicable.

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Advisory services and technical assistance meet the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. The PO intervention includes but is not limited to support for research, pest and disease control, training support and advisory services as well as marketing and promotion services. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme. Additionally, payments cover only costs incurred/income forgone under the relevant paragraph 12 of WTO Annex 2.

TRAINCO(47(1)(c)) - - training including coaching and exchange of best practices, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as the use of organised trading platforms and commodity exchanges on the spot and futures market

52FVPO03 - Training; Including Personalised Advice and Best Practices

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO03
Intervention Name	Training; Including Personalised Advice and Best Practices
Type of Intervention	TRAINCO(47(1)(c)) - training including coaching and exchange of best practices, in particular concerning sustainable pest and disease control techniques, sustainable use of plant protection and animal health products, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as the use of organised trading platforms and commodity exchanges on the spot and futures market
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland’s existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
CLIMA(46(f)) contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
CONC(46(b)) concentration of supply and placing on the market of the products, including through direct marketing
CONS(46(i)) increasing consumption of the products of the fruit and vegetables sector, whether in a fresh or processed form
PROD(46(a)) planning and organisation of production, adjusting production to demand, in particular with regard to quality and quantity, optimisation of production costs and returns on investments, stabilising producer prices
PROMO(46(e)) promoting, developing and implementing: (i) production methods and techniques that are respectful of the environment; (ii) pest and disease resilient production practices; (iii) animal health and welfare standards going beyond minimum requirements established under Union and national law; (iv) reduction of waste and environmentally sound use and management of by-products, including their re-usage and valorisation; (v) protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, in particular protection of water, soil and air.

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP

Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
ObjAKIS.N2	Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition	2nd Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

Provision of training, coaching and best practice exchange to increase employee and producer competence on e.g.

- Optimising inputs;
- Improving quality;
- Planning of production
- Promotional and Communication best practices
- Enhancing market orientation both in the short and long term

- Plant health issues;
- Food safety and hygiene issues;
- Preparing for certification under quality assurance schemes;
- Harvesting;
- Human resource management;
- Environmental issues, such as irrigation, heating, use of fertilisers and plant protection products;
- Sustainable use of crop protection products;
- Adaptation and mitigation of climate change;
- Varieties suitable for organic production in Irish conditions and organic production methods;
- Integrated production methods;
- Development of business plans and/or marketing strategies.
- Farm succession planning
- Health and safety for employees
- Promoting the setting-up of new producer organisations, merging existing ones or enabling individual producers to join an existing producer organisation as well as advising producers groups on their way to reach the recognition as producer organisation pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013

Such investments will contribute to a number of result indicators. A final list of result indicators and associated target values will be notified once OPs are approved. The CSP will be amended based on the content of these OPs, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included.

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

The coaching provider shall be a producer organisation, association of producer organisations, transnational producer organisation, transnational association of producer organisations or producer group. The coaching provider shall benefit from the support for the coaching intervention

The coaching recipient shall be a producer organisation, association of producer organisations, transnational producer organisation, transnational association of producer organisations or producer group, the individual producers members or non-members of a producer organisation, their associations or a producer group.

Training actions can be outsourced to consultancies or service providers headquartered in the EU or provided by employees of or members of the PO. Where training is provided by employees, such employees must be suitably qualified.

Coaching actions cannot be outsourced and must be provided by employees or members of a PO.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will

have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

Not applicable.

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Training including coaching and exchange of best practice meet the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. The PO scheme includes but is not limited to support for research, pest and disease control, training support and advisory services as well as marketing and promotion services. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

ORGAN(47(1)(d)) - - organic or integrated production

52FVPO04 - Organic or Integrated Production

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO04
Intervention Name	Organic or Integrated Production
Type of Intervention	ORGAN(47(1)(d)) - organic or integrated production
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
BOOST(46(g)) boosting products' commercial value and quality, including improving product quality and developing products with a protected designation of origin or with a protected geographical indication or covered by Union or national quality schemes recognised by Member States
CLIMA(46(f)) contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
CONC(46(b)) concentration of supply and placing on the market of the products, including through direct marketing

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will

meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

- The specific costs related to organic production
- The specific costs related to integrated production, e.g:,
    - Use of pheromones, predators, parasites and other biological agents to control pests
    - Use of sensor technology and cameras/in combination with drones for pest detection and in the context of crop health
    - Use of grafted plants to confer disease resistance and/or the use of disease resistant varieties
    - Use of disease resistant seed and plant material as well as varieties adapted to the site
    - Use of physical methods of weed control
    - The installation of plant, biodegradable or reusable mulch;
    - The establishment of plant mulching in orchards;
    - Composting and re-use of plant material
    - Use of agricultural waste fertilization in the greenhouse to reduce the use of chemical-synthetic fertilizers e.g. Compost, green manure, "compost tea" (plant extract), etc.
    - Use of resistant seed and plant material as well as varieties adapted to the site

Production may not be outsourced.

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will

have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of a particular supported intervention or action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Specific costs shall mean the additional costs, calculated as the difference between the conventional production costs and the costs actually incurred, and income foregone resulting from an action excluding additional income and costs savings.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

Not applicable.

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The organic and integrated production intervention in the fruit and vegetable sector meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

TRANS(47(1)(e)) - - actions to increase the sustainability and efficiency of transport and of storage of products

52FVPO05 - Increase sustainability and efficiency of transport and storage of products

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO05
Intervention Name	Increase sustainability and efficiency of transport and storage of products
Type of Intervention	TRANS(47(1)(e)) - actions to increase the sustainability and efficiency of transport and of storage of products
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland
NL	Nederland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
BOOST(46(g)) boosting products' commercial value and quality, including improving product quality and developing products with a protected designation of origin or with a protected geographical indication or covered by Union or national quality schemes recognised by Member States
CLIMA(46(f)) contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
CONC(46(b)) concentration of supply and placing on the market of the products, including through direct marketing
PROMO(46(e)) promoting, developing and implementing: (i) production methods and techniques that are respectful of the environment; (ii) pest and disease resilient production practices; (iii) animal health and welfare standards going beyond minimum requirements established under Union and national law; (iv) reduction of waste and environmentally sound use and management of by-products, including their re-usage and valorisation; (v) protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, in particular protection of water, soil and air.

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N1	Increase efficiency and competitiveness thru on farm investment + the adoption of new technologies	Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes

Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions

- Conversion of conventional machines and vehicles (i.e. those powered by internal combustion engines) (vehicles for internal use only) with appropriate devices that lead to a reduction in emissions
- Development of sustainable logistics and storage options to reduce CO2 emissions

Such actions will contribute to a number of result indicators. A final list of result indicators and associated target values will be notified once OPs are approved. The CSP will be amended based on the content of these OPs, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included. It is anticipated that R.16 will be linked to this intervention at a minimum.

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of a particular supported intervention or action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

Not applicable.

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Sustainable transport and storage intervention in the fruit and vegetable sector meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

PROMO(47(1)(f)) - - promotion, communication and marketing including actions and activities aimed in particular at raising consumer awareness about the Union quality schemes and the importance of healthy diets, and at diversification and consolidation of markets

52FVPO06 - Promotion, Communication and Marketing

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO06
Intervention Name	Promotion, Communication and Marketing
Type of Intervention	PROMO(47(1)(f)) - promotion, communication and marketing including actions and activities aimed in particular at raising consumer awareness about the Union quality schemes and the importance of healthy diets, and at diversification and consolidation of markets
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
BOOST(46(g)) boosting products' commercial value and quality, including improving product quality and developing products with a protected designation of origin or with a protected geographical indication or covered by Union or national quality schemes recognised by Member States
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
MARKET(46(h)) promotion and marketing of the products

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
Obj9.N4	Promote the consumption of safe food + increase awareness of animal health and welfare standards	4th Highest SO9	Partially

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold

R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

1) Promotion and communication actions and activities aimed in particular at raising consumer awareness about the Union quality schemes and the importance of healthy diets and PO brands or trademarks e.g.

- Advertising, and promotional campaigns through TV, print, online etc.

2)Marketing actions (placing the product on the market) aimed at diversification and consolidation of markets e.g.

- The Marketing of the PO's Produce by an outsourced marketing department
- Development of PO brands
- Market research, including production patterns, market dynamics and consumption trends;
- Development of innovative and value-added products to meet consumer demands (post research stage);
- The administrative and legal costs of restructuring POs or creating transnational producer organisations or transnational associations of producer organisations;

-
Such actions can be outsourced to Third Countries.

-
Such actions and activities must pursue one of the objectives listed in Article 14 of DA 2022/126

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of a particular supported intervention or action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Where interventions or actions are outsourced, the personnel costs must be independently assessed and verified as part of the overall costs.

For promotional and communication activities, the expenditure paid for administrative and personnel costs directly incurred by the beneficiaries shall not exceed 50 % of the overall cost of the action.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

Not applicable

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The promotional, communication and marketing intervention in the fruit and vegetable sector meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

QUAL(47(1)(g)) - - implementation of Union and national quality schemes

52FVPO07 - Implementing Union and national quality schemes

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO07
Intervention Name	Implementing Union and national quality schemes
Type of Intervention	QUAL(47(1)(g)) - implementation of Union and national quality schemes
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland
NL	Nederland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
BOOST(46(g)) boosting products' commercial value and quality, including improving product quality and developing products with a protected designation of origin or with a protected geographical indication or covered by Union or national quality schemes recognised by Member States
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
CONC(46(b)) concentration of supply and placing on the market of the products, including through direct marketing
MARKET(46(h)) promotion and marketing of the products
PROMO(46(e)) promoting, developing and implementing: (i) production methods and techniques that are respectful of the environment; (ii) pest and disease resilient production practices; (iii) animal health and welfare standards going beyond minimum requirements established under Union and national law; (iv) reduction of waste and environmentally sound use and management of by-products, including their re-usage and valorisation; (v) protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, in particular protection of water, soil and air.

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
Obj9.N4	Promote the consumption of safe food + increase awareness of animal health and welfare standards	4th Highest SO9	Partially

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:
Obtaining and maintaining certification for Quality Assurance Schemes and the personnel costs associated with that e.g.

- Costs for the incoming inspection area,
- outgoing goods inspection,
- quality control on the production area

Such actions can be outsourced to consultancies or service providers headquartered in the EU or provided by employees of the PO or its members.

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Where interventions or actions are outsourced, the personnel costs must be independently assessed and verified as part of the overall costs.

Full costs are eligible for aid as this is not a quality improvement measure (as outlined in DA 2022/126 Annex III clause 1)

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The implementing and maintaining Union and national quality schemes intervention meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

TRACE(47(1)(h)) - - implementation of traceability and certification systems, in particular the monitoring of the quality of products sold to final consumers

52FVPO08 - Implementation of traceability and certification systems

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO08
Intervention Name	Implementation of traceability and certification systems
Type of Intervention	TRACE(47(1)(h)) - implementation of traceability and certification systems, in particular the monitoring of the quality of products sold to final consumers
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
BOOST(46(g)) boosting products' commercial value and quality, including improving product quality and developing products with a protected designation of origin or with a protected geographical indication or covered by Union or national quality schemes recognised by Member States
COMP(46(c)) improvement of medium- and long-term-competitiveness, in particular through modernisation
CONC(46(b)) concentration of supply and placing on the market of the products, including through direct marketing
PROMO(46(e)) promoting, developing and implementing: (i) production methods and techniques that are respectful of the environment; (ii) pest and disease resilient production practices; (iii) animal health and welfare standards going beyond minimum requirements established under Union and national law; (iv) reduction of waste and environmentally sound use and management of by-products, including their re-usage and valorisation; (v) protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, in particular protection of water, soil and air.

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
Obj9.N4	Promote the consumption of safe food + increase awareness of animal health and welfare standards	4th Highest SO9	Partially

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold

R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

- Implementing product traceability systems (over and above current statutory requirements)
- Cost of certification audits

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Where interventions or actions are outsourced, the personnel costs must be independently assessed and verified as part of the overall costs.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Implementing traceability schemes intervention meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

CLIMA(47(1)(i)) - - actions to mitigate and to adapt to climate change

52FVPO09 - Climate change mitigation

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO09
Intervention Name	Climate change mitigation
Type of Intervention	CLIMA(47(1)(i)) - actions to mitigate and to adapt to climate change
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
CLIMA(46(f)) contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation
MARKET(46(h)) promotion and marketing of the products
PROD(46(a)) planning and organisation of production, adjusting production to demand, in particular with regard to quality and quantity, optimisation of production costs and returns on investments, stabilising producer prices
PROMO(46(e)) promoting, developing and implementing: (i) production methods and techniques that are respectful of the environment; (ii) pest and disease resilient production practices; (iii) animal health and welfare standards going beyond minimum requirements established under Union and national law; (iv) reduction of waste and environmentally sound use and management of by-products, including their re-usage and valorisation; (v) protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, in particular protection of water, soil and air.
REDE(46(d)) research into, and development of, sustainable production methods, including pest resilience, animal disease resistance and climate change resilience and mitigation, innovative practices and production techniques boosting economic competitiveness and bolstering market developments

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N5	Increase EE thru uptake of new technologies + facilitate the production of renewable energy sources	5th Highest for SO 4	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support to cover specific costs can be provided for the following actions:

- Actions to reduce greenhouse gases
- The use of specific materials against erosion
- The use of specific materials to improve soil quality and health.
- Specific costs associated with the collection, sterilisation and re use of mushroom casing
- The specific costs associated with the treatment and reuse of excess irrigation water draining from glasshouse growing systems
- Environmental management of green waste, at the farm level and the packaging area. e.g Interventions aimed at reducing the amount of waste produced, re-using it wherever possible and biodegrading it where re-use is not feasible.

Such actions will contribute to a number of result indicators. A final list of result indicators and associated target values will be notified once OPs are approved. The CSP will be amended based on the content of these OPs, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Where interventions or actions are outsourced, the personnel costs must be independently assessed and verified as part of the overall costs.

Specific costs shall mean the additional costs, calculated as the difference between the conventional production costs and the costs actually incurred, and income foregone resulting from an action excluding additional income and costs savings.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The climate change mitigation intervention meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

SETUP(47(2)(a)) - - setting up, filling and refilling of mutual funds by producer organisations and by associations of producer organisations recognised under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, or under Article 67(7) of this Regulation

52FVPO10 - Mutual Funds

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO10
Intervention Name	Mutual Funds
Type of Intervention	SETUP(47(2)(a)) - setting up, filling and refilling of mutual funds by producer organisations and by associations of producer organisations recognised under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, or under Article 67(7) of this Regulation
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
RISK(46(j)) crisis prevention and risk management, aimed at avoiding and dealing with crises in the markets of the relevant sector

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors
R.5 Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place.

This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

- the administrative costs of setting up mutual funds
- the financial contributions to replenish mutual funds, following the compensation paid to producer members who experience a severe drop in their income
- the interest repayments on loans taken out to set up or replenish mutual funds

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

·A Producer Organisation shall seek approval from the Irish authorities on all payments of compensation from the mutual fund, providing the necessary justification and evidence that a severe drop in income has occurred.

·The mutual fund could be triggered if the PO or producer member suffers a drop of 20% in VMP when compared to the average of the VMP for the previous three years or a three- year average based on the preceding five-year period excluding the highest and lowest entry.

·The Irish Authorities may consider the triggering of the mutual fund in exceptional cases where the fall does not reach the criteria as set out above but, where equally there is a severe impact or sudden drop in income.

·The eligible expenditure submitted for support under a mutual fund measure shall not comprise more than 20% of the expenditure under an operational programme.

·A PO must have a transparent and fair policy towards payments into the fund by its producer members and compensations paid from the fund to its producer members. These rules must be laid down in the PO statutes.

·All compensation paid to growers and financial contributions to replenish mutual funds must be done through the operational fund bank account.

·The payment of compensation from a mutual fund to a producer member who suffers a severe drop

·A failure by the PO to disclose all necessary information required for the activation of the mutual fund and any misuse of the fund will result in recovery of any aid paid, with interest or the total disallowance of any amount claimed but not paid.

·A PO may finance or top up a mutual fund by way of a commercial loan, in order to support payment of compensation to PO member(s). In cases where a loan is used to finance or top up a mutual fund no distinction is made between the basic capital and loans taken out in respect of the replenishment of the fund following compensate to growers. Interest repayments on loans are also eligible for EU aid.

·Commercial loan taken out to finance and or top up mutual funds shall not have duration longer than the operational programme concerned.

·The support for the administrative cost of setting up mutual funds shall comprise both the Union financial assistance and the contribution from the producer organisation. The total amount of that support shall not exceed 20 %, 16 % or 8 % of the contribution of the producer organisation to the mutual fund in the first, second and third year of its operation, respectively.

·A producer organisation may receive support for the administrative cost of setting up mutual funds only once and only within the first three years of the operation of the mutual fund. Where a producer organisation only asks for that support in the second or the third year of operation of the mutual funds, the support shall be 16 % or 8 % of the contribution of the producer organisation to the mutual fund in the second and third year of its operation, respectively.

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The crisis prevention and mitigation intervention meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

ORCHA(47(2)(d)) - - replanting of orchards or olive groves where that is necessary following mandatory grubbing up for health or phytosanitary reasons on the instruction of the Member State competent authority or to adapt to climate change

52FVPO11 - Replanting Orchards

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO11
Intervention Name	Replanting Orchards
Type of Intervention	ORCHA(47(2)(d)) - replanting of orchards or olive groves where that is necessary following mandatory grubbing up for health or phytosanitary reasons on the instruction of the Member State competent authority or to adapt to climate change
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland
NL	Nederland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland’s existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
EMPL(46(k)) improving the conditions of employment and ensuring compliance with the employer obligations as well as occupational health and safety requirements in accordance with Directives 89/391/EEC, 2009/104/EC and (EU) 2019/1152
RISK(46(j)) crisis prevention and risk management, aimed at avoiding and dealing with crises in the markets of the relevant sector

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers’ share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors
R.5 Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

- replanting of orchards where that is necessary following mandatory grubbing up for health or phytosanitary reasons
- replanting of orchards on the instruction of the member state competent authority
- replanting of orchards to adapt to climate change

Such actions shall comply with Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council when implementing these interventions.

Such actions will contribute to a number of result indicators but in particular R.14. A final list of result indicators and associated target values will be notified once OPs are approved. The CSP will be amended based on the content of these OPs, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included.

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of

SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

The expenditure for replanting of orchards shall not exceed 20 % of the total expenditure under each operational programme or relevant intervention

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Replanting of orchards intervention meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

WITHD(47(2)(f)) - - market withdrawal for free-distribution or other destinations, including where necessary processing to facilitate such withdrawal

52FVPO12 - Free Distribution

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO12
Intervention Name	Free Distribution
Type of Intervention	WITHD(47(2)(f)) - market withdrawal for free-distribution or other destinations, including where necessary processing to facilitate such withdrawal
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland
NL	Nederland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
RISK(46(j)) crisis prevention and risk management, aimed at avoiding and dealing with crises in the markets of the relevant sector

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors
R.5 Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place.

This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:
·market withdrawal for free distribution, including where necessary processing to facilitate such withdrawal

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Transport costs shall be fixed in the terms and conditions of the scheme.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Amber Box

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

N/A

HARIN(47(2)(i)) - - harvest and production insurance that contributes to safeguarding producers' incomes where there are losses as a consequence of natural disasters, adverse climatic events, diseases or pest infestations while ensuring that beneficiaries take necessary risk prevention measures

52FVPO13 - Harvest and Production Insurance

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO13
Intervention Name	Harvest and Production Insurance
Type of Intervention	HARIN(47(2)(i)) - harvest and production insurance that contributes to safeguarding producers' incomes where there are losses as a consequence of natural disasters, adverse climatic events, diseases or pest infestations while ensuring that beneficiaries take necessary risk prevention measures
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland
NL	Nederland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland’s existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
RISK(46(j)) crisis prevention and risk management, aimed at avoiding and dealing with crises in the markets of the relevant sector

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers’ share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors
R.5 Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation’s Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will

meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

- Crop insurance to cover loss of yield, market loss and similar risks of producer organizations and/or their members.
- Credit insurance to cover the cost of bad debt in case a customer does not pay

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Where interventions or actions are outsourced, the personnel costs must be independently assessed and verified as part of the overall costs.

Harvest and production insurance interventions shall not cover insurance payments which compensate producers for more than 100 % of the income loss suffered, taking into account any compensation the producers obtain from other support or insurance schemes related to the insured risk.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Amber Box

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

N/A

COACH(47(2)(j)) - - coaching to other producer organisations and associations of producer organisations recognised under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 or under Article 67(7) of this Regulation, or to individual producers

52FVPO14 - Coaching For Risk Management

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO14
Intervention Name	Coaching For Risk Management
Type of Intervention	COACH(47(2)(j)) - coaching to other producer organisations and associations of producer organisations recognised under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 or under Article 67(7) of this Regulation, or to individual producers
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland
NL	Nederland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
RISK(46(j)) crisis prevention and risk management, aimed at avoiding and dealing with crises in the markets of the relevant sector

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors
R.5 Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place.

This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:

1)Actions which enable the exchange of best practices related to crisis prevention and management interventions helping the beneficiary to benefit from experience with implementation of crisis prevention and risk management interventions e.g.

- Facilitated knowledge sharing meetings

2)Actions which create networking opportunities for coaching providers and recipients, in particular marketing channels as a means of crisis prevention and management

Such investments will contribute to a number of result indicators but in particular R.1. A final list of result indicators and associated target values will be notified once OPs are approved. The CSP will be amended based on the content of these OPs, and any extra result indicators to which contributions will be made (which were not identifiable during the planning stage) will be included.

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

The coaching provider shall be a producer organisation, association of producer organisations, transnational producer organisation, transnational association of producer organisations or producer group. The coaching provider shall benefit from the support for the coaching intervention

The coaching recipient shall be a producer organisation, association of producer organisations, transnational producer organisation, transnational association of producer organisations or producer group, the individual producers members or non-members of a producer organisation, their associations or a producer group.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of

SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

All eligible costs related to the coaching activity shall be paid to the coaching provider which includes this intervention in its operational programme.

Coaching cannot be outsourced.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Sectoral intervention in the fruit and vegetable sector meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. The PO scheme includes but is not limited to support for research, pest and disease control, training support and advisory services as well as marketing and promotion services. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

3COUN(47(2)(k)) - - implementation and management of third-country sanitary and phytosanitary requirements in the territory of the Union to facilitate access to third-country markets

52FVPO15 - Phytosanitary and sanitary requirements

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO15
Intervention Name	Phytosanitary and sanitary requirements
Type of Intervention	3COUN(47(2)(k)) - implementation and management of third-country sanitary and phytosanitary requirements in the territory of the Union to facilitate access to third-country markets
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
RISK(46(j)) crisis prevention and risk management, aimed at avoiding and dealing with crises in the markets of the relevant sector

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:
·Implementation of phytosanitary and sanitary requirements to facilitate access to the UK market

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Where interventions or actions are outsourced, the personnel costs must be independently assessed and verified as part of the overall costs.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance
Green Box
Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO
Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The intervention to implement third country phytosanitary and sanitary requirements meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

COMM(47(2)(l)) - - communication actions aiming at raising awareness and informing consumers

52FVPO16 - Communication Actions

Intervention Code (MS)	52FVPO16
Intervention Name	Communication Actions
Type of Intervention	COMM(47(2)(l)) - communication actions aiming at raising awareness and informing consumers
Common Output Indicator	O.35. Number of supported operational programmes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **Transnational**

Code	Description
NL	Nederland
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

One of Ireland's existing POs supported under the previous iteration of this intervention has transnational elements, with a member in the Netherlands.

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description
RISK(46(j)) crisis prevention and risk management, aimed at avoiding and dealing with crises in the markets of the relevant sector

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP
R.11/Fruit and Vegetables Share of value of marketed production by producer organisations or producer groups with operational programmes in certain sectors
R.5 Share of farms with supported CAP risk management tools

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

Forms part of the suite of interventions supporting the Fruit and Vegetable sector in Ireland through Producer Organisation's Operational Programmes.

Existing and newly recognised Producer Organisations (PO) may submit a 3-7 year Operational Programme which will describe the interventions they will action to achieve their selected objectives. All Operational Programmes must cover at least objectives (b), (e) and (f) of Article 46 of EU regulation 2021/2115. Each Operational Programme will be assessed in advance by DAFM to ensure that it will meet its objectives. As part of the approval process for an Operational Programme, POs must supply a

completed survey of each active farm including details of environmental measures currently in place. This survey will be updated annually as part of each Producer Organisation's claim for funding for their Operational Programme.

In order to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, each Operational Programme may be amended by the PO in advance of that operational year subject to DAFM's approval. Part year claims may also be paid before year end to ease PO cashflow.

As the paying agency, DAFM will monitor and check the Operational Programme including assessing the realised impact of each action in a Programme.

In line with Article 23(3) of DA 2022/126, a standard flat rate for the personnel and administrative costs linked to the management of the operational fund or the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the operational programme up to a maximum of 2 % of the operational fund approved will be paid.

Irish producers will be actively encouraged to either join existing or form new Producer Organisations depending on the eligibility requirements. To encourage participation DAFM will engage with the sector through advisory services and sector forums and through the work of existing POs

Under this specific intervention, support can be provided for the following actions:
·Promotional campaigns (TV, online and print based) to raise awareness of issues and increase consumption of fruit and vegetables

Eligibility conditions

A PO, TPO or APO, recognised in accordance with EU and national legislation, having submitted and received approval for an Operational Programme of 3-7 years in duration, may submit a claim for EU aid in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115.

Communication actions may be outsourced to consultancies headquartered in Third Countries.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

The aid budget will be no less than 4.1% of Value of Marketed Product (4.5% for APOs and 5% for TPOs), applied in line with Article 52 of SPR 2021/2115. A claim for EU aid to cover 50% of the costs of this intervention will be thoroughly evaluated as part of the Operational Programme and, once approved, will be paid in arrears. Over the lifetime of the Operational Programme, at least 15% of expenditure will have been spent on actions to deliver on environmental and climate objectives Article 46 (e) and (f) of SPR 2021/2115. At least 2% of expenditure of each Operational Programme will have been spent on actions linked to Article 46 (d).

The administrative costs shall be considered eligible if they do not exceed 4 % of the total eligible costs of each implemented intervention.

Personnel costs incurred by the PO shall be considered eligible for support if they are incurred in relation to the preparation, implementation or follow-up of an action. Such personnel costs shall include, inter alia, costs of personnel contracted by the beneficiary (including as part of an outsourced action) and the costs corresponding to the share of the working hours invested in the implementation of an intervention or action by its permanent staff. Member States shall ensure that the beneficiary submits supporting documents setting out the details of the work actually carried out in relation to the particular intervention or action and that the value of the related personnel cost can be independently assessed and verified. The value of personnel cost related to a particular intervention shall not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the same kind of service.

Where interventions or actions are outsourced, the personnel costs must be independently assessed and verified as part of the overall costs.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

8 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The crises communications intervention meets the criteria laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Annex II. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this scheme.

Apiculture products

COOPAPI(55(1)(e)) - - cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of research programs in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products

52API - Sectoral Intervention for the Apiculture Sector

Intervention Code (MS)	52API
Intervention Name	Sectoral Intervention for the Apiculture Sector
Type of Intervention	COOPAPI(55(1)(e)) - cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of research programs in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products
Common Output Indicator	O.37. Number of actions or units for beekeeping preservation or improvement

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SECTORAL OBJECTIVE Code + Description

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Description

In a 2020 consultation with beekeeping stakeholders, DAFM identified the need for baseline figures, training that takes into account the latest research findings and support for the dissemination of research findings. Ireland's Needs Assessment further identified Obj6.N1: Restore, maintain and improve Ireland's habitats and landscapes in order to halt biodiversity decline including farmland birds and pollinators as also being applicable. Furthermore, an overview of the sectoral support and background is given in Section 3.5 of this Plan.

To contribute to these needs, and the Related Specific Objectives, Ireland's new 5-year long National Apiculture Programme will provide sufficient time for research actions to embed and to focus on providing information and exchange of best practice to beekeepers. The research and work funded will be of a "public good" nature, the results of which will be made freely available. Proposals for the programme must demonstrate a strong emphasis on dissemination of findings to beekeepers and the wider scientific community.

The new 5 year National Apiculture Programme will build on the current National Apiculture Programme 2019 – 2022, which is being undertaken by a University. This programme aims to benefit all of the over 4,400 beekeepers in Ireland.

Support for this intervention will be provided in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/126.

Funding will be provided to a single institution that will undertake the research and dissemination of this information, following an open call for proposals from suitable research institutions.
Proposals will need to demonstrate a strong emphasis on dissemination of findings to beekeepers and the wider scientific community.

The Programme may support the following:
• National surveillance programme testing for the prevalence of selected bee diseases and pests that affect colony loss in hives across Ireland
• Research into other potential reasons for bee colony loss, including other pathogens and climate change, may also be undertaken.
• Recruitment of a part time advisor to communicate research results and contribute to and support educational programmes by the beekeeping associations in Ireland.
• Cooperation with specialised bodies in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products including participation in the COLOSS Network.

Proposals will be reviewed by a Panel of Experts. DAFM will then decide on the programme to be funded.

All suitable Institutions that can demonstrate the necessary research capabilities including Universities, Institutes of Technology, Teagasc and DAFM Laboratories are eligible to submit proposals for funding under the National Apiculture Programme. DAFM will invite proposals from suitable research institutions for a detailed scientific programme of work based on, and to achieve the aims of, the final EU approved outline proposal. Funding will be awarded following an open competition. Beekeepers having one or more hives will benefit from the research and dissemination of the findings. All funding will be paid to the National Apiculture Programme through a research body. Payments will not be made to individual beekeepers.

The purpose of the intervention will be to establish a research programme involving a wide variety of goals and research projects, the results of which must be disseminated to all beekeepers in the country. It is most appropriate that one research institute conducts this programme. Eligibility conditions will require all suitable Institutions to demonstrate the necessary research capabilities and will require the research institutions to submit a proposal for a detailed scientific programme of work based on, and to achieve the aims of the final EU approved outline proposal. Funding will be awarded following an open competition. Beekeepers having one or more hives will benefit from the research and dissemination of the findings.
Selection of the successful specialised body (or bodies) to implement the programme will be on the basis of a panel of expert evaluators who will use criteria such as: experience, knowledge and track record of the specialised body; quality of proposals; originality and degree of innovation; adequacy of the approach, methodology and work plan; dissemination plans; benefits to be derived from successful outcome; contribution of the work to the improvement of the apiculture sector and value for money

An example of eligible expenditure items in a typical year is in the table below. The expenditure items have been determined based on previous programmes. The beneficiary(ies) is/are required to maintain separate records for all transactions relating to the project to be aided and shall make these and all supporting

documents (including, in particular records of staff time) available as and when required by officers of the Department or agents authorised to act on its behalf.

Year	**Year X** **€**
Staff	75,765
Consumables	3,000
Travel & Subsistence	10,275
Equipment/ Analysis	5,859
Overheads	28,381
Total Programme Cost	123,280

The total allocated funding each year is for one research programme with combined advisory/knowledge transfer. The annual budget for this intervention is equivalent to the Member States' allocation set in Annex X of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and the corresponding equal funding provided by Ireland.
In order to maximise the return on expenditure for the programme, specialised research bodies will be invited to submit detailed programme implementation proposals. The aim is to have experts in the field of apiculture and research techniques devise the programme of work to put the measures into operation and achieve Ireland's stated objectives.

The programme, as a research programme which supports pollinators, does not have specifically targeted synergies with other schemes in the CAP Strategic Plan. Other interventions and elements of the CSP will also benefit pollinators, though with more direct means, such as GAEC 8, Eco-schemes, and measures in AECM such as EIPs. The EIPs related to apiculture are intended to support wild pollinators and do represent a risk of double funding. The programme does not overlap, duplicate or conflict with any elements of other schemes in the CSP.

6 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Submission of progress reports to include a technical report and details on financial expenditure incurred will be required at set intervals to DAFM. Payment of instalments of the funding will be dependent on receipt of reports confirming satisfactory progress. The output indicator used is the most appropriate for one research and educational programme. Funding will be provided to a single institution that will undertake the research and dissemination of this information, following an open call for proposals from suitable research institutions. The funding will be available to the successful tenderer and will be administered as an annual payment as set out in Section 6.

7 Additional information specific to the Type of Intervention

None.

8 WTO compliance
Green Box
Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO
Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

As a dedicated research programme, this intervention is WTO "green box" compliant under Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture

9 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)
52API01 - Apiculture Research & Advisory Programme	Uniform		

Description

52API01 - Apiculture Research & Advisory Programme

The annual budget for this intervention is equivalent to the Member States' allocation set in Annex X of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and the corresponding equal funding provided by Ireland. The financial allocation will be used exclusively for the implementation of the National Apiculture Programme each year. As the delivery of the National Apiculture Programme is the output of this intervention, the planned output for each year will be 1.

10 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with output

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total 2023 - 2027
52API01 - Apiculture Research & Advisory Programme	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	O.37 (unit: Actions)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
	Planned unit amount (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	52,153.70	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	52,153.70	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	298,713.70
TOTAL	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public Expenditure in EUR)	104,307.40	123,280.00	123,280.00	123,280.00	123,280.00	597,427.40
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	52,153.70	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	298,713.70
	EU co-financing rate in %	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	

5.3 Rural Development Interventions

ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments

53AECMCP70 - Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option

Intervention Code (MS)	53AECMCP70
Intervention Name	Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes

Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes
Obj9.N3	Support the efficient/environmentally responsible use of pesticides + encourage alternative practise	3rd Highest SO9	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.12 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to improve climate adaptation
R.14 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)
R.19 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)
R.21 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies
R.22 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management
R.24 Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage
R.31 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including high-nature-value farming practices
R.33 Share of total Natura 2000 area under supported commitments
R.34 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, note a number of environmental, climate and biodiversity areas that could be addressed by means of an agri-environmental climate measure. The national agri-environmental climate intervention (AECM), proposed under Article 70, accordingly consists of a range of actions to address such needs including Obj4.N1, Obj4.N2, Obj4.N4; Obj5.N1 – Obj5.N4; Obj6.N1; Obj9.N3.

Ireland is proposing an innovative approach to the delivery of our AECM which will incorporate two different approaches AECM General and AECM Co-operation, based on a geographic location identified by a defined mapping system:

·a Co-operation approach (AECM Co-operation), available to farmers in defined high priority geographical areas, also offering general measures, but in addition, offering bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures and a Local Project Team to assist with the implementation of the scheme at local level. Farmers with a significant area of land in one or more of the defined high priority geographical areas will automatically be enrolled in the Co-operation approach. The General approach is not open to them.

·And a General approach for all other locations, offering a suite of general measures with some high priority targeting (AECM General).

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, has noted a number of areas to be addressed. Many of those have been outlined in the intervention template for the AECM General . All of these areas will be considered for the AECM Cooperation too.

In addition, following the success of innovative practices introduced, piloted and trialled by the Burren Programme and European Innovation Partnerships (EIP-Agri), the AECM Cooperation will operate as a hybrid results-based model, with particular targeted attention paid to the following topics:

·Management of commonages with planned restoration of degraded lands.

·Conservation of selected endangered bird species.

·Management of peatlands.

·Farmland habitat conservation.

·The preservation of cultural and landscape assets.

·Location of appropriate interventions centred on a meaningful adaptive interaction between adviser, farmer and programme.

The AECM Cooperation will only be offered to farmers whose farm area is located within a defined target area(s). This option will focus on implementing a higher level of environmental ambition on High Nature Value farmland areas, the maintenance of High-Status Water Bodies and the achievement of national biodiversity targets with co-benefits for climate and water, using, where appropriate, results-based models, supplemented by non-productive investments (Article 73) and delivered by Local Project Teams under Article 77 (Cooperation) of the CSP Regulation.

·The applicants in AECM Cooperation will, where relevant, have access to the list of general actions inAECM General.

·Degressive payments will be used as the most appropriate means to recognise economies of scale, and to ensure that lands in the worst environmental condition are given priority in terms of scheduling of work.

Objectives of the AECM Cooperation are:

·To scale up approaches used in Burren and EIP-Agri Projects to address environmental challenges common to a number of distinct areas and habitats and involving the populations of farmers in those areas.

·To maximise farmers' activities linked to the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000 sites; it will support them in meeting requirements under these Directives by designing whole farm solutions.

·To promote and support collective schemes under Article 77 to encourage farmers to deliver a significant enhancement of the quality of the environment at a larger scale and in a measurable way.

·To increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level.

·To adapt farm plans at a local level to meet EU and national priorities, as outlined above, as well as the Nitrates Directive, the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Priority Action Framework, the Green Deal and the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies and Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021.

There will be eight Co-operation Project (CP) teams set up under Article 77.These teams will define the biodiversity, water and climate priorities in their own regions and will set objectives to address them, as part of a CP action plan, ensuring they are relevant and consistent with a range of strategies at EU and national level. Farmers in the target high priority areas may be asked to submit Expressions of Interest in joining the AECM Cooperation, which will be complementary to the AECM General.

The CP teams, through the action plan, will identify local priorities and identify actions which can best address the key environmental needs for biodiversity, the maintenance of good water quality and the safeguarding of carbon stores in peatlands, semi-natural pastures and semi-natural woodlands. A farmer whose land falls within the Co-Operation area will only be eligible for the AECM Cooperation when making an application for the AECM scheme. If the numbers expressing interest are too high for any region, a ranking and selection process will take place, using predefined selection criteria.

The mandatory scheme conditions outlined for the AECM General will also apply for the AECM Cooperation. The few differences are set out below:

a)A Farm Sustainability Plan (FSP) based on the Co-operation Project action plan, will be submitted by the farmer at the time of application.

b)All participant farmers will have access to the relevant knowledge and information required, as provided for under Article 70(9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Bespoke training which is tailored to local needs may also be offered by CP Teams on an ongoing basis. This will be important when dealing with fragile landscapes such as peatlands and other wetlands; and when learning appropriate methods of nest protection, seasonal grazing, managing fires, etc. Many farmers in the AECM Cooperation will not be familiar with hybrid/results-based delivery models and on-going training will be offered on this topic.

The intake into the Cooperation Project stream may be phased, with possibly two or more tranches in the first two years.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

The beneficiaries will be active farmers and the scheme will be open for application to farmers in the defined High Priority target areas. It is anticipated that there will be some 36,000 participants who are eligible to apply for the intervention.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

This is an IACS commitment.

The AECM Cooperation is a hybrid delivery model that intends to offer both fixed payment rates and result-based payments to participating farmers. Most payments will be results-based using score cards specifically designed for the land types and regions involved. All costings will be based on the *planned unit amounts of support* shown in the AECM General intervention template. However, most of the farmers in the defined geographical areas, who can avail of the AECM Cooperation, are farming in regions which have challenging conditions, and/or which need bespoke actions carried out to restore the land or water to more favourable environmental condition. Scorecards for each land type will clearly indicate to the farmer the improvement that needs to be made to lands to achieve the highest points and maximum payment. Trained advisers, with the support of the Co-operation Team will advise and support the farmer to achieve the optimum score. The average payment is expected to be €4,600 per full calendar

year for actions covered by AECM Cooperation Project Article 70. This will be complemented by payments for non-productive investments under Article 73 and landscape actions under Article 77.

Results-based payment models will be designed to ensure that farmers are appropriately incentivised to improve the landscapes and catchments within which they farm. Payments will reflect the quality of the result indicator. The higher the result, the higher the payment. The scoring system will be developed whereby a significant contribution to ecosystem services is only delivered where a field score of 4 or above is achieved. It is assumed that services below this point are complying with GAEC and SMRs and cannot be rewarded by another scheme payment. However, the payments for a field score of 4 will be significant enough to incentivise farmers to work at further improving habitat quality. The top payment for a total of 10 points altogether, will only be achieved where the habitat is considered to be in optimal condition and therefore deserving of the highest payment for delivering environmental benefits.

Fixed eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Works on lands which are difficult to access or work on can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. Where appropriate the AECM Cooperation is a hybrid delivery model that intends to offer both fixed payment rates and result-based payments to participating farmers. Most payments will be results-based using score cards specifically designed for the land types and regions involved. All costings will be based on the *planned unit amounts of support* shown in the AECM General intervention template. However, most of the farmers in the defined geographical areas, who can avail of the AECM Cooperation, are farming in regions which have challenging conditions, and/or which need bespoke actions carried out to restore the land or water to more favourable environmental condition. Scorecards for each land type will clearly indicate to the farmer the improvement that needs to be made to lands to achieve the highest points and maximum payment. Trained advisors, with the support of the Co-operation Team will advise and support the farmer to achieve the optimum score. The average payment is expected to be €4,600 per full calendar year for actions covered by AECM Cooperation Project Article 70. This will be complemented by payments for non-productive investments under Article 73 and landscape actions under Article 77.

Results-based payment models will be designed to ensure that farmers are appropriately incentivised to improve the landscapes and catchments within which they farm. Payments will reflect the quality of the result indicator. The higher the result, the higher the payment. The scoring system will be developed whereby a significant contribution to ecosystem services is only delivered where a field score of 4 or above is achieved. It is assumed that services below this point are complying with GAEC and SMRs and cannot be rewarded by another scheme payment. However, the payments for a field score of 4 will be significant enough to incentivise farmers to work at further improving habitat quality. The top payment for a total of 10 points altogether, will only be achieved where the habitat is considered to be in optimal condition and therefore deserving of the highest payment for delivering environmental benefits.

Fixed eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Works on lands which are difficult to access or work on can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

payment may apply.

O14 What area is eligible?

☐Agricultural area defined for the CAP plan

☒Agricultural land including and beyond agricultural area

In addition to agricultural land, the eligible area will include peatland (bogs and fens), woodlands, scrub/transitional woodland, aquatic marginal wetlands with emergent vegetation, Freshwater marsh, upper salt marsh, ponds, earth banks, sand dune systems.

☐Non-agricultural land

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description
GAEC01	Maintenance of permanent grassland based on a ratio of permanent grassland in relation to agricultural area at national, regional, sub-regional, group-of-holdings or holding level in comparison to the reference year 2018.Maximum decrease of 5% compared to the reference year.
GAEC02	Protection of wetland and peatland
GAEC03	Ban on burning arable stubble, except for plant health reasons
GAEC04	Establishment of buffer strips along water courses
GAEC05	Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient
GAEC06	Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soil in periods that are most sensitive
GAEC07	Crop rotation in arable land, except for crops growing under water
GAEC08	Minimum share of agricultural area devoted to non-productive areas or features.Minimum share of at least 4% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow. Where a farmer commits to devote at least 7% of his/her arable land to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow, under an enhanced eco-scheme in accordance with Article 28(5a), the share to be attributed to compliance with this GAEC shall be limited to 3%.Minimum share of at least 7% of arable land at farm level if this includes also catch crops or nitrogen fixing crops, cultivated without the use of plant protection products, of which 3% shall be land lying fallow or non-productive features. Member States should use the weighting factor of 0,3 for catch crops.Retention of landscape features.Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season.As an option, measures for avoiding invasive plant species
GAEC09	Ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland designated as environmentally-sensitive permanent grasslands in Natural 2000 sites
SMR01	Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy: Article 11(3), point (e), and point (h), as regards mandatory requirements to control diffuse sources of pollution by phosphates
SMR02	Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources: Articles 4 and 5
SMR03	Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds: Article 3(1), Article 3(2), point (b), Article 4(1), (2) and (4)
SMR04	Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna: Article 6(1) and (2)
SMR11	Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes: Article 4

List of relevant mandatory national standards

National Monuments Act.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

The relevant baseline elements are the same as apply for AECM General – see relevant table in that intervention template.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**

☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone

☐ transaction cost included

☐ one off payment

☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

Under Article 70, a maximum payment of €7,000 per annum will apply in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment. The level of payment achieved will be determined by the payment rates for the respective actions selected and the results achieved. The average payment is expected to be €4,600 for actions covered by this intervention under Article 70. Payments under Article 70 will be complemented by payments for non-productive investments under Article 73 and landscape actions under Article 77. This will give an anticipated average overall payment of €7,000 per annum for those participating in the AECM Cooperation. An overall maximum payment of €10,500 will apply in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment.

Calculation method

Eligible costs include additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Works on lands which are difficult to access or work on can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

Additional explanation

The AECM Cooperation is a hybrid delivery model that intends to offer both fixed payment rates and result-based payments to participating farmers. Most payments will be results-based using score cards specifically designed for the land types and regions involved. All costings will be based on the *planned unit amounts of support* in the AECM General intervention. However, most of the farmers in the defined geographical areas, who can avail of the AECM Cooperation, are farming in regions which have challenging conditions, and/or which need bespoke actions carried out to restore the land or water to more favourable environmental condition. Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply. Scorecards for each land type will clearly indicate to the farmer the improvement that needs to be made to lands to achieve the highest points and maximum payment. Trained advisors, with the support of the Co-operation Team will advise and support the farmer to achieve the optimum score.

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☐ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☒ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, note a number of environmental, climate and biodiversity areas that could be addressed by means of an agri-environmental climate measure. The national agri-environmental climate intervention (AECM), proposed under Article 70, accordingly consists of a range of actions to address such needs including Obj4.N1 – Obj4.N4; Obj5.N1 – Obj5.N4; Obj6.N1; Obj9.N2, Obj9.N3.

Ireland is proposing an innovative approach to the delivery of our AECM which will incorporate two different approaches AECM General and AECM Co-operation, based on a geographic location identified by a defined mapping system:

·a Co-operation approach (AECM Co-operation), available to farmers in defined high priority geographical areas, also offering general measures, but in addition, offering bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures and a Local Project Team to assist with the implementation of the scheme at local level. Farmers with a significant area of land in one or more of the defined high priority geographical areas will automatically be enrolled in the Co-operation approach. The General approach is not open to them.

·And a General approach for all other locations, offering a suite of general measures with some high priority targeting (AECM General).

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, has noted a number of areas to be addressed. Many of those have been outlined in the intervention template for the AECM General . All of these areas will be considered for the AECM Cooperation too.

In addition, following the success of innovative practices introduced, piloted and trialled by the Burren Programme and European Innovation Partnerships (EIP-Agri), the AECM Cooperation will operate as a hybrid results-based model, with particular targeted attention paid to the following topics:

·Management of commonages with planned restoration of degraded lands.

·Conservation of selected endangered bird species.

·Management of peatlands.

·Farmland habitat conservation.

·The preservation of cultural and landscape assets.

·Location of appropriate interventions centred on a meaningful adaptive interaction between adviser, farmer and programme.

The AECM Cooperation will only be offered to farmers whose farm area is located within a defined target area(s). This option will focus on implementing a higher level of environmental ambition on High

Nature Value farmland areas, the maintenance of High-Status Water Bodies and the achievement of national biodiversity targets with co-benefits for climate and water, using, where appropriate, results-based models, supplemented by non-productive investments (Article 73) and delivered by Local Project Teams under Article 77 (Cooperation) of the CSP Regulation.

·The applicants in AECM Cooperation will, where relevant, have access to the list of general actions inAECM General.

·Degressive payments will be used as the most appropriate means to recognise economies of scale, and to ensure that lands in the worst environmental condition are given priority in terms of scheduling of work.

Objectives of the AECM Cooperation are:

·To scale up approaches used in Burren and EIP-Agri Projects to address environmental challenges common to a number of distinct areas and habitats and involving the populations of farmers in those areas.

·To maximise farmers' activities linked to the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000 sites; it will support them in meeting requirements under these Directives by designing whole farm solutions.

·To promote and support collective schemes under Article 77 to encourage farmers to deliver a significant enhancement of the quality of the environment at a larger scale and in a measurable way.

·To increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health, animal health and welfare and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level.

·To adapt farm plans at a local level to meet EU and national priorities, as outlined above, as well as the Nitrates Directive, the Birds Directive, the Priority Action Framework, the Green Deal and the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies and Ireland's Ag-Climatise.

There will be eight Co-operation Project (CP) teams set up under Article 77.These teams will define the biodiversity, water and climate priorities in their own regions and will set objectives to address them, as part of a CP action plan, ensuring they are relevant and consistent with a range of strategies at EU and national level. Farmers in the target high priority areas may be asked to submit Expressions of Interest in joining the AECM Cooperation, which will be complementary to the AECM General.

The CP teams, through the action plan, will identify local priorities and identify actions which can best address the key environmental needs for biodiversity, the maintenance of good water quality and the safeguarding of carbon stores in peatlands, semi-natural pastures and semi-natural woodlands. A farmer whose land falls within the Co-Operation area will only be eligible for the AECM Cooperation when making an application for the AECM scheme. If the numbers expressing interest are too high for any region, a ranking and selection process will take place, using predefined selection criteria.

The mandatory scheme conditions outlined for the AECM General will also apply for the AECM Cooperation. The few differences are set out below:

a) A Farm Sustainability Plan (FSP) based on the Co-operation Project action plan, will be submitted by the farmer at the time of application.

b) All participant farmers will have access to the relevant knowledge and information required, as provided for under Article 70(9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Bespoke training which is tailored to

local needs may also be offered by CP Teams on an ongoing basis. This will be important when dealing with fragile landscapes such as peatlands and other wetlands; and when learning appropriate methods of nest protection, seasonal grazing, managing fires, etc. Many farmers in the AECM Cooperation will not be familiar with hybrid/results-based delivery models and on-going training will be offered on this topic.

The intake into the Cooperation Project stream may be phased, with possibly two or more tranches in the first two years.

What is the duration of contracts?

5 years.

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Payments to eligible participants under the AECM Cooperation Scheme intervention will be dependent on the participants meeting the requirements of this agri-environment scheme. Payments will be a mixture of fixed payments for specified costed actions and results-based payments dependant on achieving a particular result indicator. Eligible costs will be limited to additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable to comply with the conditions of the AECM Cooperation Scheme.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53AECMCP7001 - Annual average payment for participant farmers	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.14; R.19; R.21; R.22; R.31; R.33; R.34; R.24;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53AECMCP7001 - Annual average payment for participant farmers

Eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Works on lands which are difficult to access or work on can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53AECMCP7001 - Annual average payment for participant farmers (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		230.00	230.00	230.00	230.00	230.00	230.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		200,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	200,000.00	2,000,000.00
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		46,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	46,000,000.00	460,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		18,496,600.00	36,993,200.00	36,993,200.00	36,993,200.00	36,993,200.00	18,496,600.00	184,966,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53AECMGEN - AECM General

Intervention Code (MS)	53AECMGEN
Intervention Name	AECM General
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes

Obj9.N3	Support the efficient/environmentally responsible use of pesticides + encourage alternative practise	3rd Highest SO9	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.12 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to improve climate adaptation
R.14 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)
R.19 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)
R.20 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce ammonia emission
R.21 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies
R.22 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments related to improved nutrient management
R.24 Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage
R.31 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including high-nature-value farming practices
R.33 Share of total Natura 2000 area under supported commitments
R.34 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, has noted a number of climate, environmental and biodiversity related challenges which need to be addressed, including:

·agriculture's contribution to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

·carbon sink/emission source potential of soils

·energy use across farm systems

·increasing ammonia emissions

·decreasing water quality

·sub-optimal soil fertility

·the pressure agriculture is placing on Ireland's natural resources

·the unfavourable or declining status of the majority of Ireland's designated habitats and landscapes,

·lack of forest area under protection for preservation of biodiversity and safeguarding landscapes and specific natural elements, and

·lack of climate adaptation measures

The AECM General accordingly consists of actions to address these issues, including *inter alia* a reduction in fertiliser use, improved land management to address water quality and soil fertility issues, and measures to restore and maintain habitats and species to halt the further decline of biodiversity.

The interventions proposed under Pillars 1 and 2 of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) will work together in a complementary way to achieve the specific objectives set out in the CAP. The new AECM framework builds on Conditionality, the Eco-Scheme and the Organic Farming Scheme by offering a range of measures that are designed to **improve** habitats for a wide range of species while also targeting water quality and climate mitigation and adaptation, in a manner that goes beyond Conditionality, Eco-Scheme and Organic Farming Scheme requirements. It will also help to achieve the objectives of EU and national legislation including the Wildlife Act, Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive, the Climate

Action Plan and the objectives of Ireland's Prioritized Action Framework (PAF). A more qualitative approach has been included by the introduction of a number of results-based actions in the AECM General, thereby encouraging the adoption of results-based actions across the country. In addition, the introduction of a Farm Sustainability Plan (FSP) will help achieve the underlying principle of the new AECM framework of "the right measure in the right place". The completion of the FSP is necessary as part of all AECM applications. This requires both field and desk assessments of the farm holding prior to action selection. A desk check will examine the farm holding against geo-spatial data (environmental layers) on Generic Land Management (GLAM) system to identify which areas are a) priority environmental assets or b) where actions should be focused to support biodiversity, water quality, climate, or heritage. As part of the FSP on GLAM there will be reference layers that the advisor can check for example EPA Pollution Impact Potential mapping, Priority Grasslands, and Breeding Wader Hotspots. Pollutant Impact Potential (PIP) maps for Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorus (P) have been generated to show the highest risk areas in the landscape for losses of N and P to waters. This data will be used to aid selection of actions to protect highest priority habitats and address areas of highest risk to water quality.

The farm assessment involves walking the holding and using the data collated in the desk check to screen for any environmental risks taking account of current land use, land topography, condition of watercourses, existing landscape features, presence of indicator species in fields and climate adaptation/mitigation opportunities. Finally, a full discussion with the applicant outlining recommendations then deciding which actions to proceed with.

Completion of assessment, action selection and mapping based on desk and farm assessments completes the FSP which is submitted to DAFM and forms the AECM application .

There are two approaches to the national agri-environmental climate measure namely:

·AECM General, available nationally (outside of the high priority geographical area as defined for the AECM Co-operation Project approach below), which offers a range of measures (both targeted and general); and

·AECM Co-operation Project, available to farmers in defined high priority geographical areas[1]. If a farmer in one of these areas volunteers to participate, they will undertake bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures, as well as being able to select from AECM General suite of actions. Farmers participating in this approach can avail of the assistance of a Local Cooperation Project (CP) Team, who will assist with the implementation of the scheme at local level. AECM Cooperation Projects will have ecological expertise as part of the cooperation project team.

The proposed actions for AECM General will be designed with ecological assessment advice and expertise. Mandatory advisor training, including the latest ecological advice, and training on the use of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's IT system will be provided to registered farm planners to ensure that any proposed actions with potential to have an impact on a European Site will be screened for that potential risk.

The Department's IT systems will flag any proposed actions that may have a potential impact on a European Site and these proposed actions will be flagged for further consideration.

The AECM General has three tiers:

·Tier 1 – Farmers with identified Priority Environmental Assets[1] (PEAs) who must undertake mandatory actions associated with those assets; those with certain rare breeds, and those who are registered organic farmers.

·Tier 2 – Farmers above a certain stocking rate or a certain area under arable crops or whose lands include a vulnerable water area, who must undertake certain appropriate actions, or farmers participating in certain forestry schemes or who opt for one of the tree planting actions.

·Tier 3 – All other farmers[2]who undertake a range of appropriate actions, selected from a list of General actions, to address local/farm specific environmental priorities, with actions selected following the completion of a sustainable farm plan.

Note[1]: Min area/intersection thresholds with priorities areas to be considered

Note[2]: Other than those falling within the defined area under the AECM Co-operation Project

Tier 1 is critically important in terms of targeting priority environmental assets on a farm and caters for those priority assets which are not addressed under the AECM Co-operation Project. This Tier is important as the actions to be undertaken relate to identified priority areas such as sensitive landscapes [Natura and commonage lands],protection of priority water areas (Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identified - Priority Areas for Action [‘PAAs’]) and conservation of rare breeds. Given the nature of the required associated farming practices, organic farmers will also receive Tier 1 priority access to the scheme but may choose from the full list of actions unless they have a PEA on their farm (i.e. there is not a mandatory action associated with their organic status for the purposes of the AECM General). For farmers other than organic farmers, access will be determined by their priority assets and a ranking and selection process (RASS). In the event that the scheme is oversubscribed, selection criteria will be employed, with all applications assessed in each tranche on the basis of predefined selection criteria designed to rank the applications in accordance with environmental objectives.

The overall approach is a cascading one, as reflected by the three Tier structure. Applications in respect of Tier 1 farms will receive priority, by virtue of their having particularly important environmental assets which have to be addressed by adopting relevant actions. Tier 2 will then target farmers with high stocking rates, a certain area of arable land or vulnerable water areas and they too will be required to undertake certain corresponding actions. Vulnerable water areas have been defined as catchment areas to waterbodies that are at risk of not meeting their environmental objective, but which also have been characterised under the third cycle river basin management plan as areas impacted by nitrogen and phosphorus from agriculture as the significant pressure. These are mapped areas provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Catchments Unit which have been identified as at risk areas with significant agricultural pressures within Priority Areas for Action.

Additionally, access for those participating in certain forestry schemes or proposing to undertake a tree planting action will also be prioritised under Tier 2. In Tier 3, farmers may, when completing the Farm Sustainability Plan, select from a range of general actions which have been designed to also contribute to environmental and climate challenges. This tiered structure combined with the RASS is designed to ensure the targeted and prioritised delivery of environmental benefits. The Farm Sustainability Plan will inform the most appropriate selection of actions in all cases.

The actions, across the three tiers, take into account those encompassed by the other two elements (enhanced conditionality and national eco scheme) of the Green Architecture while ensuring delivery of the above objectives.

Actions are categorised according to suitability for certain land uses such as arable land, grassland and field boundaries with categories also focusing on resource protection and conservation of heritage and genetic resources. The correlation of the actions to the needs identified in Ireland’s Needs Assessment, is shown below.

Need	Addressed by Action
Obj4.N1	Low Input Grassland Environmental Management of Arable Fallow Extensively grazed permanent pasture Minimum Tillage Grass Mix Margins Low Emission Slurry Spreading
Obj4.N2	Low Input Grassland Commonage Hedgerow Rejuvenation Coppicing Hedgerow Rejuvenation Laying Planting new hedgerows Planting trees – in rows, groups or parkland Low input peat grassland Extensively grazed permanent pasture
Obj4.N4	Planting trees - in rows, groups or parkland Planting new hedgerows Hedgerow rejuvenation - coppicing Hedgerow rejuvenation - laying Riparian Buffer strips Riparian Buffer zones
Obj5.N1	Environmental Management of Arable Fallow Extensively grazed permanent pasture Minimum Tillage Low input Grassland Grass margins Low Emission Slurry Spreading
Obj5.N2	Riparian buffer strip Riparian buffer zone

	Planting Trees in Riparian Buffers Planting new hedgerows Planting trees – in rows, groups or parkland Low Emission Slurry Spreading
Obj5.N3	Environmental Management of Arable Fallow Catch crops Brassica Fodder Stubble Over winter stubble
Obj5.N4	Low input grassland Commonage Private Natura Extensively grazed permanent pasture
Obj6.N1	Commonage Private Natura Grass margins Low input grassland Planting new hedgerows Hedgerow Rejuvenation Coppicing Hedgerow Rejuvenation Laying Traditional Dry Stone Wall maintenance Unharvested Cereal headlands Winter Bird Food Brassica Fodder Stubble Extensively grazed permanent pasture Rye-grass seed set Barn owl boxes Geese and Swans Planting Trees – in Rows, Groups or Parkland Planting traditional orchards Conservation of rare breeds

	Planting Trees in Riparian Buffers Tree Belt for Ammonia Capture at farmyard Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological Monuments
Obj9.N3	Riparian Buffer strips Riparian Buffer zones Grass margins Low input grassland Extensively grazed permanent pasture

Tier Table (below) provides full details of the Tier Structure and the groupings of actions under each of the above themes.

