

Terms of Reference

Environmental Working Sub-Group: *Food Vision – A World Leader in Sustainable Food Systems*

Background:

The Food Vision 2030 Strategy was launched by the Government on 3 August. It is a ten-year Strategy for the Irish agri-food sector (taken to include primary agriculture, food and drink processing and manufacturing, fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing, forestry and forestry processing and the equine sector).

Its Vision is that Ireland will become a world leader in Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) over the next decade. This will deliver significant benefits for the Irish agri-food sector itself, for Irish society, our climate and our environment. In demonstrating the Irish agri-food sector meets the highest standards of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social – this will also provide the basis for the future competitive advantage of the sector.

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 consists of 22 Goals, grouped into four high-level Missions for the sector to work toward:

- 1) A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Agri-Food Sector
- 2) Viable and Resilient Primary Producers with Enhanced Well-Being
- 3) Food Which is Safe, Nutritious And Appealing, Trusted And Valued at Home and Abroad
- 4) An Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Agri-Food Sector, Driven by Technology And Talent

Environmental Monitoring:

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report recommended that an Environmental Working Sub-Group (EWSG) should be established to oversee monitoring, review and reporting of environmental issues and report back to the High-Level Implementation Committee (HLIC), which will be established to ensure the delivery of the four Missions and to review the annual environmental monitoring report.

At the first High-Level Implementation Committee meeting, chaired by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue TD, the Committee's draft terms of reference were agreed in principle including the establishment of the EWSG.

EWSG Remit:

The EWSG will be responsible for:

- (a) Assessing and monitoring the SEA indicators (APPENDIX I) to identify any significant environmental effects of implementation of Food Vision 2030
- (b) Reviewing progress towards achieving the Strategy's high-level environmental goals and actions set out in Mission 1 (APPENDIX II).
- (c) Overseeing and contributing to the preparation of an annual report to HLIC.
- (d) Collectively proposing potential remedial measures to the HLIC should negative environmental trends be identified as a direct result of implementation of the Strategy

Meetings:

The Sub-Group will meet quarterly, however, the frequency of meetings is subject to change depending on issues arising. The Sub-Group will meet and take submissions from stakeholders, as required.

Membership of the Sub-Group:

The composition of the Group is as follows:

- **Chair:** Bill Callanan, Chief Inspector, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
- **DAFM** – Climate Change and Bioenergy Policy Division, Nitrates, Biodiversity and Engineering Division, Economics and Planning Division, Rural Development Division, Organics, Seafood and Forestry Divisions.
- **State Agencies** - Teagasc, Bord Bia, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Environmental Protection Agency.
- **Officials from Other Government Departments** including – Environment, Climate and Communications; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- **Independent/Academic**
- **Secretariat** – Climate Change and Bioenergy Policy Division, DAFM.

Committee membership will be on an individual basis. If attendance is not possible, attendance by an alternate may be agreed in advance with the Secretariat.

December 2021

SEA Monitoring Measures and Indicators

Strategy Mission and Goals	Adverse or Uncertain Effects Identified by the SEA	Monitoring Measures and Indicators	Existing Data Sources, where Applicable
Mission 1: A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Agri- Food Sector			
Goal 1: Develop a climate neutral agrifood system	Scale up renewable energy (RE) sources, especially anaerobic digestion and biorefining, and solar PV and energy efficiency; possible unintended adverse impact on landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity.	<p>Monitor the rate of new renewable applications over the strategy period and the numbers of these that are within or adjacent to designated landscapes and ecological sites or within 1 km of a designed heritage site.</p> <p>Annual estimate and reporting on carbon and GHG emission savings due to increased deployment of farm-scale renewables.</p> <p>Successful adoption of at least one carbon farming scheme under Action 4.</p> <p>Annual measurement and reporting of methane and other GHG emissions for the agricultural sector (all Actions).</p>	<p>Local authority planning reporting.</p> <p>DAFM, SEAI, DECC</p> <p>Strategy implementation reporting</p> <p>EPA</p>

Goal 2: Restore and enhance biodiversity	None	<p>Publication of national land use review study (as Action 3).</p> <p>Annual measurement and reporting of pesticide use, with focus on the Farm to Fork 50% reduction target by 2030 (Action 4).</p> <p>Monitor number of agricultural EIAs on which DAFM is consulted as prescribing authority (Action 7).</p> <p>Annual reporting on agri-environment scheme take-up through the new RDP (Action 2).</p> <p>Annual measurement and reporting of native broadleaf species composition in new woodland planting (Action 9).</p>	<p>Strategy implementation reporting</p> <p>Number of EIA consultation requests issued to DAFM</p>
Goal 3: Protect high status sites and contribute to achieving good water quality and healthy aquatic ecosystems, as set out in the Water Framework Directive	None	<p>Monitor nitrogen fertiliser usage rates over the Strategy period to establish if rates fall (as Action 1).</p> <p>Monitor nitrogen and phosphorus levels of waterbodies, especially those already known to be effected by agriculture.</p> <p>Annual reporting around on farm chemical fertiliser use in relation to herd numbers.</p> <p>Annual reporting on agri-environment scheme take-up through the new RDP with specific reporting of uptake by more intensive farms where uptake has previously been lowest (Action 4).</p> <p>Publication of National Soils Strategy (as Action 5).</p>	Strategy Implementation Reporting

