

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: LEADER Requirement
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:00:56
Attachments: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
Minister for Agriculture Food & Marine

[REDACTED]
Minister for Rural & Community Development

Dear Ministers,

[REDACTED] I request that LEADER be enhanced and help grow capacity in communities.

[REDACTED] ... but the community must provide a proportion of funding also. Leader is a key enabler for projects.

In my experience, the glue that binds the whole thing is the Leader Programme. It is not just a grant giving programme, it's a development programme where project officers help the group / individual with confidence and increase skills. The Leader Programme and those who administer it are beacons on the rural landscape.

It is vitally important that this programme is not only maintained, but enhanced.

A huge part of our infrastructure, as well as our commercial and cultural organisations, have been instigated by the support of the Leader Programme. Therefore, I appeal to you to provide a sustainable budget of €389 million for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 to drive 'bottom-up, community-led' investment to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland, to enhance 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.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]



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[Redacted content]

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[Redacted content]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: CAP Strategic Plan
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:10:21
Attachments: [REDACTED]

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A sustainable budget of €389 million would be provided for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 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.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

South Tipperary Development Company
Unit 2C, Carrigeen Commercial Park,
Clogheen Road,
Cahir,
Co.Tipperary.
E21 HV20

[REDACTED]



THE LOCAL ACTION GROUP FOR TIPPERARY



[REDACTED]

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A SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF FORUM CONNEMARA TO THE CAP CONSULTATION PROCESS

A Chara,

FORUM Connemara CLG is a local development company (LDC), a partnership of voluntary, community and statutory agencies, based in Connemara with the objective of making the area a better place to live, work and play.

FORUM was established thirty years ago. It is governed by a Board of 18 voluntary directors representing community and voluntary groups, state agencies, local government and national social partners.

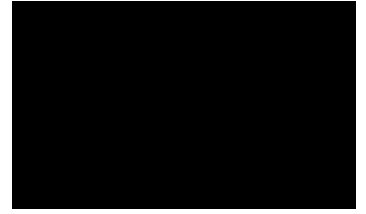
FORUM administers a range of programmes on behalf of the government and various state agencies, aimed at improving the overall economic and social well-being of stakeholders and the physical and institutional environments in which they live.

FORUM Connemara CLG. administers the following programmes/schemes:

- - Rural Development Programme (Leader) 2014 – 2020
- - North West Connemara Locally Led scheme – EIP
- - Ability Programme † Cumas Chonamara
- - Adolescent Support Programme
- - Community Employment Schemes x 3
- - Job Initiative Scheme x 1
- - Rural Social Scheme x 2
- - TUS Scheme x 2
- - Rural Recreation Scheme for County Galway

Target Groups

- Small family farms
- Business and Enterprise
- Family Support/Disadvantaged families



- Older people and Carers
- People with disability
- Under and Unemployed
- Youth
- Community Groups

The catchment area covered by the FORUM partnership faces many challenges and opportunities in terms of realising sustainable development objectives over the coming years. Much of the territory is structurally weak, with poor connectivity, a low level of demographic vitality and a narrow economic base. Structural weaknesses are most profound in the north, west and centre of the territory, where there is a high level of dependence on small-scale farming/fishing and seasonal employment.

In recent years, FORUM has been able to undertake an extensive plan of work with its target groups. This has included assisting community groups to increase their ability to undertake local development through the provision of meeting rooms, office and community facilities, on-going management assistance and advice, capacity building, seminars and education programmes and support with planning and funding projects.

Work with older people and people with disability has involved supporting resource centres, expanding a social care programme, carers groups; implementing an essential housing repairs service, provision of a transport service to Clifden Day Hospital and organising a variety of special projects including the Intergenerational Programme.

FORUM has supported groups and families by the organisation of special events and workshops. A joint initiative between LCDP and LEADER programmes resulted in a therapeutic riding training programme being run in Connemara with 11 trained personnel available to offer this service in the Connemara area. A new company was established called Connemara Therapeutic Riding CLG to deliver a community based therapeutic riding project in a local equestrian centre. Currently 40 adults and children with a wide range of disabilities benefit from the programme.

Through its action with youth and educational interests, FORUM has tackled the problems of exclusion experienced by the most marginalised children and young people by the provision of a programme of actions in primary and post primary schools, with youth clubs after school programmes and summer camps. FORUM supports parenting programmes that look at drug issues



and cyber safety in the community and possible interventions. Work is carried out with a youth representative group & a Youth café.

FORUM has a wide range of experience in implementing a variety of Socio Economic programmes. With regards to the LEADER programme, it has extended its territory to include Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht Connemara and it's off shore islands. FORUM is one of the four companies nationally who have retained LAG status and has commenced the implementation of the new LEADER transition programme.

Submission in Brief

- The LEADER Programme is a key rural development tool for supporting the economic, social and environmental development of rural communities, by providing the resources necessary for rural communities to support their own development and create capacity at local level, particularly in areas like Connemara with a low economic base, isolated dispersed population and a high level of disadvantage.
- For thirty years the LEADER Programme, delivered by Local Development Companies has maximised the drawdown and impact of EU funds, to create jobs in rural areas, and develop rural communities in keeping with the LEADER approach and evaluated as very successful by EU institutions.
- The aim of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 as identified in the draft CAP Strategic Plan is to continue to support a community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development by animating and funding initiatives that emerge at a local level to address local challenges and needs.
- Ireland's CAP SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment identified several challenges in rural Ireland for which the LEADER approach can assist with the delivery of Government objectives. These include the need to support private enterprises and communities to improve quality of life and economic activity in rural areas; and the need to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland with a focus on social inclusion and climate change mitigation.
- Representing 1.8% of Ireland's total CAP Budget, an indicative Budget of €180 million has been allocated for LEADER 2023-2027. The Budget for the 2007-2013 Programme stood at



€425 million (€85 million annual average) with the successor Programme that operated from mid-2016 to 2020 reduced to €250 million (€50 million annual average).

- A further cut to €180 million is now proposed for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 (€36 million annual average), and when examined on a year-by-year actual basis marks another significant reduction of almost 40% (not allowing for the effect of inflation in real terms) in the funds available for the delivery of important rural enterprise, tourism, job creation, and community-led projects the length and breadth of the country.

FORUM Connemara and our network organisation ILDN calls for the allocation of a sustainable minimum of €389 million (€77.8 million annual average) for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 to drive 'bottom-up, community-led' investment to create and maintain enterprise in rural Ireland, to enhance 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.

FORUM Connemara Proposes:

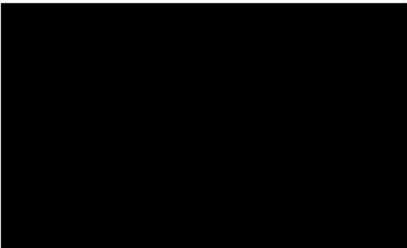
FORUM Connemara calls on the Department of Agriculture Food & Marine and the Department of Rural & Community Development to:

- Provide a sustainable budget of €389 million for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 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.
- Ensure a sustainable Budget for each Local Development Company at local level to ensure the efficient delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027

3. What does a reduced LEADER Budget mean?

The continued erosion of the LEADER Budget will:

- > Deprive rural communities of critical capacity building supports and funding for vital enterprise, tourism, and community-led development (more than 5,000 projects supported in the most recent Programme period). Weaker communities and particular groups will be left behind including our youth, women, older people as well as the many social enterprises which LEADER has been able to support to date.
- > Call into question the Government's capacity to deliver on ambitions outlined in its National Rural Strategy – Our Rural Future which are specifically linked to the LEADER approach.