All farmers participating in AECM General must comply with the following list of mandatory scheme conditions:

a) an approved agricultural advisor must prepare the AECM application to ensure that the most suitable and appropriate actions for the farm are selected and submitted,

b) A Farm Sustainability Plan must form part of the AECM application.

c) Attendance at a training course (AECM Training), which is mandatory in the first year of participation in Scheme, to facilitate knowledge transfer and acquisition of information on specific actions, complemented by on-line demonstrations/advice on good environmental practices, and

d) The farmer must keep required records.

The aim is to ensure that all environmental plans are designed and presented to the highest standard, by a trained professional, and that farmers achieve an enhanced level of environmental knowledge, evidenced by attendance at dedicated training modules, and through records kept regarding the actions delivered.

The intake into the scheme will be phased, with at least two tranches, to spread the workload on advisors and enable them to allocate sufficient time for the preparation of applications, and the completion of the sustainable farm plan and selection of appropriate actions.

Certain actions will be quality assessed or result-based (where indicated). This key new feature of the AECM, will incentivise farmers selecting these actions to improve their environmental condition and to potentially earn additional rewards in future years of the scheme, by building on/increasing their baseline (year 1) score.

TIER 1: Priority Environmental Assets ('PEAs')

All farmers with PEAs get first priority access into the Scheme in each tranche.

If a farm holding contains one of the following **Priority Environmental Assets (PEA),** this must be indicated. In addition, to qualify for Tier 1, the applicant must commit to completing any/all relevant mandatory actions where relevant to the PEA in accordance with the following list:

·Private Natura (Low Input Grassland scorecard action as deemed appropriate by Advisor)

·Commonage land (Results-based commonage scorecard will apply)

·Geese and Swans area (Geese and swans action)

·Breeding Wader mapped areas (Low Input Grassland scorecard action as deemed appropriate by Advisor)

·Catchments identified as having high status water objective (EPA designated) (no mandatory action, but actions appropriate to local needs, identified in the Farm Sustainability Plan)

·Conservation of Rare Breeds (*results based*)

Registered Organic farmers will qualify for priority access under this Tier, however if they have PEAs on their farm the appropriate action(s) from the list above must be undertaken. Commitments undertaken under the Organic Farming Scheme may qualify for an adjusted payment under the AECM; Organic farmers may also undertake general AECM actions in line with the requirements set for other farmers.

All actions to be identified in the Farm Sustainability Plan.

It is not guaranteed that all eligible applicants in Tier 1 will get into a particular Tranche; a scoring matrix and ranking and selection will apply.

Tier 2: Priority Environmental Actions

Farmers, who do not have a Priority Environmental Asset but whose lands include a Vulnerable Water Area may apply for access to the scheme under Tier 2. In such cases, appropriate actions as deemed appropriate by Advisor will be chosen to address pressures relevant to the Vulnerable Water Areas as identified in the Farm Sustainability Plan

An applicant may also be considered under Tier 2 if s/he is a participant in the Native Woodland Establishment Scheme[1] or GPC 11 – Agro-forestry[1] or if s/he adopts at least one of the tree planting actions i.e.

·Planting Trees – in Rows, Groups or Parkland

·Planting Trees in Riparian Buffers

·Tree Belt for Ammonia Capture at farmyard

In the absence of a Vulnerable Water Area

If an applicant

- (whether beef, dairy or sheep) has a whole farm stocking rate exceeding (›) 130 kg Livestock Manure Nitrogen per hectare (ha) produced on the holding, or

- Has more than 30 hectares (ha) of arable crops,

wishes to be considered under Tier 2, s/he must adopt at least one of the following mandatory actions:

·Minimum Tillage

·Catch crops

·Over winter stubble

·Grass margins arable or Grass margins grassland

·Low input peat grassland

[1] **'or successor or comparable schemes approved under the National Forestry Programme'**

TIER 3: General Actions

These actions aim to address climate change, water quality and biodiversity benefits delivered and may be chosen in addition to any mandatory Tier 1 or Tier 2 actions or on their own:

-

Actions suitable for Arable land/temporary grassland

Winter Bird Food (margin or whole field)

Unharvested cereal headlands

Over Winter Stubble

Grass Margins - Arable

Environmental Management of Arable Fallow

Minimum Tillage (Min-till

Catch crops

Brassica Fodder stubble

Actions suitable for grassland

Low input grassland (*results based*)

Grass Margins - Grassland

Extensively Grazed Permanent Pasture

Actions suitable for intensive grassland >130 kg organic N/ha

Ryegrass Seed Set for birds

Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse

Brassica Fodder Stubble (also on arable or mixed farms)

Actions suitable for farms with a whole farm stocking rate <100 kg organic N/ha Low Emission Slurry Spreading
Field Boundary actions Hedgerow Rejuvenation Coppicing Hedgerow Rejuvenation Laying Traditional dry stone wall maintenance Planting New Hedgerow   Tree Planting actions Planting Trees – in Rows, Groups, or Parkland Planting Trees in Riparian Buffers Tree Belt for Ammonia Capture at farmyard - Resource protection Riparian Buffer Strip - Arable/Grassland Riparian Buffer Zone -Arable/Grassland Low input peat grassland   Conservation of heritage and genetic resources Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological Monuments Conservation of Rare Breeds (*results based*) Planting a traditional Orchard   Species specific Barn owl box

TABLE: Details of the Tier Structure and the groupings of actions

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

The beneficiaries will be active farmers and the scheme will be open countrywide[3] to all categories of active farmer.

Note[3]: Other than those falling within the defined area under the AECM Co-operation Project

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

This is an IACS support.

Support under AECM General will be by way of fixed-value packages for a minimum contract period of five years. The duration of the commitment may be adjusted by up to one year, as per Article 70 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. As the rate of payment for certain actions under the AECM General consists of elements which fall within the scope of both Articles 70 and 73, a maximum payment of €7,311 per annum will apply in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment. The level of payment achieved will be determined by the payment rates for the respective actions selected and undertaken.

Eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. The rates for a number of 'integrated' actions incorporate non-productive capital investments associated with hedgerows (planting and rejuvenation), traditional orchards, tree planting, riparian margins, rye-grass seed set, grass margins and barn owl boxes. The non-productive investments and funding are set out separately in the non-productive investments intervention template.

AECM General is a 'structured' package whereby an applicant may select from a range of actions with an expected overall maximum value of €7,311 per year applicable in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment, as indicated above. While a fixed rate is payable for most of the actions, a variable rate will apply to four actions, namely, Commonage, Low-Input Grassland, Low Input Peat Grassland and Protection of Rare Breeds with the variation for each of those actions as follows:

- Maximum upper variation (%) or maximum amount, where applicable (% or EUR):
- Commonage: €220
- Results based Low Input Grassland: €450 per hectare per annum – score 10 (including late meadow bonus €50/ha)
- Results based Low Input Peat Grassland: €450 per hectare per annum – score 10
- Protection of Rare Breeds – an additional €75 payable for each live offspring born and registered during duration of contract

Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

The annual planned outputs are based on the uptake of comparable actions in the agri-environmental climate measure in Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

Note: The Planting traditional orchards and the Conservation of rare breeds actions are programmed under the genetic resources intervention template, but implemented under the AECM structure as described in this intervention.

<u>The AECM actions/commitments</u>:

The following information contains a summary of the AECM actions. The actual requirements are established in scheme specification documents published for advisors/farmers. The specifications may be

modified from time to time, whilst retaining the original objectives of the actions, their nature, their environmental ambition and their potential to deliver on the corresponding objectives. As such, DAFM may adjust a commitment/condition/change specifications, during its period of operation, under certain limited circumstances provided that the adjustment is justified and having regard to the objective of the original commitment.

Winter Bird Food

Objective: to provide a tailored food source for farmland birds throughout the autumn and winter.

The scarcity of food throughout the winter period generates a serious challenge for the survival of many farmland birds. Reversing population declines across a range of bird species throughout Europe has been central to the role of specific measures within various agri-environmental schemes. One such measure which has proven to be very effective is the establishment of a winter bird food crop that is specifically tailored to support the eating habitats of numerous farmland species. These spring-sown winter bird food mixes provide a concentrated seed source so even small areas can have a tremendous impact by supporting a diverse range of bird species. The winter Bird Food crop must be established by the 31st of May each year. Crops must contain species such as spring oats, oilseed rape, mustard, triticale, radish, and phacelia which are quick to establish and provide an excellent food source for birds and pollinators. This action also has benefits for climate and water through reduced chemical fertiliser rates up to a maximum of half the fertiliser rate for nitrogen and phosphorus on spring oats as described in Statutory Instrument Number 605 of 2017.

Un-harvested cereal headlands

Objective: To provide a vital food source for seed-eating farmland birds by establishing an open structured cereal headland that is left un-harvested throughout the autumn and winter.

Winter is a period when seed-eating farmland birds can struggle to find food to survive as changes in cropping patterns to winter sown crops and the lack of suitable green stubbles has limited the feeding options for birds during this particularly vulnerable period. Research has shown that un-harvested cereal headlands and cereal stubbles are two habitats that are heavily relied on by many farmland birds for winter feeding. Species such as the reed bunting, tree sparrow, linnet and goldfinch prefer to forage on seeds from un-harvested crops while the yellowhammer, skylark, and grey partridge like to pick grains and nibble on broad-leaved weeds that are found in open cereal stubbles.

Reduced insecticide and herbicide use on un-harvested cereal headlands encourages the presence of a range of invertebrates including sawflies and plant bugs which are important food sources for the chicks of pheasants and partridges.

The implementation of this measure will help to ensure a vital food source for seed-eating farmland birds and their chicks right throughout the autumn and into the cold winter months. This action also has benefits for climate and soils through reduced tilling and the capture of greenhouse gasses, particularly CO2, methane, and nitrous oxide.

A headland, of either 12 metre (m), 21m, 24m or 30m must be established by sowing a cereal crop along a field boundary using the recommended sowing rate for a commercial crop.

Pre-sowing weed control is permitted, but once the crop is sown, no herbicides, pesticides or pre harvest desiccants are permitted on the headland(s) selected for this action. Only the spot treatment of noxious and invasive weeds with herbicides is allowed. The Headland must remain in situ unharvested until the 1st of February each year.

Ryegrass seed-set as winter food for birds (margin based)

Objective: To create a ryegrass margin that can be used by farmland birds as a critical feed source during the autumn and into late winter.

The ability of ryegrass to retain seed right into March bridges the late winter hungry gap for numerous bird species such as yellowhammers, grey partridge, buntings, and skylarks while also benefiting invertebrates and small mammals.

A ryegrass dominant margin of a specified width must be fenced off along a field boundary by the 1 June each year and must be closed off until the 31 March the following year. No grazing or fertilizer application is permitted during the closed period.

Minimum Tillage

Objective: To improve soil structure and increase soil organic matter.

Minimum tillage has many advantages for both the farmer and the land. It can save fuel and time for the farmer. It reduces damage done to the soil by rain, helps prevent the breakdown of soil structure and reduces the formation of a hard pan in the soil. This measure also protects archaeological monuments within the topsoil and subsurface of the soil. The use of min-till techniques including direct drilling offer significant climate benefits by reducing the carbon emissions that are associated with conventional ploughing operations.

Participants in this measure will have to establish a crop using minimum tillage or direct drilling equipment i.e., the crop must be sown without inverting the soil (the soil cannot be ploughed).

Grass Margins – Arable

Objective: To provide a habitat for pollinators, support biodiversity and help protect water quality in arable fields.

Severe declines in biodiversity have been well documented for many groups including plants, invertebrates, birds, and mammals due to intensification of agricultural practices. Field margin habitats play an important role in reducing the loss of biodiversity as they contribute to the heterogeneity of agricultural ecosystems. Grass margin in arable land can also play a role in protecting water quality by reducing nutrient load, intercepting nutrient, and sediment runoff, and slowing overland flow.

A grass margin must be established before the 31 May 2023by sowing a suitable seed mix of tall and short grasses and these margin(s) must remain in the same location for the duration of the contract. Once the margin is established there must be no further cultivation. The margin must be mulched or mown at least twice in year 1 to aid establishment. It may be subsequently cut every year but not between the 1st of March and 30th of August. (No chemical/organic fertiliser or lime can be applied to the margin and pesticides cannot be applied to the margin except for the spot treatment of noxious and/or invasive weeds.

Grass margins- Grassland

Objective: To create a wildlife corridor that can provide habitat for overwintering predatory invertebrates, hunting ground for birds of prey such as barn owl and kestrel and opportunities for pollinators.

Severe declines in biodiversity have been well documented for many groups including plants, invertebrates, birds, and mammals due to intensification of agricultural practices. To help reverse this decline, the creation of a rough grassland field margin in a grass field can greatly promote and enhance the diversity of flora and fauna in pastoral landscapes while also offering additional benefits in terms of water quality, soil, and climate.

A grass margin must be established by the 31st of May in year 1 by erecting a stock proof fence out from the field boundary. The margin(s) must remain in the same location for the duration of the contract.

Margins may be managed by grazing, but this can only take place in mid-autumn and must ensure that no poaching or damage occurs. No chemical/organic fertiliser or lime can be applied to the margin and only the spot treatment of noxious and invasive weeds with herbicides is allowed.

Catch Crops

Objective: To establish a catch crop that will reduce nutrient leaching and help reduce soil erosion in the autumn/winter period.

Catch crops generate a large mass of herbage which helps protect the soil from exposure to heavy rainfall during the winter period. This reduces the potential of soil erosion and surface run-off while also increasing water infiltration. Catch crops utilise residual nutrients in the soil following the harvest of a cereal or oilseed crop, thus maintaining soil biology, preventing leaching of soluble nutrients while also helping to protect water quality. With their vigorous root systems, these crop species condition and break up the soil making it more friable for ease of cultivation, while the residual herbage that remains greatly enhances the organic carbon content and structure of the soil. A crop must be established by 15th of September each year using non-inversion techniques (ploughing is not permitted) and by either broadcasting or drilling the seed mixture. The under sowing or sowing grass crops is not permitted. There must be no chemical or organic fertilizer applied to the catch crop. The catch crop must remain in situ from the date of sowing until the 1st of January when light grazing, or incorporation is allowed from here on.

Environmental management of arable fallow

Objective: To create a fallow field each spring for declining ground nesting birds and in the autumn sow a cover crop to absorb residual nutrients.

Lapwing populations have been in decline over a long number of years due to the disappearance of suitable breeding habitats. They prefer to nest in bare ground or in short vegetation. The nest generally comprises a scrape in the ground lined with variable amounts of plant material. Lapwings like to have a good view from the nest to spot predators. This measure provides a rough, uneven surface for the lapwing and other ground nesting birds to nest safely and rear their chicks during the breeding season A fallow field is created by shallow cultivations and this allows a wide range of scarce and declining rare arable plants to grow while also generating areas of less densely vegetated ground for insects such as bumblebees, solitary bees, and hoverflies. No machine operations or grazing can take place in this parcel until after the 1st of July.

In the autumn, a green cover crop must be sown which will utilise residual nutrients in the soil and prevent leaching of soluble nutrients and sediment, thus protecting water quality. Chemical or organic fertiliser cannot be applied to the parcel.

Extensively grazed pasture

Objective: To maintain and enhance the sward structure of extensively managed pastures to benefit a range of invertebrates, birds, and other species.

The parcel must be maintained by light grazing. The parcel cannot be mown or topped between the 15th of March and 1st of July. Only the spot treatment of noxious and invasive weeds with herbicides is allowed and Invasive weeds can also be controlled by topping but this is only permitted after the 1st of July. Herbicides are not permitted. Strip grazing, ploughing, cultivation, reseeding, or any drainage works (including modifying existing drainage channels) are not permitted. Organic and inorganic fertiliser application are limited to 40kgN/ha each year on these parcels.

Brassica Fodder stubble

Objective: To provide vital winter foraging resources for farmland birds, including finches and buntings, amongst the weedy stubbles of a brassica fodder crop. For livestock farmers, this measure provides a cost-effective home-grown winter feed which reduces the reliance on imported concentrates.

Brassica fodder crops are rapidly growing plants, producing an abundance of herbage in a relatively short period of time, assisting in the suppression of weeds while also protecting soil aggregates from heavy deluges during the winter. After the crop is grazed, the residual weedy stubble provides a vital food source and winter cover for farmland birds to forage during some of the most challenging months of the year.
A fodder brassica or fodder root crop must be established on a suitable field before the 31st of July each year. No herbicides or insecticides are permitted on these parcels. The crop must be grazed. Grazing of livestock is permitted after the 15th of October. Applicants must ensure that grazing does not generate poaching or soil erosion. Harvesting with machinery is not permitted. After grazing, the stubble must be left undisturbed until the 15th of March.

Planting a New Hedgerow

Objective: This measure aims to enhance the visual landscape of the countryside, support biodiversity on farms and protect water quality.

Mature hedgerows provide and important wildlife habitat with greater benefits where they extend or link existing hedgerows or woodland habitats. A high hedgerow with, a wide base, a mix of woody species for an extended pollen and nectar season, and some trees left to mature along the hedgerow will have the greatest benefit for biodiversity. Hedgerows also have additional benefits for water quality when strategically positioned to help reduce soil erosion and sediment run off. A hedgerow must be planted consisting of a at least 3 native hedge species. Planting must be completed before the 31st of March 2024.

Hedgerow Rejuvenation - Laying

Objective: To rejuvenate hedgerows so their ability to support biodiversity, store carbon and maintain structure is enhanced.

Many hedgerows that have been unmanaged for years lose vigour and offer low environmental benefits. Rejuvenation of these hedgerows through laying can allow them to better support biodiversity in the future. Such measures over time will increase the availability of blossoms for invertebrates by allowing fruit and berries to ripen while also providing food for overwintering birds. It also improves the structure of the hedgerow and when incorporated into the overall hedgerow management cycle on a farm, can extend the lifespan almost indefinitely. Laying of hedgerows must be carried out between the 1st of September and the last day of February. This action must be completed by the 31st of December 2024.

Hedgerow Coppicing

Objective: To rejuvenate unmanaged hedgerows that have become gapped and are unsuitable for laying. Overtime the coppiced hedgerow will support biodiversity again and its lifespan will be extended.

Many hedgerows that have been unmanaged for years lose vigour and offer low environmental benefits. Rejuvenation of these hedgerows through coppicing needs serious consideration as it will be years before it will produce flowers and berries or provide nesting for birds. Correct assessment of rejuvenation options is essential. To encourage vigorous re-growth from the base of the plant, stems must be cut down to 10-15cm above ground level. When managed correctly the coppiced hedgerow can be brought back to form a good structure with a dense base and an extended lifespan. Coppicing must be carried out between the 1st of September and the end of February. This action must be completed by the 31st of December 2024. To encourage vigorous re-growth from the base of the plant cut the stems down to 10-15cm above ground level. The Individual mature trees, within the selected hedgerow, must be retained and not coppiced.

Traditional Stonewall Maintenance

Objective: The objective of this action is to maintain the network of traditional freestanding dry-stone walls which enhance the visual landscape and are an important part of our cultural heritage.

Dry stone walls are walls built using stones that sit comfortably without the use of mortar and constructed in a style traditional to the locality. In addition to their agricultural contribution as stockproof boundaries and shelter to livestock, these also act as nature corridors, which provide protection to wildlife and are significant habitats for both flora and fauna.

Traditional freestanding dry-stone walls must be maintained by replacing stones that have fallen off the top of the wall and by repairing gaps within the wall. Walls that have fallen or partly collapsed must be rebuilt in the same style as other walls in the locality.

Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse

Objective: To help reduce soil erosion and compaction, surface run-off and the risk of diffuse pollution to the watercourse from intensively managed grassland.

Reducing stocking density and fertiliser inputs on improved grassland will help protect water quality, while reducing surface run off may help to reduce the risk of flooding. In addition to this, Parcel(s) must be fenced off 1.5m from the top of the bank preventing livestock from entering the watercourse. This action could be implemented on poor draining soil where there is potential for run off and erosion or on free draining soil where there is a high risk of diffuse pollution from high levels of chemical and organic nitrogen. It could also be used to buffer sensitive habitats (CSAs, PIPs, flood plains, SACs) that are under significant threat from diffuse pollution. Chemical or organic fertiliser cannot be applied to the parcel and grazing is not permitted from the 16th of September to 14th of April. Reseeding or drainage works are not permitted, and machinery operations cannot take place from April to June each year. Hay or silage can be cut from the selected parcels after the 1st of July. The use of pesticides and herbicides are not permitted except for spot spraying noxious weeds. Invasive weeds can be controlled by topping after the 1st of July in localised areas.

Protection and Maintenance of Archaeological Monuments

Objective: To enhance and maintain visual archaeological monuments as landscape features and protect their biodiversity value.

All known archaeological monuments in the state are marked on maps on the National Monuments. Only monuments listed on The Record of Monuments and Places are eligible for this action.

There are two ways in which this measure can be carried out:

Option 1: Buffer margin around a visible monument in a tillage parcel(s)

A 10m wide grass margin must be established around at least one monument by sowing a grass seed mix by31st of May. The margin must be established by light cultivation (min-till) techniques and must extend from the external outer boundary of the monument.

Soil cultivation or tractor operations other than topping or mowing cannot be carried out within the margin once established. Topping or mowing is permitted once it doesn’t cause damage to the monument. Where there is encroaching vegetation (excluding established healthy trees) on/near the monument, this must be controlled but not between the 1st of March and the 31st of August annually.

Option 2: Managing vegetation around monument in an eligible grassland parcel(s)

Vegetation must be managed on and around all visible monuments initially by the 31st of December and annually thereafter.

All works must be done with hand tools (e.g., with a saw, slash hook, secateurs and/or pruning shears) or handheld power tools (e.g., with a chainsaw/brush cutter/strimmer). Tractors or diggers or other machinery cannot be used to cut or remove vegetation.

Small trees and plants like gorse, whins, rhododendron, laurel, and other individual plants should be removed by cutting at the base and treating the stump with an appropriate herbicide to prevent re-growth. Larger trees should be pruned to above head height to open access to the site or monument.

Management of vegetation can only be carried out between the 1st of March and the 31st of August Annually.

Riparian Buffers Strips/Zones

Objective: To help protect water quality by intercepting the loss of sediment and nutrients from soil surfaces after they have been mobilised. This measure also takes small areas out of production, thereby reducing the nutrient load while also supporting biodiversity.

Riparian buffer zones are one of the most common and important measures used to mitigate impacts on water quality from a range of pollutants such as phosphate, total phosphorus, sediment, nitrate, ammonium, pesticides, and microbial pathogens. They protect water quality by slowing runoff, intercepting pollutants, enabling P take-up, and breaking hydrological connectivity.

The Riparian Buffer zone/strip must be fenced off and stock proof. The buffer is in addition to any mandatory baseline requirements for applicable watercourses on the holding. Chemical or organic fertiliser cannot be applied to the Riparian buffer and only the spot treatment of noxious and invasive weeds with herbicides is allowed.

Geese and Swans

Objective: To promote the production of a grass sward to feed overwintering geese and swans.

A large influx of waterbird species migrates from northerly regions into Ireland for the winter each year. These include Whooper Swan, Greenland White Fronted Goose, Barnacle Goose and Brent Goose. They arrive in Ireland during the month of September and forage on coastal grasslands, offshore islands, and wetlands before gearing up for the return journey north, to breed.

The birds must not be disturbed during periods of occupancy. Field operations requiring the use of machinery should only be undertaken, if necessary. If hedge cutting is planned for these fields, this must only take place between the 1st of September and the 31st of October each year.

There are different requirements for both tillage and grassland enterprises.

Grassland requirements: Ensure that there is a short sward (between 5cm and 12cm) in place each year by the 1st of October by either grazing or cutting the season’s grass growth. Any mown material must be removed. Parcels are to be closed off from livestock and machinery from the 1st of October to the 31st of March in each year of the contract. These parcels must be maintained in grass for the duration of the contract.

Tillage requirements: Establish an annual winter cereal by the 15th of October or a catch crop by the 15th of September. The catch crop must be grown in accordance with the catch crop specification. The crops must remain in situ until the 31st of March annually. Catch crops cannot be grazed by livestock before the 31st of March each year.

Planting a Traditional Orchard

Objective: To support biodiversity and help ensure the survival of traditional Irish apple varieties.

While apple trees have been grown in Ireland for many centuries, the native genetic pool has been significantly altered to incorporate several modern varieties. This measure endeavours to conserve the authenticity of traditional apple tree varieties while also sustaining their heritage, by only growing trees that were once common to Irish soils.

An orchard must be created by planting 10 traditional native fruit trees by the 31st of March 2024. Trees can only be planted during the dormant season, October to March. The orchard must be fenced off from livestock with fit for purpose permanent fence. If damage is being caused by rabbits/hares, measures to prevent further damage must be taken by the erection of a rabbit-proof fence or tree guards. Trees must be staked and tied for support which must be monitored and adjusted when necessary to prevent the main stem twisting. Pesticides are not permitted. Only the spot treatment of noxious and invasive weeds is allowed. Grass and other competing vegetation must be controlled around the trees until they become established. Failed or dead trees must be replaced during the next planting season.

Tree Planting

Objective: To encourage the planting of trees onto farms where they will have multiple benefits while offering flexible planting options to suit the holding.

Planting more trees on farms can sequester carbon, support biodiversity and climate adaptation and mitigation including recapturing ammonia, help reduce soil erosion and sediment loss, recover leached nutrients, increase water retention, provide shelter and shading for livestock when mature, and enhance the visual appearance of the farm landscape. This action encompasses planting in rows, groups, or parkland, which can have multiple benefits on farms when strategically located.

Site suitability is of great importance for this action and is not permitted on NPWS Designated sites, Nature Reserves, pNHAs, Breeding Wader Hotspots, semi natural grasslands, and on archaeological monuments. Sites should contain free draining mineral soils, have no requirement for additional drainage and should be reasonably sheltered.

Planting of trees must be completed by 31 March 2024. Participants must ensure that they retain the plant passport that accompanied the plants upon purchase, for the duration of the contract. At least 3 native species must be planted. To ensure proper management from planting to maintenance, purchased trees must be a minimum of 60cm in height, planted at least 4 metres apart, fitted with a stake tree shelter and surrounding vegetation must be managed.

Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS)

Objective: To improve the recycling of organic fertiliser and to contribute to reduced nitrous oxide emissions, ammonia emissions and odours.

The method and timing of slurry application are two main factors that determine the utilization efficiency of these nutrients by the growing crop, whether grass or arable. Using low emission technology improves the utilisation efficiency of slurry compared to the traditional splash-plate. Other benefits include, reduced phosphorus run-off, a wider window of opportunity to apply slurry, reduced tainting of the

grazing sward and reduced smell from slurry spreading. Holdings that have a whole farm stocking rate under 100Kg N per hectare are eligible for this measure.

All the slurry applied on the farm (produced and/or imported) must be spread by one or a combination of the following methods for each year of the contract.

a) Band spreading
b) Injection systems
c) Trailing shoe

Over Winter Stubble

Objective: To provide a winter food source for seed-eating birds that feed on spilt grains and the seeds of broad-leaved weeds.

Over winter stubbles make a viable foraging habitat for insects and hares throughout the autumn and winter while also assisting in the capturing of excess nutrients after harvesting. Cited as one of the most simple but effective measures to support farmland birds, the adaption of over winter stubbles as a winter food source for birds will deliver the greatest benefit when operated on a larger scale. The switch from spring to autumn-sown cereals coupled with improved harvesting technology and pre-harvest weed control has contributed to the loss of quality weed-rich winter stubbles which is a key foraging habitat for farmland birds. Research shows that certain bird species prefer to forage on sprawling open stubbles rather than in tall, dense vegetations. Species such as skylark, yellowhammer, grey partridge, sparrow, finches, and pheasant, have a stronger preference to forage on weedy cereal stubbles while linnet specialises in exploiting stubbles after oilseed rape. Over winter stubbles contain spilled grains from the previous harvest along with broad-leaved weeds that germinate post-harvest thus providing a valuable winter food supply for seed eating birds. Furthermore, the retention of green cover on stubbles lessens the risk of soil erosion and nutrient leaching during the winter while also promoting carbon sequestration making it an important water and climate enhancing measure.

Following the harvest of a cereal crop, oilseed rape or linseed (but not maize) lightly cultivate the soil to encourage the emergence of green cover. Where necessary the action must be protected from livestock using a fence that is fit for purpose. There is a minimum area of 0.5 ha required to be delivered. No post-harvest herbicides are permitted, and chemical or organic fertiliser cannot be applied to the stubble. Grazing or topping of the stubble is not permitted and the stubbles must remain in situ until the 1st of February each year.

Tree belts for ammonia capture from farmyards

Objective: To capture ammonia emissions from livestock housing or uncovered slurry stores by directing the emissions into the tree belt and through the main canopy.

Using Low Emission Slurry Spreading equipment and ensuring all slurry storage is covered greatly reduces ammonia emissions. To further reduce losses, a suitably located and managed shelterbelt woodland can provide benefits in terms of ammonia recapture. Planting small woodland blocks (0.18 ha – 0.5ha) strategically located downwind of an ammonia source (e.g., livestock or poultry housing or uncovered slurry stores) optimises ammonia recapture. Planting of tree belts must be completed by the 31st of March 2024. Together with greenhouse gas recapture, these shelter belts sequester carbon, support biodiversity and screen farm buildings to enhance the visual appearance of the landscape.

Planting trees in riparian buffer zones

Objective: To protect water quality by enhancing nutrient uptake while also supporting biodiversity.

There may be situations where new riparian buffer zones created will benefit from the planting of appropriate tree species to enhance erosion interception and provide some improved bank stability. Tree roots and canopy will intercept subsurface and aerial pollutant pathways.

Riparian Buffer Zone where tree planting will benefit water quality must be selected for this measure. At least two species of Irish provenance must be planted by the 31st of March 2024. There are also requirements for this measure in terms of plant height at planting (60cm), distance from river (1.5m from the top of the bank), spacing (1.5m) and protection from livestock (tree shelter and fencing).

Barn Owl box installation

Barn owls are one of the most threatened species of owl in Ireland and is red listed on the 'Birds of conservation concern list in Ireland.

Farmers are required to install new barn owl boxes by the 31st of July 2023. This provides artificial nesting and roosting sites for barn owl.

Results based actions:

Low input peat grassland (LIPG) – Results Based

Objective: This is a result-based measure which rewards farmers for improved management of grassland on peat soils next to raised bog sites.

The natural transitional area around raised bogs (lagg zone) is vital for supporting raised bog ecosystems. Raised bogs provide a range of ecosystem services, including biodiversity, clean water, and carbon storage. Pressures from land use in these transitional zones have altered the ecosystem, resulting in the loss of these important ecosystem services. The grassland on peat scorecard incentivises farmers with land in these transitional zones to help restore these important ecosystems and the services they provide.

The scorecard is a series of questions which are answered by the surveyor for each field being scored. The result is a rating for the field on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent). The higher the score a parcel receives on the scorecard the higher the payment rate per hectare the participant receives for this action. A large portion of the score is based on the condition of the peat soils. The wetter the peat, the less carbon is emitted and hence, the higher the score. A higher proportion of the points on the Wet Grassland Scorecard are based on how wet the soil is. If you want to increase the wetness of your peaty plots you need to think about slowing the flow of water off the field. Points are also awarded for biodiversity – high cover of native meadow species such as meadowsweet, bird's-foot trefoil and common knapweed, will earn you more points. Points can be lost if threats or damaging activities exist.

Low Input Grassland (LIG) – Results Based

This is a result-based measure which aims to encourage farmers to manage their farmland in an environmentally friendly manner by linking the payment they receive to the quality of the environmental outcome delivered.

Permanent pastures that are extensively grazed and managed using low fertiliser and herbicides inputs sustain a greater variety of plants and wildlife, improve soil structure, promote water quality, and contribute to carbon sequestration.

Fields are assessed by an approved advisor between the 1st of June and the 31st of August in years 1, 3 and 5 and given a quality score, which reflects their ecological integrity. The scorecard is comprised of results indicators which are surrogates for measuring the actual biodiversity present. The scorecard is a

series of questions which are answered by the surveyor for each field being scored. The result is a rating for the field on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent).

The higher the score a parcel receives on the scorecard the higher the payment rate per hectare the participant receives for this action.

By using a results-based approach, participants in this measure will be incentivised to farm their grassland in a manner that will encourage the growth of positive indicator species and to avoid practices that can have a negative impact on the quality of the pasture. For example, a negative score is applied if the current level of management is too low with no signs of grazing/mowing or if there is poaching damage to the field.

Chemical or organic fertiliser or lime cannot be applied to the margin. Pesticides and herbicides are not permitted, other than for the spot treatment of noxious/invasive weeds. Participants are given the option to apply for a late meadow bonus payment. Eligible meadows must be closed for 6 weeks prior to cutting and the earliest date that meadows may be cut is the 1st of July.

Commonage (also results based)

Farmer shareholders are required to engage a professional advisor to assist in Commonage Management and implementation will take additional time/effort to adapt more sustainable management practices to improve the condition/score of the commonage. Implementation also requires co-operation among shareholders in the delivery of a sustainable grazing regime. The measure will improve the condition of the heath land /grassland and associated species e.g., red grouse, curlew, Hen Harrier.

Fields are assessed and given a quality score, which reflects their ecological integrity. The scorecard is comprised of results indicators which are surrogates for measuring the actual biodiversity present. The scorecard is a series of questions which are answered by the surveyor for each field being scored. The result is a rating for the field on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent).

The higher the score a parcel receives on the scorecard the higher the payment rate per hectare the participant receives for this action.

Conservation of Rare breeds

Objective: To conserve the genetic diversity of native breeds that are at risk of extinction.

This action endeavours to retain and where possible, increase populations of specific rare breeds to ensure their long-term survival. In terms of eligible livestock and bloodstock species, participants in this measure can choose from a list of cattle, goats, horses and ponies and sheep.

Each participant must be a member of an approved breed society/studbook for the duration of the contract. All progeny from a purebred mating must be registered with the relevant breed society/studbook when seeking a rare breed payment on an animal. Up-to-date monthly records of all registered animals owned by participants must be maintained. Registration and identification certificates for each registered animal must be available.

Payment will be made in arrears based on the monthly average livestock units of owned registered animals over the previous recording year. Breeding females who produce a registered offspring will be paid an additional payment per livestock unit equivalent. Individual requirements will apply to each eligible species.

O14 What area is eligible?

☐Agricultural area defined for the CAP plan

☒Agricultural land including and beyond agricultural area

In addition to agricultural land, the eligible area will include peatland (bogs and fens),woodlands, scrub/transitional woodland, aquatic marginal wetlands with emergent vegetation, freshwater marsh, upper salt marsh, ponds, earth banks, sand dune systems.

☐Non-agricultural land

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description
GAEC01	Maintenance of permanent grassland based on a ratio of permanent grassland in relation to agricultural area at national, regional, sub-regional, group-of-holdings or holding level in comparison to the reference year 2018.Maximum decrease of 5% compared to the reference year.
GAEC02	Protection of wetland and peatland
GAEC03	Ban on burning arable stubble, except for plant health reasons
GAEC04	Establishment of buffer strips along water courses
GAEC05	Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient
GAEC06	Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soil in periods that are most sensitive
GAEC07	Crop rotation in arable land, except for crops growing under water
GAEC08	Minimum share of agricultural area devoted to non-productive areas or features.Minimum share of at least 4% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow. Where a farmer commits to devote at least 7% of his/her arable land to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow, under an enhanced eco-scheme in accordance with Article 28(5a), the share to be attributed to compliance with this GAEC shall be limited to 3%.Minimum share of at least 7% of arable land at farm level if this includes also catch crops or nitrogen fixing crops, cultivated without the use of plant protection products, of which 3% shall be land lying fallow or non-productive features. Member States should use the weighting factor of 0,3 for catch crops.Retention of landscape features.Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season.As an option, measures for avoiding invasive plant species
GAEC09	Ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland designated as environmentally-sensitive permanent grasslands in Natural 2000 sites
SMR01	Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy: Article 11(3), point (e), and point (h), as regards mandatory requirements to control diffuse sources of pollution by phosphates
SMR02	Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources: Articles 4 and 5
SMR03	Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds: Article 3(1), Article 3(2), point (b), Article 4(1), (2) and (4)

SMR04	Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna: Article 6(1) and (2)
SMR11	Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes: Article 4

List of relevant mandatory national standards

National Monuments Act

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

Action	**Relevant baseline element**	**The way in which the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements**	**How commitment goes beyond Eco-Scheme requirements**
Winter Bird Food	GAEC 6 GAEC 7 GAEC 8	This action extends the prohibition on ploughing (from 30th November under GAEC 5/6), providing crop from the time of establishment until the 15th of March. The winter bird food crop is an arable crop, but it will be additional to the requirement for crop rotation diversification practices set out under GAEC 7. Land sown with winter bird food crop will be additional to the minimum requirement of at least 4% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features set out under GAEC 8	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Un-harvested cereal headlands	GAEC 4 GAEC 5 SMR 1 SMR 2	Conditionality under GAEC 4 requires the establishment of non-ploughed/uncultivated 3m buffer strips along watercourses, and where no pesticides/fertilisers are allowed. In addition to the mandatory buffer requirements, this action further protects water quality by banning the use of all herbicides, pesticides or pre harvest desiccants establishing/creating an unharvested cereal headland (various width options from 12 to 30m).Furthermore, the action also recommends no/low fertiliser use on the headland, limiting discharge to surface waters. Conditionality under GAEC 5 includes tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, as well as the considering the slope gradients. This action extends the prohibition on ploughing (from 30th November under GAEC 5), providing green	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.

		cover from the time of establishment until the 1st of February.	
Over-winter stubble	GAEC 5 GAEC 6	Conditionality under GAEC 5/6 includes tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, as well as the considering the slope gradients. This action extends the prohibition on ploughing (from 30th November under GAEC 5/6), providing overwinter stubble/cover from the time of establishment until the 1st of February.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Grass Margins (Arable & Grassland)	GAEC 4 GAEC 6 GAEC 8 SMR 1 SMR 2	This action will create grass field margins with no chemical or organic fertilisers and will be in addition to 3m watercourses margins required under GAEC 4. GAEC 6 requires a minimum soil cover to protect soils in sensitive areas and sown green cover cannot be removed before 1st of December. This action goes beyond the conditionality of GAEC 6 by providing a permanent green cover on field margins all year round. This action goes beyond the conditionality of GAEC 8 as the area selected for this action will not count for GAEC 8 non-productive areas.	The area selected for this action will not count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 1. Space for Nature
Environmental Management of Arable Fallow	GAEC 4 GAEC 5 GAEC 6 GAEC 8 SMR 1 SMR 2	GAEC 4 requires Member States to establish 3 buffer strips along watercourses both inside and outside the areas designated as Nitrates Vulnerable Zones (NVZ's). This action creates a field of fallow ground on which no fertilisers will be applied for the period of the contract (income forgone allowed on this area). This action effectively acts as a field sized buffer between agricultural inputs and receiving waterbodies which goes above the baseline required under GAEC 4, SMR 1 and 2. Conditionality under GAEC 5 includes tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion. This action goes beyond the conditionality set out in GAEC 5 by ensuring the green cover is established by the 15th of September and this action extends the prohibition on ploughing /removal of green cover (from 30th November under GAEC 5/6), providing overwinter stubble/cover from the time of establishment until at least the 1st of January.	The area selected for this action will not count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 1. Space for Nature

		GAEC 6 requires a minimum soil cover to protect soils in sensitive areas and sown green cover cannot be removed before 1st of December. This action goes beyond the conditionality of GAEC 6 by providing a green cover until at least 1st of January. This action goes beyond the conditionality of GAEC 8 as the area selected for this action will not count for GAEC 8 non-productive areas.	
Minimum Tillage ('Min Till')	GAEC 5 GAEC 6	Action is beyond GAEC requirements as no requirement to use minimum tillage in GAEC. Requires specialist advice to implement and adapt new holistic approaches & sustainable agricultural techniques. Reduces the risk of soil erosion.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Catch Crops	GAEC 6 GAEC 7 SMR 1 SMR 2	This action goes beyond the baseline for SMR1 and 2 as Ploughing is prohibited and fertilisers are prohibited further protecting watercourses from Nitrate and Phosphate losses. This measure will provide a catch cover that will utilise residual nutrients in the soil following harvesting preventing nutrient loss and protecting water quality. GAEC 6 requires a minimum soil cover to protect soils in sensitive areas and sown green cover cannot be removed before 1st of December. Under this action the crop must remain until the 1st of January. However, a sown green cover crop is not required under GAEC 6. A catch crop must be established by 15 September each year using non-inversion techniques (ploughing is not permitted) and by either broadcasting or drilling the seed mixture. The area selected for this action will not count towards GAEC 7 crop rotation/diversification requirements.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Brassica fodder stubble	GAEC 6	GAEC 6 requires a minimum soil cover to protect soils in sensitive areas and sown green cover cannot be removed before 1st of December. Under this action the crop must remain until the 1st of March.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.

Low input grassland	SMR 1 SMR 2	This action incentivises a low/no fertiliser and extensive management approach to grassland management. Scores are related to ecological integrity which includes indicator plant species which are only found in fields with low nutrient inputs. This will have associated benefits for water quality. The structure of the sward is also assessed with highest marks awarded for a diverse heterogenous structure achieved by extensive grazing management. Thus, field will be rewarded for reducing inputs below that required under the Nitrates NAP rules, thus there is no baseline overlap.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Extensively Grazed Permanent Pasture	SMR 1 SMR 2	Fertiliser inputs are restricted. Pesticides and herbicides are not permitted, except to spot treat or weed wipe to control nettles, bracken, injurious weeds, or invasive non-native species. Rushes can be controlled by topping, grazing, or weed wiping/spot spraying only. This action also incentivises a low/no fertiliser and extensive management approach to grassland management. Scores are related to ecological integrity which includes indicator plant species which are only found in fields with low nutrient inputs. This will have associated benefits for water quality. The structure of the sward is also assessed with highest marks awarded for a diverse heterogenous structure achieved by extensive grazing management. Thus, field will be rewarded for reducing inputs below that required under the Nitrates NAP rules, thus there is no baseline overlap.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Rye grass seed set for birds	Not applicable	Fenced margins are created in intensive grasslands.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse	SMR 1 SMR 2	Involves creation of riparian buffer areas in addition to any mandatory baseline requirements for applicable watercourses - 3m buffers under GAEC 4/SMR1&2. Chemical or organic fertiliser cannot be applied to these areas.	Designed to be used on intensive farms only to reduce nutrient inputs in the most vulnerable field on these farm types. Specific management practices under this AECM action will be additional to Eco Scheme. This is a more environmentally ambitious measure than Agricultural Practice 3 - reducing chemical nitrogen under the Eco-Scheme. Under

			this action there is no organic or chemical fertiliser use, and specific management practices apply.
Hedgerow rejuvenation (coppicing or laying)	GAEC 8	This measure will improve the existing non-productive features (hedgerows) so they will be of higher quality to support on farm biodiversity. No associated baseline over-lap.	AECM compensates participants for rejuvenating existing hedgerows to extend their natural life. There is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Traditional dry stone wall maintenance	GAEC 8	This measure relates to dry stone wall maintenance. As part of the measure a margin must be left along the selected walls, which is kept free from pesticides and fertiliser in order to enhance the value which walls offer as a nature corridor for flora and fauna. It goes beyond requirements under GAEC 8, where they are simply recognised as non-productive features thus no associated baseline over-lap.	AECM compensates participants for costs associated with repairing and maintaining stone walls in good condition, it is not permitted to allow their condition to deteriorate. This action goes beyond requirements under Eco-Scheme Ag Practice 1. Space for Nature.
Planting new hedgerow	GAEC 8	This measure will create new non-productive features to improve on-farm biodiversity. New hedgerows planted under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	New Hedgerows planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the contract. Annual Maintenance of new hedgerow is required for contract period in AECM.
Planting Trees (rows, groups or parkland)	GAEC 8	This measure will create new non-productive features to improve on-farm biodiversity. Trees planted under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	Trees planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the contract. Annual maintenance and protection of newly planted trees is required for contract period in AECM.
Tree belt for ammonia capture at farmyard	GAEC 8	This measure will improve on-farm biodiversity. Trees planted under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	Tree belts planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of

			the AECM contract. Annual Maintenance and protection of tree belt is required for contract period in AECM.
Riparian Buffer Strip/Zone – for grassland or arable land	GAEC 4 GAEC 8 SMR 1 SMR 2	The payment is based on income forgone and the cost of establishing and maintaining margin widths over and above the 3m buffer where required under GAEC 4/SMR. In Arable - sowing of a grass strip with specific species plus no application of organic or chemical fertilisers will be in addition to the GAEC 4/SMR baseline and will remain in situ for the duration of the scheme therefore reducing soil erosion. In Grassland - the Riparian Buffer Strip/Zone will be fenced off from livestock with no chemical or organic fertilisers or pesticides. Buffers to be established as additional to any existing baseline requirements. Newly created riparian buffer strips/zones established under AECM will not count toward GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	Newly created Riparian Buffer Strips/Zones in AECM cannot be counted towards Ag Practice 1. Space for Nature. These AECM actions are selected where they are most needed, a detailed specification must be followed and margins maintained to keep them as grassy margins to benefit birds of prey, bats and invertebrates.
Planting trees in riparian buffers	GAEC 4 GAEC 8 SMR 1 SMR 2	The payment is based on income forgone and the cost of establishing and maintaining margin widths over and above the 3m buffer where required under GAEC 4/SMR. In Arable - sowing of a grass strip with specific species plus no application of organic or chemical fertilisers will be in addition to the GAEC 4/SMR baseline and will remain in situ for the duration of the scheme therefore reducing soil erosion. In Grassland - the Riparian Buffer Strip/Zone will be fenced off from livestock with no chemical or organic fertilisers or pesticides. Buffers to be established as additional to any existing baseline requirements. Newly created riparian buffer strips/zones established under AECM will not count toward GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract. Areas planted with tress under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	Trees planted into riparian buffers cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the AECM contract. Annual maintenance and protection of newly planted trees is required for contract period in AECM.

Protection and maintenance of archaeological monuments	Comply with National Monuments Act GAEC 8	National legislation prevents farmers from removing or damaging monuments. The payment proposed is to maintain and improve their condition and is based of annual maintenance costs for the farmer to manage vegetation and keep the monuments in good condition. This measure will enhance and maintain visual archaeological monuments in the farm landscape in both tillage and grassland landscapes on parcels with a reference area i.e., on parcels with a UAA. Thus, requirements are above basic retention requirements under GAEC 8.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Conservation of Rare Breeds	SMR 11	This measure will aim to retain and where possible increase populations of specific rare breeds to ensure long term survival of the breeds. There is no requirement to keep specific rare breeds under SMR 11	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Planting a traditional orchard	Not applicable	To Increase biodiversity and provide a habitat for wildlife on the farm. To ensure the survival of old fruit varieties and to enhance the visual and historical value of the landscape.	Traditional Orchards planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the AECM contract. Annual Maintenance and protection of orchard is required for contract period in AECM.
Barn owl box	Not applicable	Farmers required to install and maintain owl boxes. This provides artificial nesting and roosting sites for barn owl. This is the most threatened species of owl in Ireland and is red listed on the 'Birds of conservation concern list in Ireland'.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Geese and Swans	SMR 3	This action requires farmers to produce of a grass sward, to protect, not disturb and to feed overwintering geese and swans including the Whooper Swan, Greenland White Front Goose, Barnacle Goose and Brent Goose and they are compensated for the associated costs and income forgone on the area concerned.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Commonage	SMR 3 SMR 4	Farmer shareholders are required to engage a professional advisor to assist in Commonage Management and implementation will take additional time/effort to adapt more sustainable management practices to improve the condition/score of the commonage. Implementation also requires co-operation	This is a results-based action where the applicant is rewarded for quality of habitat. AECM payments are based on habitat quality

		among shareholders in the delivery of a sustainable grazing regime. The measure will improve the condition of the heath land /grassland and associated species e.g., red grouse, curlew, Hen harrier. This is over and above baseline requirements to respect Nature Directives on these lands.	e.g. sward structure, positive indicator species, damaging activity.
Low input peat grassland	SMR 1 SMR 2	This action incentivises a low/no fertiliser approach and extensive management on specific peat grassland areas. Fertiliser inputs are restricted. Pesticides and herbicides are not permitted, except to spot treat or weed wipe to control nettles, bracken, injurious weeds, or invasive non-native species. Rushes can be controlled by topping, grazing, or weed wiping/spot spraying only. This action also incentivises a low/no fertiliser and extensive management approach to grassland management. Scores are related to ecological integrity which includes indicator plant species which are only found in fields with low nutrient inputs. This will have associated benefits for water quality. The structure of the sward is also assessed with highest marks awarded for a diverse heterogenous structure achieved by extensive grazing management. Thus, field will be rewarded for reducing inputs below that required under the Nitrates NAP rules, thus there is no baseline overlap.	This is a results-based measure for grassland on organic peat soils to incentivise farmer to manage them extensively and retain high water levels AECM payments are based on habitat quality e.g. sward structure, positive indicator species, damaging activity.
Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS)	GAEC 4 SMR 1 SMR2	Action compensates farmers for additional costs associated with using low emission slurry spreading equipment. Farmers are not required to use LESS as standard, other than certain categories for farmers who will be excluded from this action i.e., nitrates derogation farmers and other farmers above certain stocking rates. Buffers widths for GAEC 4/SMRs (as listed in section 3.10.2.1.1) must be respected when using the technology.[WJ1]	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**

☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone

☒ transaction cost included

☐ one off payment
☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

On the basis outlined above, a maximum payment of €7,311 per annum will apply in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment. The level of payment achieved will be determined by the payment rates for the respective actions selected and undertaken.

Average payment across all scheme participants is anticipated to be €5,000 including NPI elements. As indicated, part of this payment could be in respect of the non-productive investment element of certain actions, with this non-productive investment* potentially to an expected overall maximum value of €1,461 per annum applicable in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment. The expected overall average is €1,186 per annum applicable for those who complete these investments. The average annual payment for the elements of actions which fall under Article 70 is €4,067.

*The intervention template for AECM Non-productive investments (Article 73) refers.

Calculation method

Eligible costs include additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU)_2021/2115.

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)
☐ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)
☒ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

As indicated, beneficiaries, who received priority entry into scheme under Tier 1 by virtue of their having particularly important environmental assets, are required to undertake certain mandatory actions relevant to those assets (for example, if he/she has commonage or private natura land). Beneficiaries, who qualified for entry into scheme under Tier 2, will be required to choose an action(s) from the options listed for Tier 2 (for example, a farmer with more than 30 hectares (ha) of arable crops could choose Min Till from that list). Beneficiaries within Tiers 1 and 2 may also select any other actions – as appropriate and as informed by the Farm Sustainability Plan. Beneficiaries, who did not enter scheme under Tier 1 or 2, may select actions as appropriate and as informed by their Farm Sustainability Plan (FSP). The purpose of the FSP is to assist advisors and farmers in identifying actions appropriate to their farm, enterprise, farm habitats and connectivity as well as landscape.

Applicant will select from a range of different management and results-based actions depending on the farm's specific environmental needs.

What is the duration of contracts?

5 years.

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Participants in the AECM General will be eligible for payments under the AECM General when they have fulfilled actions to which they have committed under a contract, with the purpose of those actions relating to environmental, climate and biodiversity related objectives. In undertaking and fulfilling those actions, participants are required to adhere to certain conditions as set down for this publicly funded environmental programme. As indicated in Section 5.3.7 above, the unit cost is based on additional costs, income foregone, and transaction cost.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53AECMGEN01 - Average Payment per ha – AECM General	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.14; R.19; R.20; R.21; R.22; R.31; R.33; R.34; R.24;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53AECMGEN01 - Average Payment per ha – AECM General

Average unit amount determined as each applicant can select from a range of different actions depending on the farm's specific environmental needs. Each of these actions has a different unit amount and for four results-based actions there will be a variable unit amount.

Eligible costs include additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

The overall rate for a number of 'integrated' actions incorporates the non-productive capital investment associated with the action. These non-productive investments and the associated funding are identified and costed separately under Article 73 (non-productive investments intervention template).

AECM General is a structured 'package' which is expected to offer an average payment per ha of €367.50.Each applicant's payment will be determined by the actions selected depending on the farm's specific needs, as well as the performance achieved in the case of the results-based actions with a variable rate of aid.

This average unit amount is informed by the costings attributed to individual actions that may be selected, combined with information on the uptake of comparable actions in the agri-environmental climate measure in Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

A lot of the actions proposed in the new AECM contribute to a number of indicators. A wide range of actions have been developed for participants to choose from and it is envisaged that the Farm Sustainability Plan will assist them in the selection of the actions most appropriate for their holding. It is difficult therefore to anticipate the potential uptake of each action and/or tier. The numerators which have been used to calculate the Results Indicator percentages were estimated on the basis of the take-up of comparable actions offered to farmers under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 .

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53AECMGEN01 - Average Payment per ha – AECM General (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		367.50	367.50	367.50	367.50	367.50	367.50	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		221,322.00	331,998.00	331,998.00	331,998.00	331,998.00	110,666.00	1,659,980.00
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		80,739,097.00	121,114,915.00	121,114,915.00	121,114,915.00	121,114,915.00	40,372,143.00	605,570,900.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		32,465,191.00	48,700,307.00	48,700,307.00	48,700,307.00	48,700,307.00	16,233,639.00	243,500,058.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53DBWS - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme

Intervention Code (MS)	53DBWS
Intervention Name	Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj9.N2	Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and increasing awareness of AMR and ATR	2nd Highest SO9	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.44 Share of livestock units (LU) covered by supported actions to improve animal welfare

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The draft Needs Assessment for Ireland's CAP Strategic plan and the Commission's recommendations for Ireland's CAP Strategic plan both include recommendations in relation to improving the welfare of male dairy calves and identify actions which are needed to improve the viability of male calves in the dairy herd in locally based production systems.

Low value male dairy calves are associated with an increased risk of poor welfare regarding their higher mortality rate. Improving the quality of calves born in the dairy herd which are destined for beef production through the use of high Dairy Beef Index sires, will reduce the welfare risk for calves born in dairy herds which are not required for milk production.

Breeding High DBI index bulls with dairy dams has established positive association with progeny performance benefits (Berry et al, 2020)[1] There are also known associations between the enhanced

integration of beef and dairy systems through the production of dairy beef and the perception of calf welfare in farmers (Osawe et al 2021)[2]

The action to be undertaken in the Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme is set out below. The scheme will operate as a one year rolling contract under Article 70.

Breeding Measure

Applicants will use high DBI AI for breeding dairy beef calves. All beef A.I. sires must have a minimum DBI of 3 stars. The average DBI value for beef bulls is 2 stars.

[1] Berry, D. P., and S. C. Ring. "Observed progeny performance validates the benefit of mating genetically elite beef sires to dairy females." *Journal of dairy science* 103.3 (2020): 2523-2533.
[2] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022030221006767

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

an applicant must: -

- Have submitted a BISS application in a historical year and continue to submit BISS applications on which all their lands are declared for the duration of the Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme;
- Have dairy beef breed animals born annually in the herd in each scheme year of participation in the measure;
- From 2024 the only new entrants allowed into the scheme will be those who have commenced supplying milk to milk processors for the first time after the closing date for receipt of applications for the scheme in the 2023.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

The maximum number of calves payable per holding is 40 annually. The proposed rate of payment per calf is €20. The maximum payment annually per holding under the measure is €800. The amount of support is calculated on the basis of costs incurred and income foregone. Commitments will be paid at a rate of €20/head = €50/LU (dairy beef calves are 0.4LU).

O14 What area is eligible?

☐Agricultural area defined for the CAP plan
☐Agricultural land including and beyond agricultural area
☐Non-agricultural land

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description

List of relevant mandatory national standards

There are no relevant GAEC's, SMR's or mandatory national standards.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

There are no relevant GAEC's, SMR's or mandatory national standards.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**

☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone
☐ transaction cost included
☐ one off payment
☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

There is no range of support - there will be one unit amount of €20/calf (€50/LU).

Calculation method

The amount of support is calculated on the basis of costs incurred and income foregone. Detailed costings underpinning the rate of aid will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of the CSP Regulation

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)
☒ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)
☐ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

This is a management-based intervention with no possibility for the beneficiary to pick and choose.

Any dairy beef calves born as a result of the Breeding Measure after 1 January in the scheme year are eligible for payment.

What is the duration of contracts?

The scheme will operate as a one year rolling contract under Article 70.

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Eligibility for payment under this Government proposed animal welfare programme is dependent on the fulfilment of the specific conditions under the programme. The payment rates for the intervention are limited to the costs incurred/income foregone involved with complying with the programme.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Group	Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
LU Livestock Units DBW	53DBWS01 - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.44;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53DBWS01 - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme

The amount of support is calculated on the basis of costs incurred and income foregone. Detailed costings underpinning the rate of aid will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of the CSP Regulation.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Group	Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
LU Livestock Units DBW	53DBWS01 - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00		
		Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00		
		O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
	TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00		500,000.00
		Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00		25,000,000.00
		Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00		10,052,500.00
		Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
		Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
		Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
		Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
		Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
		Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53GR - AECM Genetic Resources

Intervention Code (MS)	53GR
Intervention Name	AECM Genetic Resources
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.19. Number of operations or units supporting genetic resources
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.31 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including high-nature-value farming practices
R.34 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for managing landscape features, including hedgerows and trees

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, noted a number of climate, environmental and biodiversity related challenges which need to be addressed.

The AECM General consists of a range of actions to achieve reduction in fertiliser use, improved land management to address water quality and soil fertility issues, and the conservation, restoration and protection of habitats and species to halt the further decline of biodiversity.

A Genetic Resources agri-environment climate measure to facilitate the conservation of certain species – both animal and plant - forms part of the overall AECM General intervention. This Genetic Resources measure will be delivered as part of the AECM structure, namely under Tier 1 and Tier 3 as outlined below.

The Genetic resources measure consists of 2 actions as follows:

1. Conservation of Rare breeds

This action will support and conserve the genetic diversity of native breeds that are at risk of extinction. It will support the retention and, where possible, increase populations of specific rare breeds to ensure their long-term survival. In terms of eligible livestock and bloodstock species, participants in this measure can choose from a list of cattle, goats, horses and ponies and sheep.