Goal 4: Develop diverse, multifunctional forests	None	<p>Annual reporting on afforestation rates.</p> <p>Of above measure, reporting of the proportion of new planting that was for native broadleaved species.</p> <p>Measurement of number of individual farmers and land-owners participating in afforestation schemes and monitoring of how this changes over the Strategy period.</p>	DAFM
Goal 5: Enhance the environmental sustainability of the seafood sector.	None	<p>Measure the % of Marine Protected Areas and report on progress towards the target of 30% by 2030.</p> <p>Monitor uptake of Clean Oceans Initiative by the seafood sector and subject to availability of suitable data seek to measure the quantity of plastics based litter removed each year.</p>	<p>DHLGH statistics</p> <p>BIM “Fishing for Litter” reporting and statistics</p>
Goal 6: Embed the agri-food sector in the circular, regenerative bioeconomy	None	<p>Publish preliminary data on food loss at primary production stage (Action 7) and develop indicators to monitor the trend in this aspect over the Strategy implementation period.</p> <p>Annual measurement and reporting on plastics packaging substitution rates for agrifood products (Action 8).</p>	<p>Strategy research</p> <p>Strategy research</p>
Goal 7: Strengthen and invest in Origin Green and other sustainability supports to reflect higher level of ambition in agri-food sector	None	Monitor additional uptake of Origin Green over Strategy period (Action 4).	Bord Bia reporting and statistics
Mission 2: Viable and Resilient Primary Producers with Enhanced Well-Being			

Goal 1: Improve competitiveness and productivity of primary producers	<p>Potential for increased productivity objective to result in increased output for livestock based sectors and associated potential for impact on air, water, biodiversity and climate.</p> <p>Potential for increased output in the tillage and horticultural sector to lead to increased fertiliser and pesticide use and permanent pasture conversion.</p>	<p>Monitor new applications and developments of pig and poultry units to establish if the Strategy is stimulating an increase in the sectors.</p> <p>Monitor and report on uptake of Origin Green and new agri-environment schemes in each of the sectors targeted by this goal (i.e., dairy, beef, sheep, pigs, poultry, horticulture and tillage).</p> <p>Annual reporting of permanent pasture conversion rates.</p> <p>Publication of National Soil Strategy during the Strategy period and that this reflects the broader sustainability objectives of the Strategy.</p> <p>Publication of Horticulture Strategy during the Strategy period and that this reflects the broader sustainability objectives of the Strategy.</p>	<p>Bord Bia, DAFM</p> <p>DAFM</p> <p>Strategy Implementation reporting</p> <p>Strategy Implementation reporting</p>
Goal 2: Improve the creation and equitable distribution of value	None	<p>Monitor and report on % of registered primary producers and fishery producers participating in quality assurance schemes (Action 4).</p> <p>Publication of proposal for grass-fed certification scheme during the Strategy period (Action 9).</p>	Strategy Implementation reporting
Goal 3: Increase primary producer diversification and resilience	None	Annual monitoring and reporting percentage of utilisable agricultural area to be under organic production (Action 2).	Strategy Implementation reporting
Goal 4: Improve the social sustainability of	None	No environmental monitoring measures identified for this goal.	

primary producers			
Mission 3: Food that is Safe, Nutritious and Appealing, Trusted and Valued at Home and Abroad			
Goal 1: Prioritise coherent food and health policies to deliver improved health outcomes	None	No environmental monitoring measures identified for this goal.	
Goal 2: Enhance customer and consumer trust in our food system, providing evidence of a safe, ethical food supply	None	No environmental monitoring measures identified for this goal.	
Goal 3: Increase value add in food & drink through insight, product development and differentiation	The SEA identifies the potential that a focus on R&D and focus on digital innovation and AI may disadvantage smaller producers who have less capacity to invest. The SEA also highlights the opportunity for improved environmental performance should the research related measures under this Goal incorporate a greater	Annual monitoring and reporting on R&D activities funded and what proportion of these incorporate measures focused on the environment and / or SMEs. Monitoring and reporting on re-training initiatives for low skilled workers most at risk of being displaced by technological innovation and AI. Reporting of the proportion of these training initiatives that have an environment or sustainability focus.	DAFM, EPA, DETE