- > Hinder the Covid19 recovery in rural areas denying enterprises including farmers and farm families of critical funding opportunities and their ability to mitigate the effects of COVID19 and Brexit.
- > Inhibit the capacity of rural communities to deliver climate mitigation and biodiversity projects.
- > Curtail the delivery of complementary schemes such as PEACE, the Walks Scheme, the Rural Social Scheme, the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme. EIP and LIFE programmes etc.
- > Undermine the future viability of Ireland’s rural based Local Development Companies.

Purpose of LEADER 2023-2027 (Draft CAP Strategic Plan)

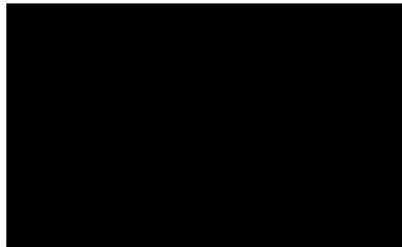
The aim of this intervention is to support a community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development by funding initiatives that emerge at a local level that aim to address local challenges and needs. Ireland’s SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment identified several challenges in rural Ireland for which the LEADER intervention can provide assistance. These include the need to support private enterprises to create rural jobs and communities to improve quality of life and economic activity in rural areas; and the need to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland with a focus on social inclusion and climate change mitigation. The LEADER Programme is a key rural development tool for supporting the economic and social development of rural communities, by providing the resources necessary for communities to support their own development and create capacity at local level.

The indicative high-level LEADER themes are as follows:

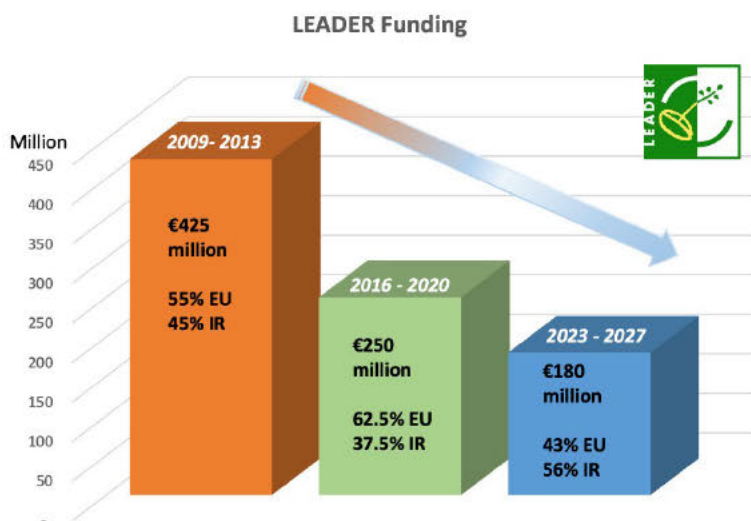
- Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation
- Economic Development and Job Creation
- Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion

LEADER FUNDING 2007-2027

Programming Period	Total Programme Allocation	Average Annual Allocation
2007-2013 (delivered 2009-2013)	€425,000,000	€85,000,000
2014-2020 (delivered 2016 to 2020)	€250,000,000	€50,000,000

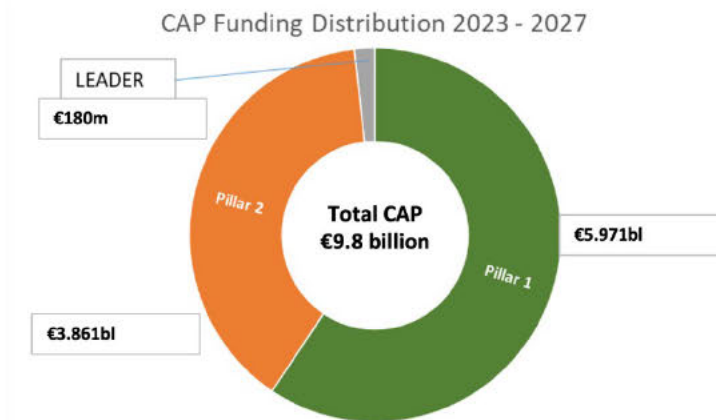


2021-2022 (Transitional)	€ 70,000,000 (plus exchequer funding as requested)	€35,000,000
2023-2027 (indicative budget)	€180,000,000	€36,000,000
<i>2023-2027 (Minimum Required)</i>	<i>€389,000,000</i>	<i>€77,800,000</i>



LEADER 2023-2027 Indicative Allocation analysed

The EU budget agreement provided for a total CAP funding for Ireland of €7.5 billion over the 5 year period from 2023 to 2027. The funding is split between Pillar 1 (Direct Payments and Sectoral Interventions -€5.9billion) and Pillar II (Rural Development - €1.56billion). The allocation for the national exchequer to co-fund the Rural Development element of the CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) of €2.3bn has been agreed. This will bring the total funding for the CSP to €9.8bn and to €3.86bn in respect of the Rural Development component of the plan. Pillar II measures include LEADER interventions to be delivered by the Department of Rural and Community Development.



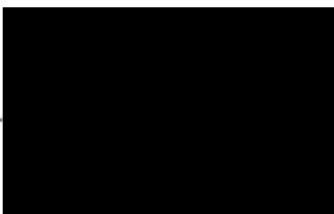
Funding will be phased over the 2023-2027 period in line with the requirements of intervention design and the annual national budgetary process.

In accordance with Article 92(1) of the draft CAP Strategic Plan regulation, “At least 5% of the total EAFRD contribution to the CAP Strategic Plan as set out in Annex XI shall be reserved for LEADER. The maximum permissible Exchequer co-funding rate for the next LEADER programme will be 80%”.

The indicative €180m financial allocation for LEADER over the 2023-27 period will consist of €77.9m (43.28%) funding from European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) with the remainder funded by the National exchequer. This equates to 1.8% of Ireland’s total CAP Budget.

Notwithstanding the increased national exchequer funding for the overall CAP Programme 2023 to 2027 there is a significant cut in LEADER funding for rural areas with the proposed allocation for the Programme falling from €425 million for the 2007-2013 Programme to just €180 million for the 2023-2027 programming period. Furthermore, the co-funding element of 56.72% falls well short of the 80% permissible under EU regulation. Increasing the co-funding rate to the maximum allowable rate affords the Government the opportunity to deliver a sustainable LEADER Budget of €389 million for the period 2023-2027.

Le gach dea-ghuí,





Forbairt Iarthar Luimní
West Limerick Resources

West Limerick Resources CLG

Submission to

Department of Agriculture

Consultation
on the
Draft CAP Strategic Plan
and the
Indicative Budget Allocations.

Background

West Limerick Resources CLG is the Local Development Company responsible for administering a wide range of EU and Nationally funded Programmes for the benefit of people living in the wider West Limerick area. The Mission statement of our company is set out as follows:

“West Limerick Resources is the community development organisation that works to achieve positive change in the lives of people and groups in West Limerick.”