2. Planting a Traditional Orchard

This action supports biodiversity and help ensure the survival of traditional Irish apple varieties. While apple trees have been grown in Ireland for many centuries, the native genetic pool has been significantly altered to incorporate several modern varieties. This measure endeavours to conserve the authenticity of traditional apple tree varieties while also sustaining their heritage, by only growing trees that were once common to Irish soils.

The AECM General has three tiers, namely:

·Tier 1 – Farmers with identified Priority Environmental Assets[1] (PEAs) who must undertake mandatory actions associated with those assets; those with certain rare breeds, and those who are registered organic farmers.

·Tier 2 – Farmers above a certain stocking rate or a certain area under arable crops or whose lands include a vulnerable water area, who must undertake certain appropriate actions, or farmers participating in certain forestry schemes or who opt for one of the tree planting actions.

·Tier 3 – All other farmers[2]who undertake a range of appropriate actions, selected from a list of General actions, to address local/farm specific environmental priorities, with actions selected following the completion of a sustainable farm plan.

As indicated, in view of the importance of conserving rare breeds, farmers with eligible rare breeds, who wish to participate in AECM General, will be afforded Tier 1 priority access to the AECM General but must comply with the requirements associated with the Rare Breeds action.

One of the actions in Tier 3, which a farmer may opt to undertaken, is the Planting of Traditional Orchards. Farmers may select the planting the traditional orchards action.

See AECM General intervention for full details of the tier structure and the groupings of actions and mandatory scheme requirements. Both actions will be delivered under the category ‘conservation of genetic resources’.

Need	**Addressed by Action**
Obj6.N1	Conservation of rare breeds. Planting traditional orchards

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

The beneficiaries will be active farmers and the scheme will be open countrywide (other than in those zones falling within the defined area under the AECM Co-operation approach) to all categories of active farmer.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

This is an IACS support.

Support under AECM General, and consequently the conservation of genetic resources measure within it, will be by way of fixed-value packages for a minimum contract period of five years. See AECM general template for further details.

Eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. The rates for a number of 'integrated' actions incorporate non-productive capital investments which includes the planting of a traditional orchard. The non-productive investments and funding are set out separately in the non-productive investments intervention template.

While a fixed rate is payable for most of the actions in the AECM, a variable rate will apply to four actions, one of which is Conservation of Rare Breeds actions, as noted below:

Action	€ per unit/year
Conservation of rare breeds (per Livestock Unit) (*results based – see below*)	200.00
Planting a traditional orchard	27.49

The variation for the Conservation of Rare Breeds action is an additional €75 payable for each live offspring born and registered during duration of contract

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description
SMR11	Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes: Article 4

List of relevant mandatory national standards

None

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

Action	Relevant baseline element	The way in which the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements	How commitment goes beyond Eco-Scheme requirements
Conservation of Rare Breeds	SMR 11	This measure will aim to retain and where possible increase populations of specific rare breeds to ensure long term survival of the breeds.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Planting a traditional orchard	Not applicable	To Increase biodiversity and provide a habitat for wildlife on the farm. To ensure the survival of old fruit varieties and to enhance the visual and historical value of the landscape	Traditional Orchards planted cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the AECM contract. Annual Maintenance and protection of orchard is required for contract period in AECM.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**

☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone

☐ transaction cost included

☐ one off payment

☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

On the basis outlined above, a maximum payment of €7,311 per annum will apply in all cases in relation to the payment for the overall AECM General contract, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment. The level of payment achieved will be determined by the payment rates for the respective actions selected and undertaken.

As regards the Genetic resources measure within the AECM General, the maximum number of livestock units (LU) for which a participant is eligible for payment per annum under the 'Conservation of Rare Breeds' actions is 20 LU, while a participant is only permitted to plant one traditional orchard consisting of 10 trees under the 'Planting a traditional orchard' action.

Average payment across all scheme participants, in the AECM General, is anticipated to be €5,000 including NPI elements. As indicated, part of this payment could be in respect of the non-productive investment element of certain actions*. As regards the Genetic resources measure, the payment rate for the 'Planting a Traditional Orchard' includes an amount in respect of 'non-productive investment' component, for the purchase of fruit trees and materials for 'fit for purpose' permanent fence, a rabbit-proof fence or tree guards.

The breakdown of the total annual payment rate per unit for this action is:

Action	Unit	Total Annual Payment per unit	Payable under Art 70	NPI element – Article 73
Planting a traditional orchard	Tree	27.49	13.81	13.68
Per orchard (10 trees)	Orchard	274.90	138.10	136.80

*The intervention template for AECM NPI intervention (Article 73) refers.

Calculation method

Eligible costs include additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU)_2021/2115.

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☐ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☒ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

As indicated, beneficiaries, who received priority entry into the AECM scheme under Tier 1 by virtue of their having particularly important environmental assets, including conservation of rare breeds. See AECM general template for further details.

What is the duration of contracts?

5 years

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Participants in the AECM General will be eligible for payments under the AECM General when they have fulfilled actions to which they have committed under a contract, with the purpose of those actions relating to environmental, climate and biodiversity related objectives. In undertaking and fulfilling those actions, participants are required to adhere to certain conditions as set down for this publicly funded environmental programme. As indicated in Section 5.3.7 above, the unit cost is based on additional costs, income foregone for the conservation of genetic resources actions.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53GR01 - Uniform Unit Amount Traditional orchard	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.31; R.34;	No
53GR02 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds per LU	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.31; R.34;	No
53GR03 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds (Offspring) per LU	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.31; R.34;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53GR01 - Uniform Unit Amount Traditional orchard

Eligible costs include additional costs and income forgone. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

The planting of traditional orchard action incorporates the non-productive capital investment associated with the action. These are non-commercial orchards. These non-productive investments and the associated funding are identified and costed separately under Article 73 (non-productive investments intervention template).

53GR02 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds per LU

Eligible costs include additional costs and income forgone. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

53GR03 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds (Offspring) per LU

Eligible costs include additional costs and income forgone. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53GR01 - Uniform Unit Amount Traditional orchard (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		138.10	138.10	138.10	138.10	138.10	138.10	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.19 (unit: Operations)								
53GR02 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds per LU (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.19 (unit: Operations)								
53GR03 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds (Offspring) per LU (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		75.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.19 (unit: Operations)								
TOTAL	O.19 (unit: Operations)		1,034.00	1,550.00	1,550.00	1,550.00	1,550.00	516.00	7,750.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		596,738.00	894,350.00	894,350.00	894,350.00	894,350.00	297,612.00	4,471,750.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		239,948.00	359,618.00	359,618.00	359,618.00	359,618.00	119,670.00	1,798,090.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53OFS - Organic Farming Scheme

Intervention Code (MS)	53OFS
Intervention Name	Organic Farming Scheme
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.17. Number of hectares or number of other units benefitting from support for organic farming
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO1 Support viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector across the Union in order to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the Union
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes
SO8 Promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj1.N4	Encourage farm diversification to improve the resilience of the agri-food sector	4th Highest SO1	Yes
Obj3.N2	Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce	2nd Highest SO3	Yes
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes

Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes
Obj8.N1	Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas	Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj9.N1	Increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics	Highest priority SO9	Yes
Obj9.N2	Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and increasing awareness of AMR and ATR	2nd Highest SO9	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.14 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)
R.19 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)
R.21 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for the quality of water bodies
R.24 Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) under supported specific commitments which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides, such as pesticides leakage
R.29 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming with a split between maintenance and conversion
R.31 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments for supporting biodiversity conservation or restoration including high-nature-value farming practices
R.43 Share of livestock units (LU) concerned by supported actions to limit the use of antimicrobials (prevention/reduction)
R.44 Share of livestock units (LU) covered by supported actions to improve animal welfare

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

Organic farming involves the establishment and maintenance of a sustainable management system for agriculture, which considers the effects agriculture has on natural resources and biodiversity, as well as agriculture's contribution to climate change, and aims to reduce these as far as is possible. The farming practices it promotes e.g. crop rotation, use of organic fertilisers, improvement to soil organic matter and no use of synthetic plant protection products or synthetic fertilisers, contribute to improving soil and water quality, the mitigation and adaptation to climate change and to the improvement of the state of biodiversity. The environmental gain associated with converting 100,000 ha of agricultural land to organic production can typically represent a GHG abatement of 0.1MT (based on Irish suckler beef farm).

Ireland's SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment both identify the need to increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources. In this context, it is clear that organic farming should be encouraged to reduce the pressure placed on these resources and to maintain the production of agricultural products using a reduced number of inputs. The SWOT analysis also

highlights the low level of organic farming in Ireland and recognises the opportunity for the Organic Farming Sector to expand.

Stakeholder consultation highlighted that any future Organic Farming Scheme would need to be cognisant of latest market demand and the environmental benefits associated with organic production systems.

The support under this intervention therefore aims to encourage farmers to convert from conventional farming methods and to apply organic farming methods as defined in Regulation (EU) 2018/848 as well as to maintain these methods after the initial period of conversion (which will be a maximum period of two years), thus answering societal demand for the use of environmentally friendly farming practices, cognisant of market demand. Organic production thus responds to consumer demand for sustainably produced agricultural products and also contributes to environmental, animal welfare and rural development issues through provision of local supply to assist in developing local markets.

The overall objective of the Organic Farming Scheme is to deliver enhanced environmental and animal welfare benefits and to encourage producers to respond to the market demand for organically produced food.

The general structure and implementation/administration of the existing Organic Farming Scheme (RDP 2014-2020) will be continued. The scheme will offer increased payment per hectare compared to the current programme and some targeted incentives aimed at areas that are deemed to be in deficit. It is proposed that the Organic Farming Scheme would open in tranches for applications on an annual basis throughout the CAP programming period.

This intervention aims to build on the progress made in respect of the development of the Organic Sector in the previous programming period and accelerate growth of the sector to contribute to the Green Deal targets. It is reflective of stakeholder consultation.

Any contracts in place under the existing RDP will be transferred into the CAP Strategic Plan as appropriate.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

As in the previous Organic Farming Scheme a series of core requirements defines basic eligibility. Key conditions include:

Requirement of minimum farm area of 3 hectares, except for horticultural (including fruit) producers where the minimum farm area is 1 hectare.

Registration with one of the Organic Control Bodies, possession of a valid organic licence and registration with DAFM.

Completion of an Approved Training Course in Organic Farming

Be an active farmer, aged eighteen years or over on the date of application.

Declare all land farmed in the applicant’s name on the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS)

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

This is an IACS support.

The principal support will be an annual area-based payment per hectare of UAA. This rate is comprised of a higher payment for farmers converting land to organic farming for the first time payable for the initial maximum two-year conversion period, with a maintenance payment thereafter. Higher rates are payable for horticultural operations (including fruit), for tillage operations, and for dairy operations, all of which are strongly in deficit.

A second element of the support will be a participation payment which would be paid to every organic farmer each year to cover administrative costs. This support for the duration of the farmers contract will help to increase the participation of smaller operators where the financial burden of setting up has been flagged as a barrier to entry. A higher rate will be paid in the first year to reflect the higher costs in the initial period of conversion to organic farming practices. This payment is seen as critical to help address one of the main barriers to entry for organic farmers – set-up and associated costs for converting to organic farming.

The support is based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to the organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer of similar land area, intensity of production and efficiency. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred.

Organic farmers are subject, where applicable, to the full suite of GAEC and SMR requirements as set out in Annex III of the CSP Regulation. The commitment to farm organically goes beyond mandatory requirements. It also goes beyond actions for the Eco-Scheme and AECM. The commitment to farm organically complements a number of actions under these two voluntary agri-environmental schemes.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description
GAEC01	Maintenance of permanent grassland based on a ratio of permanent grassland in relation to agricultural area at national, regional, sub-regional, group-of-holdings or holding level in comparison to the reference year 2018.Maximum decrease of 5% compared to the reference year.
GAEC02	Protection of wetland and peatland
GAEC03	Ban on burning arable stubble, except for plant health reasons
GAEC04	Establishment of buffer strips along water courses
GAEC05	Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient
GAEC06	Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soil in periods that are most sensitive
GAEC07	Crop rotation in arable land, except for crops growing under water
GAEC08	Minimum share of agricultural area devoted to non-productive areas or features.Minimum share of at least 4% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow. Where a farmer commits to devote at least 7% of his/her arable land to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow, under an enhanced eco-scheme in accordance with Article 28(5a), the share to be attributed to compliance with this GAEC shall be limited to 3%.Minimum share of at least 7% of arable land at farm level if this includes also catch crops or nitrogen fixing crops, cultivated without the use of plant protection products, of which 3% shall be land lying fallow or non-productive features. Member States should use the weighting factor of 0,3 for catch crops.Retention of landscape features.Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season.As an option, measures for avoiding invasive plant species
GAEC09	Ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland designated as environmentally-sensitive permanent grasslands in Natural 2000 sites
SMR01	Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy: Article 11(3), point (e), and point (h), as regards mandatory requirements to control diffuse sources of pollution by phosphates

SMR02	Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources: Articles 4 and 5
SMR03	Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds: Article 3(1), Article 3(2), point (b), Article 4(1), (2) and (4)
SMR04	Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna: Article 6(1) and (2)
SMR05	Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, laying down procedures in matters of food safety: Articles 14 and 15, Article 17(1) and Articles 18, 19 and 20
SMR06	Council Directive 96/22/EC of 29 April 1996 concerning the prohibition on the use in stockfarming of certain substances having a hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists, and repealing Directives 81/602/EEC, 88/146/EEC and 88/299/EEC: Article 3, points (a), (b), (d) and (e), and Articles 4, 5 and 7
SMR07	Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC: Article 55, first and second sentence
SMR08	Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides: Article 5(2) and Article 8(1) to (5); Article 12 with regard to restrictions on the use of pesticides in protected areas defined on the basis of Directive 2000/60/EC and Natura 2000 legislation; Article 13(1) and (3) on handling and storage of pesticides and disposal of remnants
SMR09	Council Directive 2008/119/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves: Articles 3 and 4
SMR10	Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs: Articles 3 and 4
SMR11	Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes: Article 4

List of relevant mandatory national standards

None

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

Organic farmers are subject, where applicable, to the full suite of GAEC and SMR requirements as set out in Annex III of the CSP Regulation. The commitment to farm organically goes beyond mandatory requirements. It also goes beyond actions for the Eco-Scheme and AECM. The commitment to farm organically complements a number of actions under these two voluntary agri-environmental schemes. The commitment to farm organically involves commitment to farm in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/848 and any amendments thereafter.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**

☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone

☐ transaction cost included

☐ one off payment

☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

The principal support will be an annual area-based payment per hectare of UAA over a minimum 5 years, noting exceptions outlined in Section 5.3.9 . This rate is comprised of a higher payment for farmers converting land to organic farming for the first time payable for the initial maximum two-year conversion period, with a maintenance payment thereafter. Higher rates are payable for horticultural operations (including fruit), for tillage operations, and for dairy operations, all of which are strongly in deficit. The

payment rates per Ha for land in conversion and . the payment rates per Ha for land maintaining full organic status is outlined in Section 5.3.12.

A second element of the support will be a participation payment which would be paid to every organic farmer each year to cover administrative costs. This support for the duration of the farmers contract will help to increase the participation of smaller operators where the financial burden of setting up has been flagged as a barrier to entry. A higher rate will be paid in the first year to reflect the higher costs in the initial period of conversion to organic farming practices.

The OFS rates follow a comprehensive review of organic production systems and of the calculated marginal differentials for organic in-conversion and maintenance production compared to conventional production systems. The rates have also taken account of the marketplace and barriers to entry and the targets proposed with the objective of providing further stimulation for organic production in the sectors where demand exists. The proposed rates are designed for further development of sustainable organic production systems in Ireland and to contribute to increasing the utilisable agricultural area under organic production.

Calculation method

The support is based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to the organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer of similar land area, intensity of production and efficiency. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred (participation payment), hence transaction costs are not used.

Eligible costs include additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☒ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☐ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

This is a management-based intervention and the details will be set out in the terms and conditions.

What is the duration of contracts?

An expected minimum contract period of 5 years in most cases. The option to extend the contract period including by way of annual extensions, will also be possible under the scheme as appropriate to meet the targets. Exceptionally, it may be shorter for RDP 2014-2020 contracts carried into the CSP.

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Payments to eligible participants under the Organic Farming Scheme intervention will be dependent on the participants meeting the requirements of the scheme, prime among them being the requirement to carry out farming and production in accordance with organic principles set down in EU legislation. Eligible costs will be limited to additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable to comply with the conditions of the Organic Farming Scheme.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Group	Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
Total hectares under organic production - In Conversion	53OFS01 - In Conversion Average Payment per ha - Organic Farming Scheme	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.14; R.19; R.21; R.31; R.43; R.24; R.44; R.29;	No
Total Hectares under Organic Production - Maintenance	53OFS02 - Maintenance Average Payment per ha Organic Farming Scheme	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.14; R.19; R.21; R.31; R.43; R.24; R.44; R.29;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53OFS01 - In Conversion Average Payment per ha - Organic Farming Scheme

Eligible costs include additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

The proposed payment rates per hectare for land in conversion are outlined below. These rates are based on costings derived from modelling and a comparative analysis for the various sectors taking account of additional costs and revenue foregone for organic farming production systems in conversion to full organic status. DAFM undertook a review of costings pertaining to organic farming based on the National Farm Survey (NFS) data and additional data supplied by Teagasc specialists. The costings are based on modelling and comparative analysis for the various sectors taking account of additional costs incurred and revenue foregone for organic production systems compared to conventional sectors.

In arriving at the proposed payment rates set out below, due consideration has also been given to other relevant and topical aspects such as participation by sector in the current OFS, the market for organic product and EU policy including the targets proposed.

A participation payment will also be paid to every organic farmer each year to cover administrative costs. This support for the duration of the farmers contract will help to increase the participation of smaller operators where the financial burden of setting up has been flagged as a barrier to entry. The rate is paid per farmer, therefore, to ensure the payment can be reported on under O.17, an average per hectare payment has been programmed. In addition, a higher rate will be paid in the first year to reflect the higher costs in the initial period of conversion to organic farming practices therefore it is not possible to programme a uniform unit amount for this OFS.

Planned unit amounts of support for land in conversion to organic status

Sector	Area	Rate per ha
Dry stock (Beef & Sheep)	≤ 70 ha	€300
	> 70 ha	€60

Dairy	≤ 70 ha > 70 ha	€350 €60
Tillage	≤ 70 ha > 70 ha	€320 €60
Horticulture	≤ 70 ha > 70 ha	€800 €60

53OFS02 - Maintenance Average Payment per ha Organic Farming Scheme

Eligible costs include additional costs and income foregone as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

The proposed payment rates per Ha for land maintaining full organic status are outlined below. The proposed rates are based on costings derived from modelling and a comparative analysis for the various sectors taking account of additional costs and revenue foregone for organic farming production systems maintaining full organic status. DAFM undertook a review of costings pertaining to organic farming based on the National Farm Survey (NFS) data and additional data supplied by Teagasc specialists. The costings are based on modelling and comparative analysis for the various sectors taking account of additional costs incurred and revenue foregone for organic production systems compared to conventional sectors.

In arriving at the proposed payment rates set out below, due consideration has also been given to other relevant and topical aspects such as participation by sector in the current OFS, the market for organic product and EU policy including the targets proposed.

A participation payment will also be paid to every organic farmer each year to cover administrative costs. This support for the duration of the farmers contract will help to increase the participation of smaller operators where the financial burden of setting up has been flagged as a barrier to entry. The rate is paid per farmer, therefore, to ensure the payment can be reported on under O.17, an average per hectare payment has been programmed. In addition, a higher rate will be paid in the first year to reflect the higher costs in the initial period of conversion to organic farming practices therefore it is not possible to programme a uniform unit amount for this OFS.

Sector	Area	Rate per ha
Dry stock (Beef & Sheep)	≤ 70 ha > 70 ha	€250 €30
Dairy	≤ 70 ha > 70 ha	€300 €30
Tillage	≤ 70 ha > 70 ha	€270 €30
Horticulture	≤ 70 ha > 70 ha	€600 €30

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Group	Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
Total Hectares under Organic Production - Maintenance	53OFS02 - Maintenance Average Payment per ha Organic Farming Scheme (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		238.38	225.11	239.15	239.45	239.38		
		Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00		
		O.17 (unit: Hectares)		81,000.00	8,100.00	102,867.00	136,735.00	175,602.00		
Total hectares under organic production - In Conversion	53OFS01 - In Conversion Average Payment per ha - Organic Farming Scheme (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		290.40	314.21	292.52	285.85	292.93		
		Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00		
		O.17 (unit: Hectares)		21,876.00	51,699.00	72,295.00	98,859.00	161,299.00		
	TOTAL	O.17 (unit: Hectares)		102,876.00	132,699.00	175,162.00	235,594.00	336,901.00		983,232.00
		Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		25,659,250.00	34,477,846.00	45,748,389.00	60,999,710.00	89,284,671.00		256,169,866.00
		Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		10,317,584.00	13,863,542.00	18,395,427.00	24,527,983.00	35,901,366.00		103,005,902.00
		Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
		Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
		Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
		Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
		Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								

		Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53SCEP - Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme

Intervention Code (MS)	53SCEP
Intervention Name	Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.14 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

Context:

One of the key policy objectives of Ireland's Food Vision 2030 strategy is to increase environmental sustainability within the sector. Data from the Beef Data Genomics Programme (BDGP) identifies that it is delivering on both environmental and productive efficiency, which will have a knock-on effect on competitiveness at farm level.

Under Specific Objective 4 Ireland's Needs Assessment identifies the need to reduce GHG emissions from agriculture. Reducing methane emissions from livestock production will be a key element in achieving this objective.

Ireland's strategic focus for the beef sector is on increasing competitiveness through measures aimed at improving environmental sustainability. Therefore, a successor to BDGP is proposed which will build on

the gains delivered through BDGP and the Irish exchequer funded Beef Environmental Efficiency Programme in recent years.

This measure is developed with a view to targeting bovine livestock emission efficiency through enhanced use of genetics, genomics and performance metrics in the context of Ireland's wider CAP Strategic Plan aim of increasing sustainability and environmental efficiency in Irish farming. While it is a standalone measure it complements other measures such as the Eco-Scheme, the flagship Agri-Environment Climate Measure and enhanced supports for Organic farming.

Background:

The BDGP was first introduced in 2015, as part of Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. It targeted improving the genetic merit of the Irish suckler herd, reducing the greenhouse gas intensity of Ireland's beef production, and improving farmer profitability. Reviews of BDGP to date indicate that genetic improvements are contributing to reducing the GHG emissions intensity from output, through increased efficiencies. The genetic benefits which impact on the entire herd are permanent and cumulative and thus will continue to make a positive contribution to the national herd.

The Programme was further supplemented with the introduction of the Beef Environmental Efficiency Pilot (BEEP) in 2019, where the objective was to collect additional cow and calf live-weight data and hence further improve maternal efficiency metrics. It targeted the weaning efficiency of suckler cows and calves by measuring the liveweight of the calf at weaning as a percentage of the cow's liveweight. Evidence to date indicates that it has helped farmers recognise the benefits of weighing their animals and the data generated has improved the accuracy of genetic evaluations. The BEEP scheme has demonstrated that the higher replacement index cows have a lower liveweight (circa 20 kg) than lower index cows but produce a heavier calf (circa 10 kg) at weaning. Overall, the cow/calf pair shows a 30 kg difference which indicates the ability of the animals to produce progeny who can reach slaughter weight up to one month earlier than animals from lower genetic merit equivalent animals

The BDGP was a development of previous genomic schemes; it is a key example of the complementary nature of economic and environmental sustainability. The BEEP scheme was complementary. Both programs have been successful in increasing the rate of genetic gain whilst at the same time addressing simultaneous environmental challenges.

The number of suckler cows in Ireland has decreased from 1.08 million cows in 2015 (CSO June Livestock Survey) to 0.94 million cows in 2021 (CSO June Livestock Survey provisional). This reduction in suckler cow numbers will be reflected in a drop in methane emissions associated with the Irish suckler herd. The Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme is targeted at supporting those suckler farmers who are prepared to commit to a programme of measures aimed at reducing the methane emissions associated with their suckler enterprise.

Selection for breeding indices can reduce both gross emissions and emissions intensity[1]. Both the BDGP and the BEEP have shown that emissions per suckler cow can be reduced through appropriate breeding strategies. Furthermore, the European Commission's strategy to reduce methane emissions identifies breeding as a mitigation to deliver emissions reduction decoupled from production[2]. The combination of actions participants must undertake in the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme will ensure that the cumulative long-term benefits of genetic improvement will continue to reduce the emissions associated with the Irish suckler herd.

A spending review[3] on the BDGP carried out on behalf of the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service found that the continued implementation of the principles set out under the BDGP would imply a projected cumulative reduction of c. 1.6 Mt of CO2 over the period 2015-2030 which represents a marginal abatement of approximately 11% with the size of the herd held constant at current

levels. It is therefore important to ensure this progress is not lost. With the improvement to the emission efficiency of the animals, and the use of a historical reference period to ensure there is no incentive from the intervention to increase production levels, this intervention will lead to a decrease in absolute GHG emissions from this sector. The Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme will contribute to the absolute reduction of 1.3MT that will be delivered by Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan towards Ireland's Effort Sharing target for reduction of emissions. There is strong evidence that selecting for traits associated with low methane can contribute to our 2030 climate targets.

[1]Quinton et al, Prediction of Effects of Beef Selection Indexes on Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Animal, Volume 12, Issue 5, 2018

[2]eu_methane_strategy.pdf (europa.eu)

[3]4092b0f1c806495485644360f489c63c.pdf (assets.gov.ie)

Environmental benefit

Data from the precursor programme shows clear evidence of the measure of performance improvements which can lead to environmental gains. A national review of the Beef Data and Genomics Programme recommended a continuation of the breeding programme to ensure continued improvements, with a strong emphasis on a data-driven scheme which incorporates areas such as the highest possible level of genotyping, increased use of 4- and 5-star animals, and further recording of data on commercial farms.It was also recommended to merge BDGP with the previous exchequer funded pilot BEEP-S to ensure a holistic approach to improving sector sustainability. This will help improve whole-of-life performance, leading to reduced age of slaughter and other efficiencies which can provide economic and environmental benefits.

The precision of GHG emission measurement is highly complex with some of the more relevant scientific studies including Murphy et al. (2013), Quinton et al (2018), Beauchemin et al. (2011)[1] and Wall et al. (2010)[2] finding positive impacts on the intensity of emissions per unit of output for genetic gains. The cumulative effect of these reductions in the emissions from the national herd will make a substantial contribution to GHG related targets as the genetic gain increases over time.

The overall environmental impact, in terms of GHG output, can be separated into absolute emissions and the emissions intensity of production. Gross emissions refer to the total emissions from the suckler cow herd and is calculated here as the number of Other (Non-Dairy) Cows multiplied by the mean baseline level of emissions per cow per year, estimated here as 3.4755 Tonnes of CO^2eq per annum. Emissions intensity is the Kg CO^2e generated per Kg of meat, an indication of the emissions efficiency with which meat can be produced. Quinton et al (2018) estimated the emissions intensity of Irish beef at 19.763KG CO2eq per KG beef produced at an aggregate level[3]. Improvements in genetic merit enable lower emissions intensity through greater efficiency, increasing beef output while reducing emissions per KG beef produced – i.e., a double benefit in greater output from lesser GHG emissions.

Annual descriptive summary data from the Teagasc National Farm Survey over the period 2015-2020, show that the emissions efficiency of these farms is generally superior and has improved at a faster pace for BDGP participant herds than those outside the programme.

[1] Beauchemin, K. A., Janzen, H. H., Little, S. M, McAllister, T. A. and S. M. McGinn (2011) "Mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions from beef production in western Canada – Evaluation using farm-based life cycle assessment" *Animal Feed Science and Technology* **166-167**: 663-677.

[2] Wall, E., Ludemann, C., Jones, H., Auldsley, E., Moran, D., Roughsedge, T. And P. Amer (2010) "The potential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for sheep and cattle in the UK using genetic selection" funded under DEFRA project: *Would livestock breeding goals change if carbon and nitrogen efficiency rather than economic efficiency were the priority objectives?* IF0182.

[3] This was calculated using a baseline assumption of approx. 957,000 cows and predicted production level of 175.86 KG per suckler cow at an aggregate level.

Structure of the Scheme:

It is proposed to operate the scheme on a 5-year contract basis.

Structure of Measures:

There are four mandatory actions within the Scheme are set out below. All these four actions must be undertaken by the participant in each year of the contract.

- Action 1: Replacement Strategy
- Action 2: Genotyping
- Action 3: Weighing
- Action 4: Data Recording

1: Replacement Strategy

The replacement strategy will cover both the Dams and the Sires. In years 1 and 2, 80% of the calves born on the holding must be sired by a 4-star or 5-star sire on the maternal or terminal index. In years 3 and 4, this will increase to 85% while in year 5, it will increase to 90%.

On the Dam side, in year 1, at least 50% must be at least 4-star on the replacement index on 31 October 2023. This increases to at least 65% by 31 October 2025 (year 3) and at least 75% by 31 October 2027 (year 5).

2: Genotyping Programme

At least 70% of the reference number of animals on the holding must be genotyped each year of the scheme.

3: Weighing Measure

The suckler cow and calf pair are weighed prior to the calf being weaned and not before the calf is at least 100 days old. This targets the weaning efficiency of suckler cows and calves by measuring the liveweight of the calf at weaning as a percentage of the cow's liveweight. This is increasingly recognised as a key indicator as suckler beef performance given the single unit of output (the calf) typically associated with the efficiency of the system. The cow and calf weights must be submitted by 1 November in each year of the contract. At least 70% of the reference number of animals on the holding must be weighed each year of the scheme.

4: Data Recording

Participants must provide a range of data through animal events records and surveys including:

- Calves – ease of calving, quality and docility, size, vigour/vitality, scour and pneumonia.
- Cows – milking ability and docility, culling reasons.
- Stock bulls – docility and functionality, culling reasons.

A mandatory training course for participants in the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme must be undertaken in each of the first two years of the scheme related to the four actions to be undertaken. A livestock handling module will also be included.

A specified historical reference period (structure of the period to be determined) will be set which translates into a reference number on which payment rates per herd will be based in the first year. After the first year, participants will have a choice of the original (year 1) reference period or a revised reference year based on the previous scheme year production levels in cases where the number of suckler cows has reduced on the original (year 1) reference number. A revised reference number cannot exceed the original (year 1) reference number. Where a participant reduces the number of suckler cows below their reference number during the contract, the scheme will not clawback payments related to the suckler cows disposed of from the earlier years of the contract. There will be scope for ranking and selection/linear reduction to be applied in the case of over subscription.

Food Vision 2030, the ten-year stakeholder-led strategy for sustainable development of the agri-food sector was published in August 2021. It takes a food systems approach, acknowledging the inter-connections between food, health and nutrition, and between food and the environment; and charting a pathway for the sector to sustainability in all its dimensions, environmental, economic and social. The Food Vision 2030 strategy includes commitments to produce detailed plans to manage the sustainable environmental footprint of both the dairy and the beef sectors, including minimising total emissions.

This intervention will not incentivise increased production, it is expected to improve performance at animal level which can be expected to have some impact on meat yield. Production levels eligible for consideration for payment under the measure are based on levels at an historical reference period which can be revised downward over the course of the programme, but not increased on the original reference level.

Mid-term review for the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme

A mid-term review of this intervention will be undertaken based on the results of the implementation, to ensure that relevant recommendations on improving climate performance from the BDGP review of May 2022 (including exploring alternative environmental traits such as direct selection for methane traits to evaluate their effectiveness at accelerating gains towards the objectives of the scheme and the wider policy context) are reflected in the intervention and the effects of the intervention in terms of net emission reductions can be monitored throughout the course of the CSP. The results of the review will be made publicly available.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

In order to be eligible for the scheme, an applicant must:

- Have submitted a BISS application in a reference year and continue to submit BISS applications on which all their lands are declared for the duration of the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme.
- Have beef breed animals born annually in the herd in each scheme year of the measure at a minimum level of 50% of their current reference number.
- Be a member of the Bord Bia Quality Assurance Scheme SBLAS at time of application and retain this status for the duration of their participation in the scheme

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

This is an IACS based support.

In recognition of the higher marginal transaction costs for smaller holdings, it is proposed to frontload payments to the first 10 animals per herd.

The planned unit amount of €225 per hectare for the first 15 hectares and €180 per hectare for remaining eligible hectares and annual planned output of 256,666.7 hectares are indicative allocations. This gives an

average unit amount of €199.48 each year if 20,000 farmers join the scheme with an average herd size of 20 suckler cows (total of 256,666.7 hectares).

The amount per hectare may alter and the hectares covered may alter depending on the level of participation. There will be scope for ranking and selection/linear reduction to be applied in the case of oversubscription.

O14 What area is eligible?

☒Agricultural area defined for the CAP plan

☐Agricultural land including and beyond agricultural area

☐Non-agricultural land

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description

List of relevant mandatory national standards

There are no relevant mandatory national standards or associated GAEC's or SMR's.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

All commitments under this intervention are outside the scope of the mandatory requirements under Conditionality. The commitments are also outside the scope of what is covered by national standards and the Eco-Scheme.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**

☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone

☒ transaction cost included

☐ one off payment

☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

The planned maximum unit amount of €225 per hectare applies for the first 15 hectares. A unit amount of €180 per hectare applies for remaining eligible hectares. The differential between these unit amounts is in recognition of the fact that smaller holdings participating in this intervention will have a higher transaction cost per hectare (per suckler cow). It should be noted that all participants, regardless of the scale of their enterprise, are required to complete the same measures and will be subject to the same targets in respect of these.

The predicted average unit amount of €199.48 each year is based on a predicted 20,000 farmers joining the scheme with an average herd size of 20 suckler cows (total of 256,666.7 hectares under scheme).

This intervention will be open to all farmers that meet the eligibility conditions set out in Section 5.3.5. However, there will be scope for ranking and selection/linear reduction to be applied in the case of oversubscription.

Calculation method

The amount of support is calculated on the basis of costs incurred, income foregone and transaction costs. Detailed costing underpinning the rate of aid have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of the CSP Regulation.

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☒ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☐ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

Beneficiaries must complete four mandatory management-based actions as set out in Section 5.3.5. Beneficiaries don't have the opportunity to pick and choose within the list of actions under this intervention.

What is the duration of contracts?

5 years

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

One of the key policy objectives of Ireland's Food Vision 2030 is to increase environmental sustainability within the sector. Data from the Beef Data Genomics Programme (BDGP) identifies that it is delivering on both environmental and productive efficiency, which will have a knock-on effect on competitiveness at farm level. Under Specific Objective 4 Ireland's Needs Assessment identifies the need to reduce GHG emissions from agriculture. Reducing methane emissions from livestock production will be a key element in achieving this objective. Ireland's strategic focus for the beef sector is on increasing competitiveness through measures aimed at improving environmental sustainability. Therefore, the Irish Government propose a successor to BDGP which will build on the gains delivered through BDGP and the Irish exchequer funded Beef Environmental Efficiency Programme in recent years. Eligibility for payment will depend on the fulfilment of the specific conditions under the programme. The payment rates for the intervention are calculated on the basis of costs incurred/income foregone associated with complying with this programme.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53SCEP01 - Average support per ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average			No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53SCEP01 - Average support per ha

As participation in this intervention is voluntary, it is impossible to ascertain exactly how many farmers or what average herd size will participate. As such it is impossible to project accurately how many of the animals will be paid at the higher rate per hectare (first 10 animals per herd). An average payment per ha is used based on targeted output across both payment rates.

As set out in section 5.7, the planned maximum unit amount of €225 per hectare applies for the first 15 hectares. A unit amount of €180 per hectare applies for remaining eligible hectares. The differential between these unit amounts is in recognition of the fact that smaller holdings participating in this intervention will have a higher transaction cost per hectare (per suckler cow). It should be noted that all participants, regardless of the scale of their enterprise, are required to complete the same measures and will be subject to the same targets in respect of these.

The predicted average unit amount of €199.48 each year is based on a predicted 20,000 farmers joining the scheme with an average herd size of 20 suckler cows (total of 256,666.7 hectares under scheme).

This intervention will be open to all farmers that meet the eligibility conditions set out in Section 5.3.5. However, there will be scope for ranking and selection/linear reduction to be applied in the case of oversubscription.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53SCEP01 - Average support per ha (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		199.48	199.48	199.48	199.48	199.48		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		225.00	225.00	225.00	225.00	225.00		
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70		1,283,333.50
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70		1,283,333.50
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00		256,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00		102,937,600.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53SIM - Straw Incorporation Measure

Intervention Code (MS)	53SIM
Intervention Name	Straw Incorporation Measure
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.14. Number of hectares (excluding forestry) or number of other units covered by environmental or climate-related commitments going beyond mandatory requirements
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.14 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments to reduce emissions or to maintain or enhance carbon storage (including permanent grassland, permanent crops with permanent green cover, agricultural land in wetland and peatland)
R.19 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) under supported commitments beneficial for soil management to improve soil quality and biota (such as reducing tillage, soil cover with crops, crop rotation included with leguminous crops)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

Ireland’s SWOT Analysis notes the importance of increasing the carbon sequestration and storage potential of the Irish land-use sector in order to meet the targets outlined in Ag-Climatise - Ireland's Road-map towards Climate Neutrality. Additionally, Ireland’s Needs Assessment identifies the need to adopt management practices to improve soil health. The purpose of the intervention is to encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops. This will sequester carbon in tillage soils, thereby reducing GHG emissions. The incorporation of straw will also have positive impact on soil biology and soil work-ability. This will further improve the environmental sustainability of the tillage sector. Once eligible crops on parcels which have been

declared as participating in the scheme are combined, the straw is chopped, spread evenly and incorporated into the soil in the parcel. The straw will be chopped and spread at time of harvest by engaging a chopping and spreading mechanism on the combine harvester or where there is no straw chopper on the combine harvester the straw will be chopped by a separate straw chopping machine. The straw will subsequently be incorporated into the soil by a shallow cultivator such as a disc harrow.

The Teagasc Marginal Abatement Cost Curve identifies such straw incorporation as an action that can contribute to carbon sequestration. The action of chopping and incorporating straw is required to be carried out in the year of application.

The intervention will build on the support provided under the Straw Incorporation Measure pilot in the transitional period under the Rural Development Programme.

Current standard practice on Irish farms is that straw, which is a carbon source, is usually baled and exported from tillage farms to livestock farms for bedding or as a low energy feed. The resultant manure tends to remain, in the main, on livestock farms and is applied to grassland. Grassland soils tend to have a higher organic carbon content than tillage farms (teagasc.ie). Tillage soils will show greater response and benefit more from the retention of organic material than grasslands. The SIM intervention incentivises tillage farmers to retain a source of organic matter on their farms.

The environmental effect of the incorporation of the straw was considered. Environmental benefits associated with straw incorporation in addition to increasing soil organic carbon also included increasing soil microbial activity, earthworm numbers, and increasing water infiltration capacity when combined with minimum tillage practices. An issue was identified that the incorporation of straw would reduce the area of post-harvest cereal stubble undisturbed overwinter. This is a habitat for some farmland birds. Most farmers will only incorporate a proportion of their straw so in practice the effect is limited to a particular area. The intervention is limited to roughly 40,000ha or 12% of total tillage area and a large portion of this land would already be used to grow winter crops and as such is not impacted directly by the intervention. In addition, as part of Ireland's CSP there will be complimentary incentives to ensure the overwintering of stubble ground to positively impact on biodiversity. Specifically, the over-winter stubble option within the AECM is designed to create a foraging site for farmland birds and small mammals during the autumn and winter. This will ensure that winter stubble remains available to support farmland birds and straw incorporation at the level proposed will not impact on the availability of winter stubble. The AECM also has an action to maintain unharvested cereal margins which will have similar benefit to over wintering farmland birds. Furthermore, within the AECM, we are managing the amount of catch crop a farmer would undertake to ensure the area of winter stubble is not undermined.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

Application for this intervention will be incorporated into the annual BISS application process. Where a tillage farmer declares eligible crops (wheat, oats, barley, rye, oilseed rape) they will have the option to then apply for this intervention. They will be required to identify the relevant parcels on which they will chop straw and incorporate it into the soil.

A minimum level of 5 hectares declared as the eligible crops is required in order to be eligible, up to a maximum of 40 hectares.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

Support will be by way of an area-based payment per hectare. The intervention will be a 1 year contract with automatic renewal unless opt-out is triggered by the beneficiary or by the Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The maximum duration will be 5 years. The per hectare payment is based on a uniform rate of €250 per hectare for cereal crops (barley, wheat, oats, rye) and at a rate of €150/ha for oilseed rape given the lower market value for oilseed rape straw. The support payment will compensate the farmer for the additional cost of the chopping, spreading and incorporation of straw into the soil. The

payment rates proposed are based on partial compensation, in order to achieve the target of 40,000 hectares. All costings will be independently verified as per Article 81. There will be a minimum eligible area of 5 hectares and a maximum area of 40 hectares.

O14 What area is eligible?

☒Agricultural area defined for the CAP plan

☐Agricultural land including and beyond agricultural area

☐Non-agricultural land

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description
GAEC03	Ban on burning arable stubble, except for plant health reasons
GAEC05	Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient
GAEC06	Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soil in periods that are most sensitive
GAEC07	Crop rotation in arable land, except for crops growing under water

List of relevant mandatory national standards

Not Applicable.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

Eligible beneficiaries are subject to all the elements of Conditionality as set out in the Conditionality Chapters of this Strategic Plan.

Under the Area of Climate and the Environment and specifically the area Climate Change (mitigation & adaptation) GAEC 3 (Ban on burning arable stubble) with the main objective of the standard to maintain soil organic matter is relevant to tillage farmers.

The requirements on farmers to comply with GAEC 3 is not to burn arable stubbles in order to maintain soil organic matter levels. The Straw Incorporation Measure (SIM) goes beyond this requirement by in addition to not burning straw stubbles the farmer is required to chop and incorporate the straw back into the soil thereby increasing soil organic matter levels over time.

Under the Area of Climate and the Environment and specifically the area of Soil (protection & quality) the requirements are laid out in GAECs 5 – 7.

GAEC 5 - Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient – the aim of this GAEC Standard is to reduce soil erosion. The SIM aims to increase soil organic matter (SOM) in soil and by increasing SOM in soil it reduces the risk of soil erosion.

GAEC 6 - Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soil in periods that are most sensitive. This GAEC also aims to protect soil by providing a minimum level of soil cover during the sensitive winter period. As stated under GAEC 5 the SIM will increase SOM over time in soils and reduces the risk of erosion.

GAEC 7 – Crop rotation in arable land, except for crops growing under water. The aim of this GAEC standard is to preserve the soil potential. By increasing the SOM in soil through the SIM it will increase the soil health, fertility and biology of the soil and goes beyond the requirements of the standard.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**
☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone
☐ transaction cost included
☐ one off payment
☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

Support will be by way of an area-based payment per hectare. The per hectare payment is based on a uniform rate of €250 per hectare for cereal crops (barley, wheat, oats, rye) and at a rate of €150/ha for oilseed rape given the lower market value for oilseed rape straw.

Calculation method

The support payment will compensate the farmer for the additional cost of the chopping, spreading and incorporation of straw into the soil. The payment rates proposed are based on partial compensation of approximately 85%, as this is considered sufficient to get farmers to take up the intervention - in order to achieve the target of 40,000 hectares. All costings will be independently verified as per Article 82.

Additional explanation

The planned unit amount is justified based on the costs incurred and income foregone estimate as set out above, in addition to the range of benefits which underpin the logic for the intervention. The planned unit amount under this intervention is €250 per hectare for barley, wheat, oats and rye and €150 per hectare for oilseed rape. Taking the estimate/target of 40,000 hectares per year would lead to an annual allocation of €10 million.

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)
☐ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)
☐ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

N/A - there is no possibility to pick and choose in this intervention.

What is the duration of contracts?

The intervention will be a 1 year contract with automatic renewal unless opt-out is triggered by the beneficiary or by the Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The maximum duration will be 5 years.

Under Article 70 of the CSP Regulation, paragraph 6 (b) specifically provides for a shorter period of at least one year in duly justified cases.

The SIM was introduced during the transitional period as a one-year pilot measure. The one-year scheme proved very popular with farmers in 2021 and 2022. Ireland wishes to continue with the one-year commitment approach.

A long-term commitment will likely lead to a much lower uptake by farmers and lower commitment per farmer. A greater challenge to meet the target hectares under the Scheme would result in a poorer outcome for soil carbon levels on arable soils. It must be borne in mind the nature and composition of the arable sector in Ireland is very small (c. 7%) and has already contracted significantly in recent years due to pressures from other sectors. Maximum flexibility for delivery of this intervention through annual implementation is required for the following reasons:

- Supporting an increased uptake of this important environmental practice on arable farms requires a flexible approach, to increase farmer engagement, behavioural change, and uptake, for this is a relatively new practice, farmers will be much slower to engage/retain this practice from the pilot under the RDP if they must commit to a 5-year contract.

- An estimated 50% of arable crops are on rented/short-term leased lands and farmers are often not in a position to commit to longer commitments due to uncertainty and risk of penalties. In an annual scheme they can adjust their cropping practices depending on availability of land and changes to cropping practices. The evaluation of Ireland's agri-environment climate measure in the 2024-2022 RDP, GLAS, specifically highlighted the limited engagement of tillage/arable farmers in GLAS. It was found that the environmental impact of GLAS was lower due to these tillage/arable (and dairy) farmers not participating in GLAS. The GLAS evaluation also recommended that Ireland should consider ways to incentive tillage/arable farmers to participate in AECMs and undertake environmental actions. SIM was trialled during the transitional period, and it was found that tillage/arable farmers would join AECMs and undertake environmental actions once the commitment was of an annual nature. This demonstrates the successful environmental outcome achieved by implementing environmental actions on an annual basis for such farmers.

- Further to previous, the intention is to offer maximum flexibility for farmers each year to optimise the uptake (hectares). Under a multiannual scheme a farmer would have to select the minimum amount of area which he will be guaranteed to have available in a given crop each year (i.e. barley) rather than having flexibility to adjust this amount in accordance with good rotation/diversification practices. By way of example, consider a farmer that has 100 ha and the amount sown to barley is normally 75 ha. If in year 3 s/he sows 50 ha of potatoes as a break crop, s/he would be restricted to claiming 50 ha under a multiannual SIM as the minimum area s/he can guarantee over the 5 years, would be the lowest for any given year (50 ha in this example). Thus the contracted area would be restricted to 50 ha rather than a possible 75 ha in this case.

- Recent years have seen many Member States, including Ireland, looking for derogations under Crop Diversification within Greening as a result of excess rainfall. These difficulties have resulted in changes from winter to spring sowings and changes in crop types to deal with the prevailing climatic conditions. Changes in the crop mixture may mean that farmers do not have sufficient arable area to deliver on their commitments each and every year. Forcing farmers to establish certain crops in poor weather conditions will lead to soil damage. This is a particular risk in Ireland, due to our weather conditions.

- Crop choices are often made taking account of disease pressures in particular years. Circumstances may arise where chopping and incorporating straw may not be the correct choice in a particular year as it may lead to a 'green bridge' and disease carry over. Forcing farmers in a multi-annual commitment in such circumstances to chop and incorporate straw would encourage the use of chemicals to deal with the issue of disease carry over.

- Protein crops (peas, beans and lupins) are not eligible for SIM but as we have indicated within the CSP the Irish Authorities are increasing the proportion of funding to these crops in the new CAP. Protein crops are grown in a rotation of 1 year in 5 meaning that farmers cannot grow them in the

same field every year and indeed many farmers will only have protein crops on their holdings every 2nd or 3rd year. Best agronomic practice is that field beans, peas and lupins should be grown no more than one year in five in the same field, to reduce the risk of a build-up of persistent soil-borne diseases such as foot rots caused by Fusarium solani, Fusarium culmorum and Didymella pinodella. The one in five-year rotation is also advised to reduce the build-up of Bean Stem Nematode Ditylenchus spp. infestations in soil. If SIM is a multiannual commitment on a specific land parcel, it will impact the uptake on Protein crops, which will mean the continuation of importing protein feeds such as soya from South America as farmers will be forced to maintain cereal and oilseed areas to remain compliant with this measure. This would not be of benefit to the overall environment.

- Whilst acknowledging longer term benefits can accrue the longer SIM is carried out on a given parcel, we anticipate a high retention rate of participants through annual implementation and this in turn will mean that (other than parcels in normal rotation as mentioned above), the majority of parcels would be anticipated to remain under this measure/practice for the majority of years i.e 4 out of the 5 years (allowing for crop rotation/diversification impacts).

The intention of the approach is to ensure that flexibility exists on holdings to manage the tillage enterprise to ensure that local land and climatic issues are accounted for and that a farmer can choose the most appropriate crops on an annual basis taking account of the issues that may exist in a particular year.

Flexibility for farmers under SIM allows the correct choices to be made on a farm each year to ensure a sustainable tillage enterprise that takes account of the various elements of the CSP and the conditions on their farm, and this flexibility is considered essential to ensure a high uptake and impact and thus optimise environmental benefits.

A multiannual SIM scheme would not be beneficial to the environment as it would lock farmers into certain crop choices even when they are not appropriate, from an environmental or agronomic perspective, in a given year.

For the above reasons Ireland considers that an annual duration of contract for this intervention is fully justified in an Irish context and design in accordance with Article 70 (6) (b).

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The Straw Incorporation Measure intervention complies with paragraph 12 of Annex 2 to the WTO agreement on Agriculture. Farmers' eligibility will comply with the eligibility conditions set out in the CAP Strategic Plan and support rates are limited to the extra (additional) costs and loss or income involved in the intervention.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53SIM01 - Per Ha (Barley, Wheat, Oats, Rye)	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.14;	No
53SIM02 - Per Ha (oilseed rape)	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.14;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53SIM01 - Per Ha (Barley, Wheat, Oats, Rye)

The support payment will compensate the farmer for the additional cost of the chopping, spreading and incorporation of straw into the soil. The payment rates proposed are based on partial compensation, in order to achieve the target of 40,000 hectares. All costings will be independently verified as per Article 82.

53SIM02 - Per Ha (oilseed rape)

The support payment will compensate the farmer for the additional cost of the chopping, spreading and incorporation of straw into the soil. The payment rates proposed are based on partial compensation, in order to achieve the target of 40,000 hectares. All costings will be independently verified as per Article 82.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53SIM01 - Per Ha (Barley, Wheat, Oats, Rye) (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
53SIM02 - Per Ha (oilseed rape) (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00		200,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00		50,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00		20,105,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53SIP - Sheep Improvement Scheme

Intervention Code (MS)	53SIP
Intervention Name	Sheep Improvement Scheme
Type of Intervention	ENVCLIM(70) - Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments
Common Output Indicator	O.18. Number of livestock units (LU) benefitting from support for animal welfare, health or increased biosecurity measures
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj9.N2	Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and increasing awareness of AMR and ATR	2nd Highest SO9	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.43 Share of livestock units (LU) concerned by supported actions to limit the use of antimicrobials (prevention/reduction)
R.44 Share of livestock units (LU) covered by supported actions to improve animal welfare

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The Sheep Improvement Scheme aims to build on the progress made by the Sheep Welfare Scheme (SWS) in the 2014-2020 RDP by providing support for actions that improve animal health and welfare in the sheep sector. The Sheep Improvement Scheme will complement some of the elements provided for in the SWS, while also building on other actions beneficial to sheep health and welfare, thereby further enhancing the standards of animal welfare in the Irish Sheep flock. The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment the need to continue to improve animal health and welfare standards, including through the targeted application of genomic technologies in the sheep sector.

The Sheep Improvement Scheme will contribute to improved welfare through targeted intervention in a number of areas including lameness control, parasite control, flystrike and appropriate supplementation. The full menu of actions is set out below. Participating farmers will choose to undertake two actions altogether, one action from Category A and one action from Category B appropriate to whether they have a lowland or a hill flock.

(Hill and Lowland flock are differentiated by the breed selected for their suitability to graze different landscapes. Lowland breeds typically include Suffolk, Texel and Charolais hill breeds are generally blackfaces or Cheviot.)

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

All applicants must have a flock number, have breeding ewes on their holding for the duration of each scheme year, and have declared breeding ewes on their 2022 Sheep Census return. The maximum number of ewes eligible for payment will be the average of the number of ewes in a specified historic reference period, which will be specified in the scheme terms and conditions. Payment in a given year will be based on the lower of this maximum reference number or the latest sheep census figures returned.

Applicants will be required to submit a completed Sheep Census return by the specified date for each year of participation in the Sheep Improvement Scheme.

Eligible beneficiaries are subject to all the elements of GAEC and SMRs as set out in Section 4.2.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

Menu of Actions:

Lowland Flock	**Hill Flock**
<u>Category A</u>	**<u>Category A</u>**
Lameness Control	Mineral Supplementation Ewes Post Mating
Mineral Supplementation Ewes Post Mating	Meal Feeding Lambs Post Weaning*
Parasite Control (Faecal Egg reduction test)	Parasite Control (Faecal Egg reduction test)
<u>Category B</u>	**<u>Category B</u>**
**Genotyped Ram	**Genotyped Ram
Scanning and recording of results.	Scanning and recording of results.
Flystrike Control	Mineral Supplementation Lambs Pre Weaning*

*Hill flocks may not choose both mineral supplementation and meal feeding of lambs post weaning

** The genotype ram action is not completed for each year of the scheme.

In the first year of application, all farmers will choose a Category B action, and indicate the year(s) in which they will replace this with the genotype ram action

The purpose of the inclusion of the genotyped ram action is to reduce instances of scrapie by selecting for scrapie resistance. Reduction of rates of scrapie in the national flock can be expected to have significant positive implications for welfare. Using genotyped 4 & 5 star rams will also lead to genetic improvements across key health & welfare traits like lameness, mastitis, dagginess, lamb survival & lambing difficulty.

In terms of the specific actions, the below description includes references to the current baseline.

<u>Category A</u>

Lameness Control

Baseline: Current practise is to treat sick/injured lame sheep.

Under this action participants shall carry out a minimum of 5 lameness examinations per year, at prescribed times, recording the incidences of lameness in the flock in a workbook. This will require the assembly of the flock and will constitute the scoring assessment of lameness in the flock. Farmers should identify the extent and cause(s) of lameness and then treat and manage the flock to prevent sickness and injury as a result of lameness.

After examining the sheep flock and carrying out the lameness assessment, a farmer must foot bathe his flock to prevent future lameness and treat any affected individual sheep with treatments appropriate to the cause of lameness. Such action will prevent the spread of further infection through the flock to sheep not currently lame and prevent any further injury or pain to lame sheep. All such actions and treatments must be recorded in the scheme workbook.

Mineral Feedingstuff Supplementation Ewes Post Mating

Baseline: Current baseline practise includes feeding supplementary minerals either through meal or the use of specific mineral supplements prior to lambing.

Under this action participants shall supplement minerals to ewes' post mating to help combat deficiencies in ewes that can result in increased stillbirths and mortalities.

Meal feeding lambs Post weaning

Baseline: Current practise among hill flocks is to either sell lambs directly after weaning or finish lambs for slaughter. Baseline nutritional needs prior to weaning are met by suckling and grazing.

Under this action participants shall feed lambs with a suitable ration (containing a mineral supplement) to lambs for a minimum of 4 weeks post weaning to ensure mineral deficiencies resulting from standard husbandry practises prior to weaning are corrected.

Parasite Control (Faecal Egg Count)

Baseline: Current practise among flock owners to control worms is through routine dosing and appropriate grassland management practises.

Under this action participants with lowland flocks will carry out a minimum of 2 Faecal Egg Counts per annum to establish the worm burden. Farmers will then adjust their dosing regime in accordance with the FEC tests to ensure treatment of internal parasites is carried out on a targeted basis. Farmers should only dose in accordance with the FEC tests. If the FEC does not show a worm burden which requires treatment with an anthelmintic, no treatment should be administered. If the FEC shows that treatment with an anthelmintic is necessary, then a farmer should administer an anthelmintic accordingly. All such FEC results, and treatments must be recorded in the scheme workbook.

Under this action participants with hill flocks will carry out 1 Faecal Egg Count on lambs for the presence of worms between 3 and 4 weeks post weaning.

Category B

Flystrike Control

Baseline: Current practise is to treat outbreak of flystrike with appropriate medicines (chemical control).

Under this action participants shall incorporate a flystrike programme for the prevention of flies during the months of flystrike risk. In addition to chemical control, this programme will incorporate mechanical means for the prevention of flies and recording the times of intervention and number of sheep with dags removed. The examination and prevention of flystrike by mechanical means shall be at prescribed times of the season based on the seasonal occurrence of flystrike.

Mineral Supplementation Lambs pre weaning

Baseline: Lambs' baseline nutritional needs prior to weaning are met by suckling and grazing.

Under this action participants shall supplement lambs with minerals pre weaning, to address mineral deficiencies in hill flocks, where such deficiencies exist even when the lambs' baseline nutritional needs are being met.

Scanning - Management of pregnant ewes

Baseline: There is no requirement to scan pregnant ewes in Ireland resulting in ewes being fed and managed as a uniform group, instead of in accordance with litter size.

Intervention in the management of pregnant ewes will result in reduced welfare issues such as insufficient colostrum or oversized lambs at birth. It is not possible to establish the number of lambs/litter size of a ewe in the absence of scanning to allow for the identification and management of pregnant ewes according to litter size.

Under this action participants will scan ewes 80 days after ram turnout. Ewes will be marked or divided in accordance with litter size. Ewes will be fed in the period prior to lambing in accordance with litter size to ensure optimum management of the pregnant ewe. Optimum feeding conditions will improve welfare for both ewe and lambs at lambing by ensuring ewes produce sufficient colostrums and by reducing the number of oversized lambs. This action will result in the management of increased groups of ewes.

Further detail on the individual actions and the baseline requirements is contained in Annex I.

Genotyped ram

Lowland flocks – Participants with lowland flocks selecting this action must buy 1 Genotyped 4/5 star ram (no type 4 or 5 scrapie genotyped rams will qualify). All farmers must complete this action at least once during the scheme. Farmers with over 150 ewes must complete this action twice.

Hill flocks – Participants with hill flocks selecting this action must buy 1 Genotyped sired verified hill ram **OR** Genotyped 4/5 star ram (no type 4 or 5 scrapie genotyped rams will qualify). All farmers must complete this action at least once during the scheme. Farmers with over 150 ewes must complete this action twice.

In the first year of application, all farmers will choose a Category B action, and indicate the year(s) in which they will replace this with the genotype ram action.

Baseline: genetic selection for scrapie resistance is not currently carried out as standard practice.

The increased risk of Scrapie disease in the offspring of affected animals is associated with increased genetic susceptibility. Genotyping of rams allows for the selection of breeding sheep which are resistant to scrapie. Breeding sheep with higher genetic merit also results in less lambing difficulty leading to reduced ewe and lamb mortality at lambing time. Finally, genotyping of rams reduces inbreeding in sheep, in particular, in the hill sheep breeds.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

List of relevant GAEC and SMR

Code	Description

List of relevant mandatory national standards

There are no relevant GAEC's, SMR's or mandatory national standards.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

There are no relevant GAEC's, SMR's or mandatory national standards.

