Ireland - Rural Development Programme (National)

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Ireland - Rural Development Programme (National)

1.1. Amendment

1.1.1. Type of amendment R.1305/2013
c. Decision Article 11(b)

1.1.2. Amendment modifying information provided in the PA

1.1.3. Amendment related to the third sub-paragraph of Article 4(2) of R.808/2014 (not counting against the limits set in that Article):

1.1.4. Consultation of the monitoring committee (Article 49(3) of R.1303/2013)

1.1.4.1. Date

10-10-2022

1.1.4.2. Opinion of the monitoring committee

The Monitoring Committee was consulted by Written Procedure between 10 October and 24 October 2022.

1.1.5. Amendment description - Article 4(1) of R.808/2014

1.1.5.1. Thirteenth Amendment to the RDP 2014-2022

1.1.5.1.1. Reasons and/or implementation problems that justify the amendment

As the RDP 2014-2022 programme reaches its final years, it is deemed prudent to adjust the profile of the
RDP to ensure that schemes in the RDP are coherent with the CAP Strategic Plan (CSP).

The amendment is necessary to take account of textual changes needed for RDP schemes to achieve convergence with the CSP and to reprofile the Financing Plan and Indicator Plan in order to enable full drawdown of funds. The amendment will:

- introduce changes to the existing measures to ensure convergence with the CSP
- adjust the financing plans, indicators, etc to reflect the scheme changes and
- make other minor updates necessary due to the extended period of the programme.

The amendment is set out by measure level as follows:

Amendment to M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15) – Include bio-security advice to all farmers

A change to the text is proposed to allow private veterinary practitioners provide targeted advice on biosecurity and any other significant animal health issues linked to animals listed in regulations 429/2016 and 853/2004. An increase in the support rate for the training of advisors is being proposed to provide headroom for current inflationary pressures. The increase will also allow for additional advisors to be trained and provide for more complex training in the future, should this be required. This will enable a rapid response to animal health issues, with swift provision of more complex advice in situations where this is urgently needed. The increase reflects the maximum level of support that is possible over the remaining term of the scheme. This will bring the maximum payment per training session to €3,333. Amounts and support rates will also increase for the advisory sessions at farm level, for all sectors. Training will be based on up to a 5-hour tailored advisory session at individual farm level, for which a professional fee will be payable, limited to a maximum rate of €120 per hour. These changes are to allow for the provision of more complex and targeted TASAH assessments at farm level. To improve animal health in a manner that increases herd sustainability, it may be necessary over time, for advisors to broaden the range of measures addressed at individual TASAH visits.

Amendment to M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17) – Increase grant aid rates and investment ceilings and add new support categories.

An amendment to allow increased grant aid rates of 60% for farm safety investments, organic capital investments, and LESS investments, reset and increase the investment ceiling from €80k to €90k for each investment category, create a new category to fund solar investments for own consumption, include equine related investments and an increase in the Pig and Poultry Investment Scheme ceiling to €500,000. Additional funds will be allocated to M04 to finance these changes. These changes will relate to both EAFRD and EURI funded investment items.

A higher grant rate for investments in LESS, Farm Safety, and solar renewables funded through EURI is proposed under the TAMs scheme M04. These areas are included in the areas judged of particular importance in meeting the EURI objectives of a resilient, sustainable and digital economic recovery and
where percentage targets for spending have been included in the Transitional Regulation (EU) 2020/2220. Support for farm safety investments contributes to rural resilience and will support sustained recovery. Investment in LESS and solar equipment will have a particular impact on a sustainable and resilient recovery and the achievement of the European Green Deal. Increasing the support for solar panels to encourage greater renewables and energy security is a top priority for Europe at this moment and is coherent with the aims of RePower EU.

A higher grant rate for capital investments in organic farming is proposed under the TAMs scheme M04. During the time period of the CSP, Ireland’s support for investments will be provided initially through the RDP (2023 – 2025) and thereafter by the CSP (2026 – 2027). The TAMs programme in the RDP is being designed to support both RDP and CSP implementation. The CSP and RDP must operate in a coherent manner to ensure the achievement of objectives in the CSP and RDP. The CSP includes an ambitious target of 7.5% of agricultural area for organics. This is a challenging target, and all supports must work coherently to ensure this.