The Programmes administered currently, include LEADER 2014-2020, Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Jobclub, Rural Social Scheme, TUS, Primary Health Care Programme for Travellers and Limerick Volunteer Centre. Across this range of activity, we are involved in the social, economic and environmental development of our geographic area engaging with a significant cross section of the population of our area and across all communities and individual target groups. This Community Led Local Development (CLLD) approach is deeply embedded within our Company and has been underpinned, since the establishment of the Company, by the LEADER Programme. Of note is the fact that:

- LEADER in West Limerick has been instrumental in resourcing local rural communities to take a developmental approach to the development of their local area, building capacity and prioritising key actions, initiatives and projects for the benefit of their own local areas.
- The bottom-up developmental nature of the programme rather than simply being a “grant aid” programme has been the key to the success of the Programme and it has been this developmental approach is what has informed the increasing emphasis on the Community Led Local Development CLLD methodology by the EU. This approach is very different to simply being a grant aid programme as is seen with many other funding streams targeting community groups at present.
- The unique LEADER methodology drawing on the seven specificities
 - Bottom-up approach
 - Area-based approach
 - The local partnership
 - An integrated and multi-sectoral strategy
 - Networking
 - Innovation
 - Cooperation

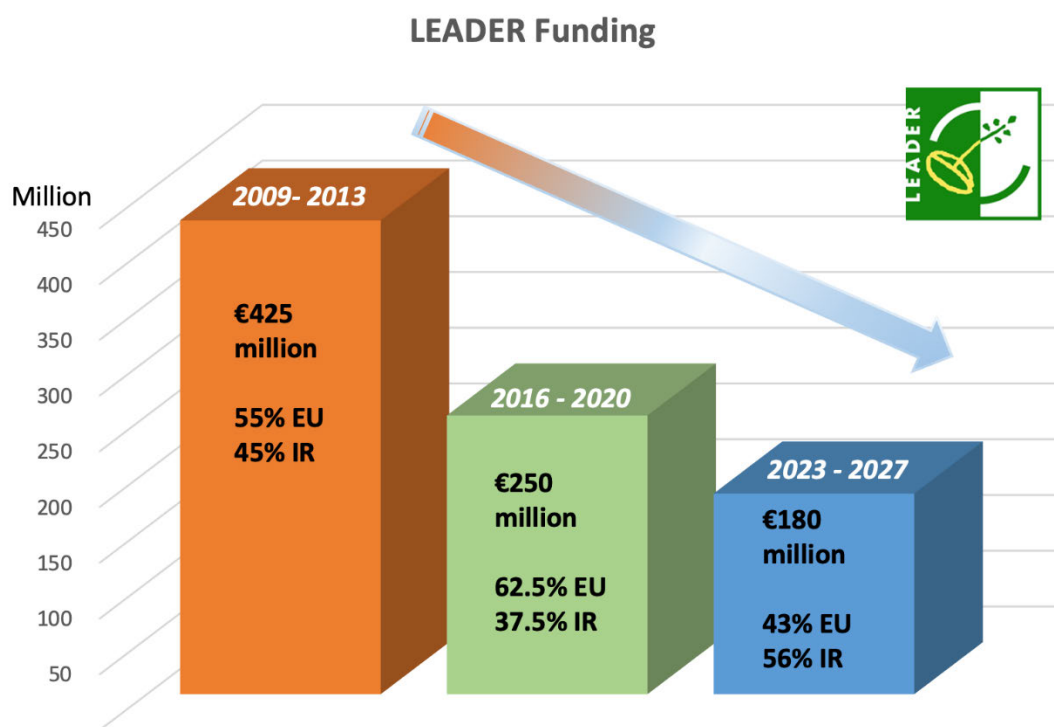
has enabled West Limerick Resources engage at local level across the remote rural areas along the Cork and Kerry Border, from Mountcollins to Loughill, through to the peri-urban area Ballybrowne to Clarina on the periphery of Limerick City.

CAP Consultation Key Points:

- To enable LEADER to continue to impact positively on rural communities throughout Ireland sufficient resources must be allocated to the Programme. Nationally the indicative allocation of €180m represents a significant cut to the LEADER Programme budget and

this needs to be reconsidered. The Irish Local Development Network, of which West Limerick Resources is a member, is seeking an increase to **€389m for the 2023-2027 period**. This figure would equate to the maximum allowable at 80% co-financing based on the current proposed EAFRD contribution of €77.9m (currently 43.28%)

- In the 2007-2013 LEADER was allocated €425m, in the last period 2014-2020 LEADER was significantly cut to €250m and it is now being proposed to reduce further to €180m for the coming 2023 – 2027 period.



- For West Limerick Resources this equated to a €9.9m allocation for the 2007-2013 period being reduced to a €4.6m allocation for the 2014-2020 period. A further reduction for the 2023-2027 period will prove particularly challenging and ultimately represents an unsustainable level of resourcing to deliver the Programme.
- While the proposed increase of the LEADER budget from the proposed €180m to €389m is significant, the overall net cost / benefit to the Irish Exchequer should be analysed. It is put forward that the net cost to the Exchequer would be significantly less than the €312.1m when taking the following into account:
 - The additional funding levered (investment) into the Programme from private matching funding by project promoters varying from 10% to 50% depending on project funding rates of aid
 - The direct return to the Exchequer through direct payments on PAYE, PRSI and VAT particularly within the 25% Administration Budget allocation but also across project development within the Action Budget allocation.
 - The indirect return to the Exchequer through job creation, enhanced rural service provision and improved quality of life in rural areas for rural dwellers. It is recommended that a detailed cost benefit analysis of the current 2014-2020 Programme period be included in the Ex Ante evaluation of the programme to analyse the full impact including the net cost to the Exchequer.
 - Taking into account that the majority of this increased cost will be incurred in the period 2026-2029 in line with the development nature of the Programme, there is

sufficient time to plan this investment and ensure the maximum impact can be derived for the benefit of rural communities.

- The additionality derived through the administering the range of complimentary Programmes both directly with Local Development Companies like West Limerick Resources but also the significant investment leveraged into rural areas from other Agencies and Departments through our ongoing work.
- In considering the current situation rural Ireland is faced with
 - The full impact of BREXIT yet to materialise
 - The ongoing fallout from the COVID Pandemic
 - The full extent of the Climate Crisis becoming clearer
 - The sustained restructuring of the core agricultural sector

there has never been a period of greater need for a sustained developmental approach to support our rural communities. Based on the existing capacity and expertise built up over 30 years, underpinned by LEADER, Local Development Companies like West Limerick Resources are ideally placed to make a significant contribution in mitigating the negative impacts presented by the challenges identified above.

Conclusion

The delivery of a sustainable LEADER Programme for the period 2023-2027 will require an increase in budget from the proposed €180m to €389m.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:23:46

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“Provide a sustainable budget of €389 million for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 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.”

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: Proposed Funding Reduction for Rural Communities
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:27:37
Attachments: [REDACTED]

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RE: Submission to the Department of Agriculture Food & Marine on the Draft CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

A Chara,

As a recipient of LEADER funding, our company knows first-hand the wide-ranging positive impacts it has had and continues to have on our marginalised and socio-economically deprived population groups in rural areas across the Listowel Municipal district.

The Listowel Community Centre calls on the Department of Agriculture Food & Marine to provide a sustainable minimum of €389 million (€77.8 million annual average - achievable by increasing Ireland's co-funding to the 80% allowable) for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 to drive 'bottom-up, community-led' investment to create and maintain enterprise in rural Ireland, to enhance 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. Furthermore we call for government to ensure a sustainable Budget for each Local Development Company to ensure the efficient delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]

COMMUNITY IS AT THE CENTRE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Listowel Community Centre is supported by
www.pobal.ie Government Supporting Communities





To whom it may concern.

8th December 2021.