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

☒ **IACS**

☐ **Non-IACS**

IACS section

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone

☐ transaction cost included

☐ one off payment

☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

The scheme will pay beneficiaries €12 per eligible ewe or €120 per Livestock Unit per year.

Calculation method

The payment rates proposed are based on partial compensation, in order to achieve the target of 170,000 livestock units. The calculations for the Sheep Improvement Scheme are based on the actions undertaken by the farmer based on costs incurred minus the net economic benefit associated with the actions. A transaction cost of 20% of the total cost per ewe is included in the calculations. The payment rates proposed are based on partial compensation, in order to achieve the target of 170,000 livestock units.

Additional explanation

Based on the 2019 National Sheep Census, there is a total of 46,000 registered flock-keepers in Ireland with a total of 2.57m (257,000 LU) eligible breeding ewes. Based on participation rates in the current Sheep Welfare Scheme, the anticipated participation rate in the Sheep Improvement Scheme is 16,600 flock-keepers participating in the scheme holding 170,000 of the existing 257,000 LU held nationally. The Sheep Improvement Scheme will be a 1-year contract with automatic renewal unless opt-out is triggered by the beneficiary or by the Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The maximum duration will be 5 years. Farmers will choose one Category A action and one Category B action for each scheme year. There is only one action which has a multiannual element i.e., all farmers must complete the Genotyped Ram action at least once during the scheme and farmers with over 150 ewes must complete this action in twice during the scheme. In the first year of application, all farmers will choose a Category B action, and indicate the year(s) in which they will replace this with the genotype ram action. While the contract under the scheme is annualised, based on previous experience of the sheep welfare scheme the majority of participants will engage multiannually and thus there is an opportunity to promote this additional breeding action specifically aimed at improving welfare.

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What are the models of the commitment(s) in the intervention?

☐ result based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☒ management based (with possibility to pick and choose)

☐ hybrid (management and result based)

Please explain the obligations/possibilities for beneficiaries in relation to the commitments set out in the intervention

Menu of Actions:

Lowland Flock	Hill Flock
Category A	**Category A**
Lameness Control	Mineral Supplementation Ewes Post Mating
Mineral Supplementation Ewes Post Mating	Meal Feeding Lambs Post Weaning*
Parasite Control (Faecal Egg reduction test)	Parasite Control (Faecal Egg reduction test)
Category B	**Category B**
**Genotyped Ram	**Genotyped Ram
Scanning and recording of results.	Scanning and recording of results.
Flystrike Control	Mineral Supplementation Lambs Pre Weaning*

*Hill flocks may not choose both mineral supplementation and meal feeding of lambs post weaning
** The genotype ram action is not completed for each year of the scheme.
In the first year of application, all farmers will choose a Category B action, and indicate the year(s) in which they will replace this with the genotype ram action

The purpose of the inclusion of the genotyped ram action is to reduce instances of scrapie by selecting for scrapie resistance. Reduction of rates of scrapie in the national flock can be expected to have significant positive implications for welfare. Using genotyped 4 & 5 star rams will also lead to genetic improvements across key health & welfare traits like lameness, mastitis, dagginess, lamb survival & lambing difficulty.

In terms of the specific actions, the below description includes references to the current baseline.

Category A

Lameness Control
Under this option scheme participants must carry out a minimum of 5 lameness examinations per year and complete the relevant section for Lameness Control in the Scheme Action Record Book. Scheme participants must then treat all identified incidences having firstly identified the cause(s) of lameness to prevent animals becoming sick/injured as a result of lameness.

Mineral Feedingstuff Supplementation Ewes Post Mating
Under this action scheme participants must supplement all ewes (including hoggets out to the ram) with mineral feedingstuffs post mating. Mineral Supplementation is required to be administered to ewes to ensure the duration of cover provided by the minerals includes at least the first 60 days from when the date of ram turnout

Meal feeding lambs Post weaning
Lambs must be supplemented with compound feedingstuffs containing appropriate mineral and vitamins for 4 weeks post weaning

Parasite Control (Faecal Egg Count)
Under this action scheme participants, with either lowland or hill flocks, must take and submit to the laboratory for testing a minimum of 2 Faecal Egg Counts per annum.

The first test should be conducted between within a specified time frame.

Category B

Flystrike Control

Under this action participants must incorporate a flystrike programme for the prevention of flies during the months of flystrike risk. They must incorporate mechanical means for the prevention of flies in addition to any chemical control used recording the times of intervention and the number of sheep with dags removed.

Mineral Supplementation Lambs pre weaning

Under this action participants must supplement lambs at least once with a mineral feedingstuff during the grazing season pre weaning which will assist in addressing mineral deficiencies in lambs on hill flocks.

Scanning - Management of pregnant ewes

Ewes must be scanned approximately between 70 and 100 days post ram turnout. Scanning data to be submitted online and recorded to Sheep Ireland database.

Genotyped ram

Lowland flocks – Participants with lowland flocks selecting this action must buy 1 Genotyped 4/5 star ram (no type 4 or 5 scrapie genotyped rams will qualify). All farmers must complete this action at least once during the scheme. Farmers with over 150 ewes must complete this action twice.

Hill flocks – Participants with hill flocks selecting this action must buy 1 Genotyped sired verified hill ram **OR** Genotyped 4/5 star ram (no type 4 or 5 scrapie genotyped rams will qualify). All farmers must complete this action at least once during the scheme. Farmers with over 150 ewes must complete this action twice.

In the first year of application, all farmers will choose a Category B action, and indicate the year(s) in which they will replace this with the genotype ram action

What is the duration of contracts?

Annual.

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 12 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The sheep improvement scheme is a welfare measure which provides support for undertaking defined management practices which are intended to support enhanced health and welfare in the national flock. Payment rates are calculated on the basis of costs incurred and income foregone.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
35SIP01 - Payment Per Livestock Unit	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.44;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

35SIP01 - Payment Per Livestock Unit

The calculations for the Sheep Improvement Scheme are based on the actions undertaken by the farmer based on costs incurred minus the net economic benefit associated with the actions.

Based on the 2019 National Sheep Census, there is a total of 46,000 registered flock-keepers in Ireland with a total of 2.57m (257,000 LU) eligible breeding ewes. Based on participation rates in the current Sheep Welfare Scheme, the anticipated participation rate in the Sheep Improvement Scheme is 16,600 flock-keepers participating in the scheme holding 170,000 of the existing 257,000 LU held nationally.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
35SIP01 - Payment Per Livestock Unit (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		120.00	120.00	120.00	120.00	120.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.18 (unit: Livestock units)		166,666.00	166,666.00	166,666.00	166,666.00	166,666.00		833,330.00
TOTAL	O.18 (unit: Livestock units)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00		100,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00		40,210,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

ANC(71) - Natural or other area-specific constraints

53ANC - ANC

Intervention Code (MS)	53ANC
Intervention Name	ANC
Type of Intervention	ANC(71) - Natural or other area-specific constraints
Common Output Indicator	O.12. Number of hectares benefitting from support for areas facing natural or specific constraints, including a breakdown per type of areas
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO1 Support viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector across the Union in order to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as to ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the Union
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj1.N1	Support family farm income and address income disparities	Highest priority SO1	Yes
Obj1.N2	Support farmers facing natural and other constraints	2nd Highest SO1	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.4 Share of utilised agricultural area (UAA) covered by income support and subject to conditionality
R.7 Percentage of additional support per hectare in areas with higher needs (compared to average)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The Areas of Natural and Specific Constraints intervention will continue to grant payments to beneficiaries in areas designated pursuant to Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013.

Those farming in designated areas face significant hardships from factors such as remoteness, difficult topography, climatic problems and poor soil conditions. Payments will compensate farmers for all or part of the additional costs and income foregone related to the natural and specific constraints in the areas concerned. These payments will, by encouraging continued use of agricultural land, contribute to maintaining the countryside as well as to maintaining and promoting sustainable farming systems.

A list of townlands currently eligible for the scheme and a map of the ANC townlands can be found at the following link:
https://www.gov.ie/en/service/13d971-areas-of-natural-constraint-scheme/#list-of-anc-eligible-townlands-by-county

It is estimated that there will be 100,000 eligible beneficiaries from this scheme. This corresponds to the number of eligible beneficiaries in the areas designated as areas of natural or specific constraints which have received payment under the existing schemes.

Beneficiaries will only qualify for payment where they occupy and farmland designated as being an area of natural or specific constraint for the full calendar year and satisfy all other requirements for payment.

The SWOT analysis sets out that Direct Payments are a valuable source of income support for all farmers across the agri-food sector; but notes that these payments are of particular importance to farms situated in areas of natural and other specific constraints. Without direct support, farming in these areas may not be viable and this could lead to the abandonment of agricultural land which would damage the rural economy and the future viability of the agri-food sector. Furthermore, the SWOT noted that High Nature Value (HNV) farming occurs most frequently in areas that are mountainous; or in areas where natural constraints prevent intensification and that grazing on these agricultural areas can be an important component of maintaining certain habitats.
The intervention design is based on the identification of the following categories of land, based on differing levels of identified constraints

Category 1 land: The system of farming prevalent in Category 1 is characterised by extensive farming practices focused on livestock management on higher ground.
Category 2 land: The system of farming prevalent in Category 2 is characterised by extensive livestock grazing practices on lower ground.
Category 3 land: The system of farming prevalent in Category 3 is less extensive in nature and characterised by grazing livestock enterprises.
Offshore island land: Island holdings are generally small and fragmented where the potential for intensification is limited and farming is economically marginal, at best. Farming on the off-shore islands off Ireland is in continuous decline.

The categorisation of land ensures that financial support is targeted towards those with the highest levels of natural and other specific constraints, thus focussing support more effectively on the contribution to the identified Specific Objectives in Article 6 of REGULATION (EU) 2021/2115 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL [SPR].

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

Eligible beneficiaries are required to:

- meet the definition of a “genuine / active farmer”.
- Occupy and farm an agricultural area of forage and arable land, situated in a designated area.
- Have a holding that meets the minimum stocking levels (grazing requirement). This requirement is set at 0.10 livestock units per hectare. This will be based on the previous year’s stocking rate, to align with the active farmer check and eco-scheme Extensive Livestock Production practice. Applicants can also select to use the current year for the stocking rate requirement. Where justified on environmental grounds, a lower requirement may apply. Tillage lands, which are payable in designated areas under the scheme, will not be subject to the minimum stocking requirements.

The minimum payment for this intervention will be €100. Applicants entitled to a lower amount will not be eligible to receive support under this intervention. In addition, it is not proposed to apply the €100 minimum threshold to ANC Offshore Island Land.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

The support rates under this intervention are as follow:

Category 1 Land: €148 on the first 12 eligible hectares or part thereof, and € 112 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 34 hectares.

Category 2 Land: €111 on the first 10 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €104 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.

Category 3 Land: €93 on the first 8 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €88.25 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.

Offshore island land: €250 for the first 20 eligible hectares, €170 for eligible hectares 20 to 34, and €70 for eligible hectares 34-40.

The payment rates will compensate beneficiaries for "part of the additional costs and income foregone related to the natural or other area-specific constraints in the area concerned", as per Article 71(4) of Regulation 2021/2115 [SPR]. Payment rates are based on an examination of standard output data from the Central Statistics Office Census of Agriculture and data from DAFM databases. This facilitated a comparison at district electoral division (DED) level of DEDs containing designated land with DEDs containing no designated land.

CSO Standard output figures show for Category 1 areas only an average SO/ha of €236.76; or Category 2 areas only an average SO/ha of €742.81; for Category 3 areas only an average SO/ha of €1020.38; and for non-designated areas an average SO/ha of €1206.86. In relation to offshore islands, an analysis of additional costs compared to ANC areas situated on the mainland identified higher costs relating to farm input costs, animal feed, and a range of services such as veterinary and advisory services.

Based on these figures, these rates are in line with the provision of Article 71(4) of Regulation 2021/2115 [SPR] in that the support granted annually per hectare will compensate beneficiaries for "part of the additional costs and income foregone related to the natural or other area-specific constraints in the area concerned."

The system of farming prevalent in Category 1 is characterised by extensive farming practices focused on livestock management on higher ground. By contrast, Category 2 is characterised by extensive livestock grazing practices on lower ground, while Category 3 is less extensive in nature and characterised by grazing livestock enterprises. Island holdings are generally small and fragmented where the potential for intensification is limited and farming is economically marginal, at best. Farming on the offshore islands off Ireland is in continuous decline.

In line with Article 82 of Regulation 2021/2115, the adequacy and the accuracy of the calculations on which the payment rates outlined above have been based has been confirmed by a functionally independent body possessing the appropriate expertise.

O12 What area is eligible?

☐Mountain areas (pursuant to Article 32 (1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013)

☒Areas facing natural constraints , other than mountains(pursuant to Article 32, (1)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013)

https://www.gov.ie/en/service/13d971-areas-of-natural-constraint-scheme/#list-of-anc-eligible-townlands-by-county

☒Areas affected by other area- specific constraints (pursuant to Article 32(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013)

https://www.gov.ie/en/service/13d971-areas-of-natural-constraint-scheme/#list-of-anc-eligible-townlands-by-county

☐All areas with natural or other specific constraints

☐Other

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Type of payment

☒ unit cost based on additional costs and income foregone

☐ transaction cost included

☐ one off payment

☐ lump sum

Range of support at beneficiary level

Category 1 Land: €148 on the first 12 eligible hectares or part thereof, and € 112 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 34 hectares.

Category 2 Land: €111 on the first 10 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €104 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.

Category 3 Land: €93 on the first 8 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €88.25 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.

Offshore island land: €250 for the first 20 eligible hectares, €170 for eligible hectares 20 to 34, and €70 for eligible hectares 34-40.

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above.

Calculation method

Payment rates are based on an examination of standard output data from the Central Statistics Office Census of Agriculture and data from DAFM databases. This facilitated a comparison at district electoral division (DED) level of DEDs containing designated land with DEDs containing non designated land. In line with Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2115 of 2021, the adequacy and the accuracy of the calculations on which the payment rates been based has been confirmed by a functionally independent body possessing the appropriate expertise.

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention
N/A

10 WTO compliance
Green Box
Paragraph 13 of Annex 2 WTO
Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The Areas Facing Natural Constraints intervention complies with paragraph 13 of Annex 2 to the WTO agreement on Agriculture. Land eligibility for the intervention is based on bio-physical criteria, as outlined in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. Areas were assessed at townland level thus meeting the criteria that such regions designated as disadvantaged be a clearly designated contiguous geographical area with a definable economic and administrative identity, considered as disadvantaged on the basis of neutral and objective criteria clearly spelt out in law or regulation and indicating that the region's difficulties arise out of more than temporary circumstances.

The amount of payments is not related to or based on the type or volume of production or prices apply for any production. Payments are available to all producers with designated land, at degressive rates. The payment rates proposed will compensate beneficiaries for "part of the additional costs and income foregone related to the natural or other area-specific constraints in the area concerned", as per Article 71(4) of Regulation 2021/2115 [SPR]. Payment rates are based on an examination of standard output data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census of Agriculture and data from DAFM databases. This facilitated a comparison at district electoral division (DED) level. DEDs containing designated land were compared with DEDs containing no designated land.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53ANC01 - Category 1 Land up to 12 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC02 - Category 1 Land 12-34 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC03 - Category 2 Land Up to 10 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC04 - Category 2 Land 10-30 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC05 - Category 3 Land Up to 8 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC06 - Category 3 Land 8-30 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC07 - Offshore Island Land Up to 20 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC08 - Offshore Island Land 20-34 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No
53ANC09 - Offshore Island Land 34-40 ha	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.4; R.7;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53ANC01 - Category 1 Land up to 12 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC02 - Category 1 Land 12-34 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC03 - Category 2 Land Up to 10 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC04 - Category 2 Land 10-30 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC05 - Category 3 Land Up to 8 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC06 - Category 3 Land 8-30 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC07 - Offshore Island Land Up to 20 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC08 - Offshore Island Land 20-34 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

53ANC09 - Offshore Island Land 34-40 ha

The amounts are calculated by reference to the tiered approach to categorising designated areas with identified constraints as set out above. The planned annual outputs are based on the number of hectares that have received payment under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme following the redesignation process carried out ahead of the 2019 scheme year. There is no planned variation of the unit amount per different years.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53ANC01 - Category 1 Land up to 12 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	148.00	148.00	148.00	148.00	148.00	148.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC02 - Category 1 Land 12-34 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	112.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	112.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC03 - Category 2 Land Up to 10 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	111.00	111.00	111.00	111.00	111.00	111.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC04 - Category 2 Land 10-30 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	104.00	104.00	104.00	104.00	104.00	104.00	0.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC05 - Category 3 Land Up to 8 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	93.00	93.00	93.00	93.00	93.00	93.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC06 - Category 3 Land 8-30 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	88.25	88.25	88.25	88.25	88.25	88.25		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC07 - Offshore Island Land Up to 20 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								

53ANC08 - Offshore Island Land 20-34 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	170.00	170.00	170.00	170.00	170.00	170.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC09 - Offshore Island Land 34-40 ha (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
TOTAL	O.12 (unit: Hectares)	1,894,836.00	2,229,219.00	2,229,219.00	2,229,219.00	2,229,219.00	334,383.00		11,146,095.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	212,500,000.00	250,000,000.00	250,000,000.00	250,000,000.00	250,000,000.00	37,500,000.00		1,250,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	85,446,250.00	100,525,000.00	100,525,000.00	100,525,000.00	100,525,000.00	15,078,750.00		502,625,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation

53AECMNPI - Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure

Intervention Code (MS)	53AECMNPI
Intervention Name	Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure
Type of Intervention	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation
Common Output Indicator	O.21. Number of supported on-farm non-productive investment operations or units
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: Yes ES rebate system: No LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold

R.16 Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to the production of renewable energy or biomaterials
R.26 Share of farms benifitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resource
R.32 Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to biodiversity

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, has noted a number of climate, environmental and biodiversity related challenges which need to be addressed, including:

·agriculture's contribution to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
·carbon sink/emission source potential of soils
·energy use across farm systems
·increasing ammonia emissions
·decreasing water quality
·sub-optimal soil fertility
·the pressure agriculture is placing on Ireland's natural resources
·the unfavourable or declining status of the majority of Ireland's designated habitats and landscapes,
·lack of forest area under protection for preservation of biodiversity and safeguarding landscapes and specific natural elements, and
·lack of climate adaptation measures

The interventions proposed under Pillars 1 and 2 of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) will work together in a complementary way to achieve the specific objectives set out for the CAP. The new AECM framework builds on Conditionality, the Eco-Scheme and the Organic Farming Scheme by offering a range of measures that are designed to improve habitats for a wide range of species while also targeting water quality and climate mitigation and adaptation, in a manner that goes beyond Conditionality, Eco-Scheme and Organic Farming Scheme requirements. It will also help to achieve the objectives of EU and national legislation including the Wildlife Act, Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive, the Climate Action Plan and the objectives of Ireland's Prioritized Action Framework (PAF). Lessons learned from the EIPs are being incorporated into the new framework through the establishment of eight co-operation project teams to assist in the implementation of measures at local level. A more qualitative approach has been included by the upscaling of results-based measures to a national level. In addition, the introduction of a Farm Sustainability Plan will help achieve the underlying principle of the new AECM framework of "the right measure in the right place".

Ireland is proposing an innovative approach to the delivery of our AECM which will incorporate two different approaches, AECM General and AECM Co-operation, based on a geographic location identified by a defined mapping system:

·a Co-operation approach (AECM Co-operation), available to farmers in defined high priority geographical areas, also offering general measures, but in addition, offering bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures and a Local Project Team to assist with the implementation of the scheme at local level. Farmers with a significant area of land in one or more of the defined high priority geographical areas will automatically be enrolled in the Co-operation approach. The General approach is not open to them.
·And a General approach for all other locations, offering a suite of general measures with some high priority targeting (AECM General)

Non-productive investments play a complementary role in both AECM approaches, in helping to achieve the above agri-environment and climate objectives; and in enhancing the environmental value of the areas where such investments are supported. In addition, non-productive investments respond directly to the following range of Needs, as described in Ireland's Needs Assessment:

Need	**Addressed by Action**
Obj4.N1	Grass margins (Grassland) Tree planting Hedgerow planting
Obj4.N2	·Hedgerow Rejuvenation; Hedgerow Coppicing & Hedgerow Laying ·Planting new hedgerows; Planting trees
Obj4.N4	Hedgerow Rejuvenation; Hedgerow Coppicing & Hedgerow Laying. Planting new hedgerows. Planting trees including trees in riparian buffers Riparian buffer strip/riparian zone
Obj5.N2	·Riparian Margins; Planting new hedgerows; Planting trees
Obj6.N1	·Planting new hedgerows; Hedgerow Rejuvenation: Hedgerow Coppicing & Hedgerow Laying; Barn owl boxes; Rye-grass seed set as winter food for birds. Planting trees. Planting traditional orchards.

The AECM provides capital funding for non-productive investments (AECM- NPI). These include, but are not limited to, the planting of riparian margins, which protect and improve water quality (Obj5.N2) by providing a protective barrier to streams; and the planting of trees and other landscape features.

This intervention supports non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives as regards:

·Improving biodiversity and the conservation status of species and habitats, with specific attention to Natura 2000 areas or other high nature value systems;
·Improvement of landscape quality and character and adaption to climate change

Non-productive investments will form part of the AECM and therefore, applications for this form of support will form part of the application submitted for AECM. The non-productive investments as set out in the AECM list of actions are listed below.

The following non-productive investments shall be supported:
Improving biodiversity and the conservation status of species and habitats, with specific attention to Natura 2000 areas or other high nature value systems

- Protection of riparian zones – the capital element is integrated with the current element; with the establishment of fencing ensuring that the desired habitat/margin is created/maintained.
- Barn Owl boxes – with the capital cost integrated into the overall payment rate
- Ryegrass seed set as winter food for birds

Improvement of landscape quality and character and adaption to climate change

- Hedgerow Rejuvenation Coppicing
- Hedgerow Rejuvenation Laying
- Planting new hedgerow
- Planting a traditional orchard*
- Planting Trees – Rows, Groups, Parkland
- Planting Trees in Riparian Buffers
- Tree Belt for Ammonia Capture at farmyard

* Note these are non-commercial orchards. The traditional Irish Orchard action is targeted to conserve traditional Irish apple varieties and participants can only plants trees from a restricted non-commercial variety list (and is number is limited to 10 trees per orchard).

Each of the above are integrated actions with the capital element of the cost referring to purchase of units where applicable e.g. barn owl boxes, trees, plants and other elements such as establishment of fencing (where such fencing relates to the protection of habitats created under AECM actions).

These all contribute to the protection of water quality and natural resources.

- Protection of riparian zones – the capital element is integrated with the current element; with the establishment of fencing ensuring that the desired habitat/margin is created/maintained.
- Barn Owl boxes – with the capital cost integrated into the overall payment rate
- Ryegrass seed set as winter food for birds
- Hedgerow Rejuvenation Coppicing
- Hedgerow Rejuvenation Laying
- Planting new hedgerow
- Planting a traditional orchard
- Planting Trees – Rows, Groups, Parkland
- Planting Trees in Riparian Buffers
- Tree Belt for Ammonia Capture at farmyards

AECM NPI contributes to R.16 (investments in natural resources) in SO4 (climate change mitigation and adaptation) as follows:

"Non-Productive Investments for the AECM contributes to Obj4.N1 (reducing GHG emissions resulting from agriculture), Obj4.N2 (Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands) and Obj4.N4 (encourage Climate Adaptation) through its contribution to R.16. The actions included for R.16 are Planting trees, Planting hedgerows, Traditional orchards, Riparian margins, trees belts." These actions both mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon but are also related to adaptation as more trees/hedgerows in the landscape create nature corridors and help regulate flood events and offer animals more shelter for extremes of weather conditions such as heat waves.

The non-productive investments for the AECM Co-operation Project will be developed by the local Co-Operation Project (CP) teams following appointment. Once appointed the CP teams will identify local priorities and identify actions which can best address them, including non-productive investments which can assist in the achievement of the relevant agri-environment and climate objectives.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

Explain how the intervention goes beyond the baseline, the links with the SMR, national standards and possibly the echo-schemes

Action	Relevant baseline element	The way in which the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements	How investments differ from Eco scheme
Rye grass seed set for birds	Not applicable	Generates a vital food source for seed eating birds during the autumn and into late winter.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Hedgerow rejuvenation (coppicing or laying)	GAEC 8	This measure will improve the existing non-productive features (hedgerows) so they will be of higher quality to support on farm biodiversity.	AECM compensates participants for rejuvenating existing hedgerows to extend their natural life. There is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
Planting new hedgerow	GAEC 8 SMR 3	This measure will create new non-productive features to improve on-farm biodiversity. New hedgerows planted under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	New Hedgerows planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the contract.
Planting Trees – rows, groups, parkland	GAEC 8 SMR 3	This measure will create new non-productive features to improve on-farm biodiversity. Areas planted with trees under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	Trees planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the AECM contract.
Tree belt for ammonia capture at farmyard	GAEC 8	This measure will improve on-farm biodiversity. Areas planted with trees under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	Tree belts planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the AECM contract.
Grass Margins (Grassland)	GAEC 4 GAEC 8 SMR 3	This action will create margins with no chemical or organic fertilisers in addition to watercourse margins protected under GAEC 4 as they will be placed on other field boundaries.	Field margins will require specific management to meet objective of the action The area selected for this action will not count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 1. Space for Nature

		The area selected for this action will not count for GAEC 8. Once fenced off in grassland they will remain in situ for the duration of the scheme. This action will result in the creation of additional non-productive features and area to improve on-farm biodiversity	
Riparian Buffer Strip/Zone – for grassland	GAEC 4 GAEC 8 SMR 1 SMR 2 SMR 3 SMR 4	Newly created riparian buffer strips/zones established under AECM will not count toward GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract. In Grassland - the Riparian Buffer Strip/Zone will be fenced off from livestock with no chemical or organic fertilisers or pesticides. Wider options than baseline available and these will also create areas for biodiversity.	Newly created Riparian Buffer Strips/Zones in AECM cannot be counted towards Eco Scheme Ag Practice 1 for the duration of the AECM contract. Margins must be created and then maintained throughout 5 years agreement to maintain grassy habitat to benefit birds of prey, bats mammals and invertebrates
Planting trees in riparian buffers	GAEC 4 GAEC 5 GAEC 8 SMR 1 SMR 2 SMR 3	Same as above but with the addition of trees which will create new habitats to support biodiversity. Areas planted with tress under AECM cannot count for GAEC 8 for the duration of the AECM contract.	Trees planted into riparian buffers cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the AECM contract.
Planting a traditional orchard	Not applicable	This will increase biodiversity and provide a habitat for wildlife on the farm. It will ensure the survival of old fruit varieties and enhance the visual and historical value of the landscape.	Traditional Orchards planted under AECM cannot count for Eco Scheme Ag Practice 4. or be counted towards Ag Practice 1 Space for Nature for the duration of the AECM contract.
Barn owl box	SMR 3 SMR 4	This provides artificial nesting and roosting sites for barn owl. This is the most threatened species of	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.

		owl in Ireland and is red listed on the 'Birds on conservation concern in Ireland'	
Commonage	GAEC 2 GAEC 8 SMR 3 SMR 4	The measure will improve the condition of the heath land /grassland and associated species e.g., red grouse, curlew, Hen harrier.	Results based scorecard applies, participants paid according to value of habitat for carbon, water and biodiversity targets

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

The intervention is targeted at environmental improvements ('non-productive' investments.) The beneficiaries are eligible AECM (ACRES) farmers who intend to take actions that require non-productive investments, in their ACRES plans.

The non-productive investments must:

·Be linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives,

·Not lead to a significant increase in the value or profitability of the agricultural holding,

·Be located on the farm, and

·Support for protection of riparian zones is conditional on the participation of the beneficiary in a related agri-environment climate management commitment (covering the management of the established/restored habitats/features).

In the AECM, the non-productive investments form part of certain actions (listed below in Section 5.3.6) and, consequently, the AECM application if the actions concerned form part of application. It is the overall application which is then processed. The selection criteria will therefore be the same as those applying for the AECM scheme. Applications in respect of Tier 1 farms will receive priority, by virtue of those actions having particularly important environmental assets. In addition, proposals from farms which fall within the Tier 2 category will receive priority over proposals solely containing the general actions offered in Tier 3. This is the means by which Ireland will target inclusion of, and expenditure on, the most vulnerable landscapes and address issues arising from a farming practice such as high stocking density or a large area of arable land.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

This is a non-IACS support.

This is an investment support measure which is integrated within the AECM and provided for in accordance with Article 70 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Support will be paid as part of the payment for the relevant actions under the AECM. The cost for the non-productive investment element will be in line with Article 73 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements
(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))
N/A
7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods
Form of support
☒ **Grant**
☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment
☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary
☒ unit costs
☐ lump sums
☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

Costings are based on standardised unit costs, which have been verified by an independent authority, as part of the verification process required for AECM. The non-productive investments are linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives. As regards the non-productive investments associated with the AECM Co-operation Project, detailed costings underpinning the proposed support will be independently verified once developed by CPs.

Range of support at beneficiary level

The cost of the component of the relevant AECM General actions which falls within the scope of Article 73 forms part of the overall payment rate for the actions concerned. A maximum amount of € 1,461.39 per annum will apply to that non-productive investment component of the AECM General actions in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment. Payment will be determined by the actual actions selected and associated area. The average payment for the non-productive investment element within actions completed under AECM General is anticipated to be €1,185.63.

For non-productive investments completed under AECM Co-operation Projects a maximum payment of €1,500 per annum will apply in all cases, save for exceptional circumstances where the environmental action justifies the higher payment. Payment will be determined by the payment rates for the respective actions selected and undertaken. The average payment for non-productive investments completed under the AECM Co-operation Projects is anticipated to be €1,200.

Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

The support rate is 100% of independently verified standard costs in accordance with Article 73 4 (c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Eligible costs for the actions in the AECM include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. The rates for a number of ‘integrated’ actions incorporate non-productive capital investments where applicable e.g. barn owl boxes, trees, plants and other elements such as establishment of fencing.

There is no financial gain for the farmer arising from completing these actions. Actions such as hedgerow laying or coppicing are labour intensive. Given the nature of Irish hedgerows, with predominantly thorny

plant species involved in coppicing; coppiced material from these species would not give rise to returns from firewood sales.

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What is not eligible for support?

Not applicable for this intervention. Ineligible investments are listed in Section 4.7.1.

Does the investment contain irrigation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Investments in the improvement of existing irrigation installations, what is the potential water saving(s) required (expressed in %)

N/A

Investments in the improvement of existing irrigation installations (affecting water bodies whose status is less than good) what is/are the requirement(s) for an effective reduction in water use - expressed in %)

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 11 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Non-productive investments under the AECM comply with Paragraph 11 of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. In accordance with point (a) eligibility for payments under the scheme will be determined by clearly-defined criteria in this EU and Irish Government funded programme. As required by point (b), the amount of aid will not be related to the type or volume of production undertaken by the producer in any given year after the base period. In addition, as required by point (c) payments will not be related to prices for any production undertaken by the farmer. In accordance with point (d) the payment will only be given for the duration of the AECM contract when the non-productive investment is realised. In accordance with point (e) payment of aid for non-productive investments under AECM will not mandate or in any way designate the agricultural products to be produced. Point (f) of Paragraph 11 is not applicable in this case.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53AECMNPI01 - Average support for on-farm NPI (General)	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.16; R.26; R.32;	No
53AECMNPI02 - Average support for on-farm NPI (Co-operation)	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.16; R.26; R.32;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53AECMNPI01 - Average support for on-farm NPI (General)

Eligible costs for the actions in the AECM General include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates have been independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. The rates for a number of ‘integrated’ actions incorporate non-productive capital investments where applicable e.g. barn owl boxes, trees, plants and other elements such as establishment of fencing. The support rate is 100% of independently verified standard costs in accordance with Article 73 4 (c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

53AECMNPI02 - Average support for on-farm NPI (Co-operation)

The non-productive investments for the AECM Co-operation Project will be developed by the local Co-Operation Project (CP) teams following appointment. Once appointed the CP teams will identify local priorities and identify actions which can best address them, including non-productive investments which will assist in the achievement of the relevant agri-environment and climate objectives.

Eligible costs will include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. The support rate will be 100% of independently verified standard costs in accordance with Article 73 4 (c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

Non-productive investments in the co-operation area will be proposed following the first scoring of fields in summer 2023 so planned unit amount value for 2023 will be €0. It is expected that this will increase from 2024 onwards to an average of €1,200.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53AECMNPI01 - Average support for on-farm NPI (General) (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	
	O.21 (unit: Operations)		15,738.00	23,608.00	23,608.00	23,608.00	23,608.00	7,869.00	118,039.00
53AECMNPI02 - Average support for on-farm NPI (Co-operation) (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	
	O.21 (unit: Operations)		6,667.00	13,333.00	13,333.00	13,333.00	13,333.00	6,667.00	66,666.00
TOTAL	O.21 (unit: Operations)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		26,659,845.00	43,989,953.00	43,989,953.00	43,989,953.00	43,989,953.00	17,330,122.00	219,949,779.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		10,719,923.65	17,688,360.12	17,688,360.12	17,688,360.12	17,688,360.12	6,968,442.25	88,441,806.38
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53OFCIS - On Farm Capital Investments

Intervention Code (MS)	53OFCIS
Intervention Name	On Farm Capital Investments
Type of Intervention	INVEST(73-74) - Investments, including investments in irrigation
Common Output Indicator	O.20. Number of supported on-farm productive investment operations or units
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas
SO8 Promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N1	Increase efficiency and competitiveness thru on farm investment + the adoption of new technologies	Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N5	Increase EE thru uptake of new technologies + facilitate the production of renewable energy sources	5th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes

Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes
Obj7.N2	Support YF in accessing finance so they are in a better position to invest in/develop their farm	2nd Highest SO7	Yes
Obj8.N1	Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas	Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N5	Improve on farm safety and increase awareness of the importance of farmer well-being	5th Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj9.N1	Increase the share of Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) under Organics	Highest priority SO9	Yes
Obj9.N2	Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and increasing awareness of AMR and ATR	2nd Highest SO9	Yes
Obj9.N3	Support the efficient/environmentally responsible use of pesticides + encourage alternative practise	3rd Highest SO9	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.15 Supported investments in renewable energy production capacity, including bio-based (in MW)
R.16 Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to the production of renewable energy or biomaterials
R.26 Share of farms benifitting from CAP productive and non-productive investment support related to care for the natural resource
R.3 Share of farms benefitting from support for digital farming technology through CAP
R.32 Share of farms benefitting from CAP investment support contributing to biodiversity
R.44 Share of livestock units (LU) covered by supported actions to improve animal welfare
R.9 Share of farmers receiving investment support to restructure and modernise, including to improve resource efficiency

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

In line with the specific objectives outlined above, the new Capital Investment Scheme will include support for Young Farmers, Women Farmers, Animal Welfare, Nutrient Storage, Farm Safety, Tillage, Dairy and the Organic sectors. Some investments will also deliver climate change mitigation, address key environmental issues including biodiversity, water quality and climate challenges; and increase energy efficiencies on farm through the uptake of new technologies and the more efficient use of energy.

Many of the investments will support and contribute to the results of more than one of the needs listed in the needs assessment, including Obj1.N3, Obj2.N1, Obj4.N1, Obj4.N4, Obj4.N5, Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3, Obj5.N4, Obj6.N1, Obj7.N1, Obj7.N2, Obj8.N1, Obj8.N5, Obj9N.1 Obj9.N2 and Obj9.N3. The areas prioritised for investment in the current proposal for a capital investment scheme will be based on four different grant rates as follows:

1.**General on Farm Investments -** Grant rate will be 40% for investments. Indicative investment ceiling limit to be applied will be €90,000 per holding. For Partnership applications an indicative investment ceiling will be applied of €160,000 per holding. There is the possibility of a higher investment ceiling of €200,000 per holding for certain animal welfare related projects in the pig and poultry sectors.

2.**Young Farmers and Women Farmers -** Grant rate will be 60% for investments. Indicative Investment ceiling limit to be applied will be €90,000 per holding. For Partnership applications an indicative investment ceiling will be applied of €160,000 per holding.

3.**Organic Farmers/Health and Safety Equipment/ Investments delivering specific environmental benefits -** A 50% grant rate will be applied for participants from the organic sector and to applicants that apply for farm safety investments. This rate may also be applied to specific investments that provide a clear benefit in relation to greenhouse gas emission reductions. Indicative Investment ceiling limit to be applied will be €90,000 per holding. For Partnership applications an indicative investment ceiling will be applied of €160,000 per holding.

4.**Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment -** It is proposed to have a 50% grant rate for LESS spreading attachments and a 40% grant rate for mobile tanker and the umbilical pump, reel and pipes. Indicative separate investment ceiling is €40,000 per holding. However, in the case of a joint application by two or more eligible partners under a registered partnership, the maximum increases to €60,000. The investment ceiling under this scheme is NOT subject to the overall investment ceiling of €90,000 per holding.

Further information on the four categories is as follows:

1. General On Farm Investments

Support under this category will include aid for Animal Welfare, Nutrient Storage and Tillage and Dairy farming.

·Support for improving animal welfare will be provided for investments in the modernisation of animal housing facilities and the construction of new animal housing on Irish farms.

·Support for nutrient storage will be provided for investments in the construction of farm nutrient storage facilities on farms.

·Support for the tillage and dairy sectors will be provided for investments in precision farming equipment and in the case of the tillage sector also for low disturbance tillage equipment. In line with Ag Climatise, particular emphasis will be placed on supporting the tillage sector. The use of precision farming equipment and low disturbance tillage equipment by tillage farmers will lead to efficiency gains and reduced use of inputs of energy, labour and machinery in the short and long term and fertiliser, water and pesticides in the medium and long term. Fertiliser and pesticide management will be more efficient through support for precision GPS, spraying and yield monitoring equipment.

Applications for investments under this category will contribute to increasing the number of farms improving animal welfare conditions, contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and contributing to improving biodiversity.

2. Young Farmers and Women Farmers

Measures in the On-Farm Capital investment scheme aim to balance the need to address the issues of both generational renewal and gender balance in farming. Measures in the CSP are complemented by the new stakeholder strategy for the Irish agri-food sector, Food Vision 2030, which recognises the important contribution of women to the sector's long-term sustainability and includes a number of actions to promote and improve gender balance at all levels. One of the barriers identified as limiting young farmers' ability to enter the agricultural sector, or to expand their venture, is the high cost associated with capital investment. In order to support young farmers and specifically to enable them to take on the necessary infrastructural work to expand their business, a higher rate of aid intensity (at 60%) will be offered to young farmers. This 60% rate compares favourably to the general 40% rate and is designed to be a significant support for young farmers. While this additional support will support generational renewal, the investments available to young farmers will also contribute to many other objectives.

The SWOT and needs assessment points to the need to increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development. Thus, Ireland's ambition through this intervention is to address this gender imbalance in farming at all ages and improve the status of the many women who are interested in and involved with farming. While only 13.4% of Irish farmers/farm holders are women CSO data shows that there are over 71,000 women working in Irish farms. The increased rate on the CIS will not only support eligible women farmers but may encourage Irish farmers to consider transferring their farm to their daughter or other female relative. The objective of a top up for Women Farmers in a Capital Investment Scheme is also to provide due recognition to women in farming and to encourage new women entrants into farming promoting gender equality in farming. In order to support women farmers and specifically to enable them to take on the necessary infrastructural work to expand their business, a higher rate of aid intensity (at 60%) will be offered to women farmers. This 60% rate compares favourably to the general 40% rate and is designed to be a significant support for women farmers. While this additional support will support gender equality, the investments available to women farmers will also contribute to many other objectives. The women farmers scheme will be available to eligible women farmers aged between 18 and 66, while the Young Farmers scheme will be for eligible young farmers aged between 18 and 40 (and this is the only investment scheme available to young male farmers. The lower age range of 41 therefore, provides a continuation from the increased rate for YF which young women farmers can avail of, while the upper age of 66 aligns with our ambition to address gender balance (across the full working age), affording due regard to both policy objectives.

3. Organic Farmers/Health and Safety Equipment/ Investments delivering specific environmental/climate benefits

Support under this category will include aid for Organic Farming, Health and Safety equipment and investments that support specific environmental/climate benefits

·Support will be provided to organic farmers at a higher grant rate. Support for investments in physical assets under a Capital Investment Scheme will support the Organic Farming Scheme and will include investments which improve soil and water quality, contribute to improving biodiversity and assist in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

·Support for investments in a select range of farm safety items will also be provided at a higher rate, such as replacement slats and safety rails/fences, solid covers for slurry stores, livestock handling facilities, crushes and enclosures and associated works, calving and isolation facilities, aeration systems and some upgrading works including rewiring.

·Support for investments that provide clear benefits to water quality, emissions and the environment will also be granted at a higher rate. These include investments in precision grass measurement, rainwater harvesting and storage, solar panels, heat recovery units, heat pumps, biomass boilers, ventilation, and insulation. Some of these investments will also contribute to the wider renewable energy policy.

4. Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment

In order to encourage the purchase by farmers of specialised Low Emissions Slurry-Spreading Equipment, support will be provided for investment in mobile slurry tanks and umbilical systems attached to low emission spreading equipment. In order to encourage the purchase by farmers of this specialised

type of equipment, this strand of support under the measure will not be subject to the overall investment ceiling which will be applicable under the other strands of support introduced.

Low Emission Spreading technology will reduce ammonia emissions and have a positive effect on emissions and provide climate change benefits. It will also encourage better management of and reduction of mineral fertilizers and pesticides which will contribute to improving biodiversity conditions.

Funding

Due to the high level of funding available in the RDP 2014-2020 as extended under the transitional arrangements, it is proposed to provide for investment support under the CSP primarily from 2025 to 2027.

Tranche application process and scheme reporting

It is proposed that a tranche-based system will be implemented; the scheme will operate in rolling tranches, to assist in the funding and budgeting process and provide certainty to the sectors. It is intended to have a breakdown through the IT system to report on the result indicators and allow for monitoring of uptake. Low uptake investment items can be identified and removed if needed.

Administrative burden will be reduced by the availability of an online system for the applicant with a number of options available for selection based on eligibility

Links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions

The Capital Investment Scheme will provide the funding for investments that complement minimum regulatory requirements such as animal welfare requirements, “nitrates” requirements, and protection of waters. These investments go beyond the requirements for Conditionality, national legislation, the Eco-Scheme or AECM; the Capital Investment Scheme increases the CSP’s contribution to achieving key environmental and climate objectives.

Applicants applying for certain animal housing or nutrient storage facilities will have to prove that they are in compliance at the time of application with nutrient storage requirements as required under Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters legislation. Appropriate support for investments in animal housing and nutrient storage facilities will ensure that the Capital Investment Scheme contributes to key environmental, climate and animal welfare objectives.

Certain applicants will be excluded from applying for Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) equipment, for example, those applicants that are obliged to LESS under the Nitrates Regulations. The investments for LESS equipment provide applicants who are not obliged to use LESS access to funding to facilitate such investments; this ensures that the Capital Investment Scheme contributes to key environmental and climate objectives.

Link to Best Available Techniques (BAT)

All new pig housing is required to be low emission housing, with BAT techniques included in pig housing design alongside the requirements for animal welfare. The upgrading of poultry housing also works to reduce emissions by reducing water spillages, through replacing drinker systems and installation of water meters. Automatic Slurry scrapers employed in cubicle houses on dairy farms to regularly convey slurry away from the floor of the animal house to a slurry tank covered by slats. Most of the slurry storage facilities in Ireland are in the form of concrete tanks. In addition, silage-based diets over the winter housing period results in cattle slurry more easily forming a crust such that ammonia emissions are already reduced. This is also the case for other types of storage facilities including circular slurry stores and geo membrane lined stores that come with the option of a store cover, all of which are eligible items for investment aid.

Indirectly emissions are reduced by the adoption of the latest available technologies for equipment such as milk plate coolers and heat transfer units (taking heat from compressor) on dairy farms; and heat recovery units, energy efficiency upgrades including wall, roof and door insulation for pigs and poultry housing. Another example is the use of Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels for water heating and ice building on dairy farms. Link to Directive 2018/2001

Investments funded must, where relevant, comply with the Directive (EU) 2018/2001, (on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources), and any energy generation will be limited to own consumption.

Specifications and retention of investments

Investments grant aided will have to comply with the Department's specifications for each investment item and the applicant will be required to keep the investment item on the holding and use it for its intended purpose for a period of at least 5 years.

Relevant baseline requirements

Relevant baseline requirements are set under GAEC 8 and SMR 2.

Applicants must also comply with the following national legislation/standards:

1. Planning and Development Regulations 2001
2. National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994
3. Health and Safety and Welfare at Work Act
4. National Rules on Electrical Installation
5. Companies Act
6. National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 (Recorded Monument) and Notification under section 5(8) of the 1987 Act (Register of Historic Monuments)
7. Farm Safety code of practice
8. Tax clearance as per Revenue
9. SI 31/2014 and SI 605/2017 – Good Agriculture Practise for Protection of Waters
10. SI 65/2018 - Good Agriculture Practise for Protection of Waters (Amendment)
11. SI 40/2020 - Good Agriculture Practise for Protection of Waters (Amendment)
12. SI 529/2020- Good Agriculture Practise for Protection of Waters (Amendment)

The intervention will only fund investments that go beyond conditionality and national standards. For example, applicants applying for certain animal housing or nutrient storage facilities will have to prove that they are in compliance at the time of application with nutrient storage requirements as required under Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters legislation.

Certain applicants will be excluded from applying for Low Emission Slurry Spreading (LESS) equipment, for example, those applicants that are obliged to use LESS equipment under the Nitrates Regulations.

To ensure all supported work complies with requirements under the National Monuments Acts, grant aid will not be paid where proposed works could cause damage to a structure or area of historical or archaeological importance. Also, where the carrying out of works is liable to cause any pollution of water sources or damage to the environment in any way, the applicant must take all reasonable steps to prevent this happening.

All applications requiring planning permission will have to be in compliance with the Planning and Developments Regulations at the time of application.

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

All applicants must:

·Apply online

·Be registered as an active Farmer

·Be aged eighteen years or over on date of submission of the application for support.

·Be the holder of an active Herd number/flock/tillage or department identifier. Herd Keeper is not acceptable.

·Have declared a minimum of 5 hectares of "eligible land" owned and/or leased or rented, which have been declared under the Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS) in the year of application or preceding year, or in the case of intensive enterprises, generate a minimum of 20 production units from farming. (Intensive enterprises are pigs, poultry, rabbits, protected horticultural crops and the production of nursery stock).

·Comply with scheme requirements on planning permission and tax clearance.

Additional eligibility for Young Farmers Population

·Aged no more than 40 years of age at any time during the calendar year in which s/he, (i) first submits an application under Pillar I measures or (ii) submits an application under Pillar II measures, for young farmer support

·Meet the conditions for being 'head of the holding'.

"Setting up a holding as head of the holding" means the earliest of the following dates:

1. date of joining a Teagasc Milk Production Partnership or Department registered Farm Partnership;

2.date of application for registering as a sole or joint user of a herd number/other Department identifier;

3. In the case of joint owners/partnerships/companies all dates of application for registering of a herd number or Department identifier will be examined and the date of set-up will be the date of application for registering of individuals associated with partnership/companies/joint applications.

Where an applicant meets the requirement of set-up for the purposes of this Scheme, he/she cannot be considered to be set-up again on a subsequent date.

·Meet the requirements for the appropriate training and/or skills required.

Additional eligibility for Women Farmers Population

·Aged between 40 years of age and an upper age limit of 66 years of age during the calendar year in which she submits an application, under Pillar II measures, for women farmer support.

·Meet the conditions for being 'head of the holding'.

·Meet the requirements for the appropriate training and/or skills required.

Additional eligibility for Certified Organic Farmers

Horticulture producers - the minimum farmed area is 1 hectare owned and/ or leased, which have been declared under the Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS) in the year of application or preceding year.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

The Capital Investment Scheme will be a demand led scheme providing grant aid to facilitate approved capital investments by farmers. Ireland anticipates 8,500 investments of grant aid less than €5,000, 7,500 investments between €5,000-€20,000 and 4,000 investments of more than €20,000. These figures are based on Ireland's previous experience and the numbers of investments grant aided under TAMS II.

Maximum upper variation (%) or maximum amount, where applicable (% or EUR):
€5,055 is the average and €132,000 is the maximum payment per applicant.

€5,055 is the average unit amount per investment based on experience seen in TAMS II. This has been calculated as follows: Ireland grant aided €264.4m in TAMS II by the end of 2020 and we grant aided 52,305 investments, €264.4m/52,305 investments = €5,055 average unit amount per investment. TAMS has been a highly successful scheme and it is expected that similar investment levels to that in TAMS II will occur. There may be some change in the types on investments that take place with the expected increase in organic farming investments along with investments to support improved environmental outcomes such as LESS, nutrient storage, energy efficiency. An increased focus on investments for animal welfare and farm safety is also expected to address issues in those areas.

The grant rates will be as follows:
·**General On Farm Investments** - 40% grant rate
·**Young Farmers and Women Farmers** - 60% grant rate
·**Organic Farmers/Farm Safety Equipment/Investments delivering specific environmental/climate benefits** – 50% grant rate
·**Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment** – 40% & 50% grant rate

Maximum grant rates
For the General On Farm Investments the maximum is €36,000 based on an indicative investment ceiling of €90,000 @40% grant rate. A maximum grant of €80,000 may apply in the pig and poultry sectors if the higher investment ceiling of €200,000 per holding applies for specific animal welfare related projects.

For the young farmer and the women farmer population, the maximum is €54,000 based on an indicative investment ceiling of €90,000 @60% grant rate.

For Organic Farmers/Farm Safety Equipment/Investments delivering specific environmental/climate benefits the maximum is €45,000 based on an indicative investment ceiling of €90,000 @ 50% grant rate.

For a partnership the maximum is €96,000 based on an indicative investment ceiling of €160,000 at the young farmer rate of 60% for two young farmers in the partnership.

For Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment the maximum is €16,000 for a tanker, the umbilical pump, reel and pipes based on a grant rate of 40% and indicative investment ceiling is €40,000 per holding. The maximum is €20,000 for LESS spreading attachments based on a grant rate of 50% and indicative investment ceiling is €40,000 per holding. However, in the case of a joint application by two or more eligible partners under a registered partnership, the maximum grant is €24,000 based on an indicative investment ceiling of €60,000 grant aided at a rate of 40%. This increases to a maximum potential grant of €30,000 if the partnership qualifies for LESS spreading attachments grant aided at a rate of 50%.

Each investment is assigned a reference cost. The reference cost is calculated based on quotations received from suppliers and a database of receipted costs from previous investment schemes.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☒ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☐ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Range of support at beneficiary level

General On Farm Investments - 40% grant rate

Young Farmers and Women Farmers - 60% grant rate

Organic Farmers/Farm Safety Equipment/Investments delivering specific environmental/climate benefits – 50% grant rate

Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment – 40% & 50% grant rate

No rate exceeds 65%

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What is not eligible for support?

·Investments in large-scale infrastructure as determined by Member States in the CAP Strategic Plan, not being part of the community-led local development strategies set out in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, except for broadband and flood or coastal protection preventive actions aimed at reducing the consequences of probable natural disasters, adverse climatic events or catastrophic events; such as excavation plant or equipment (bulldozers, diggers etc)

·Construction plant or equipment (cranes, road rollers, cement mixers etc)

·Purchase of land for an amount exceeding 10% of the total eligible expenditure for the operation concerned, with the exception of land purchase for environmental conservation and carbon-rich soil preservation or land purchased by young farmers through the use of financial instruments; in the case of financial instruments, that ceiling shall apply to the eligible public expenditure paid to the final recipient, or, in the case of guarantees, to the amount of the underlying loan; Art 73. 3 (c)

·Leasing of lands

·Purchase of payment entitlements; Purchase or lease of entitlements Art 73. 3 (b)

·Purchase of animals, annual plants and their planting for a purpose other than (i) restoring agricultural or forestry potential following natural disaster, adverse climatic events or catastrophic event, (ii) protecting livestock against large predators or being used in forestry instead of machinery, (iii) rearing endangered breeds as defined in Article 2(24) of Regulation (EU) No 2016/1012 under the commitments referred to in Article 70 or (iv) preserving plant varieties under threat of genetic erosion under the commitments referred to in Article 70; Art 73. 3 (d)

·Interest rate on debt, except in relation to grants given in the form of an interest rate subsidy or guarantee fee subsidy; Art 73. 3 (e)

·Field irrigation systems

·Purchase of Domestic living accommodation

·Purchase of Non agriculture buildings or equipment

Note: Ireland is not funding investments in afforestation under the CAP Strategic Plan.

Does the investment contain irrigation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Investments in the improvement of existing irrigation installations, what is the potential water saving(s) required (expressed in %)

N/A

Investments in the improvement of existing irrigation installations (affecting water bodies whose status is less than good) what is/are the requirement(s) for an effective reduction in water use - expressed in %)

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 11 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The Capital Investment Scheme complies with Paragraph 11 of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. In accordance with point (a) eligibility for payments under the scheme will be determined by clearly-defined criteria in this EU and Irish Government funded programme. As required by point (b), the amount of aid will not be related to the type or volume of production undertaken by the producer in any given year after the base period. In addition, as required by point (c) payments will not be related to prices for any production undertaken by the farmer. In accordance with point (d) approval will be granted for an investment, mobile or fixed, and the applicant will then have to obtain/build the investment before aid can be granted. In accordance with point (e) payment of aid under the Capital Investment Scheme will not mandate or in any way designate the agricultural products to be produced. Point (f) of Paragraph 11 is not applicable in this case.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53OFCIS01 - CIS Average Grant (Productive)	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.3; R.9; R.15; R.16; R.26; R.32; R.44;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53OFCIS01 - CIS Average Grant (Productive)

The Capital Investment Scheme will be a demand led scheme. Ireland expect 8,500 investments of grant aid less than €5,000, 7,500 investments between €5,000-€20,000 and 4,000 investments of more than €20,000. These figures are based on experience and the numbers of investments grant aided under TAMS II.

·**Maximum upper variation (%) or maximum amount, where applicable (% or EUR):**€5,055 is the average and €132,000 is the maximum payable, this could be achieved by a young farmer partnership completing an approved investment to the maximum value of €160,000 (60% rate) and also completing an approved Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment approved investment to the maximum of €60,000 (60% grant rate)

€5,055 is the average unit amount per investment based on experience seen in TAMS II. This has been calculated as follows: Ireland grant aided €264.4m in TAMS II by the end of 2020, this grant aided 52,305 investments, €264.4m/52,305 investments = €5,055 average unit amount per investment. Ireland expects similar investment levels to that in TAMS II with a strong focus on investments to support environmental sustainability, animal welfare and farm safety.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53OFCIS01 - CIS Average Grant (Productive) (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	6,250.00	6,250.00	6,250.00	6,250.00	6,250.00			
	O.20 (unit: Operations)	300.00	680.00	740.00	9,210.00	9,070.00			20,000.00
TOTAL	O.20 (unit: Operations)	300.00	680.00	740.00	9,210.00	9,070.00			20,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	1,500,000.00	3,400,000.00	3,700,000.00	46,050,000.00	45,350,000.00			100,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	603,150.00	1,367,140.00	1,487,770.00	18,516,705.00	18,235,235.00			40,210,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

COOP(77) - Cooperation

53AECMCP77 - AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77

Intervention Code (MS)	53AECMCP77
Intervention Name	AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77
Type of Intervention	COOP(77) - Cooperation
Common Output Indicator	O.32. Number of supported other cooperation operations or units (excluding EIP reported under O.1)
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes

Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes
Obj9.N3	Support the efficient/environmentally responsible use of pesticides + encourage alternative practise	3rd Highest SO9	Yes
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N4	Continue to provide support for R + I in the AF sector; + encourage the application of findings	4th Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.1 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance
R.28 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

This intervention concerns new forms of cooperation set-up under the CSP, with a new set of project areas and priorities compared to forms previously funded under the current RD programme. The intervention is nevertheless expected to build on the success of the current EIPs and locally led schemes. However the form of co-operation under the AECM measure is expected to involve a much increased level of actions and the number of participating farmers will be on a much larger scale than heretofore across the 8 newly defined project zones. A significant element is the flexibility to design and develop landscape measures on this scale with advisors, farmers, co-operation teams and relevant experts. The local team will support farmers to mobilise and operate at a landscape level for maximum environmental benefit.

Farmers, advisors, CP teams and other relevant government agencies and NGOs and farmer representative groups will be working very closely together to produce locally adapted, locally targeted plans and tailored actions to address environmental priorities. With these plans and actions they will be able to prioritise conservation and improvement of priority species and habitats from Ireland's PAF and WFD and the incorporation of results- based approach will facilitate this process. The scale and ambition of the CPs working in collaboration across Ireland's most important waterbodies and semi-natural areas, is a substantial increase from the area managed as part of a locally led scheme in the previous RDP. These new AECM Co-Operation projects will therefore represent a bigger and better approach impacting on a greater number of species, landscape types and catchments.

The AECM Co-operation will only be available to farmers in defined high priority geographical areas. In addition to undertaking general AECM measures, participating farmers will also be offered bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures and a Local Project Team to assist with the implementation of the scheme at local level. The actions implemented under Article 77 go beyond and will complement actions under Conditionality, the Eco-Scheme. In addition, this intervention under Article 77 will complement actions under Article 70 and Article 73.

Local Project teams will develop local area plans with appropriate farm measures linked with requirements under Ireland's Priority Action Framework for Natura 2000 in Ireland and the EU Water Framework Directive.

The actions implemented under Article 77 are designed to support the Cooperation approach of the proposed Agri-Environment Climate Measure (AECM), which is provided to farmers in defined high priority geographical areas. These actions include the range of measures and actions provided under the General approach of the AECM (provided for under Article 70), as well as bespoke farm, landscape and catchment measures. The co-operation element, provided for under Article 77, allows farmers to avail of a Local Cooperation Project Team who will assist them with the implementation of the AECM at local level. The Needs Assessment identifies the same needs as those referenced above for Article 77. Actions under Article 77 will focus on the protection and improvement of landscapes and catchments within which the individual farmers work, but which need the co-operation of multiple farmers and experts to enable the work to happen, and to maximise the effort for the ultimate benefit of the habitats and environments involved.

Under Article 70 AECM Co-Operation measure most payments to farmers will be results-based using scorecards which will be designed for the land types and regions involved. This result-based payment model will ensure that farmers are incentivised to improve the landscape within which they are farming. With the assistance of their trained advisor and the Co-operation Project (CP) team farmers can select and undertake additional actions under Article 73 or Article 77 to improve the habitat quality and thus increase their score and resulting payment under Article 70.