In order to enable pig farmers to cease the routine tail-docking of piglets and to reduce the level of anti-microbials, pig farmers need to significantly invest in both their existing housing stock and new housing. One of the major factors in relation to tail-docking is the stocking density of the houses, along with floor design, air quality, temperature, lighting, provision of manipulable material, feeding regime and changes to management practices. To meet the new stocking density/animal welfare requirements, pig farmers will need to increase the fattener house areas by 45% and weaner house area by 20% while also upgrading their existing housing stock. These requirements are set in Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine specification S.141 and all new pig housing funded under this measure will be required to be fully compliant with the specification. It is estimated that a typical 750 sow unit would need to spend in the region of €2.5m to provide the extra fattener and weaner space required to enable rearing pigs with intact tails. This does not include the required expenditure on upgrading existing houses or upgrading the farrowing houses to free farrowing places. Additionally with the conversion to free farrowing, farmers will need to increase the farrowing house area by a multiple of 3.

The housing stock of the poultry industry is aging and needs significant upgrading to enable birds to be reared with reduced anti-microbial usage. Poultry housing needs significant upgrading to provide for the indirect heating of houses to enable improvements in air-quality and drier litter to improve bird health. This will require significant investment in heating systems, feeding and drinking systems and ventilation systems.

**Amendment to M07 GLAS Traditional Farm Buildings – Extend scheme for three years**

An amendment to provide for the continuation of the Traditional Farm Building Scheme (TFB) for three further years and to expand the scope of beneficiaries that can apply for the scheme. A recommendation from the Mid-term evaluation of the 2014-2020 RDP, is that the implementation of small-scale schemes should be avoided in the CSP. The range of beneficiaries will be extended to include participants of the CSP Eco Scheme, ACRES scheme, EIPs and the Organic Farming Scheme, to maintain that shared portfolio of principles between the TFB Scheme and agri-environmental policy. The ceiling for investment will reset to €30,000 per holding for the remaining years of the RDP. Additional funds will be allocated to M07 to finance these changes.
Amendment to M11 Organic Farming (art 29) – Increase payment rates and introduce a participation payment to align with CAP Strategic Plan Organic Farming scheme.

The amendment provides for increased rates for conversion and maintenance payments as well as introducing an annual participation payment for beneficiaries. Organic farmers incur additional expenses on an annual basis, such as formal training and continuous upskilling on topics such as soil health and animal management. In recognition of these costs, an annual participation payment will be supported as part of the RDP’s Organic Farming Scheme. These changes will relate to both EAFRD and EURI funded organic farming contracts.

Amendment to M16 – Cooperation (art 35) – Reassign financing sources for some elements of EIPs

The amendment will allow for some EIPs to utilise both EAFRD and EURI funding.

Amendment to M16 – Cooperation (art 35) – Create a new sub-measure

A new sub-measure is proposed. A Water Quality EIP sub-measure will target water quality. Water quality in Ireland continues to be a concern and a Water Quality EIP under this sub-measure would address the implementation of intervention measures that will stem the loss of nutrients and reduce contaminants to waters which will benefit biodiversity, climate, and the environment.

Amendment to M20 - Section 15.6 – Introduce Additional National Financing for the Results Based Environment Agri Pilot Programme (REAP)

The amendment increases the allocation for the REAP pilot due to the strong interest in the pilot and the large number of applications received. The funding was provided in year one of REAP (2021) from the national carbon tax fund and is being accounted for in the Financing Plan as additional national financing.

Amendment to M20 - Section 10 – Additional funds to finance preparatory support for the CAP Strategic Plan

The amendment will provide for preparatory support for the CSP ACRES Co-Operation teams in 2022. The Acres Co-Operation teams will be fully financed by the CSP from 2023 onwards. It was necessary to set up these teams in 2022 in order to be fully prepared in advance of the launch of ACRES in 2023. Accordingly, RDP funds are required to facilitate payments for the establishment costs associated with the Co-operation teams. Additional funds will be allocated to M20 to finance this support.
1.1.5.1.2. Expected effects of the amendment

Amendment to M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15) – Include bio-security advice to all farmers

The changes will have the following impact.