Re: LEADER PROGRAMME 2023-2027

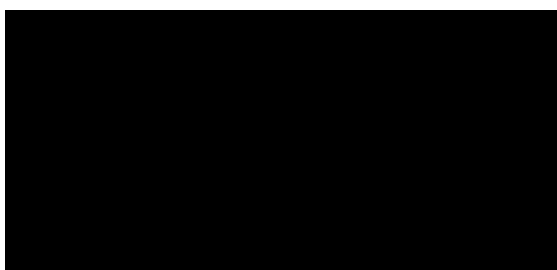
Dear Sirs,

The LEADER programme has been an essential part of the funding mix for new projects since its inception in the early 1990's. It has breathed new life into our Community and into many other communities the length and breadth of the country by funding a whole myriad of new and innovative projects that otherwise would never have gotten off the ground. It is essential that the programme continue and that it is funded to at least its current annual level. This is more important than ever in a post COVID, post Brexit economic context.

Therefore we are asking that you provide a sustainable budget of at least €389 million for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 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.

It is essential to that the programme continues to be a significant driver of community led local development for the coming period and the future of rural communities depend entirely on it.

Yours sincerely,





From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: [Marketing Mail] Submission from Moy Valley Resources
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:35:30

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RE; CAP Strategic Plan and LEADER funding allocation.

The Board and Executive of Moy Valley Resources (Integrated Resource Development Company) wish to highlight the concerns raised at recent meetings regarding the substantial reduction in LEADER funding to Ireland as recently announced.

€180m is NOT adequate to ensure continued delivery of high-impact projects of any nature and the reduction in this core funding to the most important rural development project for this Country over the last 30 years is simply not fair to rural Ireland.

Our Government eloquently speak of balanced, regional development however their actions speak louder than their words – and this reduction in funding, if it were to materialise, would negatively impact rural Ireland at its grassroots level.

In addition, the people employed in the delivery of this programme will be hugely impacted with job losses and possible closure of Development Companies or at best a massive reduction in their capacity to support the regions in which they work.

Therefore, it is our contention that funding of the LEADER 2023 – 2027 programme be increased to €389m to avoid the scenarios above and to ensure adequate resources are available to rural Ireland and those living there.

This level of funding will ensure that the ambitions of the next programme as per the CAP Strategic Plan, including climate action and rural employment can be achieved.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Moy Valley Resources

Greenhills Enterprise Centre | Bunree Rd | Ballina | Co. Mayo | Ireland

Tel: [REDACTED]

W: moyvalley.ie | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)



Registered Charity: [REDACTED]

Registered Charity Number: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: RE: Public Consultation on Common Agricultural Policy, proposed rule changes
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:38:45

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To whom it may concern,

Please accept this as a submission in relation to the consultation on CAP Strategic Plan (2023-2027) regrading farm payments which is due to closes on December 8th 2021.

I strongly urge and back the concept that farmers be given the option of rewilding, rather than farming, their land whilst continuing to receive farm subsidies at current levels. This would of course require entirely scrapping the GAEC (Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition) as it currently stands. It would also commit to local and national policies on environmental impacts and that of land use.

No farmer in Ireland, particularly many of those in ownership of land which would be the easiest to rewild, can afford to do so to the degree that our country requires in order to restore its ecosystems. Giving farmers the option to rewild could revive the populations of our rapidly dwindling native species and reverse the degradation of our biota in general.

As a nation, most Irish people have forgotten or have never known what Ireland is supposed to look like when nature is given free rein. Our people are suffering from Shifting Baseline Syndrome, a gradual change in the accepted norms for the condition of the natural environment due to a lack of experience, memory and knowledge of its past condition. This is leading to an increased tolerance for progressive environmental degradation, as well as changes in people's expectations as to what is the acceptable condition of our natural environment, and by extension what parts of it are worth protecting. This shift in perspective has led inexorably to the establishment and use of inappropriate baselines for nature conservation, restoration and management.

To those that would say that CAP payments for rewilding are an investment from which the state gets nothing in return, I would argue that healthy ecosystems, a stable climate, and the associated benefits these help provide are no less vital than food.

It is incumbent on us to facilitate those in the position of greatest stewardship of our land the opportunity and the incentive to restore it, as once the unique diversity of life is lost on this island it can never be regained.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

A SUSTAINABLE LEADER PROGRAMME 2023-2027

Delivering on:

- Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) 2023-2027
- National Rural Strategy – Our Rural Future
*a framework for the development of rural Ireland
2021-2025*
- EU long-term Vision for the Rural Areas -
*Towards stronger, connected, resilient and
prosperous rural areas by 2040*

A SUBMISSION TO THE CAP STRATEGIC
PLAN
ON BEHALF OF MONAGHAN INTEGRATED
DEVELOPMENT



1. Submission in Brief

- > The LEADER Programme is a key rural development tool for supporting the economic, social and environmental development of rural communities, by providing the resources necessary for rural communities to support their own development and create capacity at local level.
- > For thirty years the LEADER Programme, delivered by Local Development Companies has maximised the drawdown and impact of EU funds, to create jobs in rural areas, and develop rural communities in keeping with the LEADER approach and evaluated as very successful by EU institutions.
- > The aim of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 as identified in the draft CAP Strategic Plan is to continue to support a community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development by animating and funding initiatives that emerge at a local level to address local challenges and needs.
- > Ireland's CAP SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment identified several challenges in rural Ireland for which the LEADER approach can assist with the delivery of Government objectives. These include the need to support private enterprises and communities to improve quality of life and economic activity in rural areas; and the need to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland with a focus on social inclusion and climate change mitigation.
- > Representing 1.8% of Ireland's total CAP Budget, an indicative Budget of €180 million has been allocated for LEADER 2023-2027. The Budget for the 2007-2013 Programme stood at €425 million (€85 million annual average) with the successor Programme that operated from mid-2016 to 2020 reduced to €250 million (€50 million annual average).
- > A further cut to €180 million is now proposed for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 (€36 million annual average), and when examined on a year-by-year actual basis marks another significant reduction of almost 40% (not allowing for the effect of inflation in real terms) in the funds available for the delivery of important rural enterprise, tourism, job creation, and community-led projects the length and breadth of the country.

- > ***Monaghan Integrated Development (MID) calls for the allocation of a sustainable minimum of €389 million (€77.8 million annual average) for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 to drive ‘bottom-up, community-led’ investment to create and maintain enterprise in rural Ireland, to enhance 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.***

2. MID Proposals

MID calls on the Department of Agriculture Food & Marine and the Department of Rural & Community Development to:

- > Provide a sustainable budget of €389 million for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 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.
- > Ensure a sustainable budget for Monaghan Integrated Development to ensure the effective animation and delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027

3. About County Monaghan

County Monaghan is a mainly rural county and is part of the Border Region in the province of Ulster. According to the 2016 census, the county had a population of 61,386 people. It is the fifth smallest of the Irish Republic's 26 counties in area (1295km²) and fourth smallest by population, with only 37% of the County's population living within an urban area.

Despite its peripheral border location, Monaghan has a long and proud tradition in the development of unique indigenous industry and as a hub for innovation in business and agriculture nationally. In recent years the county has become more diverse and is now home to a significant population of newly-arrived immigrants. Some have fled from wars and persecution, but most arrived to pursue a better life in Ireland and to work, live and study in the county. In 2016, new communities of non-Irish nationals now comprise 11% (6,122) of the population of the county.

County Monaghan's agricultural base is characterised by relatively small farm holdings and has the second smallest average farm size in the country, averaging at 23.3 hectares. Many farmers struggle to make their holding viable and need supports in accessing the potential in farm diversification. Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic present significant uncertainty, and common threats which are likely to have a long term negative impact on the local economy.

Although the county traditionally has a strong community and voluntary ethos, the profile of community groups is getting older and communities need significant support to find new smarter and effective ways of coordinating and collaborating in order to address the challenges in their predominantly rural communities.

