

CAP consultation document

Submission by [REDACTED] *TD*

Regarding the conclusions in the Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement, I believe farmers in Ireland are ready to put their shoulder to the wheel when it comes to making a difference with climate change and reaching emissions targets. This has always been the case. But farmers must either receive a fair price for their product to cover costs and leave a margin of profit, or they must be compensated proportionately for the work carried out in agricultural schemes under the Common Agricultural Policy.

In previous rounds of consultation, I have voiced my support for the redistribution of funds among farmers to even the playing field and to introduce a cap on the maximum amount payable as part of direct payments.

Many new technologies are coming on stream which will help us meet targets in the next few years, particularly around advancements in the storage of slurry reducing the loss of emissions and dietary supplements for ruminant animals to reduce biogenic methane.

The importance of knowledge sharing will play a huge role moving forward in order to educate and enlighten farmers on new methods to make their farm's productivity while controlling its emission levels.

I support the DAFM's introduction of a soil sampling scheme for farmers and plans to introduce a liming scheme to improve soil health and fertility. These schemes will in turn help farmers accurately assess what fertiliser, beyond slurry or farmyard manure, is required – which will have benefits economically for them and environmentally when it comes to needless nutrient losses.

Having reviewed the environmental report, I wish to address some of the recommendations listed on pages 126-131. As mentioned, the redistribution of funds through internal convergence is something which I support. And while there will be some farmers be negatively impacted, the wider good it do for others will outweigh this. A young farmer starting off should be worth as much as a farmer who farmed back in the reference years in the early 2000s.

Research and advancements will have a significant role to play when it comes to emissions and finding new ways to combat their levels – without negatively impacting on the productivity or viability of family farms.

The rewetting of peatlands is something which I have supported and worked on in the past. It is vitally important that this is done with the support of local communities and in cooperation with other neighbouring landowners, so as not to flood farmland which is productive at present. Many farms along the western seaboard have land which has a peaty-type soil. These farmers must be allowed to continue farming this land.

I also welcomed measures regarding the planting of trees on farmland as part of the new environmental scheme, something which I had suggested in previous discussions around programme for government talks.

It is also important that a sustainable budget of €389 million for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 is provided to drive 'bottom-up, community-led' investment to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland, provide funding in the rural environment and support climate change mitigation

initiatives in rural communities as well as the identified high level ambitions of LEADER 2023-2027 outlined in the draft CAP strategic plan.

As outlined in the document, it is important that the “right measure in the right place” approach is taken moving forward and I look forward to taking part in future consultations on the subject.