- address the one health challenges of reducing antimicrobial resistance, controlling parasitic resistance, and supporting farmers to achieve improved biosecurity and animal health.
- Support more sustainable livestock production systems, through better animal health and increased use of new technologies.
- Support better outcomes in relation to animal welfare.
- Support better human health, with measures to reduce the incidence of zoonotic diseases.

As outlined above TASAH measures in Ireland focus on animal health and welfare challenges at herd level. This focus has been very successful with improvements seen in many areas, for example milk quality, biosecurity in intensive units, herds with significant bovine diarrhoea challenges. The training and upskilling of advisors have also had a positive effect on herds not covered by TASAH measures. Ireland plans to build on these successes by increasing the skills of advisors and expanding the range of TASAH measures available. Noting the contribution that improving animal health can make to the ambitions of the Farm to Fork Strategy, Ireland wishes to continue to develop the range of TASAH measures, supporting Irish farmers in achieving better animal health and welfare outcomes.

Amendment to M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17) – Increase grant aid rates and investment ceilings and add new support categories.

Organics

The Organic Capital Investment Scheme under the umbrella of TAMS, provides support specifically for organic farmers with the aim of ensuring a regular supply of high-quality organic produce for the market. The organic sector in Ireland is experiencing considerable growth at present with the area of land under organic production now at approximately 110,000 hectares following the most recent reopening of the Organic Farming Scheme. The proposed changes aim to stimulate the continued progress in organic production.

The associated impacts-

1. Reduce the climate and environmental footprint.
2. Animal welfare improvements
3. Efficient use of resources

Health and Safety

Encourage a strong focus on health and safety on Irish farms by delivering up to date and fit for purpose investments overall improving the farm structure. A Farm Safety Training Code of Practice Course must be completed by TAMS3 applicants, continuing a requirement that was successfully started in TAMS II.

The associated impact-

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

Solar

Solar PV grant supports are specifically aimed at improving energy efficiency in the farming sector. As a renewable source of power, solar energy has an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change.

The associated impact-

5. Encourage climate adaptation

Equine

The equine sector has not received any capital support since 2008/2009. The industry has started redeveloping over the last two to three years following on from a prolonged period of no investment. Specific horse safety equipment as well as housing and manure storage will lead to the associated impact-

6. improve animal health/welfare standards

LESS

LESS techniques combined with the correct timing of application have been shown to decrease ammonia emissions. The proposed changes aim to stimulate further adaption of the technology on farm level.

Associated impact-

7. Reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from agriculture

M07 GLAS Traditional Farm Buildings – Extend scheme for three years

The extension of the scheme for a further three years and the expansion in the scope of beneficiaries who can apply will attract new commitments to the Traditional Farm Building Scheme. With the finish of the GLAS agri-environmental scheme, it is important that the link and principles underlying the Traditional Farm Buildings Scheme and our range of agri-environmental schemes is maintained. The extension of the
beneficiary class to those participating in the CSP ECO scheme, ACRES, EIP and the Organic Farming Scheme will enable a new cohort of environmentally aware applicants to participate and contribute to the broader environmental impact of this scheme. Resetting the ceiling for investment to €30,000 per holding for the remaining years of the RDP will allow beneficiaries to maximise the potential grant aid available.

