



ACRES Circular No. 6/2024

14 February 2024

**Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES)
Submission of ACRES Claim on BISS 2024**

Dear ACRES Advisor

The Terms and Conditions of ACRES ('the Scheme') provide that farmers admitted to the Scheme must submit their payment claim annually within the deadline for the submission of applications for the Basic Income Support for Sustainability scheme (BISS). For the purposes of ACRES, the annual payment claim therefore forms part of the annual BISS application.

The purpose of this circular is to:

1. Remind you to declare the correct crop codes and claimed areas for area-based actions when making ACRES claim for payment on 2024 BISS application, and
2. Bring your attention to the facility to amend the scoring schedule for ACRES non-commonage results-based actions.

1. Declaration of crop codes/parcel use and claimed areas on 2024 BISS application

You are reminded to ensure, when completing BISS applications for your ACRES clients, that the parcel use detailed for the respective ACRES actions is compatible with those actions.

You are also reminded that the Application Procedure is outlined in Section 8 of the ACRES Terms and Conditions. Please note, in particular, that, as stated in Section 8.9, "the claimed area of parcels in the ACRES section of the BISS application is deemed to be the area claimed for payment. For area-based actions, the lower of the Eligible Hectare or the Claimed Area for the LPIS in the BISS application for the first year of the ACRES contract will set the baseline for payments for the duration of the contract".

If the claimed area for an ACRES action is "0" on the relevant LPIS, then payment cannot be made on that ACRES action and the relevant ACRES action will be rejected from the Scheme. ACRES advisors are also reminded of the requirement of claiming the minimum required area on certain ACRES actions e.g. Riparian Buffers Zone – Arable, where the



minimum area to be delivered is 0.04 hectares in order to be eligible for this action. If the claimed area for this action is “0” or below the minimum required, then that action will also have to be rejected from the ACRES contract.

It should also be noted that while an participant’s share in a commonage may have increased in 2023 BISS, that additional claimed area is not eligible for payment under ACRES as such payment is limited to area declared on 2022 BPS.

It is the responsibility of the advisor/participant to ensure that the relevant requirements in relation to their ACRES actions are correct when completing and returning the BISS application.

List of ACRES crop codes/parcel use for area-based actions

- Environmental Management of Arable Fallow
- Extensively Grazed Pasture
- Low Input Grassland
- Low Input Peat Grassland
- Management of intensive grassland next to a watercourse
- Riparian Buffer Zone - Arable
- Riparian Buffer Zone - Grassland
- Tree belts for ammonia capture from farmyards
- Winter Bird Food Plot

2. Amendment of scoring schedule for ACRES non-commonage results-based actions.

The scoring of lands, other than commonage, on which results based actions are located was scheduled to be done in Years 1, 3 and 5 of the ACRES contract with all relevant lands under Tranche 1 contracts accordingly scored in 2023. To help alleviate the workload for ACRES advisors during the busy summer period, ACRES participants who applied for non-commonage results-based actions (Low Input Grassland, Low Input Peat Grassland and ACRES Co-operation results-based actions), may now choose to have all their non-commonage lands re-scored in years 2 and 4 **or** in years 3 and 5.

When the annual claim for ACRES payment is submitted under BISS, a message box (as shown in Appendix I) will appear where it may be indicated if all the non-commonage



lands is to re-scored in the current year. This option is not applicable to year 1 of the ACRES contract.

If an ACRES Tranche 1 participant chooses, in 2024, to re-score all their non-commonage lands in year 2, they must tick the “Yes, rescore” option. In this scenario, it is mandatory that all parcels are scored by their advisor in year 2 and all scorecards are submitted by the deadline set by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) (with that deadline being 31 August 2024). If all scorecards are not submitted by the set deadline, it may result in non-payment, penalties and recoupment of monies already paid. The scorecards submitted in year 2 will then inform the year 2 claim for payment.


If a participant chooses not to rescore in year 2, they must tick the “No, don’t rescore” option. By selecting this option, year 1 scorecards will be considered as the claim for payment for year 2. However, in this scenario, participants will be obliged to rescore all their lands in year 3.

Yours sincerely,
ACRES Team

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APPENDIX 1

ACRES
Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme

 Please review all your ACRES actions. Payment will be based on the information submitted under each of the actions below.

Rescore all parcels in ACRES this year?

☐ Yes, rescore

☐ No, don't rescore

ACRES scorecards must be submitted by the 31st of August.

Please also see screenshot on next page of this Appendix



Rescore all parcels in ACRES this year?

☒ Yes, rescore

- You have opted to rescore all non-commonage results based ACRES parcels this year.
- I understand that by opting for this, that last year's scorecards will not be considered as a claim for payment for the current year and I commit to submitting all non-commonage ACRES results-based scorecards by the deadline set.
- Failure to do so may result in non-payment, penalties and recoupment of aid already paid as outlined in the [ACRES Terms and Conditions](#).
- The scorecards submitted this year will inform my claim for ACRES payment in this current year.

☐ No, don't rescore

- You have opted not to rescore all non-commonage results based ACRES parcels this year.
- I understand that by ticking this box that last year's scorecards will be considered as a claim for payment for the current year.

ACRES scorecards must be submitted by the 31st of August.

Continue