Under Article 77 it will be possible to undertake actions across a whole landscape or catchment that will have a significant positive effect on the habitat or species present in the area. By working co-operatively together several farmers can undertake work that is beyond the scope of an individual farmer under Article 70. Through this co-operative effect the Article 70 actions are enhanced giving a greater added-value or cumulative effect within the targeted Cooperation Project areas. Actions under Article 77 will be designed by the CP teams to address certain challenges or problems that need the co-operation of a number of farmers – for example flooding, mountain fires, commonage management - to enable them to maximise the impact and benefit for the areas, habitats and species concerned. Actions under Article 77 will also allow for the inclusion and input of expertise from other relevant agencies. These actions will be designed to complement the Article 70 actions.

There will be two parts to this intervention under Article 77:

(1) Eight Local Co-operation Project (CP) Teams: These teams will be recruited by procurement process. They will be multi-disciplinary, consisting of project managers, supporting administrative staff, relevant experts - such as hydrologists, ecologists, ornithologists, environmental scientists - field officers and farm advisors. The CP Teams will support the implementation of Articles 70, 73 and 77 of the AECM at a local level in the defined high priority geographical areas. The cost of implementation includes the range of support, facilitation, innovation, demonstration, training, monitoring and any other needs required in order to deliver on the national priorities identified. Full and meaningful involvement of State Agencies such as NPWS, EPA, LAWPRO, ASSAP, as well as environmental NGO's such as Birdwatch Ireland, will be key to ensure that targeting of measures is appropriate, effective and uses the correct resources.

(2) Bespoke farm/landscape-type actions: These will be actions carried out by the farmers which require the co-operation of more than one farmer, or actions on contiguous parcels. Examples are, *inter alia*, commonage actions, large scale water table manipulation eg. Blocking of drains or rewetting actions, landslide prevention or amelioration actions, actions related to invasive species control, scrub control, upland fire control, access roads, provision of water and nest protection. This fund will also fund some results-based payments which are farm based and are designed to reward the farmer for specific

results achieved/targets met, such as successful bird nesting, the achievement of targets related to management of water tables on carbon rich soils and other significant milestones achieved by the participants. This fund will also be used to reward farmers for particular environmental gains, for example increased numbers of breeding birds in a landscape. Lastly, the fund will be used to encourage co-operation between farmers in order to achieve the objectives of a particular project or landscape and to increase support for the projects amongst the local community.

Under Ireland's RDP 2014-2020 a suite of European Innovation Partnership (EIP-Agri) Co-operation projects were funded with the long-term objective of turning the experience and techniques developed, and the lessons learned into a workable, equitable, deliverable framework which can mobilise farmers to deliver real change and an improvement in environmental performance. This intervention is similarly based around addressing biodiversity, water and climate challenges on the high priority areas of Ireland's farmland which have the greatest chance of reaching those objectives.

The success of the Burren Programme and the EIP-Agri projects clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the locally adapted and results-based approach. Co-operation project teams are the key design element of the Cooperation approach offered under the AECM that ensure flexibility, local adaptability and effective targeting of measures to deliver biodiversity, water and climate action in an integrated manner on farms. The Co-operation element will provide essential animation and facilitation work, capacity and trust building, and awareness-raising, and will motivate collective action, meaningful management planning and training while also supporting implementation on the ground in the form of landscape/catchment level works programmes. The cooperation element will enable actions and impacts which are beyond the scope of the individual, where farmers can work co-cooperatively with others in the locality, dealing with events such as landslides, flooding, mountain fires, co-operative work, commonage management, management of invasive species, pest control etc.

Role of Cooperation Project Teams – Local Co-operation Teams

To support, deliver and implement the aims of the AECM Cooperation approach, there will be a series of an estimated eight Cooperation Project (CP) Teams. Their role will be:

·To develop a framework where a range of new higher-level, locally-adapted, hybrid result-based AECM projects can deliver solutions to the environmental challenges facing Ireland and to provide optimal support to farmers through a resilient and cost-effective delivery model.

·The CP Teams, with DAFM, will set out the geographical scope of each proposed project area and the associated biodiversity, water and peatland restoration targets/priorities. The final selection will be based on the high-level priorities for each area. Each CP Team will develop a system to achieve the necessary targets through a combination of implementing AECM Cooperation actions designed for the particular needs of the habitat using non-productive investments under Article 73, and co-operation actions under Article 77. They will set out sources of best practice on which it is expected each will draw on, and set out minimum requirements for the members of the applicant partnerships.

·Each CP Team will need to provide the same level of coverage throughout its area, all else being equal; it will need to identify the different skill sets needed and the number of staff with each skill set as well as where and how local teams and where appropriate wider specialists should operate to deliver that.

·Each CP Team will consist of members with core higher level skills such as ecology, archaeology, hydrology, environmental science, etc. Co-operation between CP Teams is expected to ensure that farmers in each area have equal opportunities to engage fully with the projects.

·Depending on the area of land in which a CP Team is established, it could cover approximately 3,500 potential applicants. CP teams will need to demonstrate capacity to deliver at that scale. In some cases, a CP team will have fewer than 1,000 potential applicants.

The eight Co-operation Projects (CP) will work with the Department in designing and implementing co-operation projects – with all associated actions and planning for approximately 20,000 farmers in the most sensitive and challenging lands in the country. CPs are the key design element in ensuring that Ireland will deliver on its targets for biodiversity, water and climate ambition. The design of integrated regional plans and the inclusion of expertise from other agencies, with thoughtful planning of actions and measures, will enable the teams to achieve objectives and to further educate themselves and the wider environmental and scientific community on the optimum management of the species, flora, waters and habitats of these lands.

The CP team will also work with farmers who also play a very important role in the AECM Co-operation project approach. Farmers will work with the trained advisors and the cooperation team to consider and decide how to improve the habitat that they farm which can then lead to an increase in their score for payment under Article 70. They will co-decide what actions are needed to improve their farm and will interact with the CP team to develop bespoke actions at farm or landscape level in a bottom-up approach. Under Article 77 farmers may come together in commonage management groups for example to decide how best to address the challenges facing their land - whether it be training, drain blocking, winterage practices, adapting special grazing practices for environmental purposes. This coming together of farmers, with specialist local CP advisors, is expected to result in more ownership and buy-in from farmers and thus result in better implementation and impact. The farmers will also engage with the local communities through the project teams to generate awareness of the landscape and the environment e.g. farm, school visits, culture and heritage awareness, as appropriate to the region/farm.

Link between GAEC, SMR and national standards with the intervention

Explain how the intervention goes beyond the baseline, the links with the SMR, national standards and possibly the echo-schemes

CP teams will be required to design landscape-type actions that will address the local challenges of the landscape/catchment of their particular area. Other bespoke actions may be designed on an ongoing basis during the programme. It is envisaged that the CP teams will build upon the work and learnings of the current EIPs and locally-led programmes in designing these landscape actions. Examples of such landscape actions include:

- Reintroduction and increasing farmer participation in traditional grazing management practices to optimise protection and enhancement of species rich grassland types.

- support the installation of strategically placed wildfire ponds. These can be installed as a means of providing helicopter access to local water resources in areas deficient in supplies to help to extinguish wildfires more effectively and efficiently.

- support farmers to put in linear strips of wild bird cover across the foraging range for raptor species, to optimise landscape and use a strategic approach to address foraging deficiencies especially in traditionally non-arable areas.

- support farmers for the environmental condition of land in floodplains. Farmers in a certain catchments can be encouraged to hold back or slow down water movement from their lands, to prevent/reduce downstream flood events.

The potential actions in the table below are an illustrative list and will be additional to those available to farmers under Article 70. The availability of these actions will be decided by the CP team following an analysis of what is best for the particular landscape.

The actions outlined below can be carried out on a landscape or catchment level and will allow co-operative works to be carried out over several farms. This will ensure maximum and targeted protection and/or enhancement for sensitive and high priority landscapes. It will also allow for co-operation of other agencies to augment the impact of necessary responses, and to ensure that expertise is applied in a full and rounded manner.

Action	**Relevant baseline element**	**How commitment goes beyond mandatory requirements**	**How commitment goes beyond Eco-Scheme requirements**
· Revegetation of bare areas	GAEC 1 – Maintenance of permanent grassland based on a ratio of permanent grassland to agricultural area in reference year, 2018.	High environmental value in sensitive areas. Actions will be designed to suit local needs with reference to whole habitat health.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action. Results based scoring awards negative marks for any threats to water/soil/vegetation.
· Peatland drain blocking · Water retention measures · Bridging · Earth banks and soil bunds · Provision of swales/settlement ponds · Floodplain management	GAEC 2 – protection of wetland and peatland SMR 2 SMR 4	Regenerative agricultural practices on peatlands. Practical implementation of emission reduction via restoration of bio-sequestration capacities of peat soils. Development of results-based payment scorecard for carbon farming on a catchment basis.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action. Under this action Blanket bogs are actively restored so that they can start functioning and accumulating peat and acting as a Carbon sink as important landscape features for water holding, water is retained on farm with nutrients and sediment captured before release into river systems.
· Controlled burning · Grazed fuel breaks/fire breaks · Cutting rides through scrub	GAEC 3 – Ban on burning arable stubble except for plan health reasons	Measures will also be designed to manage fires in upland areas. This will reduce species loss, loss of forestry, danger to nesting birds and the protection of sensitive landscapes. This will be	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.

· Installation of upland ponds		done in co-operation with other agencies.	
· Drinking point provision · Assessment of water pollution pathways	GAEC 4 – Establishment of buffer strips along water courses SMR 1 SMR 2	Results-based scoring and detailed farm assessment enables correction factors to be applied and bespoke solutions found for each farm	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
· Commonage management · Appropriate woodland/forestry · Landslide management	GAEC 5 – Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient. SMR 3 SMR 4	Individual farm plans, alongside landscape/catchment priorities to allow co-operative works to take place. Using expertise of other state agencies to build comprehensive strategies for improvement of sensitive landscapes.	With the exception of tree planting under the Eco-Scheme there is not an associated Eco-Scheme Action. Any tree planting under this element of the co-operation project will be separate to and distinguished from planting under the Eco-Scheme. The co-operation project actions in this category relate to landscape and habitat recovery via large scale action plans tailored to specific issues, habitats and topography of site.
· Winterage practices	GAEC 6 – Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soil in periods that are most sensitive. SMR 2 SRM 3 SMR 4	Detailed farm plans with inbuilt flexibility to allow for adjustment to respond to situations. Input from relevant experts.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
· Improved farm access	SMR 1 SMR 2	Detailed farm planning will identify actions to improve soils and reduce unnecessary fertilisers. Better stocking and movement of animals within farms.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action.
· Pond creation	GAEC 8 – Minimum share of agricultural area devoted to	Farmers will input into development of farm plans and will use their detailed knowledge of	Non-productive areas will be targeted towards management for specific habitats and species and local conditions and qualitative components will be included.

· Woodland copses · Clearance and management of invasive species · Dry stone wall maintenance · Conservation of traditional farm buildings · Protection of archaeological monuments · Safer nesting sites · Bird monitoring · Nest protection	non-productive features. Retention of landscape features. Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season. Measures for avoiding invasive plant species. SMR 3 SMR 4 SMR 8	farm history to enrich knowledge of advisors. Actions relevant and sympathetic to different regions will be used to maximise benefits. Multi-actor approach will allow sharing of knowledge and other resources. Common approach to approval systems, planning permissions, removal of features, replacement protocols etc.	All actions in this area will go beyond Eco-Scheme requirements.
· Protection of carbon rich soils · Floodplain management	GAEC 9 – Ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland designated as environmentally-sensitive permanent grasslands in Natura 2000 sites	The use of peatland results-based scorecards the allow for appropriate management of sensitive soils. Use of bespoke grassland score-cards to take account of needs specific to different regions. Input from relevant experts, on best practice to protect these sites.	N/A - there is no associated Eco-Scheme action. Actions in this category will involve qualitative assessments of peatland habitats and the delivery of bespoke habitat recovery plans.

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the

selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

There are two types of eligible beneficiaries:

1.Approved Co-operation Project teams.

2.Individuals meeting the definition of an "Active Farmer" as set out in the Definitions section.

1. **Approved Co-operation Project teams:** These teams will be selected following a procurement process. The teams will be multi-disciplinary and have developed a framework which will ensure co-operation and cohesion across all eight target areas. The teams will design measures to ensure collective environmental and climate actions deemed necessary to achieve the specific objectives of the CAP. DAFM will have a presence on the Steering Groups of all CP teams. The system put in place for the EIP-AGRI projects of reporting requirements, adherence to governance standards, and adherence to GDPR requirements will be expanded to ensure that adequate oversight of the work being done by the CP teams is of the highest standard. DAFM inspectorate will have the right to inspect all aspects of the scoring of measures and works carried out.

2. Individuals who are active farmers with lands in the defined high priority areas of the country and that have been ranked and selected to participate in the AECM Co-Operation Project.

These 8 high priority areas were identified using a range of ecological and hydrological and other criteria and mapped using CORINE semi-natural vegetation land cover classes as a base layer. These include areas dominated by semi-natural vegetation (both privately owned and in commonage), Natura 2000 lands, National Heritage Areas (NHAs) and priority water catchments and associated offshore island adjacent to these areas. These areas are of high nature value, hold significant carbon stores and are home to some of the most pristine waters in the country.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

The exact funding for each co-operation project will be dependent on the number of participants and the scale of the projects and ambition. An indicative budget allocation of €210m is set aside to cover the costs of running the co-operation projects and the landscape actions to be carried out by farmers.

On average it is expected that the Community Fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions could be ~ €32m each year from 2025 – 2028 or approximately €4m per annum for each of the 8 co-operation projects when fully established. The Community fund would be less in the first financial year (2024) with farmers from 1st tranche only and in the final financial year(2029) with farmers from 2nd tranche only in receipt of payments.

The administration cost for the project team will include all the work related to this Article and other Articles around the AECM Co-operation, including non-productive investments and general actions. The co-operation project teams will be subject to a procurement process, so the final costs are not yet known, but an estimated €50m is provided over seven years. It is intended to finalise the breakdown between both elements following the procurement process.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☒ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

Eligible costs for participating farmers will include additional costs incurred and income foregone arising from completion of the actions as well as transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Works on lands which are difficult to access or work on, can be individually costed to ensure fair payment. Where appropriate a degressive payment may apply.

The payments to cover each project team's implementation costs will be subject to a procurement process.

All costs for participating farmers as well as each project team will be agreed with the respective Co-operation Project Team and approved by DAFM in advance.

Range of support at beneficiary level

The bespoke farm/landscape actions are set out in Section 5.3.6 above. The availability of these actions will be decided by the Co-operation Project Team following an analysis of what is best for the particular landscape.

The amount payable under the community fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions is currently estimated to be on average €4m per year across the eight proposed co-operation projects when fully established. The level of payment achieved by each participant will depend on the actions completed as well as the results achieved.

The implementation cost for each project team will include the costs associated with provision of the range of support, facilitation, innovation, demonstration, training, monitoring and any other services required to deliver on the national priorities identified for each defined geographical area. These implementation costs for the project team will include all the work related to this Article and other Articles around the AECM Co-operation, including non-productive investments and general actions. Each co-operation project team will be subject to a procurement process, so the final costs are not yet known, but an estimated cost of €1,000,000 per year for first 6 years and €250,000 for final year has been provided for each of 8 Co-operation Teams (€8m per year for first 6 years and €2m for final year in total).

It is intended to finalise the breakdown between both elements above following the procurement process.

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

n accordance with Paragraph 2, this programme meets the general criteria set out in Paragraph 1 in that it will have no trade distorting effects, the aid will be provided through a programme co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union and it will not have the effect of providing price support for producers.

Payments under this Co-Operation intervention will be made in respect of training and advisory services, transferring information and results of research to producers and consumers and may also involve pest – control. Payments will be made to Co-Operation bodies to deliver these services in association with the farmers who are participants under the agri-environment climate scheme. The expenditure involved will benefit both the agricultural and wider rural community.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53AECMCP7701 - Community fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.28;	No
53AECMCP7702 - Local Co-operation Project Team's Admin	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.28;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53AECMCP7701 - Community fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions

An average unit amount is used as each Co-operation Project Team will select from a range of different actions depending on each geographical area's specific environmental needs. Also each participant can select from a range of different actions depending on the farm/landscape specific environmental needs. Each of these bespoke/ landscape actions will have a different unit amount, hence an average unit amount is used.

Eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. Detailed costings underpinning these rates will be independently verified, as per Article 82 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

This intervention will support approximately 20,000 farmers to complete actions under eight co-operation projects. These actions will make a significant contribution to delivery on Ireland's targets for biodiversity, water and climate ambition. The farmers in these defined high priority geographical areas are operating on the most sensitive and challenging lands in the country. Works on lands which are difficult to access or work on, can be individually costed to ensure fair payment.

The amount payable for each Co-operation Project's bespoke farm/landscape actions is currently estimated to be on average €4m per year when fully established. The level of payment achieved by each participant within each Co-operation Project will depend on the actions completed as well as the results achieved.

These costs will be finalised following the procurement process and appointment of the respective co-operation project teams.

53AECMCP7702 - Local Co-operation Project Team's Admin

Average unit amount determined as the project teams will be appointed following a procurement process. The costs involved will depend on the national priorities identified, the specific needs and the area involved for each of the high priority defined geographical areas.

The Co-operation Projects are the key design element in ensuring that Ireland will deliver on its targets for biodiversity, water and climate ambition in defined high priority geographical areas.

The co-operation project teams will work with DAFM in designing and implementing co-operation projects – with all associated actions and planning for approximately 20,000 farmers in the most sensitive and challenging lands in the country. The design of integrated regional plans and the inclusion of expertise from other agencies, with thoughtful planning of actions and measures, will enable the co-operation teams to achieve objectives and to further educate themselves and the wider environmental and scientific community on the optimum management of the species, flora, waters and habitats of these lands.

The implementation cost for each project team will include the costs associated with provision of the range of support, facilitation, innovation, demonstration, training, monitoring and any other services required to deliver on the national priorities identified for each defined geographical area. These implementation costs for the project team will include all the work related to this Article and other Articles around the AECM Co-operation, including non-productive investments (Article 73) and general actions under Article 70. Each co-operation project team will be subject to a procurement process, so the final costs are not yet known, but an estimated cost of €1,000,000 per year and €250,000 in final year has been provided for each of 8 Co-operation Teams (€8m. per year over a total of first six years and €2m in final year.). Due to a large variation in size in the project areas (the largest CP area has over 6 times more farmers than the smallest), the projects team's will vary considerably regarding administration costs. Hence the maximum planned unit amount is estimated at 75% higher than the average unit amount for local project teams administration costs.

Costs will be finalised following the procurement process and appointment of the respective co-operation project teams.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53AECMCP7701 - Community fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	0.00	1,500,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	2,500,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,875,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	3,125,000.00	
	O.32 (unit: Operations)								
53AECMCP7702 - Local Co-operation Project Team's Admin (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	250,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	437,500.00	
	O.32 (unit: Operations)								
TOTAL	O.32 (unit: Operations)	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	56.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	8,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	22,000,000.00	210,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	3,216,800.00	8,042,000.00	16,084,000.00	16,084,000.00	16,084,000.00	16,084,000.00	8,846,200.00	84,441,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53CFG - Collaborative Farming Grant

Intervention Code (MS)	53CFG
Intervention Name	Collaborative Farming Grant
Type of Intervention	COOP(77) - Cooperation
Common Output Indicator	O.30. Number of supported operations or units for generational renewal (excluding setting-up support)
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.36 Number of young farmers benefitting from setting up with support from the CAP, including a gender breakdown
R.37 New jobs supported in CAP projects

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, identified the need (Obj7.N1) to encourage land mobility and succession planning as a means of increasing the current low levels of young farmers in the Irish agricultural sector and supporting increased access to land and generational renewal. A key barrier for younger farmers to access land is a reluctance for older farmers to release the land. The main concerns of older farmers include among others:

- loss of income and tax concerns
- the suitability of collaborators
- ensuring adequate care of the farm including future successions and transitions, and
- stepping back/ the retirement process

A recent EU study on evaluating the impact of CAP on addressing generational renewal sets out this context across Europe.[1] Their specific recommendation for IE included:

- Supporting succession-based partnerships under Pillar II of CAP (funded jointly by EU and National Exchequer) as part of a succession plan
- Develop a structure where the younger farmer receives direct support (such as installation aid) in the beginning but very little of the farm profit, and then gradually rebalance this support over time with the older farmer gaining retirement support whilst foregoing profits.
- Create a 'farm development team with integrated support units' with input from vets, accountants, bankers, agronomists and technicians to help farms through transition. They suggest a voucher system to help farmers access these relevant experts.
- Improve rural services to support GR beyond agricultural activities alone.
- Pillar II supports should provide incentives for older farmers as the current measures focus only on younger farmers and the older farmer voice is absent. They suggest an organisation for older farmers which could be funded under the cooperation measure

This scheme is a further development of the current Collaborative Farming Grant and provides a parallel complementary support for older farmers to access a similar type of support to encourage succession planning and facilitate generational renewal. This will help older farmers to develop and navigate a pathway to retirement, which in turn will increase the availability of land to young farmers. The support intends to incentivise older farmers to seek professional support to alleviate their concerns and develop a succession plan in line with the need outlined above. This support will encourage land mobility and will help to ensure that a vibrant future for the agri-food sector, with skilled and innovative young farmers gaining access to land to develop their careers. Farm Partnership Agreements are not limited to within the same families which maximises the opportunities for succession planning in many contexts.

This scheme has two measures:

- provides financial support towards the professional costs, such as legal, taxation and advisory, incurred during the establishment of a Registered Farm Partnership. This financial support will contribute 50% of such vouched costs, to a maximum payment of €1,500 per beneficiary.
- provides financial support towards the professional costs, such as legal, taxation and advisory for older farmers, which would assist farmers in navigating a pathway to retirement. This financial support will contribute 50% of such vouched costs, to a maximum payment of €1,500 per beneficiary.

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

[1] https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4bd0b0a2-0503-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

All Farm Partnership arrangements must be newly formed arrangements being entered on the Register for the first time. Eligibility for the older farmer measure will be determined with reference to Article 71 (7) which provides for Member States to grant support to farmers at retirement age or those that will reach it by the end of the operation as determined by the MS.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

Support will be by way of a grant to the value of 50% of the administrative costs involved in establishing a new Registered Farm Partnership – i.e. vouched expenses for legal, accounting and advisory costs up to a maximum of €1,500.

Financial support towards the professional costs, such as legal, taxation and advisory for older farmers will contribute 50% of such vouched costs, to a maximum payment of €1,500 per beneficiary.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☒ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☐ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Range of support at beneficiary level

Support will be by way of a grant to the value of 50% of the administrative costs involved in establishing a new Registered Farm Partnership – i.e. vouched expenses for legal, accounting and advisory costs up to a maximum of 1,500.

Financial support towards the professional costs, such as legal, taxation and advisory for older farmers will contribute 50% of such vouched costs, to a maximum payment of €1,500 per beneficiary

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

The Collaborative Farming Grant meets the criteria laid out in paragraph 2 of Annex II of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. The Collaborative Farming Grant includes support for extension and advisory services. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this intervention.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53CFG01 - Collaborative Farming Grant 01	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.36;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53CFG01 - Collaborative Farming Grant 01

The amount of support is calculated on the basis of costs incurred. Costs under the previous iteration of this scheme averaged just under €1,500.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53CFG01 - Collaborative Farming Grant 01 (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00		
	O.30 (unit: Operations)								
TOTAL	O.30 (unit: Operations)		267.00	267.00	267.00	267.00	267.00		1,335.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00		2,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00		804,200.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53EIP - European Innovation Partnerships

Intervention Code (MS)	53EIP
Intervention Name	European Innovation Partnerships
Type of Intervention	COOP(77) - Cooperation
Common Output Indicator	O.1. Number of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational group projects
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO4 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emission and enhancing carbon sequestration, as well as promote sustainable energy
SO5 Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency
SO6 Contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas
SO8 Promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry
SO9 Improve the response of Union agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way, the reduction of food waste, as well as improving animal welfare and combatting antimicrobial resistances
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj4.N1	Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture	Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N2	Improve the protection and management of existing carbon stores, including grasslands and peatlands	2nd Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N4	Encourage climate adaptation	4th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj4.N5	Increase EE thru uptake of new technologies + facilitate the production of renewable energy sources	5th Highest for SO 4	Yes
Obj5.N1	Improve air quality through the reduction of air pollutants arising from agriculture, particularly a	Highest priority SO5	Yes
Obj5.N2	Protect and improve water quality	2nd Highest SO5	Yes
Obj5.N3	Improve soil health	3rd Highest SO5	Yes

Obj5.N4	Increase the number of sustainable farming systems that better utilise and protect natural resources	4th Highest SO5	Yes
Obj6.N1	Restore and improve IEs H+L to halt biodiversity decline, incl farmland birds and pollinators	Highest for SO 6	Yes
Obj7.N1	Effective mechanism to increase the number of young farmers	Highest priority SO7	Yes
Obj8.N1	Maximise the opportunities presented by the circular and bio-economy in rural areas	Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N6	Increase opportunities for women in agriculture and business development	6th Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj9.N2	Continue improving animal health/welfare standards and increasing awareness of AMR and ATR	2nd Highest SO9	Yes
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N4	Continue to provide support for R + I in the AF sector; + encourage the application of findings	4th Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.1 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance
R.2 Number of advisors receiving support to be integrated within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)
R.28 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The European Innovation Partnership (EIP) model offers potential for a range of actors in the sector to come together as an Operational Group to develop and test innovative solutions to particular challenges in the sector. The context is the establishment of a strong sustainable base for Irish natural capital, agriculture, food production and the bioeconomy which not only respects the environment but shows itself capable of responding effectively and appropriately to a range of environmental challenges, especially those which manifest themselves in a particular manner at local level and are not suited to the approach of national-level measures which tend towards generalised prescriptions.

The broad potential for the EIP model is recognised within the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment, with the Needs Assessment identifying a number of needs that this intervention can help address, including: Obj3N1, Obj3.N2; Obj4,N1, Obj4.N2, Obj4.N3, Obj4.N4; Obj5.N1, Obj5.N2, Obj5.N3, Obj5.N4; Obj.6N1; Obj9N2, and Obj9.N3.

This intervention will be structured around two main approaches to recruiting project teams:

1. **Direct Recruitment**

Where there is a clearly defined priority theme, DAFM will roll out a competitive tender to directly recruit a project team, who will then help to refine the objectives and methodologies for local or regionally-based schemes. The chosen project team will then oversee implementation, provide training and evaluate outputs of the schemes.

2. Competitive Calls

The establishment of a competitive fund to select a number of collaborative-based projects on foot of agreed themes. There will be a number of Open Calls held throughout the lifetime of the CAP. These competitive calls for proposals for innovative projects may be related to challenges identified by the Operational Groups themselves, or on foot of a specific themed open call. Within this intervention, support will be structured around the following two streams:

- Stream A – EIPs aimed at addressing wider competitiveness, modernisation and animal health and welfare challenges in the sector
- Stream B – EIPs aimed at addressing areas related to environmental, biodiversity and climate change challenges

To maintain the flexibility and the support for the development of innovative, 'bottom up' ideas which the EIP model offers, calls for proposals will be initiated by DAFM. These calls will be informed by consultation with relevant stakeholders and policy area experts.

Building on the success of the Stream B EIPs under the current RDP, it is proposed that a new Agri Environment Climate measure (Co-Operation option) be established under Articles 70, 73 and 77 to deal with the areas of high nature value already covered by these current EIPs. This measure outlined here under Article 127 for Stream B will only deal with areas outside the scope of that AECM Co-Operation scheme, unless an exceptional circumstances where the Department considers there is an absolute need.

While this intervention is not fully prescriptive in terms of the themes which will form the basis for these calls for proposals, it is envisaged that there will be calls for proposals on a wide variety of themes which *may include* such focuses as:

Stream A

- Innovative approaches to foster the greater uptake and utilisation of digital tools and technologies to support evidence based decision making on Irish farms
- Innovative approaches to support greater gender balance in farming in Ireland
- Innovative approaches to promote generational renewal on Irish farms, and
- Innovative approaches to support the rearing of pigs with intact tails on Irish farms

Stream B

- Innovative approaches to working on farmed peatlands.
- Innovative approaches to approaching flood mitigation and floodplain management.
- Apiculture and how farmers might collectively integrate apiculture into their farming practices to diversify income and develop more biodiverse habitats.
- Innovative approaches to farming in the callows and how to protect the varied birdlife and habitats which exist there.
- Innovative approaches to farming in Coastal areas.

- Innovative approaches for a bio-rural region for sustainable, integrated and participatory territorial development which builds around the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainability focusing on agri-food and circular bioeconomy development.

These themes are indicative and will be developed further based on stakeholder consultation as the programming period progresses. Opportunities for participation in cross border EIPs may be developed as the programming period progresses.

There will be specific themed calls for Breeding Waders and water quality following further consultation with the relevant authorities to scope out the targetted areas and best approaches to address these topics.

These competitive calls for proposals will be structured around the following phases:

- *Phase 1 – An initial call for the submission of ideas/proposals to be evaluated by an expert evaluation committee. The membership of the expert evaluation committee in each stream will include relevant expertise from outside of DAFM.
- Phase 2 – Successful Phase 1 applicants will then be invited to develop their initial proposals from Phase 1 and submit a fully detailed Operational Group Plan, setting out the detail of the administrative arrangements, Operational Group membership, actions, timelines and costs. The costs involved in developing these Operational Group Plans will be covered under this intervention. These Plans will be evaluated by an expert evaluation committee.
- Phase 3 -Successful Phase 2 applicants will move forward to full implementation of their project. Implementation costs for these projects will be covered under this intervention.

*Depending on the scope and timelines for a given call for proposals, Phase 1 may not be required in every call for proposals process.

This approach will build on the success of the EIPs delivered under the RDP 2014-2020 in addressing the innovation gap between research and best practice, in encouraging interactive and innovative approaches, and in disseminating key lessons from projects. Operational Groups will be structured in a way to ensure the involvement of a range of actors, including farm advisors, thereby supporting the cross fertilisation and potential replication of a wide range of ideas, approaches and experience and their potential for replication. This intervention has also been designed in a manner coherent with the arrangements for the set up and development of the national AKIS as set out in Section 8.1.

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

According to the selection process described above, eligible beneficiaries will be EIP Operational Groups selected by the direct recruitment or competitive call processes. Competitive calls will emphasise that this not **a research-**focussed call and that a wide variety of relevant stakeholders should be involved in any proposal. This should address some of the problems identified with proposals received under Calls under the RDP 2014-2020

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

Non-IACS: Support will be channelled towards projects structured around a competitive process as outlined above. The call for proposals will be on the basis of identified themes and successful projects

must form an Operational Group to implement innovative approaches to challenges linked to the Specific Objectives outlined in SPR. Operational Groups will be formed in compliance with the requirements of Article 77(2) of SPR.

Support will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the development of detailed Operational Group Plans. For both Stream A and Stream B, it is expected that the funding for the development of these Plans would not exceed €10,000

Support will be available at Phase 3 of the call for proposals process. Funding will be available here for the full implementation of detailed Operational Group Plans. Based on the experience of the implementation of EIPs in the 2014-2020 RDP, it would be expected that projects funded for full implementation would be based on an average unit amount of

- €650,000 for Stream A EIPs
- €1,050,000 for Stream B EIPs

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☒ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

unit amounts for each EIP will be established as part of the call for proposals.

Range of support at beneficiary level

Stream A, phase 2: €10,000

Stream B, phase 2: €10,000

Stream A, phase 3: €650,000

Stream B, phase 3: €1,050,000

Support rates will vary based on applications received as part of the call for proposals, as described above.

There is no proposed maximum upper variation on support rate. The role of the evaluation committee will be to recommend selections based on the operational programmes developed that represent best value for money, and best potential impact on identified need. The Committee will also ensure that the maximum number of projects can be supported which cover a diverse range of themes.]

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Mixed

Explanation of support activities falling outside the scope of Art. 42 TFEU

The structure of support in this intervention entails a competitive process to identify projects. Given this it is difficult to pre-empt whether emerging projects would fall within the scope of Article 42 of the Treaty.

It would be expected, however, that projects selected under EIPs will relate to agricultural activity. The possible State Aid implications of EIP projects will be assessed again at selection, and any necessary notifications will be made.

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☒ GBER ☒ ABER ☒ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

This EIP intervention will be of benefit to farmers and the general rural community but will not involve direct payments to producers or processors. The EIP programme will fund projects which will involve the application of research to particular environmental issues in the agricultural sphere. It will fund innovative approaches to dealing with a wide range of issues from potentially flood mitigation to promoting generational renewal and gender balance on Irish farms. It will not involve providing price support to producers, or direct payments to producers or processors.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53EIP01 - Phase 2 Stream A	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.1;	No
53EIP02 - Phase 3 Stream A	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.1; R.2;	No
53EIP03 - Phase 2 Stream B	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.1;	No
53EIP04 - Phase 3 Stream B	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.1; R.2; R.28;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53EIP01 - Phase 2 Stream A

Support will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process for the development of detailed Operational Group plans. The role of the expert evaluation committee will expressly include an assessment of the value for money inherent in all proposals. The unit amount included here is based on the experience of running the EIP Calls for Proposals in the 2014-2020 RDP programming period. . It is expected similar to experience in current RDP that more than one Call for Proposals will take place.

53EIP02 - Phase 3 Stream A

The amount of support available will be dependent on the outcome of the various calls for proposals implemented. The role of the expert evaluation committee will expressly include an assessment of the value for money inherent in all proposals. The unit amounts included here are based on the experience of the implementation of EIPs in the 2014-2020 RDP programming period where we had 21 projects approved to move to implementation. Three projects were approved for Stream A with an average amount of €130,000 per year for 5 years (average total €650,000), and 18 approved for Stream B with an average amount granted of €210,000 per year for 5 years (€1.1 million total).

The predicted reduction in annual planned outputs is based on the assumption that not all projects will move to full implementation (phase 3) in year 2024 onwards. As a result, in year 2023, output for Stream A is 6 and output for Stream B is 30, based on a higher number of OG groups receiving funding for completing Stage 2. Similarly, Phase 3 payments will begin in 2024 for those projects that move to full implementation, with a unit amount for 2023 of €0 to reflect this**.** It is estimated that the output in year 2024 onwards will be reduced on the basis that 50% of projects will move to full implementation (phase 3). Again, based on previous experience we expect that there will be more than one Call for Proposals and the targets are therefore divided up between 2024 and 2025. It is also expected that the number of people participating in each of these EIPs will be similar to the levels under the RDP 2014-2020,

53EIP03 - Phase 2 Stream B

Support will be available at Phase 2 of the call for proposals process for the development of detailed Operational Group plans. The role of the expert evaluation committee will expressly include an assessment of the value for money inherent in all proposals. The unit amount included here is based on the experience of running the EIP Calls for Proposals in the 2014-2020 RDP programming. .

53EIP04 - Phase 3 Stream B

The amount of support available will be dependent on the outcome of the various calls for proposals implemented. The role of the expert evaluation committee will expressly include an assessment of the value for money inherent in all proposals. The unit amounts included here are based on the experience of the implementation of EIPs in the 2014-2020 RDP programming period where we had 21 projects approved to move to implementation. Three projects were approved for Stream A with an average amount of €130,000 per year for 5 years (average total €650,000), and 18 approved for Stream B with an average amount granted of €210,000 per year for 5 years (€1.1 million total).

The predicted reduction in annual planned outputs is based on the assumption that not all projects will move to full implementation (phase 3) in year 2024 onwards. As a result, in year 2023, output for Stream A is 6 and output for Stream B is 30, based on a higher number of OG groups receiving funding for completing Stage 2. Similarly, Phase 3 payments will begin in 2024 for those projects that move to full implementation, with a unit amount for 2023 of €0 to reflect this It is estimated that the output in year 2024 onwards will be reduced on the basis that only 50% of projects will move to full implementation (phase 3). Again, based on previous experience we expect that there will be more than one Call for Proposals and the targets are therefore divided up between 2024 and 2025.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53EIP01 - Phase 2 Stream A (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	O.1 (unit: Projects)	6.00	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12.00
53EIP02 - Phase 3 Stream A (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	0.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.1 (unit: Projects)	0.00	3.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	3.00	30.00
53EIP03 - Phase 2 Stream B (Grant - Average)	O.1 (unit: Projects)	30.00	30.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	60.00
	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
53EIP04 - Phase 3 Stream B (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	0.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.1 (unit: Projects)	0.00	15.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	165.00
TOTAL	O.1 (unit: Projects)	36.00	54.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	33.00	267.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	360,000.00	3,900,000.00	7,080,000.00	7,080,000.00	7,080,000.00	7,080,000.00	3,540,000.00	36,120,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	144,756.00	1,568,190.00	2,846,868.00	2,846,868.00	2,846,868.00	2,846,868.00	1,423,434.00	14,523,852.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								

	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53ESSPO - Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations

Intervention Code (MS)	53ESSPO
Intervention Name	Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations
Type of Intervention	COOP(77) - Cooperation
Common Output Indicator	O.28. Number of supported producer groups and producer organisations
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO2 Enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness, both in the short and long term, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj2.N1	Increase efficiency and competitiveness thru on farm investment + the adoption of new technologies	Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj2.N2	Expand and diversify into new markets	2nd Highest for SO2	Yes
Obj3.N1	Increase primary producers' share in the value chain	Highest priority SO3	Yes
Obj3.N2	Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce	2nd Highest SO3	Yes
Obj7.N3	Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises	3rd Highest Priority	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.10 Share of farms participating in producer groups, producer organisations, local markets, short supply chain circuits and quality schemes supported by the CAP

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The current overarching policy objectives of Foodwise 2025 (and its successor strategy which is currently being developed) are to increase economic and environmental sustainability within the sector. Currently

there are three recognised producer organisations in the beef sector and four recognised producer organisations in the fruit and vegetable sector. The 2014 – 2019 RDP measure underpinned by SI 49 of 2016 provided only for the establishment of producer organisations in the beef sector. There have been recognised fruit and vegetable producers since 1999 but membership is low expressed as a percentage of the sector. Demand for producer organisations in the sheep sector, amenity sector and tillage sector has subsequently been expressed by stakeholders and it is proposed to expand the new measure to include these sectors also. There are a number of developed producer groups in the beef, but mainly the sheep sector which is expected to lend itself more readily to the adoption of producer organisations. Stakeholder feedback suggests that there are up to six possible groups of producers across the fruit and vegetable, tillage, amenity and potato sectors seeking to form producer organisations. It is for this reason that a target of 45 groups producers seeking to form producer organisations has been set.

DAFM's strategic direction for the beef sector is a continued focus on increasing competitiveness through measures aimed at improving both economic and environmental sustainability. Complimentary to other current and proposed measures to increase competitiveness and sustainability is enhanced support for and encouragement of co-operation at primary producer level.

In the tillage, potato and amenity sectors there is currently no support for producer groups. In the fruit and vegetable sector one of the barriers to the establishment and recognition of producer organisations is the additional cost of administration. Early-stage financial support for recognised producer organisations in these sectors would help them benefit from the advantages of collaborative working, potentially delivering consolidation of local supply, better food security, market substitution, knowledge sharing and shortening the supply chains.

Rationale for the provision of the support

The purpose of the support is to help to underpin viable farm income and resilience of the agricultural sector and to enhance long-term food security and agricultural diversity as well as ensuring the economic sustainability of agricultural production in the sectors.

The rationale for additional support is to encourage the adoption and development of producer organisations in the beef and sheep and other sectors to take advantages that producer organisations can offer primary producers in strengthening their position in the supply chain which should positively impact on profitability.

Additionally, the programme for government contains a commitment to support the establishment of producer organisations in the beef sector.

Under the 2014-2020 RDP, support of up to €3,000/group towards advisory costs relating to establishment of recognised beef producer organisations was available. Three producer organisations in the beef sector achieved recognition in 2019 , 2020 and 2021.

The CMO regulation (CMO regulation 1308/2013) outlined how recognised producer organisations were to be constituted, the activities they must engage in and their reporting requirements. Feedback from the sector centred around the need for enhanced support for administrative functions in the establishment of producer organisations in order to meet reporting requirements and to embed best administrative practice with the aim of supporting the governance function. It is proposed that the existing requirements be maintained, but that support be enhanced to include support for administrative functions in the form of grant aid of an additional €10,000 to be paid annually for the first three years in order to support the organisation's establishment and encourage the embedding of good administrative practice.

Structure of the Scheme:

Applications for recognition will be taken on a rolling basis from 2023 – 2027 inclusive. The total planned allocation over the course of the programme to each organisation is €33,000 to be paid over three years. In the following breakdown:

Year 1 - €3,000 support for advisory costs, €10,000 in administrative function support

Year 2 - €10,000 in administrative function support

Year 3 - €10,000 in administrative function support

The support for advisory costs covers a contribution for the engagement of facilitators for legal and business advisory to a maximum of €3,000 per recognised group.

The Administrative function support will contribute towards administrative costs including;

·The engagement of administrative human resources

·The purchase of relevant technology (hardware/software)

It is proposed that the support for the engagement of facilitators will continue. In the 2014-2020 RDP there was a call for applications for approval as facilitators to provide advisory services specific to the establishment of producer organisations in the beef sector. There was a training module delivered to approved facilitators and an approved list published by DAFM. It is proposed to open a new call for and training module for producer organisation facilitators in all eligible sectors. It is envisaged that this will be funded under the CSP as CPD for advisors.

For the fruit and vegetable sector this administrative and advisory costs support under Article 77 is in addition to support granted through the Producer Organisation Scheme's Operational Programme support – see Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable sector.

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

Beef and Sheep sector eligibility conditions

In order to be eligible an applicant must: -

- be set up on the initiative of producers and be led by producers;
- have a minimum of 20 members;
- be registered as a legal entity with the Companies Registration Office.

Fruit and Vegetable eligibility conditions

In order to be eligible an applicant must: -

- be set up on the initiative of producers and led by producers;
- have more than 5 members;
- have a combined VMP of more than €2.5 million;
- fulfil all EU legislative and national requirements including being registered as a legal entity with the Companies Registration Office.

Tillage, amenity and potato sector eligibility conditions

In order to be eligible an applicant must: -

- be set up on the initiative of producers and led by producers;

- have more than 5 members;
- have a combined VMP of more than €1.5 million;
- fulfil all EU legislative and national requirements including being registered as a legal entity with the Companies Registration Office.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

Total planned allocation over the course of the programme to each organisation is €33,000 to be paid over three years. Estimates below are based on an overall target of 45 new groups established in the first three years at an even rate of 15 groups per year.

The allocation comprises a €3,000 unit amount for advisory support, and a €10,000 unit amount for administrative function support. The amount for advisory support may be applied for once per group. The amount for administrative function support may be applied for 3 times in the period, in the first 3 years of establishment only.

The targets participant rates (outputs) are based on projections from stakeholder consultation on potential beef, sheep, fruit and vegetable, tillage, potato and amenity applicants based on existing producer groups.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☒ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

The €3,000 advisory amount is the amount that was granted under the previous producer organisation measure in the beef sector.

The administrative function support is a contribution to administrative costs to facilitate best administrative practice during the early development of the organisation. The amount provides for partial compensation for the outsourcing of administrative support. This amount provides sufficient incentive to engage a resource without removing the incentive to become self-sufficient as it is not proposed that full costs for admin be compensated and the support will be provided in the first three years of establishment only.

Range of support at beneficiary level

Unit amount for advisory support: 3,000

Unit amount for administrative function support: 10,000

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:
☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Mixed

Explanation of support activities falling outside the scope of Art. 42 TFEU

The structure of support offered is expected to fall within the scope of Article 42 of the Treaty. The possible State Aid implications of supports offered through this intervention will be assessed during the programme, and any necessary notifications will be made.

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:
☐ Notification ☒ GBER ☒ ABER ☒ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Early stage support for POs scheme complies with the principles outlined in paragraph 1 – it does not involve the transfer of funds from consumers nor does it have the effect of providing price support to producers. The support provided falls under the provisions outlined in clause (e) with payments being made to the Producer Organisation rather than producers.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53ESSPO01 - Unit amount for advisory support	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.10;	No
53ESSPO02 - Unit amount for administrative function support	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.10;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53ESSPO01 - Unit amount for advisory support

The €3,000 advisory amount is the amount that was granted under the previous producer organisation measure in the beef sector. Such a sum is significant enough to support the provision of advisory services without providing full support, thus maintaining motivation for groups to engage with advisory in a meaningful way that maximises its value to the group.

53ESSPO02 - Unit amount for administrative function support

The administrative function support is a contribution to administrative costs to facilitate best administrative practice during the early development of the organisation. The amount provides for partial compensation for the outsourcing of administrative support. This amount provides sufficient incentive to engage a resource without removing the incentive to become self-sufficient as it is not proposed that full costs for admin be compensated and the support will be provided in the first three years of establishment only.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53ESSPO01 - Unit amount for advisory support (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00			
	O.28 (unit: Beneficiaries)	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	0.00			45.00
53ESSPO02 - Unit amount for administrative function support (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
	O.28 (unit: Beneficiaries)	15.00	30.00	45.00	30.00	15.00			135.00
TOTAL	O.28 (unit: Beneficiaries)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	195,000.00	345,000.00	495,000.00	300,000.00	150,000.00			1,485,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	78,409.50	138,724.50	199,039.50	120,630.00	60,315.00			597,118.50
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53LEADER - LEADER

Intervention Code (MS)	53LEADER
Intervention Name	LEADER
Type of Intervention	COOP(77) - Cooperation
Common Output Indicator	O.31. Number of supported local development strategies (LEADER) or preparatory actions
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: Yes

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
SO3 Improve the farmer' position in the value chain
SO7 Attract and sustain young farmers and other new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas
SO8 Promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
Obj3.N2	Develop and promote local markets supporting locally produced food, including organic produce	2nd Highest SO3	Yes
Obj7.N3	Provide opportunities and support to businesses and individuals looking to develop rural enterprises	3rd Highest Priority	Yes
Obj8.N2	Improve infrastructure and access to services in rural areas including broadband	2nd Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N3	Support sustainable community development in rural areas, in particular to address E+C challenges	3rd Highest for SO 8	Yes
Obj8.N4	Support the further development of the tourism industry in rural Ireland	4th Highest for SO 8	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.38 Share of rural population covered by local development strategies

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

LEADER, a community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development has formed part of the policy framework for rural development in Ireland since its inception in the 1990s. It has proven to be an effective tool for supporting the economic and social development of rural communities, by providing the resources necessary for communities to support their own development. The SWOT and needs analysis identified a number of challenges in rural Ireland for which a CLLD methodology such as LEADER was identified as a possible intervention strategy. These include the need to support the development of rural enterprises, maximise the opportunities presented by the green economy, embrace the diversity of rural communities by involving all members of society in the development process.

LEADER Implementation 2023 – 2027.

Managing Authority - DAFM

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) will be the Managing Authority and Paying Agency for Ireland's CSP and will have the primary responsibility for the implementation of Ireland's monitoring and evaluation arrangements. In relation to LEADER elements of the CSP, the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) will be the contracting authority with delegated Paying Agency functions and managing authority responsibility for LEADER.

Delegated Paying Agent - DRCD

DRCD is responsible for ensuring that the systems and processes that support this function are compliant with all regulatory requirements. This includes, amongst other things, monitoring LAG compliance with financial management and decision-making requirements, for example through the annual performance review and annual planning process. In addition, DRCD is responsible for the on-going checks and controls in respect of LAG expenditure, together with the payment of all project and administration expenditure to the LAGs.

Similar to the 2014-2022 programme, the relationship will be governed by way of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DRCD and DAFM that sets out the respective responsibilities that include accounting procedures and operational arrangements.

Local Action Groups (LAGs)

The activities of each LAG will include working and engaging with rural communities with a view to identifying and progressing innovative projects that enhance the viability and sustainability of that community. There will be a strong animation focus on areas which have not benefited from LEADER financial support in the past. LAGs will be exclusively responsible for the developing project selection procedures whilst ensuring that no single interest group control selection decisions. In addition, LAGs will develop calls for proposals and present projects for evaluation, along with monitoring, evaluation and implementation of its LDS.

The LAG's engagement with all sectors of society in a sub-regional area will be crucial for the development phase of its LDS as well as its implementation and must include the seven principles of LEADER. In that regard, the membership of the LAG will include a broad range of local public and private interests in order to secure the LAGs effective operation, and in doing so, reflect the objectives of its LDS. This approach will mirror the CLLD partnership principal and will be contained in the LDS selection guidance material.

Key to this will be building on the strong relationship already in place between DRCD and the LAGs, together with stakeholder groupings. LAGs are autonomous in the selection and approval of projects.

Once the full or phased stage of a project is completed, the LAG project development officer will assist the beneficiary in the compilation of a claim to reduce errors later on. The claim is then validated by an

independent body, with payment being made to the beneficiary potentially directly or via the LAG, as is the case at present.

Sub-Regional Areas:

Ireland will configure sub-regional areas to provide an effective framework for LEADER delivery.
In order to ensure sufficient budgetary resources to LAGs to facilitate full and effective implementation of LDSs, Ireland will apportion the overall programme complement on the basis of the sub-regional areas using open and transparent criteria.

A final decision on the sub-regional areas for the 2023-2027 programme is still under consideration.

Integrated Approach:

Ireland has a number of national initiatives targeted at rural and community development that work in conjunction with LEADER to develop Ireland's rural areas, including its offshore islands.
To ensure an integrated approach to rural development each LDS will be required to give consideration to key policy documents such as the Local Economic and Community Plans as well as other relevant regional, national and EU policies. In the context of the CAP Strategic Plan, this approach envisages community representatives and local/development agencies working in a collaborative and integrated approach.

The Local Development Strategy Selection Process:

The LDS selection process will be open and transparent and will consist of two separate stages providing the opportunity for all interested LAGs to participate. This incremental approach will support the development of a robust, collaborative partnership approach at local level and facilitate full and comprehensive consultation to maintain the integrity of the CLLD approach.

A *pre-qualification/expression of interest (EOI) stage* will involve an open call, appropriate for LCDCs, current LDCs and any other groupings that wish to be considered for delivery of LEADER.
The *second stage* of the process will be the LDS development phase and will involve all LAGs that have achieved LAG designation in stage one. The criteria provided for in this stage of the selection process will be in the form of a template for the structure of the LDS as well as criteria around governance within the LAG and management systems to support the delivery of the LDS.
The ultimate aim is to facilitate the development of robust strategies that address the needs of the sub-regional area and that are complementary to other development processes at sub-regional, regional, national and European level.

Partnership Principle
It will be a requirement of the LDS selection process that no single interest group will control the decision making process of the LAG. The LAG must ensure that its membership is managed proactively at all times to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, but also to ensure that there is as broad a range of local interests as possible represented.

The LAG decision making body will include a broad range of local actors, including, but not limited to; representatives of local non-governmental organisations, local development companies, development agencies, local community-based groups, marginalised communities, youth organisations, cultural bodies, sporting bodies, social movements, networks and relevant public bodies. Each LAG should aim to secure a balanced gender representation.

In addition, the selected LAGs for the LEADER intervention will respect the European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights and the general principles of Union law.

The above conditions will be included in the preparatory stage of LDS selection guidance materials as well as the new operating rules for the forthcoming programme.

LEADER Themes:

The objectives of the LEADER measure is to fund initiatives emerging from a CLLD approach at a local level that aims to address the needs of individual sub-regional areas. The guidance documentation to accompany the LDS development process will outline a series of indicative "LEADER Themes" that have been developed from the evidence gathered during the SWOT and needs analysis processes.

A number of themes emerged strongly from all of these processes and have a strong evidence base for use in LDS's. Each LDS will be required to examine the potential of these sectors within the LDS process and in the context of an integrated regional and local planning approach.

In order to ensure that LEADER can demonstrate that it can contribute to achieving SO 8, it is necessary to set broad indicative themes as guidance for the development of the LDS.

These themes, which are detailed below, derived from a series of engagements with programme stakeholders. While not mandatory, the themes encompass the widest possible viewpoints and will therefore allow LAGs to respond freely to the emerging needs as identified during the compilation of its LDS. There is no requirement for a LAG to produce a project under an indicative theme, as the LAG is autonomous in project selection and must set up transparent selection procedures in that regard.

The projects selected locally should all contribute to the objectives of the local development strategy and should be based on clearly identified needs or opportunities, rather than a number of disconnected projects that are not coherent in terms of strategy alignment.

There will also be a requirement for the **Smart Villages concept**, **climate change mitigation and adaptation** and the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) to be over-arching elements of LEADER Local Development Strategies/Interventions.

The Smart Villages approach is closely aligned with that of the LEADER approach. Indeed, once all the LEADER principles are applied, it creates the conditions for the development of Smart Village initiatives.

Where Smart Village initiatives are identified as priorities in an LDS, LAGs will need to innovative and align with policies such as the EU's Long Term Vision for Rural Areas, as well as engaging with communities to progress and finance small-scale investments.

Training and capacity building for LAG Project Officers through learnings from cooperation, together with networking and exchanges with other LAGs at a national and European level will ensure high quality outcomes for the rural communities concerned.

Operational guidance will be issued to Local Action Groups explaining the activities that are not eligible to ensure that no double funding occurs, and to ensure the activities are in compliance with the requirements of the legislation underpinning the CAP Strategic Plan. This will ensure value for money for LEADER funding.

The activities likely to be designated as being ineligible include conventional retail operations (excluding community based shops and farm shops selling locally produced produce), primary agricultural activities, fisheries, horticulture (including bee-keeping), loans, working capital and forestry. This list is not exhaustive and may be modified.

Indicative Themes – LEADER 2023 - 2027

1.Economic Development and Job Creation

The need to support the development of the rural economy has been identified as a critical challenge in both the needs analysis and Ireland's five-year rural development policy - *Our Rural Future (2021-2025)*.

1a The Green Economy
1b Agricultural Diversification
1c Rural Tourism & Recreation
1d Enterprise Development
1e Rural Food Production
1f Social, Community & Cooperative Enterprises

2.Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion

A central focus will be the need to ensure the social cohesion of a sub-regional area i.e. not just to support economic development but also to support social inclusion. The SWOT noted that rural Ireland is becoming increasingly diverse and it is important to embrace this diversity ensuring that future community development recognises the needs of all members of society.

2a Rural Infrastructure
2b Accessible Services
2c. Optimising Digital Connectivity
2d. Rural Youth

3.Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

While recognising that climate change mitigation and adaptation is a cross-cutting issue and in this context will be considered for all LEADER interventions, there were a number of specific areas that emerged from the needs analysis process.

3a Sustainable Development of Rural Environment
3b Climate Change Capacity Building
3c Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Simplified Cost Options (section 5.3.7 also refers)

DRCD continues to explore the introduction of SCOs for preparatory support, small-scale projects and flat rate financing for running and animation costs.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

LEADER Implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy: Individual operations shall be eligible if they contribute to achieving the aims and objectives of the individual LDSs and correspond to the objectives and priorities indicated for support in the CAP Strategic Plan; applications must also conform to the LEADER operating rules. Selection criteria will subsequently help ensure good quality LEADER interventions and the added value of LEADER's rural development style - encouraging better innovations at a local level, better fit with local needs (unlikely to be achieved via classical measures), projects that benefit the entire community, connections between projects on the same territory of scale, connections of projects with economic, environmental and social objectives, projects underpinned by building community capacity first in new areas such as digital, environmental and climate change.

Innovation in the local context

Innovation can take many different forms which can all contribute to the innovative character of the LDS. This can be accomplished by the sharing of ideas through local and European LAG networks and by continued capacity building of LAG project development officers through training development led by DRCD and the National Rural/new CAP Network. Also by adopting an innovative culture within the LAG and through regular animation with communities.

The Smart Villages approach can also be a catalyst for digital and social innovation in rural areas. Social innovation at a local level can be a key driver in climate adaptation projects for rural communities to make a transition to a greener Europe as set out in the European Green Deal. The policy document titled "A long term vision for the EU's rural areas" outlines how research and innovation for rural communities can be achieved and LAGs will be encouraged to use it as a reference source with regard to innovation at a local level.

Preparation and implementation of co-operation activities of the local action group:

A concrete project must be envisaged in order to avail of support under the co-operation element of the LEADER measure. The criteria for selection of co-operation projects to be funded both in the context of preparing and implementing a co-operation project will be detailed in the operating rules for the programme and the need to support this kind of intervention must be identified in the LDS. Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

The National Rural supports and facilitates the exchange and promotion of good practice LAG projects across a range of LEADER themes. It also provides training and networking for LAGs and in particular technical assistance for inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects. This collection of information and facilitation will work in tandem with the European CAP networks, once established. Such networks can help LAGs to increase their knowledge and facilitate peer-to-peer learning so that they can improve their capacity to implement their local strategies and projects more effectively.

In that regard, LAGs will be encouraged to engage extensively with these networks including Ireland's new CAP Network, so that they can show case their projects as well as developing new networks in other jurisdictions.

Support for running costs and animation: Costs linked to the management of the implementation of the strategy consisting of operating costs, personnel costs, training costs, costs linked to communication, financial costs as well as the costs linked to monitoring and evaluation of the strategy. Costs of animation of the CLLD strategy in order to facilitate exchange between stakeholders, to provide information and to promote the strategy and to support potential beneficiaries to develop projects and prepare applications.

DRCD is exploring the feasibility of the introduction of SCOs for running and administration costs.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

LEADER Implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy: LAGs will be afforded some opportunity to fix the aid intensity for operations funded under the LDS based on the strategic role these operations can play in the context of their LDS and in line with the aid intensity rates provided for in the legal framework and relevant State Aid limitations (including the regulatory requirements applied to Investments as set out in Article 73 of the CSP regulation). Further detail on specific aid intensity rates available for particular types of projects will be clarified in the detailed operating rules that accompany the LEADER elements of the CAP Strategic Plan.

Preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action: The selection should be made taking consideration of the LDS budget, the strategic role these operations can play in the context of the LDS and in line with the aid intensities rate provided for in the legal framework and relevant State Aid limitations.

Support for running costs and animation: Support for running costs and animation shall not exceed 25% of the total public expenditure incurred within the LDS and will be supported at a rate of 100%.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☒ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☒ unit costs

☒ lump sums

☒ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

Ireland will introduce simplified cost options in the following situations in line with Reg. No 2021/2115:

1. Under Article 83(1) (c), lump-sum payments for preparatory support for costs associated with the preparation of the LDSs for the 2023-2027 programme. The purpose of offering a fixed lump sum for LDS preparation is to improve the efficiency of administering these payments for both the groups and DRCD. Groups who are successful in reaching stage two of the process to develop an LDS will be considered eligible to receive preparatory support costs. As outlined in Article 83 2(a) (i), the amounts of the grants will be based on a fair, equitable and verifiable calculation method using statistical data and other objective information.

2. Under Article 83(1) (c), lump-sum payments for lower value projects, which will be based on a draft budget for a defined output (the objective of the project). This approach will facilitate a simplification of the application process for promoters of lower value project activity as it will significantly reduce the administrative burden. As outlined in Article 83 2(b), the amounts of the grants will be based on a fair, equitable and verifiable calculation method using draft budgets established on a case-by-case basis and agreed ex ante by the body selecting the operation.