**Amendment to M11 Organic Farming (art 29) – Increase payment rates and introduce a participation payment to align with CAP Strategic Plan Organic Farming scheme.**

A higher payment rate is being proposed for horticulture producers due to the particularly high labour costs associated with this sector. Organic horticulture is a labour-intensive industry as weed control must be carried out manually. This is because herbicides are not permitted in organic systems and organic horticulture cannot avail of crop rotation to manage weed control. This is particularly the case in the period of converting to organic principles where there is no premium for the product. Currently in Ireland, there are approximately 500 organic horticulture producers with many of these operating on holdings of under two hectares. In light of the particular challenges faced by the Irish organic horticulture sector, which is primarily comprised of small producers, the cost and labour requirements involved and the ambitious targets set for increased areas under organics nationally, it is considered that increased grant rates are duly justified. There are ambitions targets set out in the Farm to Fork Strategy regarding organic farming and to ensure we meet our targets nationally we want to remove any obstacles that would impact on this upward trajectory. The enhanced rates are warranted due to additional expenses on an annual basis, such as formal training and continuous upskilling on topics such as soil health and animal management. These additional expenses apply to all farmers, who are farming organically both existing farmers and those considering converting to organic practices.

**Amendment to M16 – Cooperation (art 35) – Reassign financing sources for some elements of EIPs**

The Water EIP, Hen Harrier EIP and Pearl Mussel EIP will be able to use elements of both EAFRD and EURI funding which will enable these EIPs to continue to carry out their important environmental work.

**Amendment to M16 – Cooperation (art 35) – Create a new sub-measure**

A new Water Quality EIP will enable the implementation, by farmers, of the right action in the right place with the overall aim of addressing many of the challenges facing rural Ireland in relation to maintaining water quality. Farmers participating in this new EIP will be assisted in testing innovative techniques and implementing appropriate tailored solutions to stem the loss of nutrients and reduce contaminants to waters which will reap benefits for biodiversity, climate, and the environment for all citizens.

**Amendment to M20 - Section 15.6 – Introduce Additional National Financing for the Results Based Environment Agri Pilot Programme (REAP)**

As part of Ireland’s Programme for Government, carbon tax funding was allocated to the REAP pilot. The
The first year of REAP (2021) was funded from carbon tax funds which was exchequer funding in addition to the original RDP Public value. The carbon tax funding is being added to the Public value of the RDP, as additional national financing.

**Amendment to M20 - Section 10 – Additional funds to finance preparatory support for the CAP Strategic Plan**

This amendment facilitates important preparatory support work for the new Agri-Environment scheme under the CSP– ACRES. By enabling this work to be carried out by the ACRES Co-Operation teams this year, it will ensure that the ACRES scheme is ready for participant farmers to begin their contracts and concomitant environmental contribution from the start of the CSP on 1 January 2023.

1.1.5.1.3. Impact on the change on indicators

The Indicator Plan suggests making the following changes to:

Focus Area 1A Target Indicator for M01, M02 and M16. Increase in indicator to reflect the change in expenditure allocated.

Focus Area 1B Target Indicator and Planned Output Target for M16. Increase in indicator to reflect the creation of a new Water Quality EIP. Decrease in target indicator due to EU Commission guidance stating EIP operational groups should not be included in target.

Focus Area 2A Target Indicator and Planned Output Target for M04. This indicator target has been reduced in line with the reduction of funding being allocated.

Focus Area 2B Target Indicator and Planned Output Target for M04. This indicator target has been increased in line with the increase of funding being allocated.

Focus Area 4 Target Indicator and Planned Output Target for M11. T9/T10 and T12 have been increased in line with the increased target area being allocated. This was allocated in 10th amendment but not updated.

Focus Area 5D Target Indicator and Planned Output Target for M04. This indicator has been increased in line with the increase of funding being allocated.

Specific Output indicator for M07 will be increased in line with the extension of the scheme.