See [Innovating Communities](#), a current LEADER cooperation funded training project as one example of building local capacity to address local needs and challenges in the 6 Southern Border counties. This cooperation project is being developed by the 6 Local Development Companies implementing LEADER in the region.

4. Areas of need identified and potential areas of Action under LEADER:

The LEADER Programme has been the first port of call for local enterprises, Tourism and community and voluntary groups who want to use bottom-up development to identify local approaches to dealing with the challenges for their areas. Below find a summary of key current needs and associated actions as identified by Monaghan Integrated Development:

4.1 Limited adequately-paid job opportunities for people living in rural Monaghan

Monaghan has a large percentage of its population working in lower paid (including farming) and lower skilled jobs. Most of these people work within the county. People from neighbouring counties also travel to County Monaghan to work in low paid jobs – large food processing industry production line employment, and also some of the larger engineering companies. There is a challenge to create better paid jobs within the county based on current industry profile.

In addition, many people commute to the large towns and to the greater Dublin area from County Monaghan for work. This impacts on quality of life and on carbon footprint, adds to congestion along the East coast corridor. This is most prevalent for those with high skills sets and higher paid jobs, there is also a tendency for higher paid jobs to be in the services sector.

4.2 Lack of viable opportunities to re purpose land or farm assets and change farming methods to meet the new model of EU agriculture

This a particular challenge for county Monaghan which has rolling Drumlin landscape with a land base suited to grass production. An increasing emphasis on crop production and potential for reduction in livestock numbers, alternative uses for land which is not suited for tillage or crop production needs to be examined. EU policy and programmes supported under Pillar 2 of the previous round of CAP including GLAS and other environmental programmes have helped to improve Biodiversity and protect rural areas however the inclusion or promotion of actions to promote economic viability of farms without state subvention has not taken place. Monaghan as a county has 70% of the poultry production capacity nationally. With this brings environmental and waste disposal challenges linked to Nitrates and phosphates legislation. The further growth of this industry is under threat due to disposal of waste which could be reused within the industry to also address the spiralling cost of energy for heating.

4.3 Exploiting the somewhat untapped potential of the roll out of broadband across rural County Monaghan for provision of services and employment

The digitalisation of County Monaghan with high speed broadband is in the process of being rolled out to businesses, community facilities and private households. Broadband Connection points (BCP's) have also been fast tracked and rolled out across the county in a number of community facilities. Usage levels of BCP's has varied considerably and is poor in many areas across the county.

Adoption of new technologies has been accelerated somewhat by COVID however a more structured approach and range of supports to encourage and accelerate the provision of services, to older people, young people, the farming sector and other sections of the community. The development of employment opportunities utilising this new resource needs to be targeted and supported. Digital maturity and adequate preparation for the opportunities that fast broadband will present to a rural county like Monaghan are critical for the local economy.

4.4 Relatively low number of jobs and businesses in the environmental sector in the county and need to fully embrace the climate agenda to transition our local economy

The Green Deal policy objective at EU level when applied across Europe in the next round of funding will provide both challenges and opportunities to businesses and local communities. The Green Deal highlights that nature is an important ally in our fight against climate change, it regulates the climate, absorbs and stores carbon, and provides valuable renewable resources for the circular and bio-economy. A circular and sustainable management of our resources will improve our living conditions, maintain a healthy environment, create quality jobs and provide sustainable energy resources. This will require the LEADER method to be employed in developing and coordinating an effective rural enterprise ecosystem locally to support this change.

The private sector will have an important role to play in providing services and products to manage this transition. Monaghan has a strong entrepreneurial culture which in part can be attributed to the difficult farming landscape and peripheral border location. This entrepreneurial population could be mobilised to pivot and create 'entrepreneurship for the

environment', through the creation of a range of new environmental jobs in services and manufacturing. Specifically, across the area of renewable energy and energy conservation and mitigation, circular economy and waste management, recycling and waste reduction. This could include changes to existing businesses or development of new business – both providing the same output, new jobs.

5. Learning from Evaluation of Monaghan LEADER Local Development Strategy 2014-2020

A recent Evaluation report for our LEADER 2014-2020 LEADER Programme in County Monaghan highlights the importance of the animation work of LEADER staff on the ground as facilitators of bottom up development and rural communities and enterprises working to make their areas sustainable. Of significance the Evaluation Report found:

- ***“the role of the LEADER Development Officers is extremely important in supporting the identification, application and implementation of projects. There was general high praise for their efforts in supporting project promoters with some promoters stating that the projects would not have been completed without their assistance”.***
- ***An important observation was noted that the relatively “high levels of administration currently in LEADER were widely reported as causing undue work pressure and detracted LEADER staff from the important developmental animation work of the programme”***
- ***“Procurement proved to be a very time consuming process for more complex multi-supplier projects”, while some suggested that greater flexibility in satisfying procurement would be desirable***
- ***“...the time lag between applying for drawdown and the funds appearing in the account was noted as a challenge for some promoters who were relying on bridging and co-financing loans . The ‘multi-layered’ process of the current LEADER programme involving different structures nationally and locally”*** was highlighted.
- On the reasons for projects not proceeding, the report comments: ***“Overall, the responses from the project promoters indicated that the application and implementation experience, though challenging, was ultimately satisfactory”***
- ***However some found the LEADER ‘process was too complicated’ while ‘accessing the required co-funding’ was also an issue,***

- ..**“the extent to which the LEADER Programme is successful in attracting projects** is not related to its own procedures and processes alone, **but to how those procedures and processes compare with those of other funding programmes”** being rolled out nationally and locally. Strategic coherence and the avoidance of duplication of funding streams is an important issue if the impact of rural programmes like LEADER are to have maximum impact for rural communities.

An important message from the Evaluation of our LEADER Local Development Strategy 2014-2020 is **the need to adequately resource the LEADER Programme to undertake the critical ‘animation role’ for to support community and local enterprise project promoters** to develop their projects and get them up and running in rural areas. The quality, quantity and likely success of projects being brought forward for funding is highly dependent on strong levels of animation support under LEADER.

LEADER is providing a critical stimulus to the local SME sector, social enterprises and the community and voluntary sector. This funding and animation continues to be the life blood of the recovery for rural Ireland and now more than ever, needs significant funding to help our local economies rebuild out of the crisis.

Minimise the levels of administration in the LEADER funding, **simplify the procurement process**, especially for smaller projects, and **address the ‘multi-layered’ process of administration of the current LEADER programme.** Too many stages and entities involved in the process causing confusion, inefficiencies and delays.

6. What would a reduced LEADER Budget mean?

The continued erosion of the LEADER Budget will:

- > Deprive rural communities of critical capacity building supports and funding for vital enterprise, tourism, and community-led development (more than 5,000 projects supported nationally in the most recent Programme period). Weaker communities and particular groups will be left behind including our youth, women, older people as well as the many social enterprises which LEADER has been able to support to date.
- > Call into question the Government's capacity to deliver on ambitions outlined in its National Rural Strategy – Our Rural Future which are specifically linked to the LEADER approach.
- > Undermine the realisation of the 'EU long-term Vision for the Rural Areas -*"Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040, and its commitment to cherish and preserve our rural areas and invest in their future"*
- > Hinder the Covid19 recovery in rural areas denying enterprises including farmers and farm families of critical funding opportunities for alternative farm enterprises and their ability to mitigate the effects of COVID19 and Brexit.
- > Inhibit the capacity of rural communities to play their part to deliver climate mitigation and biodiversity projects.
- > Curtail the delivery of complementary schemes such as PEACE, the Walks Scheme, the Rural Social Scheme, the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme. EIP and LIFE programmes etc.
- > Undermine the future viability of Ireland's rural based Local Development Companies like MID.
- > For Monaghan Integrated Development, the proposed budget of €180mn would mean a significant cut in the administration and animation funding for our LEADER staff team in the order of €500,000 for 2023-2027.