Further consideration is being given to the introduction of one of the off-the-shelf flat rate financing methods for administration costs and animation. The amounts of the grants payable would be based on Article 83 (2)(c) and would use a fair, equitable and verifiable calculation method in accordance with the rules for application of flat rates applicable in Union policies for a similar type of operation.

Range of support at beneficiary level

LEADER Implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy: LAGs will be afforded some opportunity to fix the aid intensity for operations funded under the LDS based on the strategic role these operations can play in the context of their LDS and in line with the aid intensity rates provided for in the legal framework and relevant State Aid limitations (including the regulatory requirements applied to Investments as set out in Article 73 of the CSP regulation). Further detail on specific aid intensity rates available for particular types of projects will be clarified in the detailed operating rules that accompany the LEADER elements of the CAP Strategic Plan.

Preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action: The selection should be made taking consideration of the LDS budget, the strategic role these operations can play in the context of the LDS and in line with the aid intensities rate provided for in the legal framework and relevant State Aid limitations.

Support for running costs and animation: Support for running costs and animation shall not exceed 25% of the total public expenditure incurred within the LDS and will be supported at a rate of 100%.

LEADER may provide support rates greater than 65% in accordance with Article 73(4) (c)(ii) *where investments include basic services in rural areas and infrastructure in agriculture and forestry, as determined by Member States;*

Additional explanation

Non applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Mixed

Explanation of support activities falling outside the scope of Art. 42 TFEU

LEADER/CLLD projects do not fall under the scope of Article 42 of the TFEU.

At present, LEADER projects are subject to the *de minimis* regulation (Commission Regulation(EU) No. 1407/2013) and are exempted from State aid control as they are deemed to have little or no impact on competition and trade in the EUs internal market.

In addition, companies that are experiencing financial difficulties are no longer excluded from the scope of the *de minimis* regulation and will therefore be allowed to receive *de minimis* aid.

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☒ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

What is the added value of the LEADER approach fro Rural Development aimed?

The added value of LEADER is derived from the full application of the 7 LEADER principles. The added value of LEADER/CLLD at programme level can be expressed as improved social capital, improved governance and enhanced results and impacts, compared to those benefits which would have been

obtained without applying this method. The importance of demonstrating the added value will be included in the LDS selection guidance material.

The social capital element builds upon networks already in place, as well as trust and cooperation between LAGs. The added value of social capital can also be achieved by building and developing the capacity of local actors (beneficiaries and communities). It involves the participation of all stakeholders in the “bottom up” approach that allows for the enhancement of knowledge, skills and training development. This approach can have enhanced results for communities and helps them reach their objectives as set out in their LDS.

Open and transparent decision making as part of the LDS selection process and in LAG procedures are indicative of good governance. In that regard, strong and coherent communications will be required, at all stages, to ensure the implementation and smooth interaction among the key players of CLLD. LAGs must ensure that all decisions are made in a transparent and inclusive manner, whilst ensuring that there is as broad a range of interests represented in its decision making in order to secure the effective operation of the LAG. Improved local governance at all levels of the LEADER process can have real and measurable results in areas such as capacity building for LAG staff, networking and services offered by LAGs to prospective beneficiaries.

This will ultimately lead to better quality projects for communities through increased animation, better sustainability, with employment opportunities emerging as a result of the targeted LDS objectives.

Conversely, the added value outcomes would not be present where you have projects delivered that do not use the CLLD approach. In instances such as these, projects are usually led by the top down approach through national funding schemes and may not have the widest community input when compared to LEADER. Additionally, there would be no capacity building or continued animation in communities with which to bring about a coherent smart strategy in these rural areas.

Describe how the basic requirements and principles related to the LEADER approach will be ensured through the delivery model

The seven principles summarise the LEADER approach. In that context, Ireland will ensure as part of the LDS selection guidance materials and independent selection process, that each strategy is focused on these principles.

Is support from more than one EU fund planned?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Would the lead fund option be applied?

☐ Yes ☒ No

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

LEADER meets the criteria laid out in paragraph 2 of Annex II of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. LEADER includes but is not limited to support for research, training support and advisory services as well as marketing and promotion services. There are no direct payments to producers and all other criteria in paragraph 1 are also met by this intervention.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(3)(b) - 77(1)(b) - LEADER under Article 77(1), point(b)	43.30%	20.00%	80.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Group	Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
29 LDSs	RDD to programme - Average expenditure per year	Grant		Average		R.38;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

RDD to programme - Average expenditure per year

For LEADER the total indicative financial allocation is calculated via (allocation\planned unit amt) so is the equivalent to (planned output (LDS)*unit amount (29 * 6.21)). The breakdown per individual year is not the equivalent of the 'planned output * unit amounts' but rather an estimate of the % expenditure per year from 2023 to 2027.

The percentage expenditure is based on the average percentage expenditure per year for the previous LEADER programme (2014-2020). ** The exception to this is that the 2027 indicative amount in the table is based on the average percentage expenditure figure for the same period of the 14-20 programme plus the percentage of the balance of funding (expected to be spent during N+3 period).

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Group	Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
29 LDSs	RDD to programme - Average expenditure per year (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	
		Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	
		O.31 (unit: Preparatory actions)	0.00	29.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	TOTAL	O.31 (unit: Preparatory actions)		29.00						29.00
		Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	9,490,500.00	18,329,250.00	23,945,250.00	28,931,250.00	39,958,125.00	39,958,125.00	19,387,500.00	180,000,000.00
		Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	4,109,386.50	7,936,565.25	10,368,293.25	12,527,231.25	17,301,868.12	17,301,868.13	8,394,787.50	77,940,000.00
		Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
		Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
		Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
		Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
		Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)	0.00	29.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	29.00

		Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information

53AECMTR - Training to Implement Agri-Environment-Climate Measure

Intervention Code (MS)	53AECMTR
Intervention Name	Training to Implement Agri-Environment-Climate Measure
Type of Intervention	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information
Common Output Indicator	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N2	Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition	2nd Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N3	Ensure consistency of advice by providing for CPD for advisors and for primary producers	3rd Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.1 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance
R.2 Number of advisors receiving support to be integrated within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)
R.28 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The SWOT analysis, undertaken as part of Ireland's preparation of its CAP Strategic Plan, noted a number of environmental, climate and biodiversity related challenges that could be addressed by means of an agri-environmental climate measure (AECM). The national AECM **[name to be inserted]** accordingly consists of a range of actions to address such challenges, including a reduction in the use of fertiliser, improved land management to address water quality and soil fertility issues, and the restoration and maintenance of habitats and species to ensure their preservation and halt the further decline of biodiversity. This associated training intervention will accordingly meet the need to 'increase farmers' and advisers' understanding of climate change, air quality, water quality, soil health …. and biodiversity related challenges and opportunities at farm level' [ObjAKIS.N1].

The training will:

- increase farmers' understanding of climate change, the impact of farming activities on natural resources and the protection of biodiversity at farm level,
- outline how the actions undertaken as part of the AECM will address the challenges outlined above, and
- educate farmers on how to appropriately implement the AECM actions; thereby equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise delivery and continue the ongoing management of the commitments undertaken; as well as to facilitate the implementation of sustainable farming practices.

Two training courses will be provided:

- one mandatory course, undertaken no later than one calendar year following entry into the AECM; and
- one voluntary course, undertaken in the third year of participation in the AECM (on ongoing management and to address issues or developments)

The mandatory course, to be attended by all AECM participants is accordingly designed to include:

- An introduction to the Green Architecture model, the elements within it (conditionality, AECM and eco-schemes) and how these elements interact with one another;
- An overview of the challenges to be addressed (environmental, climate and biodiversity);
- An overview of the agri-environment climate measure, its regulatory basis, the objectives of the scheme and funding;
- Information on the individual commitments as well as nutrient management, sustainable farming practices, record-keeping, delivery timelines, controls, inspections and sanctions;
- An overview of health and safety as part of good farm management.

The voluntary course, that will be offered in the third year of participation in the scheme (open to all AECM participants), is designed to include:

- management and aftercare actions
- updates to participants on issues that have arisen or have been identified in relation to compliance with specifications.
- lessons learned to date on the implementation of the overall scheme,
- follow up on any issues identified at initial training and any developments on higher level environmental issues.

While courses will generally be delivered at various locations to facilitate ease of access to training for farmers, the means of training may have to be adapted in line with public health restrictions, i.e., courses may have to be delivered remotely via computer if in-person training is prohibited. Both courses will be delivered in groups of 20-30 farmers and will entail 6 hours of training for each course.

Participants are required to undertake the mandatory training course as soon as possible after entry into the scheme but no later than the end of the first calendar year following approval into the scheme. The Agri-Environmental Training Scheme 2022* will provide a means to give a high-level overview of the issues proposed to be addressed in the agri-environment climate measure in advance of its commencement, while videos will be accessible from the commencement of the [**name of AECM**] so that participants may access them for guidance on the implementation of measures in advance of the formal training.

**The Agri-Environmental Training Scheme ('AETS') is a voluntary training scheme, administered by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, available to farmers during the transition period (in the first half of 2022). The objective of AETS, which is open to all farmers, is to train participating farmers in environmental practices and standards, and to enhance the uptake and delivery of future agri-environment schemes in accordance with Department specifications.*

The training videos will be accessible from the commencement of the [**AECM**], with relevant stakeholders notified when they are available. The videos will provide overarching information on [**name of AECM General**] and will provide guidance on the way in which certain actions are to be implemented to best effect. The training videos may also serve as a tool to support the training of advisers and for their training of scheme participants in turn, in conjunction with traditional training methods.

As intake into the AECM General and the AECM Co-operation Project will be on a phased basis, in at least two tranches, the numbers of participants in the mandatory training courses will be determined by the level of intake in each tranche.

The training covered by this intervention is specific to farmers who have been approved for participation in AECM. While it will give an overview of the Green Architecture, the training will be focussed on the AECM options and the associated actions so, as such, it goes beyond baseline requirements under Conditionality and national standards. It is also independent of the Eco-Scheme.

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

Eligible beneficiaries: Training providers

Conditions of Eligibility

Payment will only issue for the training of farmers who have been approved for participation in AECM.

Providers must be registered professional advisors with DAFM. This entails

- Having a relevant National Framework of Qualifications Level 8 qualification
- Having received the specific training for AECM delivered by DAFM for advisors
- Being registered with the Farm Advisory Service.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

This is a non-IACS support.

The total amount payable per attendee at the training courses is €246, comprising of €90 per attendee to the trainer and €156 for the farmer in respect of his/her costs for attendance at the training.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☒ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

The €90 per attendee rate for the knowledge provider is based on the cost associated with delivery and preparation time, course materials and delivery costs. Each participating farmer is compensated for the time element (replacement farmer cost) and travel cost, which has been calculated as €156.

Range of support at beneficiary level

Not applicable.

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

This publicly funded programme meets the general criteria of Paragraph 1 and the policy specific conditions set out at Point (c) of Paragraph 2.The purpose of this measure is to inform, train and upskill participants in relation to the AECM. The expenditure involved is for the provision of the training and the costs incurred by the attendees (such as travel costs and the cost of replacement labour on the farm to facilitate their attendance). It does not involve direct payments to a processor or producer, and it does not provide price support.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53AECMTR01 - Unit Amount per Attendee	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.1; R.2; R.28;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53AECMTR01 - Unit Amount per Attendee

The €90 per attendee rate for the knowledge provider is based on the cost associated with delivery and preparation time, course materials and delivery costs. Each participating farmer is compensated for the time element (replacement farmer cost) and travel cost, which has been calculated as €156.

The annual planned output of 17,500, 25,000 and 7,500 farmers trained in each of the years 2023, 2024 and 2025 respectively reflects the phased intake and the mandatory requirement to attend training course in 1st year of AECM participation. The reduction in annual planned output (to 13,090, 18,700 and 5,608) each year in 2025, 2026 and 2027 respectively reflects estimated attendance at the voluntary training course.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53AECMTR01 - Unit Amount per Attendee (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	246.00	246.00	246.00	246.00	246.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)	17,500.00	25,000.00	20,590.00	18,700.00	5,608.00			87,398.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)	17,500.00	25,000.00	20,590.00	18,700.00	5,608.00			87,398.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	4,305,000.00	6,150,000.00	5,065,140.00	4,600,200.00	1,379,568.00			21,499,908.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	1,731,040.50	2,472,915.00	2,036,692.79	1,849,740.42	554,724.29			8,645,113.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53CPDA - CPD For Advisors

Intervention Code (MS)	53CPDA
Intervention Name	CPD For Advisors
Type of Intervention	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information
Common Output Indicator	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N2	Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition	2nd Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N3	Ensure consistency of advice by providing for CPD for advisors and for primary producers	3rd Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N4	Continue to provide support for R + I in the AF sector; + encourage the application of findings	4th Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.1 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance
R.2 Number of advisors receiving support to be integrated within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

Agricultural advisers will play a central role in addressing key challenges facing the agri-food sector and in assisting in the implementation of the range of schemes to be rolled out as part of the CAP Strategic

Plan. The SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment highlights the role of continued professional development for advisers. Participation in continuous professional development activities will allow advisers to enhance their knowledge base on an ongoing basis and ensure that they are familiar with the latest techniques, technologies, and regulatory and scheme requirements in a rapidly changing agri-food sector. It will promote the development of knowledgeable, professional and competent advisers; and will thereby enhance the quality of service provided to farmers. This in turn will underpin more efficient and effective practices feeding into more competitive and environmentally efficient farming.

This intervention will build on the continuous professional development provided to the advisers in the Farm Advisory System (FAS) in the previous programming period and will be reflective of key themes and challenges identified in the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment and via stakeholder consultation.

The intervention will be structured around tendering processes to select suitably qualified training providers and online platform service providers to deliver high quality professional training in a range of areas such as climate change (both mitigation and adaptation) and sustainable energy, air, soil and water quality, biodiversity conservation, organic farming, carbon farming, and the adoption of new technologies and best practice. These tenders will be rolled out over the course of the programming period, and it is envisaged that they will incorporate a blended approach to learning incorporating online and in-person learning in a manner consistent with existing FAS training delivery and with Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 [SPR]

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

The beneficiaries will be training providers and online platform service providers, as outlined above. Eligible training providers and online platform service providers will be selected via competitive tender processes. For the training providers, requests for tenders will be issued on the basis of identified training themes; and successful training providers will be required to meet particular requirements related to the specific training to be delivered.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

Support rates will be set on foot of the competitive tender processes set out above. Tender proposals will be evaluated based on predetermined selection criteria, which may include a focus on high quality provision, proven track record, and value for money.

As the intervention will be structured around tendering processes to select suitably qualified training providers and online platform service providers, the planned unit amounts are dependent on the competitive tender processes.

The planned unit amount (€200,000 per training intervention delivered) is estimated based on experience in the previous programming period, including the transitional period. It is envisaged that two training modules will be provided in each year of the CAP Strategic Plan.

In the life of the CAP (2023-2027), it is envisaged that the online platform for the provision of online CPD for advisers delivered in the transitional period, will come due for re-tender in 2023. It is estimated that the cost for the online platform will be €300,000 spread over 2023 and 2024, which will also be dependent on the competitive tender process.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☒ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

Unit costs will be set based on successful tender outcome.

Range of support at beneficiary level

Support rates will be set on foot of the competitive tender processes set out above. Tender proposals will be evaluated based on predetermined selection criteria, which may include a focus on high quality provision, proven track record, and value for money.

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

This intervention is Green Box compliant under paragraph 2(c) of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on agriculture, providing training services for beneficiaries.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53CPDA01 - Unit Amount for Provision of an Online Platform	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.1; R.2;	No
53CPDA02 - Unit amount per training intervention delivered	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Average		R.1; R.2;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53CPDA01 - Unit Amount for Provision of an Online Platform

As the intervention will be structured around tendering processes to select suitably qualified training providers and online platform service providers, the planned unit amount is dependent on the competitive tender process.

In the life of the CAP (2023-2027), it is envisaged that the online platform for the provision of online CPD for advisors delivered in the transitional period, will come due for re-tender in 2023. It is estimated that the cost for the online platform will be €300,000 spread over 2023 and 2024, which will also be dependent on the competitive tender process.

53CPDA02 - Unit amount per training intervention delivered

As the intervention will be structured around tendering processes to select suitably qualified training providers and online platform service providers, the planned unit amount is dependent on the competitive tender process.

The planned unit amount (€200,000 per training intervention delivered) is estimated based on experience in the previous programming period, including the transitional period. It is envisaged that two training interventions will be provided in each year of the CAP Strategic Plan.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53CPDA01 - Unit Amount for Provision of an Online Platform (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	300,000.00	300,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Operations)	0.33	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00			1.00
53CPDA02 - Unit amount per training intervention delivered (Grant - Average)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Operations)	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00			10.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Operations)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	99,000.00	601,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00			1,900,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	40,210.00	241,260.00	160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00			763,990.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53KT - Knowledge Transfer Programme

Intervention Code (MS)	53KT
Intervention Name	Knowledge Transfer Programme
Type of Intervention	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information
Common Output Indicator	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N2	Review education and training courses and advisory services to reflect new challenges and ambition	2nd Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N3	Ensure consistency of advice by providing for CPD for advisors and for primary producers	3rd Highest for CCO	Yes
ObjAKIS.N4	Continue to provide support for R + I in the AF sector; + encourage the application of findings	4th Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.1 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance
R.2 Number of advisors receiving support to be integrated within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment identify a range of areas in which support for knowledge transfer can play a central role in underpinning a more competitive, resilient, modern and sustainable

agricultural sector. This theme is also reflected in national policy documents such as *Food Wise 2025 (*and its successor strategy which is currently being developed)and in the General Objective included in Regulation XX of fostering a smart, resilient and diversified agricultural sector. This intervention will build on the Knowledge Transfer Programme which was included in the 2014-2020 RDP by providing support for high quality and targeted advice to farmers, delivered by professional agricultural advisers with the appropriate experience and expertise (KT Facilitators). The intervention is also one of the elements underpinning the further development of the national Agriculture Knowledge & Innovation System.

The intervention will be based on support for the implementation of Knowledge Transfer Groups, which will facilitate the delivery of targeted knowledge and skills, drawing on the expertise of the advisers ruining the Groups as well as allowing for shared learning between the farmers in the Groups. The structure also allows for knowledge transfer benefits to be derived from the inclusion of external expert advice.

Knowledge Transfer Groups will be set up across the farming sector. The composition of Groups will not be limited by reference to the type of enterprise farmers in each Group are engaged in. Rather, the composition of Groups will allow flexibility for Groups to be formed in accordance with local needs. Facilitators will be encouraged to form groups based their local needs and may prioritise specific groups of farmers in line with the Needs Assessment. The intervention will run for a three year period. It is envisaged that the average Group size will be 15 farmers with scope for replacements, with farmers required to attend eight Knowledge Transfer Group meetings in each year of the programme. A central element of the intervention design is based on ensuring that the Programme is structured in a way that ensures that the content of Knowledge Transfer Groups is clearly targeted at key challenges and issues identified in the sector, while also maintaining a degree of flexibility for Knowledge Transfer Groups to tailor the content to their own experience, circumstances and requirements. Accordingly, in each year of the intervention, each Knowledge Transfer Group will be required to deliver four meetings from a list of 'Priority KT Topics'. The remaining four meetings can deliver on topics identified by the Groups themselves. This structure draws on the experience of the Knowledge Transfer Programme delivered under the 2014-2020 RDP.

The list of 'Priority KT Topics' will be refreshed at the start of each year of the programme and will be reflective of the issues identified in the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment, as well as emerging policy priorities in the sector. The AKIS Coordination Group will be consulted on the 'Priority KT topics' to support the development of the Agricultural Knowledge & Innovation System, including integrating the latest research and innovation in the topic areas. KT Groups will be encouraged to engage wit EIP Operational Groups and demonstration farms, as appropriate, to learn from their implementation and outcomes. Furthermore, it is envisaged that training will be provided for KT Facilitators on the 'Priority KT Topics' through the roll-out of the Continuous Professional Development Programme (CPD) for Advisers;

As an example, the menu of 'Priority KT Topics', may contain the following key topics:

-Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies; and understanding the main contributors to emissions on Irish farms

-Farm health, safety and wellbeing; drawing on risk identification and mitigation strategies and best practices

-Biodiversity conservation with a focus on identifying key habitats and species and associated tools and management techniques

-Farm management strategies, incorporating tools and approaches for farm financial management and succession planning

-Water quality, incorporating key management actions

-Soil quality and grassland management, incorporating available tools and best practice

-Energy efficiency on farms
-Animal health and welfare, incorporating best practice in areas such as biosecurity and antimicrobial drugs/antibiotics
-Digital and smart technologies and tools; and their applicability on farm

Drawing on the experience of the Knowledge Transfer Programme in the 2014-2020, at least one of the meetings delivered on the 'Priority KT Topics' must incorporate delivery from an appropriate external expertise. The cost of this provision is factored into the costings for the intervention under the payment proposed for the KT facilitator.

At the beginning, middle and end of the 3 year intervention, each KT Facilitator will hold a one to one meeting with each farmer in his/her group in order to set out their goals for the programme and report on progress in relation to same. This will also incorporate an element of evaluation of the intervention and will be by way of completion of an online form following each of the one to one meetings. This will ensure that each farmer's progress is reviewed as the intervention proceeds.

Selection of Operations
Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

In order to be eligible to deliver Knowledge Transfer Groups, KT Facilitators will be required to hold a minimum educational qualification to Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications, or another specified qualification deemed eligible by DAFM. KT Facilitators are also to be FAS approved. *Eligible participants must be registered with the Department as farmers, for example hold a herd/flock number, submit census returns, etc.*

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

KT Facilitators will receive €500 per annum per each farmer in the Group who completes each year of the intervention. Farmers participating in the Groups will receive €750 upon completion of each year of the intervention. Theses support rates are based on the income foregone and costs incurred in each case; and the costings are based on a standardised/simplified costs approach using an average Group membership of 15 farmers and on average two Groups per Facilitator.

For the KT Facilitator, the support rate is based on the costs of initiating, registering, preparing for, and delivering the KT Group meetings and the one-to-one review sessions with each farmer in the Group, along with all administrative duties related to the implementation of the KT Groups. The cost of incorporating the mandatory external expertise is also included in the costs for the KT Facilitator.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements
(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))
N/A
7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods
Form of support
☒ **Grant**
☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary
☒ unit costs
☐ lump sums
☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

Farmers participating in the Groups will receive €750 upon completion of each year of the intervention.

For farmers, the support rate is based on the time/replacement cost of attending the KT meeting and one to one review sessions as well the travel expenses involved. The costings are based on standardised costs for replacement costs and Public Service travel rates.

KT Facilitators will receive €500 per annum per each farmer in the Group who completes each year of the intervention.

For the KT Facilitator, the support rate is based on the costs of initiating, registering, preparing for, and delivering the KT Group meetings and the one-to-one review sessions with each farmer in the Group. The cost of incorporating the mandatory external expertise is also included in the costs for the KT Facilitator.

Range of support at beneficiary level

The payment rate for farmers shall be: €750 euros per KT year completed.

KT Facilitators will receive €500 per annum per each farmer in the Group who completes each year of the intervention.

Additional explanation

N/A

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

This intervention is Green Box compliant under paragraph 2(c) of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on agriculture, providing training services for beneficiaries.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53KT01 - KT Support for Advisors	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.1; R.2;	No
53KT02 - KT Support for Farmers	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.1;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53KT01 - KT Support for Advisors

KT Facilitators will receive €500 per annum per each farmer in the Group who completes each year of the intervention.

For the KT Facilitator, the support rate is based on the costs of initiating, registering, preparing for, and delivering the KT Group meetings and the one-to-one review sessions with each farmer in the Group. The cost of incorporating the mandatory external expertise is also included in the costs for the KT Facilitator.

53KT02 - KT Support for Farmers

Farmers participating in the Groups will receive €750 upon completion of each year of the intervention.

For farmers, the support rate is based on the time/replacement cost of attending the KT meeting and one to one review sessions as well the travel expenses involved. The costings are based on standardised costs for replacement costs and Public Service travel rates.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53KT01 - KT Support for Advisors (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)								
53KT02 - KT Support for Farmers (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	0.00	0.00	750.00	750.00	750.00	0.00	0.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)	0.00	0.00	18,960.00	18,960.00	18,960.00	0.00	0.00	56,880.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	0.00	0.00	23,700,000.00	23,700,000.00	23,700,000.00	0.00	0.00	71,100,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)			9,529,770.00	9,529,770.00	9,529,770.00			28,589,310.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

53SCT - Training to Implement Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme

Intervention Code (MS)	53SCT
Intervention Name	Training to Implement Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme
Type of Intervention	KNOW(78) - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information
Common Output Indicator	O.33. Number of supported training, advice and awareness actions or units
Contributing to ringfencing requirement for/on	Generational Renewal: No Environment: No ES rebate system: LEADER: No

1 Territorial scope and, if relevant, regional dimension

Territorial scope: **National**

Code	Description
IE	Éire/Ireland

Description of the Territorial Scope

N/A

2 Related Specific Objectives, Cross-Cutting Objective and relevant Sectoral Objectives

CAP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE Code + Description Recommended CAP Specific Objectives for this Type of Intervention are displayed in bold
XCO Cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake

3 Need(s) addressed by the intervention

Code	Description	Prioritisation at the level of the CAP Strategic Plan	Addressed in CSP
ObjAKIS.N1	Increase farmers' and advisors' understanding of CC, AQ,WQ,SH, AH+W and BD related challenges	Highest for CCO	Yes

4 Result indicator(s)

RESULT INDICATORS Code + Description Recommended result indicators for the selected CAP Specific Objectives of this intervention are displayed in bold
R.1 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP in order to enhance sustainable economic, social, environmental, climate and resource efficiency performance
R.28 Number of persons benefitting from advice, training, knowledge exchange, or participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups supported by the CAP related to environmental or climate-related performance

5 Specific design, requirements and eligibility conditions of the intervention

Describe what are the specific objectives and content of the intervention including specific targeting, principles of selection, links with relevant legislation, complementarity with other interventions/sets of operations in both pillars and other relevant information.

The current overarching policy objectives of Food Vision 2030 are to increase economic and environmental sustainability within the sector. Data from the Beef Data Genomics Programme (BDGP) identifies that it is delivering on both environmental and productive efficiency, which will have a knock-on effect on competitiveness at farm level.

In the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme, participants will be required to engage in activities aimed at improving the genetic merit and carbon efficiency as well as improvements to welfare of the herd including performance recording and genotyping.

Participants in this scheme will be required to complete training modules in the first and second years of the programme aimed at assisting them in effectively completing the necessary actions within the scheme.

The associated training will:

- outline how the actions undertaken as part of the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme will address the challenges that the scheme is designed to address,
- educate farmers on how to appropriately implement the actions; thereby equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise delivery and continue the ongoing management of the commitments undertaken; as well as to facilitate the implementation of high welfare practices.

The mandatory course, is accordingly designed to include:

- An introduction to on-farm practices including weight recording.
- Information on the process of genotyping and the development of a replacement strategy for improved genetic merit and the importance of performance measurement for breeding decisions.
- Information on the individual commitments as well as record-keeping, delivery timelines, controls, inspections and sanctions.
- A module on livestock handling safety to reduce instances of on-farm accidents/fatalities.

Training courses on the measures under the scheme will be held mainly remotely on-line with a limit on the number of participants to ensure effective dissemination of information. Attendees will be required to attend these courses in the first and second year of the programme.

The training covered by this intervention is specific to farmers who have been approved for participation in the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme. As such it goes beyond baseline requirements under Conditionality and national standards. It is also fully independent of what is required under the Eco-Scheme.

Selection of Operations

Selection criteria for this intervention will be established in compliance with Article 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and Annex I to regulation (EU) 2021/2289. All selection criteria shall aim to ensure equal treatment of applicants, better use of financial resources and targeting of the support in accordance with the purpose of the intervention. Where appropriate, the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations will be brought to the Monitoring Committee for opinion, with reference to Article 124 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Define eligible beneficiaries and specific eligibility criteria where relevant related to the beneficiary and area

Eligible beneficiaries: Training providers

Eligibility Conditions:

- Farmers who have been approved for participation in the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme
- Providers must be approved by DAFM.

Define eligible type of support (non-IACS) or commitments (IACS) and other obligations

The total amount payable to the training provider per attendee at the training courses in year 1 and 2 is €100 annually or €200 in total.

The cost of the farmer's time for attendance is factored into their rates of payment under the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme. The farmer will not receive an additional payment for completing the mandatory training.

6 Identification of relevant baseline elements

(relevant GAEC, statutory management requirements (SMR) and other mandatory requirements established by national and Union law), where applicable, description of the specific relevant obligations under the SMR, and explanation as to how the commitment goes beyond the mandatory requirements (as referred to in Art. 28 (5) and Art. 70 (3) and in Art. 72 (5))

N/A

7 Form and rate of support/amounts/calculation methods

Form of support

☒ **Grant**

☐ **Financial instrument**

Type of payment

☐ reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary

☒ unit costs

☐ lump sums

☐ flat-rate financing

Basis for the establishment

The €100 per attendee rate for the knowledge provider is based on the cost associated with delivery and preparation time, course materials and delivery costs.

Range of support at beneficiary level

Not applicable

Additional explanation

Not applicable

8 Information regarding State aid assessment

The intervention falls outside the scope of Article 42 TFEU and is subject to state aid assessment:

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Mixed

Type of state aid instrument to be used for clearance:

☐ Notification ☐ GBER ☐ ABER ☐ de minimis

9 Additional questions/information specific to the Type of Intervention

N/A

10 WTO compliance

Green Box

Paragraph 2 of Annex 2 WTO

Explanation of how the intervention respects the relevant provisions of Annex 2 to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as specified in Article 10 of this Regulation and in Annex II to this Regulation (Green Box)

Paragraph 2 applies.

This intervention, which does not provide a direct payment to farmers, provides targeted training on the implementation of measures under the proposed Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme with a view to supporting the successful implementation of the Programme which is aimed at supporting emissions reductions through the use of genomic and performance metrics. It falls under Paragraph 2(c) of the WTO agreement. The support is provided through a publicly-funded programme and does not have the effect of providing price support to producers.

11 Contribution rate(s) applicable to this intervention

Region	Article	Applicable rate	Min Rate	Max Rate
IE - Éire/Ireland	91(2)(d) - Other regions	40.21%	20.00%	43.00%

12 Planned Unit Amounts - Definition

Planned Unit Amount	Type of Support	Contribution rate(s)	Type of Planned Unit Amount	Region(s)	Result Indicator(s)	Is the unit amount based on carried over expenditure?
53SCT01 - Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme 01	Grant	91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Uniform		R.1; R.28;	No

Explanation and justification related to the value of the unit amount

53SCT01 - Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme 01

The €100 per attendee rate for the knowledge provider is based on the cost associated with delivery and preparation time, course materials and delivery costs.

The annual planned output of 20,000 farmers trained in each of years one and two reflects the targeted uptake and the mandatory requirement to attend the training course in both years if participating in the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme.

13 Planned Unit Amounts - Financial table with outputs

Planned Unit Amount	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53SCT01 - Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme 01 (Grant - Uniform)	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		100.00	100.00					
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)		20,000.00	20,000.00					40,000.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)		20,000.00	20,000.00					40,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00					4,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		804,200.00	804,200.00					1,608,400.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

6 Financial plan

6.1 Overview table

	Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
	(Direct payments (CY N=FY N+1))	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
1	Initial direct payments allocations (initial Annex V)	N/A	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	5,931,409,980.00
2	Cotton (Annex VIII)	N/A						
3	Initial direct payments allocations excluding cotton (Initial annex IX)	N/A	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	5,931,409,980.00
4	Coupled income support (Article 96)	N/A	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	35,000,000.00
5	Transfer to EAFRD total amount (flexibility+reduction) Resulting amount	N/A					N/A	
6	Total flexibility - Article 103(1)(a) Amount to be entered	N/A					N/A	
7	If above 25%: of which for the environmental and climate-related objectives (Article 103(2)(a)) - amount to be entered	N/A					N/A	
8	If above 25%: of which for the installation of young farmers (article 103(2)(b)) - Amount to be entered	N/A					N/A	
9	Total flexibility %	N/A					N/A	
10	Transfer to EAFRD of the estimated product of reduction, if applicable (Article 17(5))	N/A					N/A	
11	Transfer to types of interventions in other sectors (article 88(6)) Amount to be entered	N/A						
12	Transfer to types of interventions in other sectors (article 88(6)) resulting percentage	N/A						
13	Transferred from EAFRD: amount (article 103(1)(b))	N/A					N/A	
16	Adjusted direct payments allocation (Annex V)	N/A	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	5,931,409,980.00
17	Adjusted direct payments allocations excluding cotton before reduction transfer (Annex IX)	N/A	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	5,931,409,980.00

	EAGF sectorial	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
18	Wine (Annex VII)						N/A	
19	Apiculture (Annex X)	52,153.70	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	N/A	298,713.70
22	Types of interventions in other sectors (Art.42(f)) from Direct Payments	N/A						
	EAFRD	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total**
23	Initial EAFRD Member State's allocation (Annex XI)	311,640,628.00	311,640,628.00	311,640,628.00	311,640,628.00	311,640,628.00	N/A	1,558,203,140.00
24	Flexibility transfer to direct payments - amount (Article 103.1(b)) amount to be entered						N/A	
25	resulting percentage						N/A	
26	Transferred from direct payments (flexibility+reduction estimate), article 17+103	1,000.00					N/A	1,000.00
27	Allocated to EU Invest (Article 81)						N/A	
28	Allocated to LIFE (Article 99) - amount						N/A	
28a	Allocated to ERASMUS (Article 99) - amount						N/A	
28b	Early retirement carry-over amounts (Article 23 of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005) - Article 155(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 amount						N/A	
30	Adjusted EAFRD Member State's allocations (Annex XI)	311,641,628.00	311,640,628.00	311,640,628.00	311,640,628.00	311,640,628.00	N/A	1,558,204,140.00
	Financial Year, minimum spending requirements (Articles 92, 93, 95, 97)	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total**
31	Reserved for LEADER (Article 92(1)) - minimum 5% over the period resulting percentage	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	N/A	5.00
32	Reserved for LEADER - amount to be entered	15,588,000.00	15,588,000.00	15,588,000.00	15,588,000.00	15,588,000.00	N/A	77,940,000.00
33	Reserved for environmental and climate related objectives under EAFRD (Article 93) (min 35%) - Outermost regions excluded resulting percentage	67.15	67.15	67.15	67.15	67.15	N/A	67.15
34	Reserved for environmental and climate related objectives under EAFRD - amount to be entered	209,265,891.81	209,265,891.81	209,265,891.81	209,265,891.81	209,265,889.14	N/A	1,046,329,456.38
35	- Out of which for Article 70	141,315,030.54	141,315,030.54	141,315,030.54	141,315,030.54	141,315,027.84	N/A	706,575,150.00
36	- Out of which for Article 71 (50%)	50,262,500.00	50,262,500.00	50,262,500.00	50,262,500.00	50,262,500.00	N/A	251,312,500.00
37	- Out of which for Article 72						N/A	
38	- Out of which for Article 73 linked to specific objectives in Art 6(1) points (d), (e) and (f) and, as regards animal welfare, in Art 6(1), point (i)	17,688,361.27	17,688,361.27	17,688,361.27	17,688,361.27	17,688,361.30	N/A	88,441,806.38
38a	- Out of which for Article 74 linked to specific objectives in Art 6(1) points (d), (e) and (f)						N/A	
39	Difference as compared to minimum amount	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	500,958,007.38
39a	To be reserved for young farmers (Annex XII) - (Article 95) (if only Direct Payments: annual amounts to be respected)	N/A	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
39b	Reserved for young farmers		35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
40	Reserved for young farmers - needed to reach minimum requirements		35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
41	- through Complementary income support for young farmers (under Direct Payments)	N/A	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00

42	"of which needed to reach minimum requirement" - basis for reverse ceiling	N/A	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
43	- through investments by young farmers (weighted at 50%) (under Rural Development)						N/A	
44	"of which needed to reach minimum requirement" - basis for reverse ceiling						N/A	
45	- setting up of young farmers (under Rural Development)						N/A	
46	"of which needed to reach minimum requirement" - basis for reverse ceiling						N/A	
47	Minimum amount to be reserved for eco-schemes (Article 97)	N/A	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	1,482,852,495.00
48	Rebate (where relevant - optional for Member States)	N/A						
49	Annual amounts reserved for eco-schemes under direct payments	N/A	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	1,482,852,495.00
51	Total amount for eco-schemes	N/A	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	1,482,852,495.00
52	Rebate from rural development - optional for MS Article 97 (2-4)	N/A						
53	Amount reserved for redistributive payment (Article 29) - minimum 10% annually applied on row 17, unless derogation applies	N/A	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	593,140,998.00

6.2 Detailed financial information and breakdown per intervention and planning of output (TO BE FINALIZED)

6.2.1 Direct Payments

	Financial Year	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total 2024 - 2028**
	Calendar year N = Financial year N-1	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**Total 2023 - 2027**
	Adjusted direct payments allocation (Annex V)	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	5,931,409,980.00
	Cotton (Annex VIII)						
	Adjusted direct payments allocations excluding cotton before reduction transfer (Annex IX)	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	1,186,281,996.00	5,931,409,980.00
	Transfer to EAFRD of the estimated product of reduction, if applicable (Article 17(5))					N/A	
	Maximum of indicative financial allocations (article 87(3))	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	
	Decoupled interventions (article 16(2))						
BISS (21)	**Basic income support for sustainability**						
51BISS	BISS	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**Total 2023 - 2027**
53BISS01 - Planned average unit amount per entitlement (Average)	Planned unit amount	158.68	158.68	158.68	158.68	158.68	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	126.94	126.94	126.94	126.94	126.94	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	190.42	190.42	190.42	190.42	190.42	
	O.4 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.4 (unit: Hectares)	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	4,407,042.00	22,035,210.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	728,494,838.00	3,642,474,190.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article 31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						
CRISS (29)	**Complementary redistributive income support for sustainability**						
51CRISS	Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**Total 2023 - 2027**
51CRISS01 - CRISS Payment per Hectare (Average)	Planned unit amount	43.14	43.14	43.14	43.14	43.14	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	40.98	40.98	40.98	40.98	40.98	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	45.29	45.29	45.29	45.29	45.29	
	O.7 (unit: Hectares)	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	
	Planned output * Planned unit amount	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	118,635,000.00	593,175,000.00
TOTAL	O.7 (unit: Hectares)	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	2,750,000.00	13,750,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	118,628,199.60	593,140,998.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article 31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						
CIS-YF (30)	**Complementary income support for young farmers**						
51CISYF	Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**Total 2023 - 2027**
51CISYF01 - CISYF Support	Planned unit amount	196.00	186.70	177.77	169.15	161.16	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	145.00	145.00	145.00	145.00	145.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	220.00	220.00	220.00	220.00	220.00	

Per Hectare (Average)	O.6 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.6 (unit: Hectares)	181,500.00	190,575.00	200,145.00	210,210.00	220,770.00	1,003,200.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	35,588,460.00	177,942,300.00
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article 31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						
Eco-scheme (31)	**Schemes for the climate, the environment and animal welfare**						
51ECO	Eco-Scheme	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**Total 2023 - 2027**
51ECO01 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO02 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for preserving landscape features (enhanced) (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO03 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO04 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for limiting chemical nitrogen (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO05 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of native trees/hedgerows (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO06 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting of	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						

native trees/hedgerows (enhanced) (Uniform)	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO07 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha use of GPS Controlled Spreader/Sprayer (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO08 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for soil sampling and appropriate liming (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO09 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for enhanced crop diversification (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO10 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for planting a multi-species sward (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51ECO11 - Eco-Scheme Payment per ha for extensive livestock production (enhanced) (Uniform)	Planned unit amount	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	66.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	131.00	
	O.8 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.8 (unit: Hectares)	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	3,838,634.00	19,193,170.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	296,570,499.00	1,482,852,495.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						
	Sum of indicative allocations for decoupled interventions	1,179,281,996.60	1,179,281,996.60	1,179,281,996.60	1,179,281,996.60	1,179,281,996.60	5,896,409,983.00
	Coupled income support (16(3)(a))- amount - binding ceiling						
CIS (32)	**Coupled income support**						
51VCS	Protein Aid	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**Total 2023 - 2027**
51VCS01 - Average payment per hectare in Protein Aid (Average)	Planned unit amount	583.00	500.00	400.00	350.00	350.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	700.00	600.00	480.00	420.00	420.00	
	O.10 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
51VCS02 - Average	Planned unit amount	291.50	250.00	200.00	150.00	175.00	
	Minimum Amount for the Planned unit amount	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	

payment per hectare in Protein/Cereal Mix Crop (Average)	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount	350.00	300.00	240.00	210.00	210.00	
	O.10 (unit: Hectares)						
	Planned output * Planned unit amount						
TOTAL	O.10 (unit: Hectares)	12,007.00	14,000.00	17,500.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	83,507.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	35,000,000.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum ringfencing requirement (Annex XII) (only under article 30) (Union contribution)						
	Out of which needed carried over - expenditure (applicable only to eco-scheme and only with type of payment "compensatory" (article 31(7)(b)) if the intervention contains carry over)						
	Sum of indicative allocations for coupled interventions	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	35,000,000.00
	Sum of all indicative direct payments allocations	1,186,281,996.60	1,186,281,996.60	1,186,281,996.60	1,186,281,996.60	1,186,281,996.60	5,931,409,983.00

6.2.2 Sectoral

Financial Year		**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total financial allocation**
Fruit and Vegetables								
52FVPO01 - Average payment per Operational Programme (Average)	O.35 (unit: Operational Programmes)	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00		
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	3,067,024.21	10,223,414.03	10,223,414.03	10,589,718.32	10,589,718.32		44,693,288.91
Apiculture products								
COOPAPI (55(1)(e)) - cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of research programs in the field of beekeeping and apiculture products								
52API - Sectoral Intervention for the Apiculture Sector		**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total**
52API01 - Apiculture Research & Advisory Programme (Uniform)	O.37 (unit: Actions)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	52,153.70	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00		298,713.70
TOTAL	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public Expenditure in EUR)	104,307.40	123,280.00	123,280.00	123,280.00	123,280.00		597,427.40
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total Union expenditure in EUR)	52,153.70	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00		298,713.70
	EU co-financing rate in %	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00		
Sum of indicative allocations and outputs for interventions for apiculture products		52,153.70	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00	61,640.00		298,713.70

6.2.3 Rural Development

	Financial Year	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029 (including payments of Q4 2029)**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								

53AECMCP70	Agri-Environment Climate Measure 'AECM' – Cooperation Option	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53AECMCP7001 - Annual average payment for participant farmers (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		230.00	230.00	230.00	230.00	230.00	230.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		200,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	200,000.00	2,000,000.00
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		46,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	92,000,000.00	46,000,000.00	460,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		18,496,600.00	36,993,200.00	36,993,200.00	36,993,200.00	36,993,200.00	18,496,600.00	184,966,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								
53AECMGEN	AECM General	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total 2023 - 2029
53AECMGEN01 - Average Payment per ha – AECM General (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		367.50	367.50	367.50	367.50	367.50	367.50	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		221,322.00	331,998.00	331,998.00	331,998.00	331,998.00	110,666.00	1,659,980.00
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		80,739,097.00	121,114,915.00	121,114,915.00	121,114,915.00	121,114,915.00	40,372,143.00	605,570,900.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		32,465,191.00	48,700,307.00	48,700,307.00	48,700,307.00	48,700,307.00	16,233,639.00	243,500,058.00

	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								
53DBWS	Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53DBWS01 - Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme (Grant - Uniform) [LU Livestock Units DBW] 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00		
[LU Livestock Units DBW] 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
TOTAL [LU Livestock Units DBW]	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00		500,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00		25,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00	2,010,500.00		10,052,500.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								

	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								
53GR	AECM Genetic Resources	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53GR01 - Uniform Unit Amount Traditional orchard (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		138.10	138.10	138.10	138.10	138.10	138.10	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.19 (unit: Operations)								
53GR02 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds per LU (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.19 (unit: Operations)								
53GR03 - Uniform Unit Amount Rare breeds (Offspring) per LU (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		75.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.19 (unit: Operations)								
TOTAL	O.19 (unit: Operations)		1,034.00	1,550.00	1,550.00	1,550.00	1,550.00	516.00	7,750.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		596,738.00	894,350.00	894,350.00	894,350.00	894,350.00	297,612.00	4,471,750.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		239,948.00	359,618.00	359,618.00	359,618.00	359,618.00	119,670.00	1,798,090.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								

	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								
53OFS	Organic Farming Scheme	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53OFS01 - In Conversion Average Payment per ha - Organic Farming Scheme (Grant - Average) [Total hectares under organic production - In Conversion] 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		290.40	314.21	292.52	285.85	292.93		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00		
[Total hectares under organic production - In Conversion] 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	O.17 (unit: Hectares)								
53OFS02 - Maintenance Average Payment per ha Organic Farming Scheme (Grant - Average) [Total Hectares under Organic Production - Maintenance] 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		238.38	225.11	239.15	239.45	239.38		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00		
[Total Hectares under Organic Production - Maintenance] 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	O.17 (unit: Hectares)								
TOTAL [Total hectares under organic production - In Conversion]	O.17 (unit: Hectares)		102,876.00	132,699.00	175,162.00	235,594.00	336,901.00		983,232.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		25,659,250.00	34,477,846.00	45,748,389.00	60,999,710.00	89,284,671.00		256,169,866.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		10,317,584.00	13,863,542.00	18,395,427.00	24,527,983.00	35,901,366.00		103,005,902.00

	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								
53SCEP	Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53SCEP01 - Average support per ha (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		199.48	199.48	199.48	199.48	199.48		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		225.00	225.00	225.00	225.00	225.00		
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70		1,283,333.50
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70	256,666.70		1,283,333.50
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00	51,200,000.00		256,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00	20,587,520.00		102,937,600.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								

	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								
53SIM	Straw Incorporation Measure	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53SIM01 - Per Ha (Barley, Wheat, Oats, Rye) (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
53SIM02 - Per Ha (oilseed rape) (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.14 (unit: Hectares)								
TOTAL	O.14 (unit: Hectares)		40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00		200,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00		50,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00	4,021,000.00		20,105,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ENVCLIM (70)	**Environmental, climate-related and other management commitments**								
53SIP	Sheep Improvement Scheme	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		120.00	120.00	120.00	120.00	120.00		

35SIP01 - Payment Per Livestock Unit (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.18 (unit: Livestock units)		166,666.00	166,666.00	166,666.00	166,666.00	166,666.00		833,330.00
TOTAL	O.18 (unit: Livestock units)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00		100,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00	8,042,000.00		40,210,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
ANC (71)	**Natural or other area-specific constraints**								
53ANC	ANC	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53ANC01 - Category 1 Land up to 12 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	148.00	148.00	148.00	148.00	148.00	148.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC02 - Category 1 Land 12-34 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	112.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	112.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC03 - Category 2 Land Up to 10 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	111.00	111.00	111.00	111.00	111.00	111.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	104.00	104.00	104.00	104.00	104.00	104.00		

53ANC04 - Category 2 Land 10-30 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC05 - Category 3 Land Up to 8 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	93.00	93.00	93.00	93.00	93.00	93.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC06 - Category 3 Land 8-30 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	88.25	88.25	88.25	88.25	88.25	88.25		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC07 - Offshore Island Land Up to 20 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC08 - Offshore Island Land 20-34 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	170.00	170.00	170.00	170.00	170.00	170.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
53ANC09 - Offshore Island Land 34-40 ha (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.12 (unit: Hectares)								
TOTAL	O.12 (unit: Hectares)	1,894,836.00	2,229,219.00	2,229,219.00	2,229,219.00	2,229,219.00	334,383.00		11,146,095.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	212,500,000.00	250,000,000.00	250,000,000.00	250,000,000.00	250,000,000.00	37,500,000.00		1,250,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	85,446,250.00	100,525,000.00	100,525,000.00	100,525,000.00	100,525,000.00	15,078,750.00		502,625,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								

	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
INVEST (73-74)	**Investments, including investments in irrigation**								
53AECMNPI	Non-Productive Investments Associated with Agri-Environment Climate Measure	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53AECMNPI01 - Average support for on-farm NPI (General) (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	1,185.63	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	1,482.39	
	O.21 (unit: Operations)		15,738.00	23,608.00	23,608.00	23,608.00	23,608.00	7,869.00	118,039.00
53AECMNPI02 - Average support for on-farm NPI (Co-operation) (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	
	O.21 (unit: Operations)		6,667.00	13,333.00	13,333.00	13,333.00	13,333.00	6,667.00	66,666.00
TOTAL	O.21 (unit: Operations)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		26,659,845.00	43,989,953.00	43,989,953.00	43,989,953.00	43,989,953.00	17,330,122.00	219,949,779.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		10,719,923.65	17,688,360.12	17,688,360.12	17,688,360.12	17,688,360.12	6,968,442.25	88,441,806.38
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
INVEST (73-74)	**Investments, including investments in irrigation**								
53OFCIS	On Farm Capital Investments	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53OFCIS01 - CIS Average Grant	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00			

(Productive) (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	6,250.00	6,250.00	6,250.00	6,250.00	6,250.00			
	O.20 (unit: Operations)	300.00	680.00	740.00	9,210.00	9,070.00			20,000.00
TOTAL	O.20 (unit: Operations)	300.00	680.00	740.00	9,210.00	9,070.00			20,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	1,500,000.00	3,400,000.00	3,700,000.00	46,050,000.00	45,350,000.00			100,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	603,150.00	1,367,140.00	1,487,770.00	18,516,705.00	18,235,235.00			40,210,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
COOP (77)	**Cooperation**								
53AECMCP77	AECM Co-Operation Measure - Article 77	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53AECMCP7701 - Community fund for bespoke farm/landscape actions (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		1,500,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	2,500,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,875,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	3,125,000.00	
	O.32 (unit: Operations)								
53AECMCP7702 - Local Co-operation Project Team's Admin (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	250,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,750,000.00	437,500.00	
	O.32 (unit: Operations)								
TOTAL	O.32 (unit: Operations)	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	56.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	8,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	40,000,000.00	22,000,000.00	210,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	3,216,800.00	8,042,000.00	16,084,000.00	16,084,000.00	16,084,000.00	16,084,000.00	8,846,200.00	84,441,000.00

	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
COOP (77)	**Cooperation**								
53CFG	Collaborative Farming Grant	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53CFG01 - Collaborative Farming Grant 01 (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00		
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00		
	O.30 (unit: Operations)								
TOTAL	O.30 (unit: Operations)		267.00	267.00	267.00	267.00	267.00		1,335.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00		2,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00		804,200.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								

	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
COOP (77)	**Cooperation**								
53EIP	European Innovation Partnerships	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53EIP01 - Phase 2 Stream A (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00						
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00						
	O.1 (unit: Projects)	6.00	6.00						12.00
53EIP02 - Phase 3 Stream A (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.1 (unit: Projects)		3.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	3.00	30.00
53EIP03 - Phase 2 Stream B (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00						
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00						
	O.1 (unit: Projects)	30.00	30.00						60.00
53EIP04 - Phase 3 Stream B (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	210,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.1 (unit: Projects)		15.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	165.00
TOTAL	O.1 (unit: Projects)	36.00	54.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	36.00	33.00	267.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	360,000.00	3,900,000.00	7,080,000.00	7,080,000.00	7,080,000.00	7,080,000.00	3,540,000.00	36,120,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	144,756.00	1,568,190.00	2,846,868.00	2,846,868.00	2,846,868.00	2,846,868.00	1,423,434.00	14,523,852.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

COOP (77)	Cooperation								
53ESSPO	Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53ESSPO01 - Unit amount for advisory support (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00			
	O.28 (unit: Beneficiaries)	15.00	15.00	15.00					45.00
53ESSPO02 - Unit amount for administrative function support (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
	O.28 (unit: Beneficiaries)	15.00	30.00	45.00	30.00	15.00			135.00
TOTAL	O.28 (unit: Beneficiaries)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	195,000.00	345,000.00	495,000.00	300,000.00	150,000.00			1,485,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	78,409.50	138,724.50	199,039.50	120,630.00	60,315.00			597,118.50
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
COOP (77)	**Cooperation**								
53LEADER	LEADER	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
RDD to programme - Average expenditure per year (Grant - Average) [29 LDSs]	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	6,210,000.00	
[29 LDSs]	O.31 (unit: Preparatory actions)								

TOTAL [29 LDSs]	O.31 (unit: Preparatory actions)		29.00						29.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	9,490,500.00	18,329,250.00	23,945,250.00	28,931,250.00	39,958,125.00	39,958,125.00	19,387,500.00	180,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	4,109,386.50	7,936,565.25	10,368,293.25	12,527,231.25	17,301,868.12	17,301,868.13	8,394,787.50	77,940,000.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)		29.00						29.00
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
KNOW (78)	**Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information**								
53AECMTR	Training to Implement Agri-Environment-Climate Measure	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53AECMTR01 - Unit Amount per Attendee (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	246.00	246.00	246.00	246.00	246.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)	17,500.00	25,000.00	20,590.00	18,700.00	5,608.00			87,398.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)	17,500.00	25,000.00	20,590.00	18,700.00	5,608.00			87,398.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	4,305,000.00	6,150,000.00	5,065,140.00	4,600,200.00	1,379,568.00			21,499,908.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	1,731,040.50	2,472,915.00	2,036,692.79	1,849,740.42	554,724.29			8,645,113.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								

	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
KNOW (78)	**Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information**								
53CPDA	CPD For Advisors	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53CPDA01 - Unit Amount for Provision of an Online Platform (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	300,000.00	300,000.00						
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Operations)	0.33	0.67						1.00
53CPDA02 - Unit amount per training intervention delivered (Grant - Average) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Operations)	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00			10.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Operations)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)	99,000.00	601,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00			1,900,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)	40,210.00	241,260.00	160,840.00	160,840.00	160,840.00			763,990.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

KNOW (78)	**Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information**								
53KT	Knowledge Transfer Programme	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53KT01 - KT Support for Advisors (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)			500.00	500.00	500.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)								
53KT02 - KT Support for Farmers (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)			750.00	750.00	750.00			
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)			18,960.00	18,960.00	18,960.00			56,880.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)								
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)			23,700,000.00	23,700,000.00	23,700,000.00			71,100,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)			9,529,770.00	9,529,770.00	9,529,770.00			28,589,310.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								
KNOW (78)	**Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information**								
53SCT	Training to Implement Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**Total 2023 - 2029**
53SCT01 - Training to Implement the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme 01 (Grant - Uniform) 91(2)(d)-IE-40.21%	Planned unit amount (Total Public Expenditure in EUR)		100.00	100.00					
	Maximum Amount for the Planned unit amount (EUR)								
	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)		20,000.00	20,000.00					40,000.00
TOTAL	O.33 (unit: Beneficiaries)		20,000.00	20,000.00					40,000.00

	Annual indicative financial allocation (Total public expenditure in EUR)		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00					4,000,000.00
	Annual indicative financial allocation (Union Contribution in EUR)		804,200.00	804,200.00					1,608,400.00
	Out of which for financial instrument (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which for financial instrument (Union Contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Total public Expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which carry-over (Union contribution in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (applicable to article 95(1) under article 73 and 75) (Total public expenditure in EUR)								
	Out of which needed to reach the minimum financial allocation set out in Annex XII (Union Contribution in EUR)								

7 Governance and Coordination system

7.1 Identification of governance and coordination bodies + control bodies

Authority type	Institution name	EAGF	EAFRD	Responsible name	Address	Email
Other delegated and intermediate bodies not laid down in the Regulation, with a description of their role	Delegated Paying Agency for LEADER - Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)	N	Y	Head of Division, LEADER Policy & Operations Unit, DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development, Trinity Point, 10-11 South Leinster Street, Dublin 2, D02 EF85	leader2127@drcd.gov.ie
Control Body	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Y	Y	Head of Division, Finance Division, DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 WK12	fdeuaudit@agriculture.gov.ie
Certification Body	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Y	Y	Head of Division, Finance Division, DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 WK12	fdeuaudit@agriculture.gov.ie
AKIS coordination, including farm advice - Relevant coordination body	DAFM	Y	Y	Head of Division, Research Division, DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 WK12	Research@agriculture.gov.ie
Paying Agency	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Y	Y	Head of Division, Finance Division, DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 WK12	fdeuaudit@agriculture.gov.ie
Competent Authority	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Y	Y	Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 WK12	fdeuaudit@agriculture.gov.ie
Managing authority	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Y	Y	Head of Division, CAP Strategic Plan Division, DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2,	CAPStrategicPlan@agriculture.gov.ie
Monitoring Committee	DAFM	Y	Y	Head of Division CAP Strategic Plan Division, DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 WK12	CAPStrategicPlan@agriculture.gov.ie
CAP plan communication officer (cf. Article 43(2) CPR)	DAFM	Y	Y	Head of Division, Communications Division	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 WK12	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie

Brief description of the set up and organisation of the Competent Authority

Competent Authority

The Competent Authority is the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Paying Agency is the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Within Finance Division there is a separate independent unit that acts on behalf of the Minister in his capacity as the Competent Authority, in issuing, reviewing and withdrawing the accreditation of the Paying Agency, and designating and withdrawing the designation of the Certification Body. The Competent Authority functions are separate to that of the Paying Agency. There will be no requirement for a co-ordinating Body.

The Minister in their capacity as Competent Authority shall delegate functions to Ministry staff to carry out the following tasks:

- Carrying out a review of the existing accreditation status of the designated paying agency DAFM referred to in Article 8 HZR;
- designating and withdrawing the designation of a certification body as referred to in Article 12 and ensuring that there is always a certification body designated. Ireland employs the services of an independent audit body through a public procurement contract.
- Inform the Commission of the appointment of a Certification Body or a change in Certification Body and keep the Paying Agency under constant supervision.

Paying Agency:

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in its capacity as Paying agency has an organisation structure to allow it to execute functions with regard to EAGF and EAFRD.

Organisation Structure

The Paying Agency has:

- Line Divisions responsible for approving/authorising payments which are deemed eligible
- Integrated operational and financial system to capture all financial data on payments
- Integrated Controls Division with functions to carry out required controls as defined.
- Accounting Division responsible for execution of payments
- Finance Unit responsible for Annual Accounts preparation/performance report submission, and submission of management declaration.
- Managing Authority responsible for drawing up, monitoring and managing the Annual Performance Review (APR), monitoring the implementation of the CAP Strategic Plan (CSP), who will also act as interlocuter on performance review, clearance and response to any action plans needed.
- Managing any delegated functions and drawing up formal Memorandum of Understanding with the delegated body and monitoring compliance
- Internal Audit Unit which provides independent objective assurance on controls and compliance with accreditation criteria.
- Accreditation Review group with independent observers to monitor compliance with accreditation

Human Resource Standard

- DAFM has a staff compliment in excess of 3,500 and has a dedicated Human Resource Division with a strong emphasis on staff training and ethics. Annual Business plans, role profiles for all staff members, ethics and conflict of interest returns and annual performance reviews are embedded in the culture of the Department.
- Segregation of duties is paramount, with separate divisions responsible for different stages of the process to payment.