Alongside the changes to the above indicators and targets, changes will be made to the total public expenditure for the following measures and schemes:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M01</th>
<th>Overall decrease based on reprofiling of total Measure public and EAFRD expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Agri-environment training allocation decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02</td>
<td>Overall reduction in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation based on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- CPD advisors allocation reduced due to scheme being included in CSP 2023-2027 intervention launch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Beef Producers Organisation (BPO) allocation reduced due to scheme being included in CSP 2023-2027 intervention launch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- TASAHW scheme maintaining current allocation. Th inclusion of–bio-security advice to all farmers and increase to rates has been taken into account in scheme allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04</td>
<td>Overall increase in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation based on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- TAMS scheme increase in grant aid rates and investment ceilings and addition of new support categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- TAMS EURI maintains current allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M07</td>
<td>Overall increase in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation based on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional Farm Buildings Scheme extended for a further three years and the expansion in the scope of beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10</td>
<td>Overall reduction in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation based on reprofiling of schemes’ allocations based on amended 75% co-financing rate implemented in 12th RDP amendment:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- GLAS scheme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Burren scheme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- BDGP scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- REPS/AEOS RDP 2007-2013 scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Straw Incorporation Measure EURI maintains current allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11</td>
<td>Overall reduction in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organic Farming Scheme EURI allocation reduced based on reprofiling of overall RDP EAFRD allocations. The lowered allocation takes into account the proposed increase in payment rates and participation rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M12</td>
<td>Natura RDP 2007-2013 scheme maintaining current allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13</td>
<td>Overall reduction in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation based on reprofiling of total RDP budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M14</td>
<td>Overall reduction in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation based on reprofiling of total RDP budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16</td>
<td>Overall increase in total Measure public and EAFRD allocations and EIPs EURI allocations based on reassignment of financing resources for some elements of EIPs and introduction of new sub-measure: Water Quality EIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19</td>
<td>LEADER programme maintaining current total Measure public, EAFRD and EURI allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M20</td>
<td>Overall increase in total Measure public and EAFRD allocation based on additional funds to finance preparatory support for the CAP Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M113</td>
<td>Discontinued measure: Early Retirement scheme (maintaining current allocation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1.5.1.4. Relationship between the change and the PA

n/a
## 2. Member State or Administrative Region

### 2.1. Geographical area covered by the programme

**Geographical Area:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IE</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description:**

The Programme covers the total territory of Ireland.

### 2.2. Classification of the region

**Description:**

All regions of Ireland are classified as 'more developed regions' in accordance with Commission Implementing Decision No. 99/2014.
3. **EX-ANTE EVALUATION**

3.1. **Description of the process, including timing of main events, intermediate reports, in relation to the key stages of RDP development.**

In line with the Rural Development Regulation, work on the ex ante evaluation of this Rural Development Programme (RDP) has been characterised by ongoing communication and engagement from an early stage between the evaluators and the Managing Authority, as part of an iterative process overall.

Following on from the finalisation by the Evaluation Helpdesk of the draft “Guidelines on the Ex Ante Evaluation of 2014-2020 RDPs” in August 2012, the Managing Authority began its initial preparation of a Request for Tender. At the time, discussions in relation to the detail of the Rural Development Regulation were still ongoing at EU level.

Following on from an open public procurement process held towards the end of 2012, Fitzpatrick Associates Economic Consultants were recruited to complete the ex ante evaluation, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment. A contract with the evaluators was signed on January 31, 2013.

During 2013, the focus of the evaluators’ work was on the SWOT and situation analyses and the Needs Assessment as developed by the Managing Authority. This work involved extensive public and stakeholder consultation. This process specifically manifested itself in a number of changes to the structure and content of the SWOT. For example, the text in a number of areas was strengthened by the inclusion of quantitative evidence and data, some presentational changes were incorporated to ensure greater clarity, and certain themes (such as the importance of developing the knowledge base in the sector) were emphasised more clearly.

As the design of the RDP developed, the evaluators’ focus was more on the detailed measure level information and budgets, and evaluating their fit with the overall strategy being proposed by the Managing Authority, as well as the suitability of the draft RDP indicator and financial plans. Therefore, the input of the evaluators has been taken into account from the development of the intervention logic through to measure design.

A series of meetings had been held between the evaluators and the Managing Authority in relation to the Ex Ante Evaluation. In addition, the evaluators have held bilateral meetings with the implementing divisions in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) on the actual RDP schemes. This ongoing engagement has ensured that the evaluators have gained a detailed understanding of the proposed RDP schemes. Outside of formal meetings, there has also been frequent contact between the evaluators and the Managing Authority as various issues arose.