7. Purpose of LEADER 2023-2027 (Draft CAP Strategic Plan)

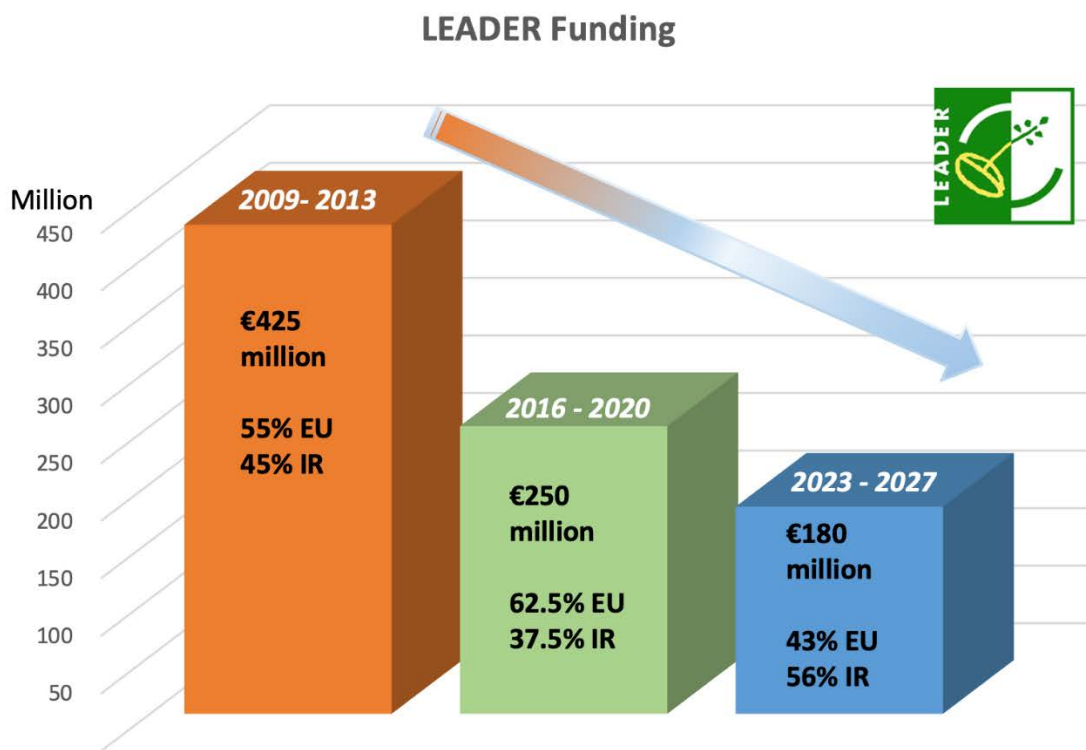
The aim of this intervention is to support a community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development by funding initiatives that emerge at a local level that aim to address local challenges and needs. Ireland's SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment identified several challenges in rural Ireland for which the LEADER intervention can provide assistance. These include the need to support private enterprises to create rural jobs and communities to improve quality of life and economic activity in rural areas; and the need to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland with a focus on social inclusion and climate change mitigation. The LEADER Programme is a key rural development tool for supporting the economic and social development of rural communities, by providing the resources necessary for communities to support their own development and create capacity at local level.

The indicative high-level LEADER themes are as follows:

- Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation
- Economic Development and Job Creation
- Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion

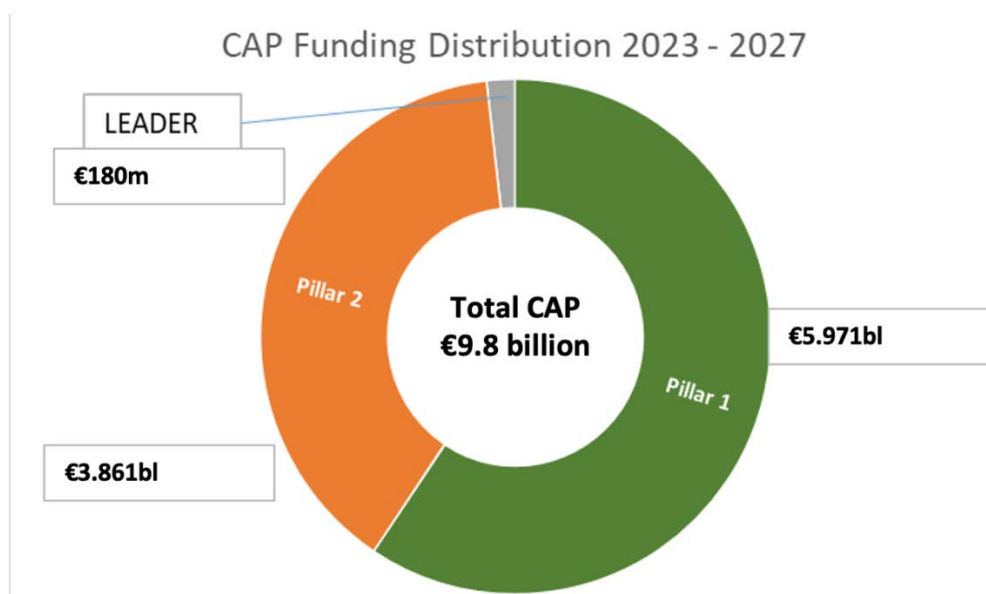
8. LEADER Programme FUNDING 2007-2027

Programming Period	Total Programme Allocation	Average Annual Allocation
2007-2013 (delivered 2009-2013)	€425,000,000	€85,000,000
2014-2020 (delivered 2016 to 2020)	€250,000,000	€50,000,000
2021-2022 (Transitional)	€ 70,000,000 (plus exchequer funding as requested)	€35,000,000
2023-2027 (indicative budget)	€180,000,000	€36,000,000
<i>2023-2027 (Minimum Required)</i>	<i>€389,000,000</i>	<i>€77,800,000</i>



9. LEADER 2023-2027 Indicative National allocation analysed

The EU budget agreement provided for a total CAP funding for Ireland of €7.5 billion over the 5 year period from 2023 to 2027. The funding is split between Pillar 1 (Direct Payments and Sectoral Interventions - €5.9billion) and Pillar II (Rural Development - €1.56billion). The allocation for the national exchequer to co-fund the Rural Development element of the CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) of €2.3bn has been agreed. This will bring the total funding for the CSP to €9.8bn and to €3.86bn in respect of the Rural Development component of the plan. Pillar II measures include LEADER interventions to be delivered by the Department of Rural and Community Development.



Funding will be phased over the 2023-2027 period in line with the requirements of intervention design and the annual national budgetary process.

In accordance with Article 92(1) of the draft CAP Strategic Plan regulation, “At least 5% of the total EAFRD contribution to the CAP Strategic Plan as set out in Annex XI shall be reserved for LEADER. The maximum permissible Exchequer co-funding rate for the next LEADER programme will be 80%”.

The indicative €180m financial allocation for LEADER over the 2023-27 period will consist of €77.9m (43.28%) funding from European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) with the remainder funded by the National exchequer. This equates to 1.8% of Ireland's total CAP Budget.