Risk

There is a dedicated Risk Division in the Department.

Delegated Functions

There will be a formal Memorandum of understanding with any entity with delegated functions. This delegated entity will be kept under supervision by the Paying Agency.

Controls:

- The Paying Agency will continue to ensure that procedures are in place for the processing of claims, with relevant checklists. Payments will only be made via bank transfer to the beneficiaries concerned in a secure manner. Claims to the EU for reimbursement will be based on eligible expenditure incurred.

- The Paying Agency will put in place a performance reporting system to satisfy the reporting requirements for Annual Performance Report and ongoing monitoring,

Debts

- A dedicated debtor's unit is in place to ensure best practice in debt management

Advances and Securities

- A system is in place to manage advances and securities in our accounts Division

Information Systems Security

- The information systems security is certified in accordance with International Standards Organisation 27001: Information Security management systems

Monitoring

- DAFM has a dedicated Internal unit who are independent and report to the head of the Paying Agency.

Paying Agency Reporting Function Structure:

Finance Division within the Paying Agency will be responsible for

- Preparation and submission of EAFRD quarterly claims of expenditure and monthly T104
- Preparation and submission of relevant forecast data
- Preparation and submission of Annual Accounts Clearance package
- Submission of Management declaration
- Submission of Certification Body Report
- Coordination and submission of APR which reconciles to Annual Accounts, with variances explained.

Certifying Body

- The Certification Body will be appointed after public tender process to an independent audit body who will perform their certification duties in line with the Horizontal provisions. The term will be awarded for a minimum of 3 years. The process of the appointment of a Certification Body for the CSP is currently under way and it is anticipated that the process will be finalised by July 2022.

Managing Authority

CAP Strategic Plan Division within the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine will be the Managing Authority.

Delegated Paying Agency

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) will be the delegated Paying Agency for LEADER. The monitoring and evaluation of LEADER will be integrated with the overall monitoring and evaluation for the CAP Strategic Plan.

DAFM Divisions

Within DAFM, in general terms, a number of line divisions will be responsible for different aspects of the CSP monitoring and evaluation arrangements. These are:

- CAP Strategic Plan Division:
    - Will be the central coordinating division for the monitoring and evaluation of the CSP;

- Will be interlocuter for performance review and performance clearance for Pillar 2, and will draw up and implement action plans;
- Will coordinate the intervention design input from line divisions;
- Will coordinate the process of the identification, capture and management of the appropriate amount of data required for efficient monitoring and evaluation at the earliest possible juncture by line divisions, i.e. during application processing;
- Will identify, with the assistance of line divisions, the data requirements that are likely to be satisfied using external sources of information;
- Will engage external technical assistance to assist with evaluations as required, including through the compilation of the more qualitative data associated with the Annual Performance Reports;
- Will coordinate the complementarity between Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 interventions in the context of input into the overall CSP evaluation.

- Line divisions (for example, Agri-Environment and Structures, Nitrates Bio-diversity and Engineering Division, Climate Change and Bio-Energy Division, etc):
  - Will ensure that the requirements in relation to statistical information and monitoring and evaluation data are addressed to the maximum possible extent during the design of individual measures, including where this involves consultation with/implementation by external bodies;
  - Will implement systems of collection and reporting of monitoring and evaluation data over the next CAP period;
  - Will provide data for inclusion in the Annual Performance Report and for the performance review.

- Direct Payments Policy Unit:
  - Will be interlocuter for performance review and performance clearance for Pillar 1, and will draw up and implement action plans;
  - Will report into the Managing Authority and Paying Agency on Pillar 1 measures as appropriate.

- IMT (Information Management and Technology) Division and Digital Transformation and Governance Division:
  - Will be responsible for the development of the IMT systems necessary to support the implementation of the CSP;
  - Will ensure the capture and interrogation of statistical information and monitoring and evaluation data from both internal (DAFM) and external sources, including data that may be obtained by alternative means such as surveys.

- Economics and Planning Division (EPD):
  - as DAFM's central economics and evaluation unit: will contribute to the optimum design and targeting of measures under the new CSP;
  - Will incorporate such measures into DAFM's Spending Review process, in line with the Public Spending Code published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.
  - As a member of the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service, will provide ongoing expert advice and input into evaluation issues that arise over the lifetime of the CSP;

As set out in Article 124 of Regulation 2021/2115/EC (the Strategic Plan Regulation), the Managing Authority will establish a Monitoring Committee for the CAP Strategic Plan. The Monitoring Committee will have a role in relation to the monitoring of the performance of the CSP. The Committee's function in this regard includes the consideration and approval of annual implementation reports and the reviewing the implementation of the CSP and progress made towards achieving its objectives. In the development of the CAP Strategic Plan to date, engagement with stakeholders via the CAP Stakeholder Consultative Committee has been an essential element the Plan's preparation and development. Ireland's Monitoring Committee will comprise of a balance between the relevant government and public authorities, economic and social partners as listed in Article 106(3). To promote a fairer gender balance, the Monitoring Committee will aim to have increased representation by women in its membership. The Managing Authority will be responsible for ensuring that relevant bodies concerning women, youth and the interests of people in disadvantaged situations are represented on the Monitoring Committee.

Some of the evaluation activities outlined in the Ireland's CSP Evaluation Plan will be augmented by the engagement of external evaluators. All evaluation activities will be reviewed by the Monitoring Committee as required under the CSP Regulations. In all cases, the work of such evaluators will be overseen by Steering Committees comprised of representatives from relevant line divisions.

7.2 Description of the monitoring and reporting structure

The provision of efficient data management systems to record, maintain, manage and report statistical information on the CSP, and to provide monitoring data for the annual performance report under Article 134 SPR, requires action at four levels:

• identification and capture of the appropriate statistical and monitoring data at the earliest opportunity, i.e. during measure design and implementation (application processing, control and payment processing),

• enhancement/re-design of existing internal IT systems to enable processing of statistical and monitoring data -

• identification of other potential methods to collect statistical and monitoring data in accordance with evaluation requirements and

• the efficient incorporation of these additional methods/sources into DAFM's data management systems.

Each of these activities will also be informed by the range of requirements in relation to:

• the measurement of outputs, unit amounts, financial allocations, milestones and programme targets in accordance with the range of other indicators detailed in the Implementing Act

• the Annual Performance Report (APR), including in relation to outputs, progress towards milestones, targets and achievement of results,

At this stage, it is envisaged that DAFM's overall data management system for statistical information and monitoring data is likely to be comprised of three elements:

• capture and processing of application/measure data, including monitoring data (in respect of output indicators, and result indicators, as required in particular for the completion of APRs) through existing, internal IT systems and data sources, primarily:

o the Generic Claims Processing System (GCPS) and the Ranking and Selection System (RASS), which will process application data,

o the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) and the (Agriculture Field Inspection and Testing (AFIT) system, which will facilitate control and inspection, and

o the SAP financial system

o The use of satellite data and technologies such as AgriSnap, DAFM's geotagged photo app for Checks by Monitoring (CbM), will have significant benefits for farmers. The introduction of CbM for the Protein Aid Scheme in 2021 is the first step in the implementation of the Area Monitoring System (AMS) which will be compulsory in the CSP.

o The pilot Farm Environmental Study (FES) funded under the RDP 2014-2020 that will generate a database of baseline habitat and biodiversity data at the farm level and will provide the scope for a comprehensive analysis of farm habitats and biodiversity and a baseline for reporting and future targeting of agri-environmental schemes and measures.

o The pilot Soil Sampling Programme funded under the RDP 2014-2020 will generate a database of baseline data on soils across a sample of farms in different areas and sectors and will provide scope for a comprehensive analysis of soil health and type and a baseline for reporting and future targeting of measures.

o LEADER Data. A new system will be designed to cater for the requirements for the new 2023-2027 LEADER Programme based on the 2014-2020 system template. It will cater for the uploading of all project and payment documentation to a dedicated project repository. All LAG expenditure (animation and administration) is also uploaded onto the system. Administrative Article 48 checks are also recorded and available for control purposes. In addition, various project data reports can be obtained from the system for statistical purposes. The system allows for LAGs to input data relating to results indicators which form part of the annual implementation report for monitoring and evaluation purposes. These files are readily available with viewing permission restrictions limited to relevant users.

• capture and processing data, including monitoring and evaluation data from external sources, including:

o The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government

o The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
o Teagasc
o The Environmental Protection Agency
o Bord Bia
o Agricultural planners and advisors
o EIP Operational Groups
o The Irish Cattle Breeding Federation
o The Central Statistics Office
o The National Biodiversity Centre

and
• capture of other, more qualitative, monitoring data) through alternative means or from other external sources, such as may be provided via the use of external expertise and evaluations.

In addition, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and DAFM will strive to develop data sharing agreements to assist in our collective need to report of delivery of conservation measures nationally under the CSP. Close cooperation between NPWS/DHLGH and DAFM in the Irish Strategic Nature Project (should it receive funding) will be an important capacity builder in the context of data gathering and sharing across Government.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the CSP

During the CSP implementation phase, a Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group will be established within the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation requirements of the CSP are met. External actors will also be consulted as appropriate in relation to any specific issues as they arise.

In addition, an Inter-Departmental Environmental Committee will be established. This Committee will contain representatives from the Government Departments responsible for climate, air and water quality, as well as representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The relevant State agencies will also be involved. The Committee's remit will be to ensure that the most up to date datasets, research and information are available, and to provide a coherent approach to the monitoring of the environmental and climate impacts of the CSP and make recommendations where appropriate.

While Article 140 (5) of the CSP regulation states that Member States shall submit the evaluation plan to the monitoring committee no later than one year after the adoption of the CAP Strategic Plan, it is intended to compile a draft evaluation plan for the CSP in Q1 2022. The evaluation plan will outline the need for an evaluation team to assess the impact of CSP interventions across the three overarching themes of the CSP.

Development of CSP Reporting and Analytics IT project

A CSP Reporting and Analytics project will be established in response to a need to assess, monitor, plan and develop schemes linked to the CSP. The project will develop reporting capacity to capture and provide complete and accurate data for audit purposes on outputs and results, which underpin and match expenditure incurred under the CSP, and which will be included in the APR

Given the performance focus of the CSP, the project will monitor performance and communicate the data in a consist and coherent manner. An IT interface/dashboard, linking the numerous schemes (on different IT platforms), will monitor spend, outputs and results throughout the year. This interface will sit on a database platform established as part of this project. Such an IT interface will allow the Department to rectify issues before the end of the financial year and will also reduce the administrative burden associated with reporting under the CSP.

The deliverables for the project include compiling a wide-ranging database across a range of internal data collated from across the Department on CSP intervention indicators.

A working group will be established to identify what areas of interest are to be considered for inclusion. A sub working group comprised of colleagues from the Rural Development Division, Finance Unit and relevant Line Divisions and the Data Analytics Unit was established in 2021 to scope out the requirements for such a database. A workshop with external consultants was held in November to further this scoping exercise. This work will be progressed during the course of 2022.

It is intended that the interface/dashboard will cover a wide range of data including, amongst others, payment data, land data and demographic information as well as the relevant output and result indicator data. The data is provided on a granular level to aid analysis and allow the user to analyse information required for accurate analysis and modelling need for the evaluation element of the CSP.

Audit and assurance

The key difference in the New Delivery Model (NDM) of the CSP is the fact that in order for expenditure incurred to become eligible for reimbursement from the EU annual financial expenditure must be supported with a corresponding output which can be verified by the certification body, and which in turn feeds into result indicators which are predefined in the Strategic Plan. In the current model assurance on financial expenditure is based on the legality and regularity of the expenditure (beneficiary compliance with terms and conditions, proper administration etc).

The new assurance model is based on solid governance systems in the assurance pyramid, with a shift in focus to performance reporting, as legality and regularity of expenditure under the CAP Strategic Plan is achieved by the Member States' performance expressed in reported aggregated outputs. Thus, the certification bodies will audit Member States' governance systems and performance reporting on outputs and results. A clear audit trail linking expenditure declared in Annual Accounts and claims with associated outputs and results will be developed to facilitate audit requirement and clearance purposes.

7.3 Information on the control system and penalties

7.3.1 IACS - Integrated Administration and Control System

Is IACS used to manage and control interventions in the wine sector as laid down in Title III of Regulation (EU) ../... [CAP Strategic Plan Regulation]? : **No**

Is IACS used to manage and control conditionality? : **No**

Article 65(4)(d) of the HZR gives the possibility to MS to define the "agricultural parcel". Please provide the definition of "agricultural parcel" in your Member State.

Agricultural parcel means a continuous area of land, declared by one farmer, which does not cover more than one single crop

7.3.1.1 All elements of the IACS as set out in the Regulation [HZR] are established and operating as from 1 January 2023

All elements of the IACS as set out in the Regulation [HZR] are established and operating as from 1 January 2023 : **No**

7.3.1.1.1 Identification system for agricultural parcels (LPIS)

The Irish LPIS is a physical block system, with the majority of LPIS reference parcels containing a single agricultural parcel. Approximately 90% of the land is in permanent grassland with arable land making up the majority of the remaining area, with only a very small amount of permanent crops. The Irish LPIS is aligned to the national topographical map, with parcel boundaries reflecting physical features in the landscape. The parcel boundaries are stable and normally match hedgerows in the landscape. The Irish LPIS in conjunction with the GSAA, will be used to manage all area based actions under the new CAP.

7.3.1.1.2 Geo-spatial (GSA) and an animal-based application system (GSA)

The Geo-spatial application system in Ireland is a front end system for applicants to submit land-based applications. It has developed and matured in design and capacity over CAP (2014-2020) to facilitate 100% online claim applications for the BPS and related area-based schemes, mapping tools, preliminary checks and more recently Checks by Monitoring. It provides a robust, user-friendly application process for the applicant with early error resolution through Preliminary Checks and a means of communication with the applicant. As such it is a key element to ensuring farmers have full knowledge of the application process and are paid in an efficient and timely manner.

7.3.1.1.3 Are you applying an automatic claim system (in the meaning of Article 65(4)(f)) of the HZR?
For area-based interventions? : **No**
For animal-based interventions? : **No**

7.3.1.1.4 Area monitoring system (AMS)

The area monitoring system (AMS) will be established and operating in a limited capacity as from 2023, as permitted in the Regulation [HZR]. Ireland has commenced and planned the incremental implementation of the AMS in accordance with and in the spirit of the provisions of the above-mentioned article. Indeed, the Commission is aware that Ireland implemented Checks by Monitoring for the Coupled Support Protein Aid Scheme in 2021 and is planning further developments in 2022 that will feed directly into the planned incremental implementation of the AMS. Article 10 (4) of the recently circulated draft Implementing Regulation requires that the AMS be operational for BISS and ANC from 1st January 2023 in each member state. Ireland believes that the earlier introduction for the largest schemes will create an enormous burden (and probably an unrealistic expectation) on the administration to implement an effective and efficient AMS for both BISS and ANC by 1st January 2023. Ireland has requested that subsidiarity would apply for AMS planning and implementation in each Member State with the aim of full implementation by January 2024 (in accordance with Article 68 (1) HRZ).

7.3.1.1.6 System for the identification and registration of payment entitlements, where applicable
Are requirements set out in Article 71 of the HZR fullfilled? : **Yes**

7.3.1.1.7 System for the identification and registration of animals in the meaning of article 65(4)(c) [Article 66(1)(g) HZR]
Do you have a system for the identification and registration of animals referred to in Article 66(1)(g) of HZR? : **Yes**

system for the identification and registration of bovine animals laid down by Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council : **Yes**

system for the identification and registration of ovine and caprine animals laid down by Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 : **Yes**

system for the identification and registration of pigs laid down by Council Directive 2008/71/EC : **Yes**

7.3.2 Non-IACS

7.3.2.1 Brief description on the penalty system for non-IACS interventions in line with the principles of effectiveness, proportionality and dissuasiveness

Non-IACS EAGF

The penalty system for IACS (EAGF) Interventions requires that penalties shall be applied by means of the reduction from or exclusion of the total amount of the payments granted or to be granted to the beneficiary concerned in respect of aid applications that have been or will be submitted during the calendar year of the finding.

Under the penalties system, the penalties referred to in the first sub-paragraph shall only apply where the non-compliance is the result of an act or omission directly attributable to the beneficiary concerned and where any, or several, of the following conditions are met:

Fruit and Vegetable Producer Organisations (PO)

Non-respect of recognition criteria

Penalties for non-respect of recognition criteria, can include warning letters/corrective actions, but can also lead to suspension of aid or suspension of recognition. Penalties or recovery of aid may also apply.

If a PO breaches the recognition criteria in part or in full, it will receive a warning letter within two months of the failure being identified, explaining the breach and how serious it is. The letter will outline what the PO needs to do to correct the breach and they will be given 4 months to implement corrective actions.

In cases of less serious breaches, payment of aid will be suspended after the 4 month deadline has passed if corrective action has not been taken. A 1% penalty will be applied to the yearly aid amount for each full or part month the PO is not compliant.

In cases of serious breaches, payment of aid will be suspended from the date of the warning letter until corrective action is taken to the satisfaction of DAFM. If the PO fails to meet the recognition criteria within the 4 month period, recognition will be suspended for a period of up to 12 months. A 2% penalty will be applied to the yearly aid amount for each full or part month the PO is suspended.

If the criteria are not fulfilled by the end of the period of suspension, recognition will be withdrawn. Outstanding aid shall not be paid and unduly paid aid may be recovered.

Fraud

Where a PO has committed fraud,

-The recognition of that PO is withdrawn.

-The actions concerned shall be excluded from support and any aid already paid in respect of those actions will be recovered.

-The PO will also be excluded from recognition during the following year.

Ineligible Amounts:

Following the examination of all documentation, if the amount claimed exceeds the amount deemed eligible following checks, by more than 3%, a penalty shall be applied. The amount of the penalty is the difference between the amount claimed and the amount deemed eligible following check, unless the PO is able to demonstrate that it is not responsible for the inclusion of the ineligible amount.

Apiculture Programme

In the event of failure by a beneficiary to comply with any or all of the grant aid conditions, payment of aid may be suspended, reduced or cancelled. This will be based on the circumstances of the case and calculation of an appropriate and proportional level of penalty. Payment of the final claim is dependent on DAFM being satisfied that the programme has been successfully completed.

More detailed penalties for the Apiculture Programme will form part of the contract following the tendering process within the intervention and will be listed in the terms and conditions of the corresponding Request for Tender process.

Remedial Action Without a Penalty

If a non-compliance is detected during an inspection (On the Spot Checks (OTSC), Administrative, Check by Monitoring (CbM) or other) and the non-compliance has no or only insignificant consequences for the achievement of the objective of the intervention concerned then no penalty shall be applied. However, the beneficiary will be informed and instructed to carry out remedial actions if required. The beneficiary will also be informed of any appropriate advisory services relating to the specific matter at hand.

Remedial action without a penalty will not apply in cases where the non-compliance constitutes a risk to public or animal health. In all such cases a penalty will apply.

If remedial action is not undertaken by the beneficiary, then a penalty may be applied retrospectively or further noncompliance's within the same intervention or requirement being considered intentional.

Force Majeure

A penalty will not be applied if it is established that that non-compliance is due to force majeure or exceptional circumstances as set out in Article 3 of the HRZ Regulation. This will also be the case where the act or omission is a direct result of an order from a public authority.

Non-IACS EAFRD

The penalty system for non-IACS (EAFRD) Interventions requires that penalties shall be applied by means of the reduction from or exclusion of the total amount of the payments granted or to be granted to the beneficiary concerned in respect of aid applications that have been or will be submitted during the calendar year of the finding.

Under the penalties system, the penalties referred to in the first sub-paragraph shall only apply where the non-compliance is the result of an act or omission directly attributable to the beneficiary concerned and where any, or several, of the following conditions are met:

LEADER:

Ineligible expenditure

In cases where ineligible expenditure is identified in a claim for payment, where the ineligible amount is greater than 10 % of claimed amount for the operation, an administrative penalty shall be applied. The amount of the penalty shall be equal to ineligible amount established.

Circumvention

No payment of LEADER funding

CPD for Advisors, EIPs:

Penalties for the above interventions will form part of the contract following the tendering/application process within each intervention and will be listed in the terms and conditions of the corresponding Request for Tender process. All penalties will be in line with the principles of effectiveness, proportionality and dissuasiveness.

AECM Training, Knowledge Transfer:

All penalties will be in line with the principles of effectiveness, proportionality and dissuasiveness.

Remedial Action Without a Penalty

If a non-compliance is detected during an inspection (On the Spot Checks (OTSC), Administrative, Checks by Monitoring (CbM) or other) and the non-compliance has no or only insignificant consequences for the achievement of the objective of the intervention concerned then no penalty shall be applied. However, the beneficiary will be informed and instructed to carry out remedial actions if required. The beneficiary will also be informed of any appropriate advisory services relating to the specific matter at hand.

If remedial action is not undertaken by the beneficiary, then a penalty may be applied retrospectively or further noncompliance's within the same intervention or requirement being considered intentional.

Force Majeure

A penalty will not be applied if it is established that that non-compliance is due to force majeure or exceptional circumstances as set out in Article 3 of the HRZ Regulation. This will also be the case where the act or omission is a direct result of an order from a public authority.

7.3.2.2 Brief description of the control system for non-IACS (control methods, cross-checks, durability of investments and related ex-post checks, etc)

Non-IACS EAGF

Ireland will make use of existing control systems and administration checks to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of participation in interventions receiving support under CAP.

Furthermore, Ireland may augment checks making use of remote sensing imagery or the area monitoring system or other relevant technologies to assist.

Controls for non-IACS (EAGF) Interventions

On-the-spot checks (OTSC) and administrative checks will be carried out for non-IACS (EAGF) Interventions. In future, Ireland may use AMS to develop checks by monitoring (CbM) for certain interventions where feasible and appropriate.

Cross Reports

DAFM officials and officials of other State bodies can cross report non-compliance with a particular intervention or requirement to DAFM control officials. In such cases, the official or cross-reporting body must consider the same criteria as outlined in section above when determining the extent of the penalty. In cases of reoccurrence, DAFM officials with responsibility for OTSC and penalties will include the appropriate criteria when determining the final penalty percentage.

Controls for non-IACS (EAGF)

Title	Type of Check	Controls
Fruit and Veg POs	Administrative checks	Recognition criteria: -Legislative Compliance -Legal status of PO -PO's objectives and compliance of obj with legislation -Articles of association and membership agreements -Competence (report from inspectorate) Claims for aid -Subject to 100% checks
Fruit and Veg POs	OTSC	Risk-assessed sample representing at least 30% of total aid applied for each year across minimum 5% of action promoters is subject to OTSC including: -Compliance with recognition criteria -Implementation of actions and consistency with approved OP -Compliance of expenditure with union law -Accounting of operational fund -Proof of full service/products delivery -VMP declaration is accurate -Proof of good practice in Procurement procedures
Apiculture	Administrative Checks	100% checks on successful applicant as part of procurement process

Apiculture	OTSC	A full physical on-site inspection including an examination of all invoices and records will be carried out at least once during the course of the programme

Non-IACS EAFRD

Ireland will make use of existing control systems and administration checks to ensure compliance with the rules on terms and conditions of participation in interventions receiving support under CAP. Below is a list of controls for certain interventions in the CAP Strategic Plan.

Furthermore, Ireland may augment checks making use of remote sensing imagery or the area monitoring system or other relevant technologies to assist.

Controls for non-IACS (EAFRD) Interventions

On-the-spot checks (OTSC) and administrative checks will be carried out for non-IACS (EAFRD) Interventions. In future, Ireland may use AMS to develop checks by monitoring (CbM) for certain interventions where feasible and appropriate.

Cross reports

DAFM officials and officials of other State bodies can cross report non-compliance with a particular intervention or requirement to DAFM control officials.In such cases, the official or cross-reporting body must consider the same criteria as outlined in section above when determining the extent of the penalty. In cases of reoccurrence, DAFM officials with responsibility for OTSC and penalties will include the appropriate criteria when determining the final penalty percentage.

Controls for non-IACS (EAFRD)

Title	Type of check	Controls
CPD for Advisors	Administrative Checks	Eligibility checks at stages of the tendering process: -Before RFT to ensure correct specs -On opening tenders -Throughout and after evaluation -After implementation to ensure compliance with contract criteria Checks of payment claims: -Verifying expenditure against approved contracts -Compliance with national and EU rules -Compliance with intervention procedures -Review of supporting docs for each claim Proof of good practice in procurement procedures
CPD for Advisors	OTSC	Risk based inspection will be carried out on up to 100% of service providers
Knowledge Transfer	Administrative Checks	Eligibility Checks on 100% of: -Facilitators

		-Participants Verification of actions completed in line with KT T&Cs 100% systematic checks may be complemented by further administrative checks on a sample basis
Knowledge Transfer	OTSC	Controls will be undertaken on 5% of meetings to ensure adherence to T&C and quality of delivery
AECM Training	Administrative Checks	100% of population will be checked as the Prepayment validation (PPV) Process, checking: -AECM contract is held by attendees on date of attendance -Course provider has valid AECM Provider role on date of course -Course is finalised within 10 working days -Participants have been paid before payment made to Provider
AECM Training	OTSC	Limited percentage of population (exact % will be determined in line with T&C development) will be checked based on risk analysis, checking: -Attendance -Quality -content
EIPs	Administrative checks	100% of applicants will be checked. Eligibility checks including: -beneficiary eligibility -compliance with selection criteria -costs' eligibility Checks of payment claims: -expenditure relates to the approved project -Compliance with national rules -Compliance with T&C and procedures -Review of the supporting documents for each payment claim Proof of good practice for procurement procedures
EIPs	OTSC	Risk based "witnessed audit" inspection by audit unit on 100% of population

7.3.2.3 Public procurement rules?

Brief description how the compliance with public procurement rules is fulfilled.

EU and national rules promote an open, competitive and non-discriminatory public procurement regime which delivers value for money. In respect of the purchase of goods and services required to deliver successful interventions outlined in Section 5 the Department will ensure that there is an appropriate focus on good practice in procurement and that procedures are in place to comply with relevant guidelines and legislation.

7.4 Conditionality

7.4.1 Control system for conditionality

7.4.1.1 Description of the control system for conditionality

Article 12 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 sets out the principles regarding conditionality where each Member State must set up a system of conditionality, under which an administrative penalty shall be imposed on beneficiaries receiving direct payments, or the annual payments under Articles 70, 71 and 72 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, who do not comply with the Statutory Management Requirements (SMR) under Union law and the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) standards.

Article 83 to 86 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 outline in detail the principles of the control system and penalties required for conditionality.

Ireland will make use of existing control systems and administration checks to ensure compliance with the rules on conditionality.

Furthermore, Ireland may augment checks making use of remote sensing imagery or the area monitoring system or other relevant technologies to assist.

Control rate:

Ireland will establish the control sample for the checks for conditionality to be carried out each year on the basis of a risk analysis, to cover at least 1% of beneficiaries receiving the aid. As part of the risk analysis, Ireland will conduct an annual review of the control systems taking into consideration the results achieved and emerging new risks.

Selection of the control sample will include selecting 20-25% of cases at random. The remainder of the control sample are selected using risk criteria specific to an SMR / GAEC measure. Risk analysis results will be reviewed annually and risk categories that perform below random may be either dropped or amended and new categories may be added.

Controls for Conditionality

On-the-spot checks (OTSC) and administrative checks will be carried out for conditionality. In future, Ireland may use AMS to develop checks by monitoring (CbM) for certain SMRs or GAEC where feasible and appropriate.

Cross reports

DAFM officials and officials of other State bodies can cross report non-compliance with a particular standard or requirement to DAFM control officials. In such cases, the official or cross-reporting body must consider the same criteria as outlined in section above when determining the extent of the penalty. In cases of reoccurrence, DAFM officials with responsibility for OTSC and penalties relating to conditionality will include the appropriate criteria when determining the final penalty percentage.

General

Simplified Control System

Article 83(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 provides that Member States may set up a simplified control system for farmers with a maximum size of holding not exceeding 5 hectares of agricultural area declared in accordance with Article 69(1). Ireland does not intend to avail of this option as it is considered a crude instrument in determining the level of risk associated with a particular farming enterprise. Ireland's risk analysis and selection procedure for conditionality will include an analysis of the risks associated with the relevant standards and requirements and this analysis will facilitate targeted OTSC in accordance with the risks.

Land transfer

Article 84(2) point (a) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 provides that Member States shall include rules on the application of administrative penalties in cases where the agricultural land, or an agricultural holding or part thereof is transferred during the calendar year concerned or the years concerned. These rules shall be based on a fair and equitable attribution of the liability for non-compliances among transferors and transferees. For the purpose of this point, 'transfer' means any type of transaction whereby the agricultural land ceases to be at the disposal of the transferor.

Ireland will apply the penalty to beneficiaries referred to in Article 83(1) who do not comply, at any time in the calendar year concerned with the requirements of the standards and requirements of conditionality. It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to ensure compliance during the calendar year in which the non-compliance occurs.

Checks using the area monitoring system

Article 85(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 provides that if a Member State uses the area monitoring system referred to in point c of Article 66(1) to detect cases of non-compliance, it may decide to apply lower percentage of reductions than those provided for in paragraph 2 of Article 85.

It is unlikely AMS will be used to detect non-compliances in 2023.

Penalties of less than or equal to €100

Article 84(2) point (b) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 provides that Member States may decide not to apply a penalty per beneficiary and per calendar year when the amount of the penalty is EUR 100 or less. In such cases the beneficiary shall be informed about the finding and the obligation to take remedial action for the future.

Ireland will not avail of this derogation to the application of a penalty equal to or below EUR 100.

7.4.1.2 Types of checks

SMR / GAEC	Types of checks
GAEC01 - Maintenance of permanent grassland based on a ratio of permanent grassland in relation to agricultural area at national, regional, sub-regional, group-of-holdings or holding level in comparison to the reference year 2018.Maximum decrease of 5% compared to the reference year.	On-the-spot control
GAEC02 - Protection of wetland and peatland	On-the-spot control
GAEC03 - Ban on burning arable stubble, except for plant health reasons	On-the-spot control
GAEC04 - Establishment of buffer strips along water courses	On-the-spot control
GAEC05 - Tillage management, reducing the risk of soil degradation and erosion, including consideration of the slope gradient	On-the-spot control
GAEC06 - Minimum soil cover to avoid bare soil in periods that are most sensitive	On-the-spot control
GAEC07 - Crop rotation in arable land, except for crops growing under water	On-the-spot control
GAEC08 - Minimum share of agricultural area devoted to non-productive areas or features.Minimum share of at least 4% of arable land at farm level devoted to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow. Where a farmer commits to devote at least 7% of his/her arable land to non-productive areas and features, including land lying fallow, under an enhanced eco-scheme in accordance with Article 28(5a), the share to be attributed to compliance with this GAEC shall be limited to 3%.Minimum share of at least 7% of arable land at farm level if this includes also catch crops or nitrogen fixing crops, cultivated without the use of plant protection products, of which 3% shall be land lying fallow or non-productive features. Member States should use the weighting factor of 0,3 for catch crops.Retention of landscape features.Ban on cutting hedges and trees during the bird breeding and rearing season.As an option, measures for avoiding invasive plant species	On-the-spot control
GAEC09 - Ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland designated as environmentally-sensitive permanent grasslands in Natural 2000 sites	On-the-spot control
SMR01 - Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy: Article 11(3), point (e), and point (h), as regards mandatory requirements to control diffuse sources of pollution by phosphates	On-the-spot control
SMR02 - Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources: Articles 4 and 5	On-the-spot control
SMR03 - Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds: Article 3(1), Article 3(2), point (b), Article 4(1), (2) and (4)	On-the-spot control
SMR04 - Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna: Article 6(1) and (2)	On-the-spot control
SMR05 - Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, laying down procedures in matters of food safety: Articles 14 and 15, Article 17(1) and Articles 18, 19 and 20	On-the-spot control
SMR06 - Council Directive 96/22/EC of 29 April 1996 concerning the prohibition on the use in stockfarming of certain substances having a hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists, and repealing Directives 81/602/EEC, 88/146/EEC and 88/299/EEC: Article 3, points (a), (b), (d) and (e), and Articles 4, 5 and 7	On-the-spot control

SMR07 - Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC: Article 55, first and second sentence	On-the-spot control
SMR08 - Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides: Article 5(2) and Article 8(1) to (5); Article 12 with regard to restrictions on the use of pesticides in protected areas defined on the basis of Directive 2000/60/EC and Natura 2000 legislation; Article 13(1) and (3) on handling and storage of pesticides and disposal of remnants	On-the-spot control
SMR09 - Council Directive 2008/119/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves: Articles 3 and 4	On-the-spot control
SMR10 - Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs: Articles 3 and 4	On-the-spot control
SMR11 - Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes: Article 4	On-the-spot control

7.4.2 Penalty system for conditionality

7.4.2.1 Description on the penalty system for conditionality

The penalty system for Conditionality requires that administrative penalties shall be applied by means of reduction from or exclusion of the total amount of the payments granted or to be granted to the beneficiary concerned in respect of aid applications that have been or will be submitted in the course of the calendar year of the finding.

Under that system, the administrative penalties referred to in the first subparagraph shall only apply where the non-compliance is the result of an act or omission directly attributable to the beneficiary concerned; and where one or both of the following conditions are met:

(i)the non-compliance is related to the agricultural activity of the beneficiary
(ii)the non-compliance concerns the holding as defined in point (2) of Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 or other areas managed by the beneficiary situated within Ireland.

In the first instance when arriving at an appropriate penalty, consideration will be given as to whether the non-compliance should be deemed as non-intentional or intentional on behalf of the beneficiary. A **non-intentional ('negligent' in the 2014-2020 CAP) non-compliance** is not deemed to be a deliberate act or omission by the beneficiary leading to the non-compliance.

The reduction of the payment for a **non-intentional non-compliance** will as a general rule be 3%. However, this penalty rate may be reduced to 1% or increased to 5% of the total payments to the beneficiary taking into consideration severity, extent and permanence of the non-compliance.

In cases where a **non-intentional non-compliance** has grave or more serious consequences for the achievement of the objective of the standard concerned or constitutes a direct risk to public or animal health, the percentage reduction due to such non-compliance shall be at least 5% and may be up to 10%

Intentional non-compliance is deemed a deliberate act or omission by the beneficiary resulting in the non-compliance. Information on the penalty system regarding non-intentional non-compliance is set out in Section 7.4.2.3 below. Information on the penalty system regarding intentional non-compliance is set out in Section 7.4.2.4 below.

The severity, extent, permanence or re-occurrence and intent of the non-compliance will be taken into consideration for the calculation of the reductions and exclusions. The terms severity, extent, permanence and re-occurrence are described as follows:

·**Severity** – the importance/impact of the non-compliance
·**Extent** – has the non-compliance an "off-farm" impact and has it a far-reaching impact
·**Permanence** – the length of time for which the effects of the non-compliance last
·**Reoccurrence** – 're-occurrence of a non-compliance' means non-compliance within the same requirement or standard determined more than once within a consecutive period of three calendar years.

The penalties imposed will be dissuasive and proportionate.

Remedial action without a penalty

In the event that a non-compliance is detected during the course of an inspection (On The Spot Checks (OTSC), Administrative, Area Monitoring System (AMS) or other) and the non-compliance has no or only insignificant consequences for the achievement of the objective of the standard concerned then no

penalty shall be applied. However, the beneficiary will be informed and instructed to carry out remedial actions if required. The beneficiary may also be informed of any appropriate advisory services relating to the specific matter at hand.

Remedial action without a penalty will not apply in cases where the non-compliance constitutes a risk to public or animal health. In all such cases a penalty will apply.

If remedial action is not undertaken by the beneficiary, then a penalty may be applied retrospectively or further non compliance's within the same standard or requirement may be considered intentional.

Force majeure

A penalty will not be applied if it is established that that non-compliance is due to force majeure or exceptional circumstances as set out in Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116. This will also be the case where the act or omission is a direct result of an order from a public authority.

7.4.2.2 Definition and application of ‘reoccurrence’ (calculation and time span covered):

‘Re-occurrence of a non-compliance’ means non-compliance within the same requirement or standard determined more than once within a consecutive period of three calendar years.

In cases where the non-compliance with a particular standard or requirement reoccurs within a consecutive period of three calendar years, the percentage reduction shall be, as a general rule, 10%. However, this may be reduced to 5% depending on the nature and circumstances of the case and taking into consideration severity, extent and permanence of the non-compliance.

Where the same non-compliance further persists without justified reason by the beneficiary it shall be considered to be a case of intentional non-compliance.

7.4.2.3 Definition and application of ‘intentionality’

As set out in Section 7.4.2.1 above, an **intentional non-compliance** is deemed a deliberate act or omission by the beneficiary resulting in the non-compliance.

In case of intentional or deliberate non-compliance, the percentage reduction shall be at least 15% and may be higher (up to 100%) depending on the extent, severity, permanence or re-occurrence of the intentional non-compliance.

7.4.3 Indication of the application of a simplified control system for small farmers

Article 83(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 provides that Member States may set up a simplified control system for farmers with a maximum size of holding not exceeding 5 hectares of agricultural area declared in accordance with Article 69(1).

Ireland does not intend to avail of this option as it is considered a crude instrument in determining the level of risk associated with a particular farming enterprise. Ireland’s risk analysis and selection procedure for conditionality will include an analysis of the risks associated with the relevant standards and requirements and this analysis will facilitate targeted OTSC in accordance with the risks.

7.4.4 Competent control bodies responsible for the checks of conditionality practices, statutory management requirements

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) is the competent control body responsible for checks under SMR 1-11 as well as checks under GAEC 1-9.

There are provisions for Cross Reporting to DAFM from other State Bodies. DAFM officials and officials of other State Bodies can cross report non-compliance with a particular standard or requirement to DAFM control officials.

SMR / GAEC	Paying Agency Name	Name of the Control body	Name of the responsible for the check	Address	Email
GAEC01	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC02	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC03	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC04	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC05	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@Agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC06	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC07	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC08	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
GAEC09	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR01	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie

SMR02	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR03	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR04	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR05	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR06	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR07	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR08	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR09	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Divsion	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR10	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie
SMR11	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Head of Integrated Controls Division	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland	*TBC*@agriculture.gov.ie

7.5 Social conditionality

7.5.1 Description of the control system for social conditionality

As allowed under the SPR, Ireland is not adopting a system for controls and penalties for social conditionality until 2025.

7.5.2 Description on the penalty system for social conditionality

As allowed under the SPR, Ireland is not adopting a system for controls and penalties for social conditionality until 2025.

8 Modernisation: AKIS and digitalisation

8.1 AKIS

8.1 Overall envisaged organisational set-up of the improved AKIS

The national AKIS policy is led by the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine (DAFM), the Managing Authority (MA). The SWOT analysis and the Commission recommendation both highlight that while the constituent parts of the Irish AKIS (Research, Knowledge Transfer, Farm Advisory Service, and Cooperation & CAP Network) are well established, there is a need to structure the AKIS so that it is more collaborative, especially around advisor access to the latest research and cooperation. In addition, the expanded scope (e.g. EU Green Deal, Brexit, National Climate Action Plan, SDGs, Digitalisation, Just Transition) all point to the need to adapt the AKIS approach to meet key challenges and threats and to develop a new organisational approach for AKIS. Additionally, more rapid and equitable diffusion of science and technologies will be needed if sustainable development is to be achieved.

Addressing these recommendations will result in a well-functioning AKIS that connects people and facilitates knowledge flows between research, cooperation and advisory services and is more responsive to the growing information needs of farmers, rural economy actors, advisors, researchers and other food system & bioeconomy stakeholders.

Organisational set up

To strengthen the links between the actors in the AKIS, the MA will establish and chair an AKIS coordination group which will provide a platform to improve synergies and complementarities between the institutions.

The membership of the coordination group will comprise of representatives of core stakeholders involved in the AKIS in Ireland and will at a minimum involve representatives from: relevant Government Departments and agencies such as Teagasc, Bord Bia, and the EPA. It will also engage with LEADER, the National CAP Network, Private Advisory services, Academic institutions, Farm and other Non-Governmental Organisations.

The AKIS Coordination Group will be established before the commencement of the new programming period. The Group's membership will be kept under regular review. The AKIS Coordination Group will agree an implementation plan & monitoring process which will include the following activities:

- Education, training & skills provided in a flexible, adaptive and innovative manner
- Improving the relevance & uptake of research & innovation by end-users
- Enhanced Knowledge Transfer & Farm Advisory Service including improved accessibility and promotion of advisory services with Continued Professional Development for both public & private advisors.
- Improved networking, collaboration and development of innovation support services to strengthen links and activities between research, advisors, the farming community, the rural economy and cooperation & interactive-innovation projects.
- Promoting & Supporting the Digital Transition in Agriculture with a particular focus on developing: a coordinated approach; development & uptake of digital and data based technologies and services; governance and societal impact of agri-digitalisation.

Following establishment of the AKIS Coordination Group, the MA will conduct an independent review of the AKIS framework in Ireland. This review will be paid out of technical assistance and will follow public procurement guidelines

8.2 Description of how advisory services, research and CAP networks will work together within the framework of the AKIS (Art.114)(a)(ii))

The organisational set-up of AKIS in Ireland currently involves numerous different policy areas, activities, organisations and instruments. This structure has organically emerged and has heavily relied on Teagasc for structure and a range of organisations for mobilisation. Due to the proliferation of activities and organisations it is now viewed from a policy perspective that further AKIS development would benefit from a coordinated framework approach.

This framework approach on AKIS will seek to bring about coordinated, regular and structural interplay between information, knowledge, advice, innovation, training, education and research. The aim in this CAP period would be, in particular, to enhance the collaboration role between Teagasc, Bord Bia and the private advisory service including in particular with the Agricultural Consultants Association and with the environmental & farming community as well as the agri-food & bio-based sector and the forestry sector. There is a need to strengthen the agricultural knowledge and innovation system to make it more collaborative and responsive to needs to ensure that it accounts for a long-term perspective and key challenges particularly in relation to agriculture and climate action and sets out key performance indicators which would increase the impact of public expenditure and spur further private investment. The relevant organisations and AKIS related interventions that support knowledge flow is described in more detail below.

Teagasc

Teagasc (the Agriculture and Food Development Authority), is the national body providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry, forest industry, and rural communities. Teagasc is funded through grant in aid by the MA and is uniquely placed to play an influential role in a well-functioning AKIS with direct access to the latest in-house research.

Teagasc supports science-based innovation in the agri-food sector and bioeconomy with the aim to underpin profitability, competitiveness and sustainability. This is achieved through the close coupling of research and knowledge transfer in four programme areas: Animal and Grassland Research and Innovation; Crops, Environment and Land Use; Food; and Rural Economy and Development. Each of these programmes is composed of research, development and knowledge-transfer/industry-development departments.

In addition, the Teagasc Advisory Service, provides a local service to the farming and rural economy community. Approximately, 50% of the Teagasc budget is split between advisory and education services. The Advisory Service is provided by approximately 51 specialists advisers and 250 Teagasc field advisors operating through a nationwide office network in 12 regional units. Teagasc has a range of demonstration farms and links with commercial farms which are utilised for benchmarking exercises and discussion group visits. Most recently, Teagasc has enhanced its demonstration farm programme through the development of the Signpost programme which involves a partnership of over 30 companies and organisations from the Irish agri-food sector. Its purpose is to support climate action by Irish farmers. Its main goals are to reduce gaseous emissions from Irish agriculture, while creating more profitable and sustainable farming enterprises. 100 Signpost Farmers are central to the programme and demonstrate climate smart farming systems for all farmers. A Signpost Advisory campaign is the second element to the programme which will engage with all farmers and support them to move towards more sustainable farming systems.

Teagasc also has the mandate to create and impart knowledge to the Irish agri-food sector. A notable development in this area is the ConnectEd programme which provides education, knowledge,

professional development and networking opportunities that are designed to provide businesses and professionals working with the agri-food sector structured access to Teagasc research, education, knowledge resources and online tools.

Teagasc also has a forestry advisory service in place which provides advice to private landowners on forestry-related matters, including forest establishment, forest management, timber harvesting, environment related issues, and forest protection. This service involves 8 specialist advisors with regional responsibility, covering all regions in the country.

Bord Bia

The Bord Bia Origin Green programme is Ireland's food and drink sustainability programme, operating on a national scale, uniting government, the private sector and the full supply chain from farmers to food producers and right through to the foodservice and retail sectors. The programme enables the industry to set and achieve measurable sustainability targets that respect the environment and serve local communities more effectively. Origin Green provides programmes for farmers, producers, manufacturers and retailers and is independently monitored and verified. Accreditation at farm-level is provided to ISO: 17065 and Carbon Trust (PAS 2050), while food and drink manufacturers are independently verified by international auditors, Mabbett. On-farm assessments constitute a key component of the Origin Green programme. The rollout of sustainability assessments at farm level has been made possible by Bord Bia's pre-existing Quality Assurance infrastructure, which has been in place for over twenty years. Throughout the country, over 100 independent auditors, working on behalf of Bord Bia, undertake 650 weekly engagements on farm as part of these programmes. In addition to quality, the sustainability criteria measured and monitored are greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity, water use, energy efficiency, soil management and socio-economic factors. At farm level, there are over 53,000 members of Bord Bia's Sustainable Assurance Schemes for beef and lamb farmers (92% of beef produced), dairy farmers (95% of milk produced), horticulture (70% of horticulture) and egg (95% of eggs), which are aligned to Origin Green. Over a five-year period under Origin Green, over 260,000 carbon assessments took place on beef and dairy farms. Farms that joined the Sustainable Beef and Lamb Assurance Schemes in 2014 saw an average of 5% reduction in CO2 per unit of beef produced by year end 2018. Farms that joined the Sustainable Dairy Assurance Schemes in 2014 saw an average of 9% reduction in CO2 per unit of milk produced to year end 2018.

Skillnet Ireland

Skillnet Ireland is a business support agency of the Government of Ireland. Their mandate is to advance the competitiveness, productivity and innovation of Irish businesses through enterprise-led workforce development. Skillnet programmes have been developed with agri-food organisations such as farming organisations, cooperatives, and private veterinary services to advance the competitiveness, productivity and innovation of Irish agri-food related businesses through enterprise-led workforce development.

Agricultural Consultants Association & other consultancy services

The Agricultural Consultants Association (ACA) have 160 member offices with 248 agricultural and environmental graduates, 17 forestry consultants and 120 people employed as administration and technical staff[1]. An internal survey conducted in 2017 of its membership, estimated that its members advise in the region of 55,000 farmers.

Additionally, advisory services are provided through private sector commercial companies or individuals who are commercial advisors on e.g. Tillage or of input supply, for profit solutions and service.

National CAP Network (NCN)

The NCN will play an instrumental role in facilitating the increased involvement of a range of stakeholders in improving the quality of the implementation of the interventions outlined in the CAP Strategic Plan. The SWOT analysis highlighted the importance of a well functioning AKIS and the NCN will contribute to this by facilitating increased flows of knowledge exchange and innovation through its activities. The NCN will also play a key role in highlighting the availability of CAP and Horizon Europe funding to potential beneficiaries as well as the benefits of CAP funding to the wider public. The Irish MA's aim is to have the new NCN in situ to coincide with the commencement of the new programming period in 2023.

The NCN will include the development of an innovation support service in its Action Plan and activities to bring together researchers, advisors and farmers facilitating the improved exchange of knowledge and information on the various challenges and opportunities facing the sector. Knowledge gained and lessons learned from EIP operational groups in the current RDP both nationally and from other Member States will form a key part of the NCN dissemination activities. The NCN dissemination activities will also link with the Teagasc led SignPost series (collaborative partnership of farmers, industry and state agencies working together for climate action) amongst others.

The NCN will have an increased focus on fostering innovation in agriculture and rural development and support the inclusion of, and the interaction between, all stakeholders in the knowledge-exchange and knowledge-building process of initiatives.

Veterinary Advice & Advisory Services

Veterinary advice has tended to be shared in a diffuse and direct person-person fashion, and in most cases does not have a formal advisory and communication structure, apart from the recent innovation of Animal Health Ireland and the previous CAP funded Knowledge Transfer programmes which have helped formalise advice in respect of key disease threats, and facilitated networking between producers, animal disease experts and research bodies. Private veterinary practitioners and the DAFM Regional Veterinary Laboratory network currently function as information gatherers and opinion leaders in animal disease control in Irish food animal production.

Research Policy, Education Programmes & Research Producing Organisations

Irish Public Sector investment in Research, Development and Innovation targeting the Agri-Food sector is broad-based and is generally in excess of €150 million per year. This involves a range of organisations that fund research and innovation such as the DAFM, Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and the Higher Education Authority. In addition, Teagasc receives close to half of the annual research & innovation budget indicated through its grant-in-aid allocation from DAFM.

Teagasc has a statutory remit to provide and procure education and training and provides an extensive range of further education, adult and continuing education and higher level education courses. Teagasc education programmes are delivered through its network of seven colleges: four Teagasc colleges and three linked private colleges. Teagasc also has 24 Local Education Centres located in various locations in Ireland. Teagasc also has had a longstanding and substantial involvement in higher education provision and has a major input into higher education and postgraduate education delivery through its extensive partnership with the higher education sector including Technological Universities and Universities.
Research Producing Organisations such as Teagasc and also a range of Universities (including University College Dublin (UCD), University College Cork (UCC), Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, University of Limerick, National University Of Ireland Galway, Maynooth University), and

Technological Universities (e.g. Technological University Dublin, Munster Technological University, ,Waterford Institute of Technology) particularly those offering postgraduate courses in various aspects of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences play a key role in the dissemination of research and innovation to farmers through work packages in research projects and extension activities such as demonstration farms. This enables farmers to learn new skills and competencies and incorporate innovation at the farm level. These institutions thus strengthen linkages and interaction between research, education and advisory services in the following ways:

• Offering specialised undergraduate courses in education and research on the complete food chain from initial on integration of land ecosystems with farm production through processing to final consumption by the consumer

• UCD/Teagasc Masters in Agricultural Innovation Support

• UCD/Teagasc Masters in Agricultural Extension

• Training Sessions

• On Farm Demonstrations

• Organising events to display latest research, information, products and technology to farmers.

• Conducting research works on problems/issues/challenges faced by farmers.

AKIS related interventions

While all interventions will require a well-functioning AKIS to be successfully implemented, some interventions are directly connected to the AKIS. These are outlined below.

Knowledge Transfer

The aim of this intervention in the Irish context is to provide farmers with a platform to share knowledge and to engage in learning. The SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment identified a range of areas in which knowledge transfer can play a central role in underpinning a more competitive, resilient, modern and sustainable agricultural sector. This intervention is also one of the elements underpinning the further development of the national AKIS. The intervention will be based on support for the implementation of Knowledge Transfer Groups by Knowledge Transfer Facilitators, which will facilitate the delivery of targeted knowledge and skills drawing on the expertise of the advisors running the Groups as well as allowing for shared learning between the famers in the Groups. A central element of the intervention design is based on ensuring that the Programme is structured in a way that ensures that the content of Knowledge Transfer Groups is clearly targeted at key challenges and issues identified related to the place-based location of the group. The measure will offer the potential for a cross-sectoral response or the possibility to address sectoral needs while also maintaing a degree of flexibility for Knowledge Transfer Groups to tailor the content to their own experience, circumstances, and requirements. Accordingly, in each year of the intervention, each Knowledge Transfer Group will be required to deliver four meetings from a list of 'Priority KT Topics'. The list of 'Priority KT Topics' will be refreshed at the start of each year of the programme and will be reflective of the issues identified in the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment, as well as emerging policy priorities in the sector. The AKIS Coordination Group will be consulted on the 'Priority KT topics' to support the development of the Agricultural Knowledge & Innovation System, including integrating the latest research and innovation in the topic areas. KT Groups will integrate learnings and outputs from the EIP-AGRI operational groups EIPs in the content for the KT

Priority topic and will be encouraged to engage with EIP Operational Groups and demonstration farms, as appropriate, to learn from their implementation and outcomes. Furthermore, it is envisaged that training will be provided for KT Facilitators on the 'Priority KT Topics' through the rollout of the Continuous Professional Development Programme (CPD) for Advisors"

Knowledge Transfer will be a standing item on the agenda for the AKIS Coordination group.

Outside of the CAP, DAFM, through its Research Programme, has a Knowledge Transfer Framework in place which aims to foster development and efficient dissemination of knowledge through its competitive research calls. DAFM's Knowledge Transfer Framework requires consideration of the Knowledge Transfer activities to be used in a research project across the lifetime of a research project, specifically at the application stage (where applicants must prepare a Knowledge Transfer Plan that is relevant and appropriate to the proposed project) and at the reporting stage (where project coordinators of successful projects must report on knowledge transfer and exchange activities undertaken to deliver impact, value and benefits from the project). DAFM's Knowledge Transfer Framework also requires that successful projects awarded funding provide a self-assessment on the knowledge transfer activities and measure the effectiveness of these activities across the lifetime of the project as part of the Project Progress Reports.

European Innovation Partnerships

The aim of this intervention is to provide support to a range of actors who are looking to come together to form Operational Groups (OGs) to develop and test innovative solutions to particular challenges identified in the sector. The broad potential for the EIP model is recognised within the SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment, with the need to encourage the application of research and innovation at farm level identified. This approach will build on the success of the EIPs delivered under the RDP 2014-2022 in addressing the innovation gap between research and best practice, and in encouraging innovative approaches. The dissemination of key findings and lessons learned will be a major pillar of the AKIS and will be facilitated through the NCN and its Innovation Support Service and also the integration of AKIS as a cross-cutting element in the CPD for advisors and Knowledge Transfer measures.

Continued Professional Development for advisors

The aim of this intervention is to provide the necessary support and resources to allow for the up-skilling and the continuous professional development of advisors in the agricultural sector. It is intended that agricultural advisors will play a central role in addressing the key challenges identified in Ireland's SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment; as well as in implementing the range of schemes to be rolled out as part of this CAP Strategic Plan.

Participation in continuous professional development activities will allow advisors to enhance their knowledge base on an ongoing basis and ensure that they are familiar with the latest techniques, technologies, and regulatory and scheme requirements in a rapidly changing agricultural industry. It will promote the development of knowledgeable, professional and competent advisors (both public and private), thereby enhancing the quality of service provided to farmers. CPD for advisors will be a standing item on the agenda for the AKIS Coordination group.

The intervention will be structured around tendering processes to select suitably qualified training providers and online platform service providers to deliver high quality professional training in a range of areas. These tenders will be rolled out over the course of the programming period, and it is envisaged that they will incorporate a blended approach to learning incorporating online and in-person learning in a manner consistent with existing FAS training delivery. Each course/module will consider the need to

develop the Irish Agricultural Knowledge & Innovation System by including the following cross-cutting elements: Highlighting key research and innovation in each of the module area; Identifying key elements that should be considered by Advisors for Knowledge Transfer facilitation from research and demonstration and; Introducing the Advisor to the concept of 'interactive innovation' and the advisors role as an innovation broker linking farmers to research, farm demonstration such as the Teagasc Signpost Farm Series and innovation opportunities .

AECM training

The aim of this intervention is to provide training to farmers who partake in the National Agri-Environment Scheme. The training will increase farmers' understanding of climate change and the impact farming activities have on natural resources and biodiversity at farm level, demonstrate how the agri-environment actions will address those issues, and educate farmers on how to implement the actions, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise delivery and ongoing management of the commitments.

Training for participants in the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme

Participants in Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme will be required to engage in a training course during year 1 and year 2 of the scheme. This training will outline how the actions undertaken as part of the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme will address the challenges that the scheme is designed to address. The associated training will educate farmers on how to appropriately implement the actions of the scheme; thereby equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise delivery and continue the ongoing management of the commitments undertaken; as well as to facilitate the implementation of high welfare practices

[1] Recalibrating Advisory Services for a New Era in Irish Farming - Jim Power Economics October 2019

8.3 Description of the organisation of all farm advisors according to the requirements referred to in Articles 15(2), 15(3) and 15(4)

Farm Advisory Services

Access to and consistency of advice delivered was a common theme raised by stakeholders during consultation on the development of the CAP Strategic Plan. The aim of the FAS is to provide advice to farmers and other beneficiaries of CAP as required under Article 15 of the regulation so as to help farmers meet their obligations under various EU Schemes. All advisors in Ireland, public and private, must be registered with the MA to provide services under the Farm Advisory Services. As noted in the Commission Recommendations, further integration of training and outreach activities for all advisors, public and private, will further strengthen the advisory service. There are approximately 900 approved FAS Advisors registered with DAFM. Of this approximately 400 are Teagasc advisors, 350 are private advisors (who are members of the Agricultural Consultants Association), and the remaining (approx.) 150 are non-affiliated private advisors. DAFM provides impartial advice to all approved FAS advisors, who must be approved to address CAP related schemes with their farmer clients. Under scheme T&Cs, if advisors submit a claim/plan on behalf of a client, they are required to confirm that it is true, accurate and correct.

Teagasc

Teagasc have the responsibility for supporting the knowledge and technology needs of the entire agri-food and biobased chain. They also have the ability to integrate research, advice and education services to deliver the innovation support necessary to add significant value to Ireland's agri-food sector and bioeconomy. Teagasc has a high level of resources devoted to knowledge transfer and as such has excellent linkages and access to agricultural and rural communities. Teagasc advisors are required to confirm that they are impartial in the conduct of their duties and must declare and Conflict of Interest as they arise.

Private advisors

There are approximately 350 private advisors (who are members of the Agricultural Consultants Association), approximately 150 non-affiliated private advisors currently operating in Ireland. In addition to advising on statutory obligations, independent advisors will play an important role in advising primary producers on the challenges and opportunities for Irish agriculture including diversification of enterprise. An important element of a well functioning AKIS will be close collaboration between public and private advisors and access to the latest research, innovation, piloting and demonstration actions. The independent review of the AKIS framework in Ireland will consider these issues. If necessary, arising from this review the AKIS Coordination Group will seek to implement changes to improve collaboration and/or access to research, innovation, piloting or demonstration activities.

8.4 Description of how innovation support is provided as referred to in Article 114(a)(ii)

As the emphasis now is on improving information flows within the AKIS, the Innovation Hub will provide innovation support services and facilitate sharing of knowledge and provide a platform for actors to meet, and create, develop and test ideas. Using lessons learned from the current RDP EIP's, the Innovation Hub will focus on developing interactive-innovation projects and training in specific areas to help build innovation capacity in the agri-food sector, including farmer led innovation.

The Innovation Hub will also facilitate the translation of research outcomes from a wide range of literature into guides for practical implementation by primary producers or operational groups. The Innovation Hub will operate independently of the EIP operational groups; however the Hub will provide support and advice to multi-actors groups in the field who may be looking to form an operational group. The Innovation Hub will maintain close contact and collaboration with the National Agricultural Sustainability Research and Innovation Centre. This centre was recently established with exchequer funding through Teagasc. The Innovation Hub will be located within the NCN. The activities of the NCN including the Innovation Hub will be overseen by a steering group chaired by the MA and under the AKIS Coordination Group.