The evaluators have also been involved in various stages of the public consultation process, including attending stakeholder workshops in July, 2013 and January, 2014. The Managing Authority provided copies of all written submissions to the evaluators also as part of their work. Both the Managing Authority and Fitzpatrick’s attended an Evaluation Helpdesk Good Practice workshop on the ex ante evaluation of the SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment in Prague in May 2013. This helped to ensure a common understanding on these central elements of RDP design.
There was at all times an open and constructive working relationship between the two parties, which, especially at crucial stages of the process, has helped to expedite the work. The evaluators were successfully able to maintain a balance between a critical and collaborative approach to the task at hand during the process.

Further details in relation to Ex Ante Evaluation and their main recommendations and how they have been incorporated into the RDP are set out in section 3.2.

The full ex ante evaluation report itself is set out in section 3.3 (attached separately).
### 3.2. Structured table containing the recommendations of the ex-ante evaluation and how they have been addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (or reference) of the recommendation</th>
<th>Category of recommendation</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHW Advisory 1</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHW Advisory 2</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHW Advisory 3</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Areas of Natural Constraints</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bioenergy</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bioenergy 2</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPD 1</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<td>CPD 2</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity and Training Needs</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation Plan</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Flexibility</td>
<td>Establishment of targets, distribution of financial allocations</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLAS 1</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLAS 2</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicator Plan</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Transfer Groups 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Transfer Groups 2</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEADER 1</td>
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<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<td>LEADER 6</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land Mobility</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Locally Led Agri Environment Schemes</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organic Farming</td>
<td>Establishment of targets, distribution of financial allocations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT 1</td>
<td>The SWOT analysis, needs assessment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SWOT 2</td>
<td>The SWOT analysis, needs assessment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Structural Issues</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAMS</td>
<td>Programme implementing arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2.1. AHW Advisory 1

**Category of recommendation:** Other
**Date:**
**Topic:** AHW Advisory 1
**Description of the recommendation**

Targeted AHW Advisory Service - improve measure text in relation to some features, e.g. references to “training of trainers”, and vagueness in relation to monitoring and evaluation
How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

The measure text in relation to the AHW Advisory element of Measure 2 has been redrafted in order to more clearly set out the separate submeasures involved, the relevant beneficiaries, and the relevant subsections of the measure description relevant to each sub measure

3.2.2. AHW Advisory 2

Category of recommendation: Other

Date:

Topic: AHW Advisory 2

Description of the recommendation

Targeted AHW Advisory Service - sharpen the boundaries between this and other knowledge transfer measures, particularly regarding training of veterinarians

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

The need to ensure boundaries between all measures has been a feature of RDP design and implementation. This has encompassed also the need to ensure complementarity between various measures focused on knowledge transfer. This has been accommodated by the RDP Coordinating Committee. For example, animal health topics covered in the Knowledge Transfer Groups will cover the general principle of the control of the diseases to be covered in the AHW advisory service and signpost farmers towards the advisory support available.

Clarifying text has also been included in the relevant measure descriptions.

3.2.3. AHW Advisory 3

Category of recommendation: Other

Date:

Topic: AHW Advisory 3

Description of the recommendation

Targeted AHW Advisory Service - consider removing the reference to “welfare” from the measure title and description
3.2.4. Areas of Natural Constraints

Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements
Date:
Topic: Areas of Natural Constraints
Description of the recommendation

ANCs - ensure that minimum stocking requirements apply to the whole farm in order to realise the full environmental benefits of the Scheme

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This recommendation has not been incorporated into the RDP given the intrinsic links between health and welfare issues.

3.2.5. Bioenergy

Category of recommendation: Other
Date:
Topic: Bioenergy
Description of the recommendation

Bioenergy - additional detail should be provided in relation to the additional premium payment proposed in the measure design process

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design – i.e. the calculations for stocking density are on the basis of the whole farm. There are, however, a number of cases where exceptions to this practice are in place - for example the stocking density calculation may differ where recognised environmental plans are in situ.
As the design of the RDP progressed from the submission of the initial draft, it was decided to make a number of changes to the delivery of the bioenergy scheme and to pilot these on the basis of national funding in 2015. These changes are aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy response. Accordingly, this recommendation is no longer relevant to the RDP.