Notwithstanding the increased national exchequer funding for the overall CAP Programme 2023 to 2027 there is a significant cut in indicative LEADER funding for rural areas with the proposed allocation for the Programme falling from €425 million for the 2007-2013 Programme to just €180 million for the 2023-2027 programming period. ***This represents a fall from €85mn annually in in 2007-2013, to a proposed €36mn annually for 2023-2027.***

Furthermore, the co-funding element of 56.72% falls well short of the 80% permissible under EU regulation. Increasing the co-funding rate to the maximum allowable rate affords the Government the opportunity to deliver a sustainable LEADER Budget of €389 million for the period 2023-2027.

10. Conclusions

On 2 December, 2021, the agreement on reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP) was formally adopted at EU level. The Rural Development Regulation Pillar II of the CAP includes a bottom-up local development approach pursued by local stakeholders (the LEADER programme). The European Commission recognising the disproportionate cut in pillar II budget of CAP for 2023-2027, encouraged member states to increase their co-funding in order to provide for important investment in Rural Development through LEADER.

In making this submission as part of the national consultation on the CAP Strategic Plan for 2023-2027, the board of MID are mindful of the socio-economic impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the particular impact of BREXIT on a Border county like Monaghan.

Monaghan Integrated Development is very mindful of the impacts of the CAP Reform on a mainly rural county like Monaghan. However, we believe that the 9 CAP objectives offer considerable opportunities for LEADER to play its part in mitigating the impacts and in bringing rural communities and enterprises to the table to develop innovative solutions to the challenges our rural areas face.

According to the recently published EU vision for rural areas towards 2040, *“Rural areas are the fabric of our society and the heartbeat of our economy. They are a core part of our identity and our economic potential. We will cherish and preserve our rural areas and invest in their future”* (Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission).

MID welcomes the EU Vision for Rural areas and see a critical role for LEADER / CLLD – Community button up involvement in achieving the four complementary vision goals of **‘Stronger rural areas’**, **‘Connected rural areas’**, **‘More resilient rural areas that foster well-being’** and **‘Prosperous rural areas’**.

Monaghan Integrated Development CLG, as the Local Development Company for county Monaghan are recommending that the maximum national co-funding for LEADER under EU Regulations of 80% is availed of and **a roust budget of €389 million is invested nationally in LEADER for 2023-2027 resulting in annual budget of €77.8 million for the period.**

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:45:51
Attachments: [REDACTED]

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A sustainable budget of €389 million would be provided for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 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.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

South Tipperary Development Company
Unit 2C, Carrigeen Commercial Park,
Clogheen Road,
Cahir,
Co.Tipperary.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



THE LOCAL ACTION GROUP FOR TIPPERARY

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: Additional Public Consultation on Proposed Interventions (PCPI) 08/12/2021
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:52:57

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To Whom it concerns

I would like to register my disappointment and that of our members on your proposal of an allocation of €180 million for Leader funding in your CAP Strategic Plan.

Leader funding has been one of the major contributions to community development in rural areas and this is evidenced throughout the farming community.

Regards,

[REDACTED], on behalf of

[REDACTED]
Farm Family Rights Group

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: Cuts to LEADER Funding proposed for the 2023 to 2027 programme period
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 13:59:22

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am emailing you regarding the proposed cut to the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 budget.

It is vitally important to rural Ireland that a sustainable budget of €389 million is allocated. This funding provides community led investment required to sustain employment in the most rural areas of the country.

In the post Covid economy there needs to be an emphasis on developing rural businesses and Leader is the perfect conduit for this.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

F.M. Marine Services Ltd
T/A Murphy Marine Services
Murphy Marine Services
Ballymanagh
Valentia Island
County Kerry

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Web Site: [REDACTED]

F.M. Marine Services Limited Trading as Murphy Marine Services. Registered Office Ballymanagh, Valentia Island, Co Kerry.

Registration Number: [REDACTED] VAT No: [REDACTED]



MAKING A REAL
DIFFERENCE: A
SUSTAINABLE LEADER
PROGRAMME 2023-2027



County Kildare
LEADER PARTNERSHIP

A SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF
COUNTY KILDARE LEADER
PARTNERSHIP

1. Submission in Brief

For the last 25 years, the LEADER Programme in Kildare has been a very successful development programme for supporting the economic, social, and environmental development of rural communities, by providing financial, mentoring and training resources necessary for rural communities to support their own development and create capacity at local level.

Over that period, the LEADER Programme, delivered by the Local Development Company in the county, has maximised the drawdown and impact of EU funds, to create jobs in rural communities in keeping with the LEADER approach and evaluated as very successful by EU institutions.

The aim of the new LEADER Programme 2023-2027 as identified in the draft CAP Strategic Plan is to continue to support a community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development in Kildare, and all over the country, by animating and funding initiatives that emerge at a local level to address local challenges and needs.

Ireland's CAP SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment identified several challenges in rural Ireland for which the LEADER approach can assist with the delivery of Government objectives. These include the need to support private enterprises and communities to improve quality of life and economic activity in rural areas; and the need to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland with a focus on social inclusion and climate change mitigation.

Representing 1.8% of Ireland's total CAP Budget, an indicative Budget of €180 million has been allocated for LEADER 2023-2027. It is the view of County Kildare Leader Partnership that this is insufficient to respond to the real needs that exist in rural communities. **The Budget for the 2007-2013 Programme stood at €85 million per year average but has reduced since then and it is proposed that this will fall further to €36 million per year average for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027.** This marks another significant reduction of almost 40% (not allowing for the effect of inflation in real terms) in the funds available for the delivery of important rural enterprise, tourism, job creation, and community-led projects the length and breadth of the country.

County Kildare Leader Partnership along with ILDN calls for the **allocation of a sustainable minimum of €389 million (€77.8 million annual average) for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 to drive 'bottom-up, community-led' investment to create and maintain enterprise in rural Ireland, to enhance 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.

2. CKLP Proposal:

County Kildare Leader Partnership (CKLP) calls on the Department of Agriculture Food & Marine and the Department of Rural & Community Development to:

Provide a **sustainable budget for the overall LEADER Programme** of €389 million 2023-2027 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.

Ensure a **sustainable Budget for County Kildare Leader Partnership and each Local Development Company at local level** to ensure the efficient delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 in Kildare.

3. County Kildare Leader Partnership

County Kildare LEADER Partnership is a not-for-profit Local Development Company responsible for the delivery of a range of Rural, Enterprise, Social Inclusion and Community Development Initiatives in County Kildare. It has been operational since January 2009 and is the result of an amalgamation of a number of organisations and their activities including KELT, the Kildare Community Partnership (KCP) and the County Kildare based section of OAK Partnership.

County Kildare LEADER Partnership is now continuing this work through the Rural Development Programme (LEADER), the Social Inclusion Community Activation

Programme (SICAP) and other supporting programmes in empowering local communities to improve their quality of life.

The company has a Board of Directors, sub committees, and staff that are focussed on supporting communities and individuals to improve their quality of life and play a full and active role in their local community. In setting about its work, County Kildare LEADER Partnership strives to adopt a people-centred approach, that is caring, inclusive and empowering and recognises that in order to be effective, any work that is undertaken with stakeholders in County Kildare is achieved through co-operation and collaboration.

4. The LEADER programme in County Kildare to date.

The LEADER programme has operated in County Kildare for the past 25 years, supporting innovative communities and individuals all around the county as they in addressed economic, social and environmental challenges and responded to gaps in services. The 2007 – 2014 Programme invested €8.2 million supporting 232 different enterprise and community initiatives all around the county and since 2016 another €4 million has supported a further 80 projects.