	environmental and sustainability focus.		
Goal 4: Develop market opportunities at home and abroad	The SEA identifies the potential for increased focus on exports to lead to an increase in food-miles and carbon footprint for some produce (Action 3)	Annual monitoring and reporting on export value of Irish sourced agri-food products. Uptake of farm-scale carbon offsetting schemes during the Strategy period, for example through woodland creation or peat restoration.	
Mission 4: An Innovative and Competitive Agri-Food Sector, Driven by Technology and Talent			
Goal 1: Move to a challenge focused innovation system	None	Monitor and report on climate based innovation measures supported by the Strategy (Action 2).	Strategy Implementation Reporting
Goal 2: A strategic funding approach to research, innovation and development	None, although it is identified as an enhancement opportunity that investment in research, innovation and development provides an opportunity for support for sustainability, climate and environment focused measures.	Monitor the proportion of funded research activities which have an environment or sustainability component and report on the outcomes of these projects.	
Goal 3: Develop a dynamic knowledge exchange environment	None	No environmental monitoring measures identified for this goal.	
Goal 4: Enhance the use of technology and data	None		

Goal 5: Improve competitiveness and resilience	None	No environmental monitoring measures identified for this goal.	
Goal 6: Attract and nurture diverse and inclusive talent	None	No environmental monitoring measures identified for this goal.	
Goal 7: Policy coherence and synergies in Sustainable Food Systems (SFSs) between Ireland's domestic policy and its development cooperation and foreign policy	The SEA identifies uncertain effects on the population objective in terms of how Ireland's participation in international initiatives will influence domestic policy and consumption.	The identified uncertain or adverse effects only relate to the population SEA objective. No environmental monitoring measures are identified.	

Additional Proposals:

SEA Objective	Aspects Requiring Monitoring	Suggested Indicators	Existing Monitoring and Data
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Conservation status of protected sites Ammonia deposition at protected sites	% of sites in favourable or improving condition Average site ammonia deposition rates in comparison with critical level.	NPWS and National Biodiversity Data Centre. Existing monitoring programmes are in place for reporting on status of specific species and habitats.: https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites

	Habitats Directive species Coastal habitats status	Number of designated sites exceeding the specific critical level. % of species in favourable conservation status over Strategy duration % of marine habitats in favourable status	
Population and Health	Incidences of stress, physical and mental illness in farming and fishing communities Notifiable accidents in farming and fisheries workers Farm retention rates amongst younger generations	% of workings in farming and fisheries scored 'below average' in self-administered mental well-being checks Death and injury rates per 100,000 workers Average age of workers identifying as working in agriculture or fisheries from census data.	Strategy reporting Health and Safety Authority data and annual reporting: https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Statistics/ National Census data: https://www.cso.ie/en/census/
Soil and LandUse	Change in wetland and agricultural cover Peatland soils status	% landcover based on CORINE data Proportion of peatland soils subject to protection or management under agri-environment schemes.	CORINE data is updated every 6 years, most recently in 2018, with current data provided at: https://land.copernicus.eu/pan-european/corineland-cover
Water	Surface water body ecological status Agricultural pollution levels in rivers	% in good or high status. % of locations exceeding the nitrate and phosphorous environmental quality standard. % of waterbodies failing WFD targets.	EPA annual reporting: https://www.epa.ie/environment-andyou/freshwater-and-marine/
Air	Atmospheric concentrations of key agricultural pollutants	Annual average background concentrations of NOx, NMVOC, particulates and ammonia at locations recording these parameters.	Real-time air quality monitoring data provided by EPA at: https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring-assessment/air/

Climate	Agricultural contribution to GHG	Annual recorded sectoral emission statistics	National reporting provided on EPA website: https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring-assessment/climate-change/ghg/
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Food Vision 2030 – Monitoring indicators

Mission 1 – A Climate smart environmentally sustainable agri-food sector

Key indicators:

- Biogenic methane level – commitment to at least 10% reduction by 2030 (on 2018 levels)
- Ammonia – reduce to 5% below 2005 levels by 2030
- Nitrous Oxide emissions – emissions associated with chemical fertiliser use to reduce by more than 50% by 2030
- Water Quality – reduce nutrient losses from agriculture to water by 50% by 2030
- Biodiversity – by 2030, 10% of farmed area prioritised for biodiversity
- Afforestation level – at least 8,000 ha pa, double biomass from forests to 2 million tonnes by 2035
- Level of organic farming – at least 7.5% of UAA by 2030
- Food waste statistics – halve food waste per person by 2030
- Enhanced Origin Green Programme – achieve high participation rate by both primary producers and the food industry