3.2.6. Bioenergy 2

Category of recommendation: Other

Date:

Topic: Bioenergy

Description of the recommendation

Bioenergy - further details should be provided on the basis for target setting and uptake levels anticipated given the underdeveloped market for indigenously-produced biomass

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

As the design of the RDP progressed from the submission of the initial draft, it was decided to make a number of changes to the delivery of the bioenergy scheme and to pilot these on the basis of national funding in 2015. These changes are aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy response. Accordingly, this recommendation is no longer relevant to the RDP.

3.2.7. CPD 1

Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements

Date:

Topic: CPD 1

Description of the recommendation

CPD - ensure that a sufficiently broad range of disciplines to meet the needs of the knowledge transfer measures is reflected in the Continued Professional Development training under the measure, in particular softer skills, e.g. farm succession, facilitation, innovation and entrepreneurship

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design. A consultation process will underlie the identification of
specific needs. This will ensure that the broad range of disciplines to meet the needs of knowledge transfer measures in reflected in the CPD for advisors in Measure 2. This complementarity is a feature of the RDP design, and is facilitated by the RDP Coordination Committee.

### 3.2.8. CPD 2

**Category of recommendation:** Programme implementing arrangements  
**Date:**  
**Topic:** CPD 2  
**Description of the recommendation**

CPD - undertake a an RDP wide assessment of the capacity and needs, including training needs, of the agricultural and rural development advisory services

**How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account**

This has been incorporated into measure design, in particular by making it compulsory for advisors facilitating Knowledge Transfer Groups to undertake continuous professional development provided by DAFM. A consultation process will underlie the identification of specific needs. As part of measure design and implementation, consultation with key stakeholders will be put in place and will specifically address this issue.

### 3.2.9. Capacity and Training Needs

**Category of recommendation:** Programme implementing arrangements  
**Date:**  
**Topic:** Capacity and Training Needs  
**Description of the recommendation**

A review of the capacity and training needs of the agri-food and rural development advisory services to cope with the multiple, parallel demands of the RDP as a whole should be undertaken to identify any constraints that might hamper RDP implementation and actions that might need to be undertaken

**How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account**

This matter will be addressed taking into account requirements on Pillar 1 and Pillar 2. Consultation with
key stakeholders will specifically address this issue. For example, in developing RDP measures, consultation with advisory service providers clearly set out the measures that would involve their input and ensured that there was clarity in relation to likely demand for advisors vis a vis their available resources. In addition, training of advisors is underway which ensures that advisors have the relevant knowledge base to deal with various measures, while the uptake on training is an indicator of sufficient capacity to effectively implement the RDP.

3.2.10. Evaluation Plan

Category of recommendation: Other
Date:
Topic: Evaluation Plan
Description of the recommendation

Develop a detailed and specific evaluation plan at an early stage, setting out plans for the evaluation of individual measures, of individual themes, of progress under specific priorities, or other dimensions of the Programme and its implementation. The plan should incorporate result and impact indicators and targets where possible, albeit outside the scope of the formal programme indicator plan and the performance framework.

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

Monitoring and evaluation is a central element in the RDP. The Evaluation Plan sets out that a Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group will be set up to oversee all elements of overall CAP monitoring and evaluation. This Steering Group has now been established, and is actively ensuring that monitoring and evaluation requirements are being addressed in the context of the design of the individual measures under the RDP. In addition, other specific actions have been included in the Evaluation Plan and will continue to be addressed by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group. For example, additional indicators outside of the Indicator Plan have been developed for measures, and provision has been made for linking ongoing evaluation work in the Department to the RDP. The Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group will ensure that a clear programme of monitoring and evaluation is in place. The Monitoring Committee will be kept up to date in relation to this process.

3.2.11. Financial Flexibility

Category of recommendation: Establishment of targets, distribution of financial allocations
Date:
Topic: Financial Flexibility
### Description of the recommendation

**Maintain financial flexibility and re-allocate where appropriate later (e.g. at Mid-term stage) based on close monitoring of the effectiveness of measures**

### How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

The financial plan for the RDP will be monitored and managed in line with established procedures and in conjunction with relevant national budgetary processes.