The LEADER programme has supported initiatives and businesses all over the county. Tourism projects that attract visitors to the county were assisted, such as Lullymore Heritage Park, the Kildare Maze, Redhill's Adventure Centre, Santa's Magical Trail in the Clonard Court Hotel Athy, the Athy Heritage Museum and the Redhills Equestrian Centre near Kildare town.

Individual and community enterprise ideas were also helped, such Athy Community Enterprise Centre, Farm TV, the Kalbarri Cookery School, the Slí Beatha Float House in Naas, the ACDAL Centre in Allenwood and the new Equine Tech Innovation Ireland Centre in Kildare Town

Community facilities all around the county have benefitted from LEADER support, such as the Bandhall in Ballymore Eustace, the Geraldine Hall in Maynooth, Monasterevin Community Centre, playgrounds in Castledermot and Rathangan, the Community Café in Narraghmore, Clane Athletics Track, the Sallins Scouts Den and walking tracks at Rathcoffey, Cappagh, Straffan and Milltown.

LEADER has also responded to social inclusion needs in the county through support for the kitchen in the Peter McVerry facility in Kerdiffstown, Newbridge Family Resource centre, in supporting Teach Tearnann's response to Domestic Violence and Abuse, and the Teach Dara Community and Family Resource Centre in Kildare town.

Significant training and capacity building has also been provided, such as towards the development of a Craft Network, Social Enterprise training, Food Network support, Biodiversity training for Community groups and training community groups in response to climate change.

The Kildare LEADER Programme sees itself primarily as **a strategic and development programme** and has driven initiatives through a number of in-house initiatives. Since 2018, **11 Projects** have been developed in-house by our team in partnership with local actors and there are more in process for 2022.

- The LEADER investment in these 11 projects amounts to **€597,000** in project finance and private matching finance raised by CKLP of **€742,905**.
- We developed five bespoke training programmes between 2018-2021. These have real results, such as the flagship [Original Kildare](#) Craft Collective and the new [Flavours of Kildare](#) initiative.
- We have been leaders in innovation through bespoke social enterprise and STEM youth work training.
- Our climate change programme and community biodiversity projects have become models replicated by other LDC's throughout the country.
- We initiated the [Barrow Blueway Economic Plan](#) – the first of its type for strategic Blueway/Greenway development and which sets the course for over 40,000 additional visitors per annum.
- We are currently in the process of renovating a landmark heritage building to become a community hub.

The work of the Development Officer

The term "administration" does not do justice to the work activities involved as implementing partner, and the work of LEADER staff is not limited to supporting grant applications. A crucial new focus for the ongoing LEADER programme in Kildare is the outreach to communities who have not engaged with LEADER or other funding

initiatives. The capacity in some of these geographical or thematic communities is low and significant time needs to be invested with them to develop this before any projects can emerge. Even training that is contracted out for delivery requires staff time. Aside from the funding application, these initiatives require an investment in the form of:

- Project development, public procurement and management
- Mentoring and support for Promoters
- Networking development with other agencies
- Volunteer hours from experts for evaluation
- Private matching finance investment

5. Purpose of LEADER 2023-2027 (Draft CAP Strategic Plan)

It is extremely welcome that the new LEADER programme 2023 – 2027 will continue to build on the work done in Kildare over the last 25 years and support a community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development by funding initiatives that emerge at a local level that aim to address local challenges and needs. Ireland's SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment identified several challenges in rural Ireland for which the LEADER intervention can provide assistance. These include the need to support private enterprises to create rural jobs and communities to improve quality of life and economic activity in rural areas; and the need to create and sustain employment in rural Ireland with a focus on social inclusion and climate change mitigation. The LEADER Programme is a key rural development tool for supporting the economic and social development of rural communities, by providing the resources necessary for communities to support their own development and create capacity at local level.

The indicative high-level LEADER themes are as follows:

- Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation
- Economic Development and Job Creation
- Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion

6. County Kildare Leader Partnership's concerns about the future LEADER Budget.

County Kildare Leader Partnership shares the concerns of LDC's all over the country regarding the indicative funding proposed for the LEADER programme 2023 – 2027. This continued erosion of the LEADER Budget will:

- > Deprive rural communities of critical capacity building supports and funding for vital enterprise, tourism, and community-led development (more than 5,000 projects supported in the most recent Programme period). Weaker communities and particular groups will be left behind including our youth, women, older people as well as the many social enterprises which LEADER has been able to support to date.
- > Call into question the Government's capacity to deliver on ambitions outlined in its National Rural Strategy – Our Rural Future which are specifically linked to the LEADER approach.
- > Hinder the Covid19 recovery in rural areas denying enterprises including farmers and farm families of critical funding opportunities and their ability to mitigate the effects of COVID19 and Brexit .
- > Inhibit the capacity of rural communities to deliver climate mitigation and biodiversity projects.
- > Curtail the delivery of complementary schemes such as PEACE, the Walks Scheme, the Rural Social Scheme, the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme, EIP and LIFE programmes etc.
- > Undermine the future viability of Ireland's rural based Local Development Companies.

The indicative €180m financial allocation for LEADER over the 2023-27 period will consist of €77.9m (43.28%) funding from European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) with the remainder funded by the National exchequer. This equates to 1.8% of Ireland's total CAP Budget.

Notwithstanding the increased national exchequer funding for the overall CAP Programme 2023 to 2027 there is a significant cut in LEADER funding for rural areas with the proposed allocation for the Programme falling from €425 million for the 2007-2013 Programme to just €180 million for the 2023-2027 programming period. Furthermore the co-funding element of 56.72% falls well short of the 80% permissible under EU regulation. Increasing the co-funding rate to the maximum allowable rate affords the Government the opportunity to deliver a sustainable LEADER Budget of €389 million for the period 2023-2027.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Submission regarding draft CAP strategic plan
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 14:11:32

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A chara

I am writing on behalf of Ardfert Community Council. We are a community organisation which provides essential services to our community ranging from childcare services to senior citizen supports. We run a community centre and are currently developing a community recreation facility to provide much needed facilities for the area which is expanding rapidly due to major housing developments.

The LEADER programme has been of vital assistance to us over the past few years. For our new community facility, Leader funding of €31,365 which on top of sports capital funding of €50,889 has led to the development of over €800,000. These facilities are currently in daily use by the community. As a group of community volunteers we put in huge effort to meet community needs but this needs financial support to act as a catalyst for local rural social and economic developments. Our past and future development plans would not have been possible and will not be possible without the support of LEADER funding.

We are very concerned with the indicative budget for the next CAP programme which proposes to cut funding to the LEADER programme. Rural communities require are expanding and require more support rather than less. We request that his budget is revisited and propose that it provides a sustainable minimum of €89 million (€77.8 million annual average - achievable by increasing Ireland's co-funding to the 80% allowable) for the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 to drive 'bottom-up, community-led' investment to create and maintain enterprise in rural Ireland, to enhance 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. Furthermore we call for government to ensure a sustainable Budget for each Local Development Company to ensure the efficient delivery of the LEADER Programme 2023-2027.

Is mise le meas

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CAP Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: LEADER CAP
Date: Wednesday 8 December 2021 14:12:14

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To whom it may concern,

I am contacting you in relation to the proposed reduction in funding for LEADER CAP funding. The new proposals will reduce the figure from €50m per annum to €36m per annum. When you take into consideration that the funding was €85m per annum 10 years ago, this represents a catastrophic loss to the programme.

I am completely opposed to the proposed cuts as I feel it is always money very well spent on needy causes and I urge you most strongly to reconsider this decision.

Yours respectfully,

[REDACTED]