Furthermore, Enterprise Ireland announced in late 2020 a call for expressions of interest to complete a national designation process to identify up to three research performing organisations (RTOs) or Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) or other consortia. The successful applicants will be invited to apply to a restricted call that the European Commission will issue under the Digital Europe Programme. Successful applicants of this second stage process will then be jointly funded by the European Commission and Enterprise Ireland to establish their European Digital Innovation Hubs. European Digital Innovation Hubs will support businesses and organisations in their digital transformation and to disseminate the latest advances in cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and High-Performance Computing (HPC).The EDIHs will be one-stop-shops, with a research and technology organisation (RTO) or higher education institution (HEI) based lab at its core, that help companies (notably SMEs) and public sector organisations become more competitive in their business/production processes, products, or services by providing access to research infrastructure, technical expertise and experimentation, so that these organisations can "test before invest". It will be examined in due course how any potential EDIHs will consider agri-digitalisation in the Irish context.

8.5 Digitalisation strategy (Art.114)(b))

Ireland has a detailed and coherent overarching National Digital Strategy, published in February 2022 in the "Harnessing Digital - The Digital Ireland Framework" paper, of which agriculture forms a part. This overall digital strategy clearly recognises that digital technologies are already being deployed in the agriculture sector to improve efficiencies, products, and climate mitigation.

The approach to the digitalisation of agriculture in particular has been a bottom-up approach in Ireland to date. Significant sources of funding have been provided for research projects, research and innovation public-private partnerships and innovation clusters. The private sector has been supported by public funding to form an Agtech Cluster. An AgTech Representative Group has also formed in 2021. This bottom-up activity has provided for a structuring effect with regards to Agri-Digitalisation. Due to the proliferation of activities and organisations it is now viewed from a policy perspective that further agri-digitalisation development would benefit from a strategic approach that will be addressed as a standing item under the AKIS Coordination Group.

Within the CAP the interventions relating to digitalisation include Knowledge Transfer Groups, CPD for advisors, and the On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme. Key topics in the Knowledge Transfer Groups description of the intervention explicitly references digital and smart technologies and tools; and their applicability on farms. On CPD for advisors continuous professional development is intended to allow advisers to ensure that they are familiar with the latest techniques and technologies in a rapidly changing agri-food sector.

On farm investment

Support for agri-digitalisation at farm level is essential and the aim of this intervention is to provide support to farmers looking to modernise their holdings. Irelands SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment identifies the need to increase environmental efficiency in the agricultural sector through on farm investment and the adoption of new technologies.

The On-Farm Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS) is the only intervention contributing to indicator R.3 (digitalising agriculture) and will contribute directly to supporting digital farming technology in the CAP. It is anticipated that tillage applications, EID tag readers, Computer information systems, heat detection systems as well ear tags and pedometers may be part of the types of investments that fall under OFCIS and contribute to supporting digital farming technology.

Support digital transformation at all levels

The European Commission has been actively providing research and innovation opportunities since 2016, laying the ground for a digitalized and data-empowered European agricultural sector. DAFM is one of the nine Paying Agencies involved in a project called "New IACS Vision in Action" (NIVA). This project demonstrates a clear intention to collaborate in exploring innovations and working together in creating an innovation ecosystem. Project NIVA has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. A multi-disciplinary team led by DAFM, and including The Walton Institute, Waterford Institute of Technology and Teagasc have worked together and developed a geo-tagged photograph application (app) for use on Smartphone and mobile devices as a part of this project. The app, known as AgriSnap, will enable farmers and advisors/consultants to take geo-tagged photographs using their Smartphone and submit them securely to DAFM in an efficient and seamless manner. This will facilitate a faster turnaround of queries by DAFM. This will enable payments to be expedited and decrease administrative costs as previously many of these query cases would have required a physical inspection.

Outside CAP:

DAFM

DAFM is taking part in a validation exercise at the moment, which is being led by Ordnance Survey Ireland, to produce a national land cover map. The map will be based on an adapted version of the Fossitt classification. The aim is to have this map completed by the end of 2021. There is a need to further develop how to use this map, and to devise a conversion from the land cover information (what is on the earth's surface) that the map gives to land use (what humans do on the land). This will then be used for monitoring and for practical applications.

DAFM has engaged with its respective Divisions seeking input on data that will be required for reporting and analytics requirements for CAP reform, environmental accounting and the development of high-value data sets under Open Data EU & national policy.

Skillnet Ireland

Skillnet Ireland is a business support agency of the Government of Ireland. Their mandate is to advance the competitiveness, productivity and innovation of Irish businesses through enterprise-led workforce development. A Skillnet programmes for the Digital Adoption in Agriculture is currently being developed by DAFM, Teagasc, Walton Institute WIT and the IFA. It is envisaged in the first instance that this Digital Adoption Programme for farmers will be further developed and rolled-out with agri-food organisations such as farming organisations, cooperatives, and private veterinary services who develop training programmes within the SkillNet process. The development process to date has involved significant engagement with farmers on digital adoption and needs through the IFA and the Agri-Discrete DAFM funded project.

Research and Innovation

Ireland has made a very significant commitment to the progression in smart farming and digital technologies through the following:

· DAFM, together with Science Foundation Ireland provided funding of €28million for the VistaMilk Research Centre which will, together with a range of agri-food and technology companies, develop new, and advance existing electronic monitoring and actuation technologies to transform an already world-class dairy sector into a global leader in sustainable Agri-Tech.

· Science Foundation Ireland has also funded the €17.6 million Industry Partnership between UCD & Origin Enterprises examining digital and precision agriculture in crop science.

· DAFM has also funded many other precision agriculture type projects worth approximately €6 million through the national agri-food research funding programme and through trans-national European Research Area Networks.

· DAFM has funded the Agri-Discrete project dealing with improving data use, ensuring data security and examining data ownership for use of digital technology in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

· The Nova UCD Agri-Tech Hub has been established in UCD Lyons Farm and is being developed in collaboration with AIB, Kildare County Council and Kildare LEO and several agri-companies and investors including, Devenish, Dairymaster, and Glanbia, and Finistere, The Yield Lab, and Atlantic Bridge.

· Terrain AI: The €5 million Terrain-AI project is being led by 50 researchers based in Maynooth University and funded by Microsoft Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland. Its aim is to improve understanding of the impact of human activity on land use, and how it relates to climate change, with the ultimate aim of reducing global carbon levels by sharing the insights and models developed with other countries.

EU Research & Innovation Funding:

In general, Ireland is already well positioned both strategically and structurally to facilitate the deployment of digital technologies through key players such as for example Teagasc, TSSG (Waterford IT), Tyndall Institute (UCC) and in terms of EU & international collaborative efforts, Irish partners are successfully involved in the following EU research and innovation funded projects:

·Smart Agri-Hubs - **€20 million project** developing the innovation potential for digital transformation of the European Agri-food Sector – TSSG, Teagasc and ICBF are Irish partners in this EU project.

·FairSHARE -Increasing the potential of advisors for innovation in Agri-ICT is a €7m Teagasc coordinated project. This project aims to engage, enable and empower the independent farm advisory community, through sharing of tools, expertise and experiences.

·DEMETER - Agricultural digital integration platforms – €15 million Innovation Action - TSSG coordinated funded project

Ireland will also participate in the **Horizon Europe** Agriculture of Data partnership and is actively examining opportunities under the **Digital Europe Programme** on a Common EU Agricultural Data Space and Testing & Experimentation Facilities for AI & Agri-Food.

Finance & Innovation Acceleration

There are also a number of publicly and privately funded agri-tech accelerators active in Ireland at present:

·The Yield Lab: The Yield Lab Europe programming runs for twelve months and supports companies across Europe. During this time, companies will be guided through a uniquely developed accelerator programme designed to combine the existing technology entrepreneurial ecosystem with strong agricultural industry leaders, and to showcase these companies to corporate and strategic partners, and to international investors to enable them to scale. As well as its European presence, Yield Lab Ireland has a global network available to help each portfolio company in their pursuit of growth.

·Thrive Agtech Europe: SVG|THRIVE is a leading global AgriFood investment and innovation platform headquartered in Silicon Valley, and comprised of top agriculture, food & technology corporations, universities, and investors. With a community of over 5,000 start-ups from 100 countries, the THRIVE platform invests, accelerates and creates unparalleled access for entrepreneurs to scale globally to solve the biggest challenges facing the food and agriculture industries. THRIVE's Corporate Innovation Program is focused on connecting our corporate partners with emerging technologies and startups that will make the most significant impact in their organizations.

·Ireland AgTech Fund: The Ireland Strategic Investment Fund and Finistere Ventures launched a €20 million that involves the following: ISIF investing a total of €40 million in Finistere-managed AgTech venture funds - €20 million in the Ireland AgTech Fund and €20 million in a global AgTech

funds.Finistere Ventures opened its first EU office in Ireland and has partnership plans to increase AgTech's economic impact in Ireland; and Ireland to become a hub for AgTech start-ups.

Close the digital divide

Agri-Digitalisation

While Ireland ranks highly in the Digital Economy and Society Index 2020, the SWOT analysis identified that awareness and confidence levels in using technology among the farming sector are low and there is an opportunity for a strategic approach to steer the digital transformation of the farming sector and rural areas. The Department will ensure through CAP measures that opportunities are in place to provide impartial advisory services with adequate digital knowledge on technology and use of data. This will help in minimising the digital divide and make better use of digital technology. The future role of farm advisory services will also encompass facilitating innovation projects on digital technologies; taking on board lessons learnt from EIP Projects; as well as supporting farmers to orient themselves in the digital landscape. To date, Teagasc has developed several digital-based tools that are being used by farmers and a host of agri-consultants, such as, the eProfit Monitor, Nutrient Management Planning Online, PastureBase Ireland. It is expected that the VistaMilk research project will generate several new digital tools that can greatly facilitate decision making on Irish farms.

Outside CAP

Department of Environment Climate and Communications (DECC)– National Broadband Plan (NBP)

The establishment of high-speed internet connectivity across Ireland is essential. Ireland has made significant progress over the last decade in rural broadband coverage.

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) aims to ensure that every home, farm and business in Ireland – regardless of how remote or rural – has access to high-speed broadband. The DECC to date has identified more than 544,000 premises (collectively known as the Intervention Area) across Ireland that require access to high-speed broadband. The NBP is one of the biggest and most significant investments in rural Ireland ever. Stretching across 96% of Ireland, this massive, complex project is considered to be amongst the most ambitious in telecoms globally. It will bring high-speed broadband to 23% of Ireland's population (including 69% of the country's farms) over a seven-year period.

Department of Rural Community Development – Digital initiatives & schemes

There a range of digital initiatives and schemes and these initiatives come under the remit of the NBP to encourage digital innovation and development at local level.

The Digital Innovation Programme encourages local projects that support digital development. This allows them to be piloted before being scaled up or replicated elsewhere. Projects must promote, support, or advance at least one of the seven pillars: Digital Skills, Infrastructure, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Digital Economy and Employment, Digital Services, Community and Culture and Digital Transition. Projects that cut across more than one pillar are particularly welcome. These projects will provide innovative digital solutions to local issues. They will also help to establish telecommunications and support local economies.

Annexes

Annex I on the ex-ante evaluation and the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) referred to in Directive 2001/42/EC

1. Summary of ex-ante evaluation process and results

Introduction to ex-ante evaluation process

Following a public procurement process which concluded in June 2019, a consultancy team led by RSM Ireland was appointed to carry out the ex-ante assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment of Ireland's draft CAP Strategic Plan. The Ex-Ante Evaluation of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) 2023-2027 was subsequently prepared on behalf of the Managing Authority (the CAP Strategic Plan Division of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine by RSM Ireland. The main purpose of the Ex-Ante Evaluation is to "improve the quality of the design of the CSPs", as stated in Article 139 of the CSP Regulation 2115/2021.The evaluation has been undertaken in alignment with the extended period of plan consultation and preparation led by the Managing Authority during 2019, 2020 and 2021, and has involved active co-ordination, assessment and engagement as well as formal and informal feedback across the various phases of the development of the CSP.

Ongoing engagement between the evaluators and the Managing Authority in relation to the Ex-Ante Evaluation has been a feature of this iterative process. At the initial stage of the development of the CSP the evaluators presented to key stakeholders at the SWOT analysis workshop. The evaluators were also subsequently represented at the CAP Consultative Committee and associated workshops. In addition, the evaluators have held a series of bilateral meetings with the relevant Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) implementing divisions and with officials in the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) with responsibility for delivery of the LEADER programme. The evaluators also attended an Evaluation Helpdesk Good Practice Workshop event in Rome in 2019.

This ongoing engagement has ensured that the evaluators have gained a detailed understanding of the development of the CSP and the proposed interventions. Sections 8.4 and 8.5 of the ex-ante evaluation report present high level recommendations as well as recommendations relevant to individual interventions. These have been considered by the Department and, where appropriate, updates have been made to the draft CSP. Other recommendations have been made regarding the implementation of the plan, and these will be considered further at appropriate stages by the Managing Authority, the Paying Agency and the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group.

As per Article 139 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/2115, the recommendations have been categorised by:

- SWOT analysis, needs assessment
- intervention logic/contribution to objectives
- external/internal coherence
- allocation of budgetary resources
- outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets
- measures to reduce the administrative burden
- financial instruments
- SEA specific recommendations
- Other

Strategic Environmental Assessment including Appropriate Assessment

Process

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening check was carried out by the Managing Authority (the CAP Strategic Plan Division of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine). In accordance with 9(1)(a) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004), the Managing Authority is required to carry out an environmental assessment for Plans or Programmes relating to agriculture.

Under Regulation 42(1) of the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (as amended), an initial screening for Appropriate Assessment of the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027 was carried out by our external consultants. It was concluded that the draft CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027 will be subject to a full Appropriate Assessment – full details of the screening are at the following link: gov.ie - CAP Strategic Plan Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment (www.gov.ie).

The environmental assessment was conducted as an iterative process alongside the Appropriate Assessment and ex-ante evaluation of the draft CAP Strategic Plan. Similar to the ex-ante assessment, ongoing engagement between the external consultants and the Department in relation to the environmental assessment has been a feature of this iterative process. The Managing Authority established a steering group to help inform the environmental assessment. The steering group comprised representatives of the Department's CAP Strategic Plan development team, Department intervention design team, in-house ecological expertise and Teagasc, as well as representatives from the statutory environmental authorities - the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (including the National Parks and Wildlife Service), the Environmental Protection Agency as well as the Department of Environment and Climate Change. The environmental assessment process helped to inform intervention design as well as shaping the Green Architecture, including the baseline conditionality.

Members of the CAP Consultative Committee were also kept informed throughout all stages of the environmental assessment, including through a dedicated workshop at the scoping stage of the process. Members of the consultancy team were also represented at meetings of the CAP Consultative Committee and associated workshops. In addition, the consultants held a series of bilateral meetings with the implementing divisions in the Department and with officials in the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) with responsibility for LEADER. These briefings provided a detailed overview of the intervention design and intervention logic, including the interplay between conditionality, eco schemes and the Agri Environment and Climate Measure (AECM). This afforded a valuable opportunity for the environmental assessment process to interact with the broader development of the CSP. Feedback from the consultants was also provided to the implementation design leads and, where appropriate, the draft CSP was updated.

Public consultation element of the environmental assessment

At scoping stage, in addition to the statutory consultation with the environmental authorities, the Managing Authority also conducted a wider non-statutory public consultation on the draft scoping report to help inform the environmental assessment. All of the environmental topics listed in the SEA Directive were scoped in for the assessment of the plan. The consultants presented the draft scoping report to the CAP Consultative Committee and the Steering Group for the environmental assessment. A number of improvements were made to the scoping report including updated reference to available datasets, the hierarchy of relevant plans and programmes, as well as additional targeted questions in the Strategic Environmental Objective assessment questions. The submissions received and responses to them are recorded in Section 3.4 of the draft Environmental Report.

The draft Environmental Report and the draft Natura Impact Statement were subsequently prepared by external consultants. These reports, alongside the draft CAP Strategic Plan, were subject to a statutory and public consultation for a period of thirty days in November and December 2021. There were fourteen submissions received in relation to the draft Environmental Report and the draft Natura Impact Statement.

These were subsequently considered by the external consultants and by DAFM (as the Competent Authority in this instance).

Following the submissions received from key stakeholders, including the statutory authorities and the Environmental Pillar, a number of additional recommendations to improve the quality of the draft Environmental Report and draft Natura Impact Statement were made, and additional mitigation measures were identified. These additional mitigation measures will be reflected in the updated Environmental Report, and a link will be uploaded to the SFC.

Following the adoption of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027 by the European Commission (expected in Q3 2022), DAFM (as the Competent Authority) will proceed to arrange for the preparation and publishing of the finalised Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement and Appropriate Assessment Statement.

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2. Recommendations of the ex-ante evaluation and SEA and how they have been addressed

Title / Reference	Category of recommendation	Date	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	XCO
CSP as a Strategy 1	External/internal coherence	23-12-2021										
CSP as a Strategy 3	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
CSP as a Strategy 2	External/internal coherence	23-12-2021										
Performance Management and Monitoring 5	Other	23-12-2021										
Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 1	Other	23-12-2021										
Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Performance Management and Monitoring 1	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Performance Management and Monitoring 2	External/internal coherence	23-12-2021										
Capturing Lessons 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Capturing Lessons 1	Other	23-12-2021										
Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers 1	Other	23-12-2021										
Performance Management and Monitoring 4	Other	23-12-2021										
Performance Management and Monitoring 6	Other	23-12-2021										
Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 3	Other	23-12-2021										
Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers 2	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Performance Management and Monitoring 3	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 4	Other	23-12-2021										
Complementary Redistribution Income Support for Sustainability	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Eco-Scheme 1	Other	23-12-2021										
Mitigation Measure 7 : Agri Environment and Climate Measures (AECM)	SEA specific recommendations	31-12-2021										
Mitigation Measure 3: Collaborate and engage with NPWS to address monitoring on permanent grassland	SEA specific recommendations	31-12-2021										

Title / Reference	Category of recommendation	Date	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	XCO
Mitigation Measure 6 from Food Vision 2030 Capital Investment Scheme	SEA specific recommendations	31-12-2021										
BISS	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Co-ordinated Oversight and Information Sharing	External/internal coherence	23-12-2021										
Mitigation Measure 5 Eco scheme Agricultural practice 3: Limiting chemical nitrogen usage	SEA specific recommendations	31-12-2021										
Mitigation Measure 1: Aim for all farms to support right measure, right place over plan lifetime	SEA specific recommendations	31-12-2021										
Mitigation Measure 4 Capacity Building and Training	SEA specific recommendations	31-12-2021										
Eco-Scheme 3	Other	23-12-2021										
Areas of Natural Constraints 1	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
AECM 3	Other	23-12-2021										
Protein Aid 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Fruit and Vegetable POs 2	Measures to reduce the administrative burden	23-12-2021										
Fruit and Vegetable POs 1	SWOT analysis, needs assessment	23-12-2021										
AECM 1	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Straw Incorporation Measure 1	SWOT analysis, needs assessment	23-12-2021										
Capital Investments Scheme 1	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
EIP1	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
EIP 3	External/internal coherence	23-12-2021										
Eco-Scheme 2	Other	23-12-2021										
AECM 2	Other	23-12-2021										
AECM 4	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
CPD for Advisors 2	Other	23-12-2021										
AECM 5	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										

Title / Reference	Category of recommendation	Date	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	XCO
AECM 6	Other	23-12-2021										
AECM Training 1	Other	23-12-2021										
AECM Training 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Straw Incorporation Measure 2	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Organic Farming Scheme 2	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
EIP 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme	Intervention logic/contribution to objectives	23-12-2021										
Protein Aid 1	SWOT analysis, needs assessment	23-12-2021										
Apiculture 1	SWOT analysis, needs assessment	23-12-2021										
Apiculture 2	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
Areas of Natural Constraints 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Areas of Natural Constraints 3	Allocation of budgetary resources	23-12-2021										
Knowledge Transfer 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Collaborative Farming Grant 3	Other	23-12-2021										
LEADER 1	Intervention logic/contribution to objectives	23-12-2021										
CPD for Advisors 1	Other	23-12-2021										
Collaborative Farming Grant 2	Other	23-12-2021										
LEADER 2	Intervention logic/contribution to objectives	23-12-2021										
LEADER 3	Intervention logic/contribution to objectives	23-12-2021										
Knowledge Transfer 1	SWOT analysis, needs assessment	23-12-2021										
AECM Training 3	Allocation of budgetary resources	23-12-2021										
AECM Training 4	Other	23-12-2021										
Straw Incorporation Measure 3	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										

Title / Reference	Category of recommendation	Date	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	XCO
Capital Investments Scheme 2	Other	23-12-2021										
Capital Investments Scheme 3	Allocation of budgetary resources	23-12-2021										
Organic Farming Scheme 1	Outputs, results and establishment of milestones and targets	23-12-2021										
CPD for Advisors 3	Other	23-12-2021										
Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme	Measures to reduce the administrative burden	23-12-2021										
Sheep Improvement Scheme	Other	23-12-2021										
Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations	Other	23-12-2021										
Collaborative Farming Grant 1	Measures to reduce the administrative burden	23-12-2021										
AECM Training 5	Other	23-12-2021										
Mitigation Measure 2: Oversight and monitoring	SEA specific recommendations	31-12-2021										

CSP as a Strategy 1 - Description

Further clarity should be provided on the role the CSP is to play in addressing the targets set out in the Climate Action Plan 2021, alongside the other policies and programmes expected to contribute.

CSP as a Strategy 1 - Justification

Ireland's CSP is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 1.3 MT. This will contribute significantly to the target outlined in Ireland's Climate Action Plan. The remainder will be delivered through a combination of other core measures outside the CSP, regulation (which will focus on reducing nitrogen allowances, promoting mandatory use of low emission slurry spreading technology and use of Nitrogen fixing clover), market/private industry incentives, and new technologies, innovation and diversification opportunities. Section 1 has been updated.

CSP as a Strategy 3 - Description

Statements should be included regarding plan flexibility and change during its implementation, in light of the requirements to achieve stringent sectoral climate targets over the course of its duration.

CSP as a Strategy 3 - Justification

This has been addressed in Section 7.2 on monitoring and reporting systems.

CSP as a Strategy 2 - Description

Some further clarifying statements should be included on the boundaries between key features of the green architecture, as regards definitions, additionality, and the avoidance of duplication. In particular, the conditionality requirements, Eco-Scheme actions, AECM obligations, and other land-use interventions.

CSP as a Strategy 2 - Justification

This is an important element of the intervention design and Section 3.1 of the draft CSP has been updated.

Performance Management and Monitoring 5 - Description

Initiation of some early evaluation of proposed or recent predecessor initiatives that would inform the new CSP implementation e.g. Eco-Scheme, ANC, Young Farmer supports, AECM.

Performance Management and Monitoring 5 - Justification

In addition to the evaluation plan that will be produced in Q1 2022, the Managing Authority will continue to use all available assessments of measures undertaken during the current RDP - for example the 2020 ADAS evaluation of the GLAS environmental scheme - to inform the implementation of measures under the CSP. In addition, DAFM will use the measures introduced during the transition period (Soil Sampling Programme, Farm Environmental Study and the Results-Based Environment Agri-Pilot (REAP) programme) to both provide baseline data and to inform the design of the new flagship Agri-Environment Climate Measure (AECM) in the CSP. It will also build on the experience gained from the implementation of European Innovation Partnership initiatives during the current RDP in designing and implementing the Cooperation Project component of the new AECM.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 1 - Description

Preparation of a systematic inventory of the human resource requirements by Intervention, the availability of this, and the readiness of the personnel involved.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 1 - Justification

This will be considered by the Managing Authority. A structure has been put in place for the delivery / implementation of the Plan, which will address these issues.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 2 - Description

Consideration of the timing and build-up of activity, and the usefulness of possible staggering some of the schedules.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 2 - Justification

This will be considered by the Managing Authority and Paying Agency as the CSP is being implemented.

Performance Management and Monitoring 1 - Description

Preparation of an ambitious Evaluation Plan that will not just meet but exceed Commission requirements for performance management and monitoring, and will include a real focus on tangible outcomes and impacts on the agricultural, rural development and environmental aims of the CSP.

Performance Management and Monitoring 1 - Justification

While Article 140 (5) of the CSP regulation states that Member States shall submit the evaluation plan to the monitoring committee no later than one year after the adoption of the CAP Strategic Plan, it is intended to compile a draft evaluation plan for the CSP in Q1 2022. This is necessary as baseline data will need to be collected in order to properly assess the impact of the CSP. The evaluation plan will outline the need for an evaluation team to assess the impact of CSP interventions across the three overarching objectives of the CSP.

Performance Management and Monitoring 2 - Description

A strong central unit responsible for this on a day-to-day basis, building on the plans already in place, and involving close cooperation between the relevant DAFM Divisions but also potentially other public and private institutions and advisory organisations.

Performance Management and Monitoring 2 - Justification

The Manging Authority will put in place a Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group to oversee the implementation of the evaluation plan and the work of the evaluation team. The Steering Group will consist of DAFM officials as well as other relevant Government Departments and agencies, as appropriate.

Capturing Lessons 2 - Description

Similarly, the plan could more explicitly discuss its scope and process for future potential change, in light of lessons from early and ongoing implementation and delivery.

Capturing Lessons 2 - Justification

This has been addressed in Section 7.2 on monitoring and reporting systems.

Capturing Lessons 1 - Description

Where lessons from previous or other programmes have informed specific needs or scheme specification for 2023-2027, these should be more clearly referenced.

Capturing Lessons 1 - Justification

The draft CSP has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers 1 - Description

Consideration should be given to reducing the age threshold from 40 years at a future point if the impacts of the intervention are positive and resources allow.

Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers 1 - Justification

DAFM considers that this recommendation would create a group of farmers who could not then avail of the scheme (this would also need to apply to all CAP measures, not just CISYF). There would be a cohort of young people between 35 and 40 who may be planning to enter farming, and carrying out this change would mean that supports would not be available to them. The most recent CSO figures give the average age of farmers as 57.2 years (2020 data, CSO website). Given this high average age, coupled with the lengthy time taken for a younger farmer to become head of the holding, it does not make practical sense or increase fairness to reduce the age further.

Performance Management and Monitoring 4 - Description

Strong commitment to more regular surveying of farmers and to applying behavioural economics in evaluating CSP interventions and performance.

Performance Management and Monitoring 4 - Justification

This will be considered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group.

Performance Management and Monitoring 6 - Description

A commitment to carry out a deep and evidence informed Mid-Term review of the CSP in 2025, and with an openness to make major alterations to the CSP at that time, especially in the context of the evolving external environment.

Performance Management and Monitoring 6 - Justification

The CSP will be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Performance Report and Annual Review and the Monitoring Committee. In addition, a comprehensive mid-term and Ex post evaluation will be conducted on the CSP by the evaluation team.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 3 - Description

Potential outsourcing of the management/implementation of some schemes to relevant partners.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 3 - Justification

This is already being actively examined in the case of, for example, the Cooperation Project component of the new AECM, and will be considered by the Managing Authority and Paying Agency in the context of the design of the other measures in the CSP.

Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers 2 - Description

DAFM should collect and monitor data on the numbers of annual new young entrants to farming, alongside the stock of successful applicants to young farmer supports.

Complementary Income Support for Young Farmers 2 - Justification

DAFM will collect numbers of young farmers in their first year of application to the scheme.

Performance Management and Monitoring 3 - Description

An early inventory of all performance-related data currently and potentially available to support the tracking, monitoring and measurement of results.

Performance Management and Monitoring 3 - Justification

This will be an important element of the evaluation and monitoring plan that will be produced in Q1 2022, and will inform the work of the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 4 - Description

Consideration of a potentially greater role for public and private research and advisory organisations in implementing and supporting delivery within the new plan.

Human Resources and Administrative Capacity 4 - Justification

Public and private research and advisory organisations will be central to the implementation of the CSP. Research and best practice, particularly in an environmental context, will be transmitted to farmers through an extensive advisory support network, both as part of individual measure implementation and in the context of the delivery of training and knowledge transfer programmes. The Managing Authority will use every opportunity to maximise this research and advisory input as the CSP is being implemented.

Complementary Redistribution Income Support for Sustainability - Description

Similarly, following a sufficient initial period of implementation, the distribution of CRISS payments (and all direct payments) should be modelled using de-facto recorded data, to compare actual outcomes as against the estimated impacts modelled prior to CSP roll out.

Complementary Redistribution Income Support for Sustainability - Justification

While this recommendation will be further considered by the Managing Authority, it is envisaged that a review/evaluation of the impact of direct payments will be carried out during the lifetime of the CSP.

Eco-Scheme 1 - Description

The scope to introduce multi-annual as opposed to single year Eco-Scheme requirements should be considered as the initial model makes progress and becomes established.

Eco-Scheme 1 - Justification

DAFM is designing the Eco-Scheme to be an annual scheme with annual payments. The recommendation is noted and while the Department is keen to avoid major changes to the scheme design after it has become established, it, nevertheless, will of course review uptake and performance of the individual agricultural practices throughout the programme.

Mitigation Measure 7 : Agri Environment and Climate Measures (AECM) - Description

The proposed actions for AECM general must be designed with ecological assessment advice and expertise. Mandatory advisor training including the most up to date ecological advice and the use of the Department's IT system should be provided to registered farm planners to ensure that any proposed actions with potential to have an impact on a European Site will be screened for that potential risk. The Departments IT systems should also flag any proposed actions that may have a potential impact on a European Site and these proposed actions will be flagged for further consideration.

Mitigation Measure 7 : Agri Environment and Climate Measures (AECM) - Justification

Agreed and this has been updated in the updated draft Environmental Report and Section 5.3 of the CSP.

Mitigation Measure 3: Collaborate and engage with NPWS to address monitoring on permanent grassland - Description

Collaborate and engage with NPWS to address monitoring on permanent grassland.

Mitigation Measure 3: Collaborate and engage with NPWS to address monitoring on permanent grassland - Justification

DAFM is currently reviewing the designated Environmentally Sensitive Permanent Grassland (ESPG) sites in collaboration with the National Parks and Wildlife Service Division of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Cross-reporting and cooperation between statutory authorities (DAFM, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (National Parks and Wildlife Service) and Local Authorities will be enhanced to facilitate effective controls and follow up actions, as appropriate. This will include;

- Greater emphasis on targeting controls to ensure effectiveness. This will be achieved by consideration of new information relevant to the SMRs and GAECs, evaluation of outcome of past controls and an effective risk analysis procedure in the selection process.
- Where feasible, checks by monitoring will be introduced to enhance the number of farmers subject to controls.
- Remedial actions will form part of the control process

Mitigation Measure 6 from Food Vision 2030 Capital Investment Scheme - Description

The strengthening of the implementation of the EIA (Agriculture) Regulations is important in providing protection for habitats under pressure from agriculture. Any risk/s to any Natura 2000 sites as a result of new agricultural activities or enterprise should be subject to suitable environmental assessment requirements under AA and EIA (Agriculture) criteria. Best practice in this respect could be further extended to include assessment of all agricultural activities. Therefore, all new agricultural activities, changes in agricultural activities or management practice, should be cognisant and compliant with all relevant environmental legislation. Environmental legislation would include, but not be limited to, AA and EIA Agriculture Regulations

Mitigation Measure 6 from Food Vision 2030 Capital Investment Scheme - Justification

The Local Authorities are the competent authority for planning applications. Current planning legislation requires the competent planning authority to consider likely significant effects to the environment and European Sites as part of the planning process. Screening for Appropriate Assessment and EIA is part of

the planning process. DAFM will make provision in On The Spot Checks (OTSC) control procedures to check planning permission for new works.

BISS - Description

Following a sufficient initial period of implementation, the distribution of BISS payments (and all direct payments) should be modelled using de-facto recorded data, to compare actual outcomes as against the estimated impacts modelled prior to CSP roll out.

BISS - Justification

While this recommendation will be further considered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group, it is envisaged that a review/evaluation of the impact of direct payments will be carried out during the lifetime of the CSP.

Co-ordinated Oversight and Information Sharing - Description

Mechanisms should be considered for co-ordinated CSP delivery, monitoring and data sharing regarding CSP implementation and impacts across DAFM, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Biodiversity Centre, and others with a role in mapping and monitoring agricultural activity and its effects.

Co-ordinated Oversight and Information Sharing - Justification

The Managing Authority will put in place a Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group to oversee the implementation of the evaluation plan and the work of the evaluation team. The Steering Group will consist of DAFM officials, as well as other relevant Government Departments and agencies, as appropriate. An environment sub-committee will also be established, with formal representation and input from all of the relevant Departments and agencies.

Mitigation Measure 5 Eco scheme Agricultural practice 3: Limiting chemical nitrogen usage - Description

In order to ascertain and confirm positive trends from this practice, ongoing coordination with other departments and agencies including Environmental Protection Agency, Inland Fisheries Ireland, as well as farm advisors as the key interface between DAFM and farmers on the ground.

Mitigation Measure 5 Eco scheme Agricultural practice 3: Limiting chemical nitrogen usage - Justification

Oversight and monitoring of the environmental impacts of the CAP Strategic Plan will be carried out by the inter Departmental Environment Sub-Committee, which will report to the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group. In addition, to address and respond to trends relating to environmental issues, the monitoring regime will need to be strengthened. This will require enhanced cooperation, including data sharing agreements, across Government Departments and State Agencies, including the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (including National Parks and Wildlife Service), Department of Environment and Climate Change, the Environmental Protection Agency, representatives from the Local Authorities and Teagasc.

Mitigation Measure 1: Aim for all farms to support right measure, right place over plan lifetime - Description

Lessons learned from operational agri-environmental schemes, EIPs, LIFE projects, the Pilot Farm Environmental Survey (FES) and Pilot Soil Sampling Programme (SSP) should be expanded where appropriate over the CAP Strategic Plan period. The current pilot stage of the FES will focus on the development of methodology and the up-skilling of farmers and advisors in the roll-out of farm level

habitat surveys on approximately 6,500 farms. The programme will provide the farmer with an inventory of habitats, biodiversity and environmental information about his/her own farm. This should inform future knowledge transfer, awareness raising, communication and further mapping at farm level.

Mitigation Measure 1: Aim for all farms to support right measure, right place over plan lifetime - Justification

Agri Environment and Climate Measures (AECM)

In addition to the evaluation plan that will be produced in Q1 2022, the Managing Authority will continue to use all available assessments of measures undertaken during the current RDP - for example the 2020 ADAS evaluation of the GLAS environmental scheme - to inform the implementation of measures under the CSP. In addition, DAFM will use the measures introduced during the transition period (Soil Sampling Programme, Farm Environmental Study and the Results-Based Environment Agri-Pilot (REAP) programme) to both provide baseline data and to inform the design of the new flagship Agri-Environment Climate Measure (AECM) in the CSP. It will also build on the experience gained from the implementation of European Innovation Partnership initiatives during the current RDP in designing and implementing the Cooperation Project component of the new AECM

The proposed actions for AECM general will be designed with ecological assessment advice and expertise. Mandatory advisor training including the most up to date ecological advice and the use of the Department's IT system will be provided to registered farm planners to ensure that any proposed actions with potential to have an impact on a European Site will be screened for that potential risk. The Department's IT systems will also flag any proposed actions that may have a potential impact on a European Site and these proposed actions will be flagged for further consideration.

In addition to this, the AECM cooperative measure will have ecological expertise as part of the cooperation project team. The priority areas and actions identified for this measure have been agreed in close collaboration with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The European Innovation Partnerships will now also include a targeted call for breeding waders and a targeted call to improve water quality on intensive farms.

Mitigation Measure 4 Capacity Building and Training - Description

Capacity Building and Training Critical to the environmental issues is the need for capacity building and training for farmers and their advisors, and as such the following mitigation measure is recommended

Education and training is targeted at all farmers and advisors and that a core component should be delivered on understanding and addressing key environmental challenges facing agriculture in particularly water, climate change and biodiversity and human health, landscape and cultural heritage. This would help deliver a more robust and comprehensive understanding of these issues and generate potential solutions and ownership from farmers themselves. Key themes to consider over the capacity building interventions are as follows:

- As part of the delivery of education and training farmers should be made aware of and be required to be aware of Annex 1 habitat, Annex 2 species and SPA bird population sensitivities in the zone of influence of the farm.
- The provision of farm advisor training with respect to PIP maps and their interpretation specifically focusing training on Nitrate & Phosphorous pollution impact potential

Such education and training and farm awareness will provide consistency with the controls outlined for SMR 3 and SMR 4

Further details on the knowledge requirements required for specific Annex I habitats, Annex II species and SPA bird populations are outlined in appendices to the accompanying Natura Impact Statement

Mitigation Measure 4 Capacity Building and Training - Justification

The CPD for Advisors measure will address a number of high-level topics including climate change (both mitigation and adaptation), air, soil and water quality, biodiversity conservation, and the adoption of new technologies and best practice. It is envisaged that training of advisors on issues related to landscape and cultural heritage will be included in the biodiversity conservation topic. Training is also being provided during the Transitional period of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2022. The training for Farm Advisory Services and Knowledge Transfer will also have a role to play.

Eco-Scheme 3 - Description

Examine Eco-Scheme participation on samples of farms to understand the drivers for option selection and the resulting actions and their impacts.

Eco-Scheme 3 - Justification

The recommendation around a sample of farms could feature as part of the internal review process following the introduction of the Eco-Scheme in 2023 and will be considered further by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group.

Areas of Natural Constraints 1 - Description

Definitions, targets and the means of monitoring Result Indicator R7 need to be clarified and established as it may relate to the ANC Measure.

Areas of Natural Constraints 1 - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated. ANC will contribute to Result Indicator R.7. However, work is ongoing in relation to Result Indicator 7, including engaging with the Commission on the calculation methods.

AECM 3 - Description

Beyond budgetary reasons, it is not made clear why a target of 50,000 farmers was set for this scheme. Further explanation of this point would be of benefit.

AECM 3 - Justification

Section 3.1 on the overall ambition of the Green Architecture has been updated.

Protein Aid 2 - Description

Further development of the controls for the implementation of mixed cropping under the intervention should take place.

Protein Aid 2 - Justification

The Protein Aid Intervention template in Section 5.1 now includes additional text to explain mixed cropping.

Fruit and Vegetable POs 2 - Description

Continued efforts should be made to reduce the administrative burden associated with the scheme, while being cognisant of the scheme’s legislative requirements.

Fruit and Vegetable POs 2 - Justification

This is a primary objective for the team who are considering how the scheme will be implemented. This will include consideration of appropriate IT systems with feedback from existing Producer Organisations.

Fruit and Vegetable POs 1 - Description

A brief overview of the main points arising from the SWOT analysis and needs assessment, which are relevant to the Sectoral Intervention in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector, should be referenced.

Fruit and Vegetable POs 1 - Justification

The Fruit and Vegetables PO Intervention template in Section 5.2 now includes a brief overview of the SWOT analysis and needs assessment.

AECM 1 - Description

Actions that contain results-based metrics require further definition. It is not clear whether a farmer will still receive payment for an action that was implemented, but the result indicator could not be achieved.

AECM 1 - Justification

The results-based actions are fully results-based, with no hybridisation between prescription and indicators. Indicators are entirely within the farmer's control and include diversity and cover of indicator plant species, assessment of sward structure, presence and cover of negative indicators, and any threats to soil, vegetation or water from farming practices. Fields must reach a minimum score threshold to be paid, i.e. in the case of low input grassland, a score below the minimum threshold demonstrates that the field in question is not being managed as a low input grassland and the scorecard is therefore not applicable. There will be detailed specifications provided to planners.

Appropriate training will be provided to advisers and a comprehensive communication plan will ensure the requirements of the scheme are understood.

Straw Incorporation Measure 1 - Description

More specific reference to the opportunity presented by straw incorporation should be made in the SWOT analysis.

Straw Incorporation Measure 1 - Justification

Recommendation is accepted. Additional text has been included in the SWOT and the Needs Assessment in relation to the benefits of chopping and incorporating straw.

Capital Investments Scheme 1 - Description

More information could be provided to detail how the intervention will be monitored and evaluated, with details regarding how impact will be measured and how any data will be collected.

Capital Investments Scheme 1 - Justification

While this recommendation will be considered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group, it is proposed to build a reporting system to link investment items to result indicators, and to collect data. The list of investment items will be kept under review based on the data collected.

EIP1 - Description

Further explanation regarding the basis of the target values would provide context on the expected output values and allow judgements to be made on how ambitious/reliable these are.

EIP1 - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

EIP 3 - Description

Clarify the EIPs that are in scope for this intervention, and potential overlaps with the co-operation measure of AECM. This is not fully clear at present and may create confusion between this intervention and what is proposed under AECM

EIP 3 - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

Eco-Scheme 2 - Description

Monitor the interface between conditionality requirements and Eco-Scheme participation obligations and provide additional interpretation and guidance where required.

Eco-Scheme 2 - Justification

This recommendation is noted. The payments under the Eco-Scheme will only be for actions going beyond Conditionality and legislative requirements. A comprehensive communication plan will be put in place to ensure that advisers and beneficiaries are aware of scheme obligations prior to rollout.

AECM 2 - Description

The Cooperation option could make its evidence basis more explicit. For example, are there elements other than the hybrid results-based model used that have been informed by the Burren Programme or EIP-Agri programme?

AECM 2 - Justification

This recommendation is noted and the intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated

AECM 4 - Description

A definition of what the result indicators are measuring in each instance would improve understanding.

AECM 4 - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated.

CPD for Advisors 2 - Description

The thematic approaches selected should carefully complement and add value to mainstream farm advisor training.

CPD for Advisors 2 - Justification

Recommendation is accepted. The topics to be covered as part of the CPD Programme will be complementary to the FAS training. Also, the topics to be covered will be agreed following consultation with the AKIS Stakeholder Group.

AECM 5 - Description

Greater detail on the monitoring for the scheme should be included. The ADAS review of GLAS identified a greater degree of monitoring as a lesson to be taken forward for subsequent iterations of the

scheme. Effective monitoring, particularly given the multi-faceted nature of this intervention, will be critical to ongoing management, lessons learned and adaptation where needed.

AECM 5 - Justification

While Article 140 (5) of the CSP regulation states that Member States shall submit the evaluation plan to the monitoring committee no later than one year after the adoption of the CAP Strategic Plan, it is intended to compile a draft evaluation plan for the CSP in Q1 2022. This is necessary as baseline data will need to be collected in order to properly assess the impact of the CSP on beneficiaries. The evaluation plan will outline the need for an evaluation team to assess the impact of CSP interventions of the three overarching themes of the CSP.

AECM 6 - Description

Ambitions for the scheme should be managed, with communications to the public and wider stakeholders needing to be clear on the scale of the scheme and appropriate expectations of it.

AECM 6 - Justification

Communications will be coordinated centrally, and will outline the way in which the Green Architecture, including the AECM, contributes to national and European environmental goals. All relevant DAFM Divisions will be contributing to the Communications Strategy, which will also include dissemination by the CAP Network and existing National Rural Network contract.

AECM Training 1 - Description

There is no indication provided of whether any elements from previous iterations of the training programme, or lessons learnt, have been reflected in the design. It is recommended that the intervention provides some detail on whether the lessons learnt from previous programmes or evaluations have been incorporated into the design.

AECM Training 1 - Justification

This recommendation has been addressed in the intervention. ADAS considered GLAS training as part of their evaluation of GLAS and noted, inter alia, that “Participants in this evaluation have made suggestions for improving the value of advice and training, but fundamentally it should improve understanding and capacity to implement actions and provide aftercare in order to deliver outcomes over the course of the agreement”. The proposal to have a second voluntary course in year 3 of the contract was to address this point of improving understanding and the provision of aftercare over the course of the agreement.

AECM Training 2 - Description

The number of participants in the AECM does not appear to align with the expected numbers taking place in the mandatory training element of the AECM training. How the numbers of participants were reached could be made more explicit.

AECM Training 2 - Justification

The intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect this.

Straw Incorporation Measure 2 - Description

Monitoring will need to cover wider impacts of the intervention on straw supply elsewhere in the sector to avoid any negative downstream effects.

Straw Incorporation Measure 2 - Justification

Recommendation is accepted. We will continue to monitor the area of crops sown, to avoid any possible negative effects on straw supply.

Organic Farming Scheme 2 - Description

The measure could benefit from clearly setting out the role of ICT systems in administration of the intervention and detail how indicator data will be collected to ensure that reporting systems are robust.

Organic Farming Scheme 2 - Justification

Section 7.2 of the draft CSP on monitoring and evaluation has been updated.

EIP 2 - Description

Provide more detailed and specific eligibility requirements to prevent a similar low success rate as in the previous programme

EIP 2 - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme - Description

The draft intervention should be updated to reflect SO4, as this is one of the related objectives but is not referenced specifically.

Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect a secondary impact on SO4.

Protein Aid 1 - Description

The intervention's relevance to multiple SOs should be more explicitly stated in the draft CSP

Protein Aid 1 - Justification

The Intervention template in section 5.1 has been updated to include link to SO 4 and 5, along with SO 1

Apiculture 1 - Description

A brief overview of the SWOT analysis and needs assessment, as relevant to the Sectoral Intervention for the Apiculture Sector, should be incorporated within its sections of the CSP.

Apiculture 1 - Justification

The Apiculture Intervention template in Section 5.2 now includes a brief overview of the SWOT analysis and needs assessment.

Apiculture 2 - Description

It would be useful if the intervention adopted some means to track the level of beekeeper engagement with the new National Apiculture Programme (e.g. through existing sectoral surveys), even if outside the formal indicator system for the CSP.

Apiculture 2 - Justification

As part of the annual beekeeping hive census and/or through other appropriate surveys, the level of beekeeper engagement with the new National Apiculture Programme will be monitored.

Areas of Natural Constraints 2 - Description

Consideration should be given to sample-based research and evaluation of the environmental, biodiversity, conservation and farm viability effects of ANC participation on individual farms to inform an understanding of the scheme's impacts and the case if any for alternative implementation models.

Areas of Natural Constraints 2 - Justification

While Article 140 (5) of the CSP regulation states that Member States shall submit the evaluation plan to the monitoring committee no later than one year after the adoption of the CAP Strategic Plan, it is intended to compile a draft evaluation plan for the CSP in Q1 2022. This is necessary as baseline data will need to be collected in order to properly assess the impact of the CSP on beneficiaries . The evaluation plan will outline the need for an evaluation team to assess the impact of CSP interventions - including the ANC intervention - across the three overarching themes of the CSP.

Areas of Natural Constraints 3 - Description

Payment rates should be re-examined in light of the results of the 2020 Census of Agriculture, when published.

Areas of Natural Constraints 3 - Justification

Recommendation is accepted. Payment rates will be reviewed when the 2020 Census of Agriculture data is available.

Knowledge Transfer 2 - Description

The list of priority topics should be used to ensure that groups sufficiently cover both economically-oriented and environmentally-oriented topics as part of their activities over the course of the three-year operating period.

Knowledge Transfer 2 - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

Collaborative Farming Grant 3 - Description

More information could be provided in the plan on the structure and governance of these partnerships, including their use of a common framework or a local contextual structure.

Collaborative Farming Grant 3 - Justification

Section 5.3 of the CSP has been updated and further details will be outlined in the Terms and Conditions for the intervention.

LEADER 1 - Description

Further explanation regarding the potential result indicators that are dependent on the LDS selected and how they have been selected would give a better insight into the performance framework/logic model of the programme.

LEADER 1 - Justification

Section 2.1.9 has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

CPD for Advisors 1 - Description

CPD for Advisors should be evaluated distinctly, and the ongoing routine evaluation of training as delivered should be written into the specification for training providers.

CPD for Advisors 1 - Justification

Recommendation is accepted. It is envisaged that each module will include an assessment/evaluation to determine if the advisor has successful gained the required data (passed the module). In addition, DAFM topic experts will evaluate the content for each module to ensure that it covers the topic at hand and is of a high standard.

Collaborative Farming Grant 2 - Description

Greater information may need to be provided on how farmers may be encouraged to form partnerships and how they may be convinced of the benefits.

Collaborative Farming Grant 2 - Justification

A network of public (Teagasc) and private Farm Advisory Services is in place throughout the country to promote the concept of collaborative arrangements primarily through the establishment of Registered Farm Partnerships (RFPs). A comprehensive communications campaign will also be put in place on the implementation of the CSP. The CAP Network will also have a role to play.

LEADER 2 - Description

The measure could benefit from clearly setting out in more detail the role of ICT systems in the monitoring/administration of the intervention.

LEADER 2 - Justification

Section 7.2 has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

LEADER 3 - Description

Provide more detail on actions that LEADER will take to address the gender equality aspect of SO8. to ensure that the measure thoroughly addresses the EU SO.

LEADER 3 - Justification

Each of the LEADER interventions in the draft CAP SP will respect the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights as referenced in Article 9 of the CAP SP Regulation. This includes the equal rights of women and men. This will be further outlined in the calls for proposals and LEADER Programme Operating Rules.

Knowledge Transfer 1 - Description

The description of the intervention would be improved with the provision of a brief summary regarding the main knowledge transfer related issues arising in the SWOT analysis and needs assessment.

Knowledge Transfer 1 - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

AECM Training 3 - Description

The unit cost calculations should be provided in more detail as it is unclear precisely how this was reached.

AECM Training 3 - Justification

The intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to reflect this.

AECM Training 4 - Description

A more detailed description, if available, should be provided on how the training will cover each action provided in the AECM General and the Cooperation Options.

AECM Training 4 - Justification

This recommendation will be considered during implementation. This recommendation is also addressed in the environmental assessment section.

Straw Incorporation Measure 3 - Description

Full implementation should be reviewed and evaluated at appropriate stages, and payment rates should be reviewed at appropriate intervals.

Straw Incorporation Measure 3 - Justification

While this recommendation will be further considered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group, it is envisaged that the evaluation plan, which is still to be developed, will include a review/evaluation of the Straw Incorporation Measure.

Capital Investments Scheme 2 - Description

Further justification as to why similar investment levels to TAMS II are expected would also help support the intervention strategy, along with explaining why the investment substitution which was identified is expected.

Capital Investments Scheme 2 - Justification

The intervention template in Section 5.3 of the CSP has been updated.

Capital Investments Scheme 3 - Description

The draft Plan should clarify why funding is only being allocated in 2026 and 2027.

Capital Investments Scheme 3 - Justification

The intervention template in Section 5.3 of the CSP has been updated.

Organic Farming Scheme 1 - Description

The intervention draft should establish/outline frequent monitoring processes of the payment rate to review its ability to meet the 7.5% target which is a significant increase from previous funding period.

Organic Farming Scheme 1 - Justification

R.24, which relates to Share of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) supported by the CAP for organic farming, with a split between maintenance and conversion to organic farming, will be monitored throughout the CSP period.

CPD for Advisors 3 - Description

Consider explicit training needs analysis across the advisor cohort, and keep a degree of future CPD open and flexible, to be specified as needs dictate.

CPD for Advisors 3 - Justification

CPD advisor topics will be kept under review and the main advisory bodies will also be consulted on the topics to be covered.

Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme - Description

The new monitoring and administration system should be subject to ongoing review of its efficiency, especially in the first year of implementation. Any issues encountered should be corrected as soon as possible to ensure the new system reduces administrative burdens and eases reporting and analysis

Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme - Justification

Adjustments as required to systems and evaluation of lessons learned, particularly following initial implementation, is part of standard project management practice employed.

Sheep Improvement Scheme - Description

While perhaps beyond the requirements for result indicator monitoring as applicable to the entire CSP, consideration should be given to establishing targets and recording outputs across different actions within the intervention as a means of supporting more detailed monitoring and evaluation.

Sheep Improvement Scheme - Justification

Recommendation will be further considered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group.

Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations - Description

The decision, at an advanced stage of CSP planning, to widen the scope of this scheme from supports in the beef and sheep sectors to a wider set of sectors, should be explained in the CSP

Early Stage Support for Producer Organisations - Justification

Intervention template in Section 5.3 has been updated to provide greater clarity on this.

Collaborative Farming Grant 1 - Description

Any additional details on the administrative burden associated with this scheme should be included.

Collaborative Farming Grant 1 - Justification

Further clarification has been provided in Section 5.3 of the CSP.

AECM Training 5 - Description

There is no distinction or acknowledgement provided that some participants will be in the General Option and others will use the Cooperation Model and whether the training needs of participants will change based on the option that they will use in the AECM. This could be made clearer within the plan.

AECM Training 5 - Justification

This has been made clear in the draft CSP Section 5.3.

Mitigation Measure 2: Oversight and monitoring - Description

Oversight and monitoring of the CAP Strategic Plan through the Environmental Monitoring Committee and existing controls and checks protocols. In addition, to address and respond to trends relating to environmental issues, the monitoring regime needs to be enforced, targeted in a practical manner to allow for results that enhance the positive measures in the plan, and respond accordingly where adverse effects

are identified early in the plan stage. This would also support where positive effects are occurring and learn from these actions. This will facilitate achievement of targets set out in the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027 including those relevant to other national and EU legislations such as WFD, Habitats Directive, Birds Directive and the National Emissions Ceiling Directive. Allow for annual review and remedial actions/revisions if adverse effects are identified through this monitoring. This would seek to monitor effects (positive and negative) across key environmental receptors identified through the SEA and AA process namely Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, European Sites, water resources and GHG emissions. Enhanced cross reporting between local authorities, EPA, DAFM, DHLGH, DECC and Irish Water as appropriate.

Mitigation Measure 2: Oversight and monitoring - Justification

Oversight and monitoring of the environmental impacts of the CAP Strategic Plan will be carried out by the inter-Departmental Environment Sub-Committee, which will report to the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group. In addition, to address and respond to trends relating to environmental issues, the monitoring regime will be strengthened, through enhanced cooperation, including data sharing agreements, across Government Departments and State Agencies, including, but not limited to, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (incl National Parks and Wildlife Service), the Environmental Protection Agency, representatives from the Local Authorities and Teagasc.

In addition to this, cross-reporting and cooperation between statutory authorities (DAFM, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (National Parks and Wildlife Service) and Local Authorities) will be enhanced to facilitate effective controls and follow up actions, as appropriate. This will include;

- Greater emphasis on targeting controls to ensure effectiveness. This will be achieved by consideration of new information relevant to the SMRs and GAECs, evaluation of outcome of past controls and an effective risk analysis procedure in the selection process.
- Where feasible, checks by monitoring will be introduced to enhance the number of farmers subject to controls.
- Remedial actions will form part of the control process

DAFM will make provision in On The Spot Checks (OTSC) control procedures to check planning permission for new works.

3. Ex-ante evaluation report

See attached document(s)

4. Strategic environmental assessment report

See attached document(s)

Annex II on the SWOT analysis

See attached document(s)

Annex III on the consultation of the partners

See attached document(s)

Annex IV on the crop-specific payment for cotton (where relevant)

Annex V on the additional national financing provided within the scope of the CAP Strategic Plan

Basis	Intervention	Budget	higher number of beneficiaries	a higher aid intensity	providing financing to a certain operation within the intervention	Additional information

The annual estimated amount of national financial assistance in the Fruits & Vegetables sector per region concerned and the total for the Member State

N/A

Annex VI on transitional national aid (where relevant)

a) the annual sector-specific financial envelope for each sector for which transitional national aid is granted

Sector	The sector-specific financial envelope, EUR				
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027

b) where relevant, the maximum unit rate of support for each year of the period

Sector	Maximum unit rate of support, in %				
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027

c) where relevant, information as regards the reference period modified in accordance with the Article 147(2) second subparagraph

Sector	informations as regards the reference period modified

d) a brief description of the complementarity of the transitional national aid with CAP Strategic Plan interventions

Other annex: Consistency with and contribution to the Union targets for 2030

National contribution to the EU 2030 target of 50% reduction of nutrient losses, while ensuring no deterioration in soil fertility

See Section 2.3.3 of the CSP.

National contribution to the EU 2030 target of 10% of agricultural area under high-diversity landscape features.

See Section 2.3.3 of the CSP.

National contribution to the EU 2030 target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming

See Section 2.3.3 of the CSP.

National contribution to the EU 2030 targets of 50% reduction of the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides, and use of more hazardous pesticides

See Section 2.3.3 of the CSP.

National contribution to the EU 2030 target of 50% reduction of sales of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture

See Section 2.3.3 of the CSP.

National contribution to the EU 2025 target to roll-out of fast broadband internet in rural areas to achieve the objective of 100% access

See Section 2.3.3 of the CSP.

DOCUMENTS

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent by
Annex III: Consultation with Partners	Annex III: Consultation of the partners	10-Aug-2022		Ares(2022)5704992	Annex III: Consultation with Partners	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Annex to Section 3.1.5	Annex Chapter 3: Consistency of the Strategy and complementarities	10-Aug-2022	3.1.5	Ares(2022)5704992	Annex to Section 3.1.5	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Annex to Section 7.3 Appeals Procedure	Annex Chapter 7: Governance and Coordination system	10-Aug-2022	7.3 Appeals Procedure	Ares(2022)5704992	Annex to Section 7.3 Appeals Procedure	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Annex to Section 7.3 EAFRD	Annex Chapter 7: Governance and Coordination system	10-Aug-2022	7.3 IACS EAFRD	Ares(2022)5704992	Annex to Section 7.3 EAFRD	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Annex to Section 7.3 EAGF	Annex Chapter 7: Governance and Coordination system	10-Aug-2022	7.3 IACS	Ares(2022)5704992	Annex to Section 7.3 EAFG	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Annex to Section 7.3 System for the Identification and Registration of Terrestrial Animals	Annex Chapter 7: Governance and Coordination system	10-Aug-2022	Annex 7.3 IDR	Ares(2022)5704992	Annex to Section 7.3 System for the Identification and Registration of Terrestrial Animals	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Ex-Ante Evaluation Report	Annex I: Ex-ante evaluation and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) referred to in Directive 2001/42/EC	10-Aug-2022	Ex-Ante	Ares(2022)5704992	Ex-Ante Evaluation Report	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Ireland's SWOT Analysis: Preparations for Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027	Annex II: SWOT analysis	10-Aug-2022		Ares(2022)5704992	Ireland's SWOT Analysis: Preparations for Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
SEA Report	Annex I: Ex-ante evaluation and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) referred to in Directive 2001/42/EC	10-Aug-2022	SEA Report Annex	Ares(2022)5704992	SEA Report	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Selection Certification of Verification of Costings	Annex Chapter 7: Governance and Coordination system	10-Aug-2022	Teagasc Costing	Ares(2022)5704992	Selection Certification of Verification of Costings	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank
Programme snapshot 2023IE06AFSP001 1.2	Snapshot of data before send	11-Aug-2022		Ares(2022)5704992	Programme snapshot 2023IE06AFSP001 1.2 Programme snapshot 2023IE06AFSP001 1.2	11-Aug-2022	Malik, Shashank