### 3.2.12. GLAS 1

**Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements**

**Date:**

**Topic: GLAS 1**

**Description of the recommendation**

GLAS / GLAS+ to the extent possible distinguish and favour young farmers in competitive processes where GLAS / GLAS+ is oversubscribed

### How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

In setting selection criteria for GLAS, we have been advised that incorporating the favouring of young farmers is not possible as selection criteria must be related to the objectives of the Measure. Therefore, this recommendation has not been taken up in the RDP.

### 3.2.13. GLAS 2

**Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements**

**Date:**

**Topic: GLAS 2**

**Description of the recommendation**

Monitor closely how GLAS / GLAS+ uptake and participation is likely to support the activities required to support Ireland’s compliance with obligations under the Birds, Habitats, Water Framework and Nitrates
Directives, and ensure there is flexibility to adjust the implementation approach where required

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will form part of the implementation of Measure 10 – GLAS. It is also intended to monitor take up of the scheme on an ongoing basis to ensure that ranking and selection for each tranche is adjusted where necessary to achieve the best overall balance of environmental objectives. In addition, while the introduction of local, targeted agri-environment schemes emerged from the preparatory analysis underlying the RDP as a priority for investment, it has been decided to included these actions in the RDP at an early date as an amendment. This will ensure that these locally focused interventions are more fully integrated with the national Measure 10 – GLAS and that the obligations under the above mentioned directives are most effectively met.

3.2.14. Indicator Plan

Category of recommendation: Other

Date:

Topic: Indicator Plan

Description of the recommendation

Include in the indicator plan some indicators and targets for schemes that don't yet have any

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been addressed in the drafting of the RDP. A monitoring and evaluation steering group is in place within DAFM to ensure that all data and monitoring and evaluation requirements are addressed across the CAP.

3.2.15. Knowledge Transfer Groups 1

Category of recommendation: Other

Date:

Topic: Knowledge Transfer Groups 1

Description of the recommendation

Knowledge Transfer Groups- discuss the requirement for only individual facilitators with the Commission,
which it seems is very administratively intensive

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design. The approach is based on the importance of having an open and transparent process that will deliver the most suitably qualified individuals to run knowledge transfer groups. Also, the on-line expression of interest and approval process means that the selection process will not be a significant administrative burden. This has been borne out in the extensive consultation process.

3.2.16. Knowledge Transfer Groups 2

Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements
Date:
Topic: Knowledge Transfer Groups 2
Description of the recommendation

Knowledge Transfer Groups - ensure that topics relevant to the restructuring of agriculture are included in the agenda of the menu of potential Groups

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design. These topics will be included, for example via the inclusion of farm succession planning in Groups.

3.2.17. LEADER 1

Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements
Date:
Topic: LEADER 1
Description of the recommendation

LEADER - clarify the intended content of the social inclusion theme under LEADER and how this differs or relates to the social inclusion activities of local authorities on the one hand, and on the local partnership
companies (the existing LAGs) on the other

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design. While it is not possible to pre-empt what may emerge from the process of designing Local Development Strategies, it would be expected that social inclusion activities will feature. The development of Local Development Strategies will include the requirement that such activities will not duplicate existing initiatives in other fora.

3.2.18. LEADER 2

Category of recommendation: Other
Date:
Topic: LEADER 2
Description of the recommendation

LEADER - clarify the role of the LCDC and of the LAG in relation to the economy and enterprise as there seem to be inconsistencies about this

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design. While the funding to enterprise in rural areas delivered through LEADER will be a distinct funding stream focussed specifically on rural areas it will nevertheless be required to complement the funding delivered through national systems including Local Enterprise Offices at a sub-regional level. Programme management systems including common evaluation systems are currently being designed to support the implementation of the LEADER elements of the RDP that will ensure that all entities delivering enterprise support in a specific sub regional area are working together to ensure that the funding available to rural areas is maximised to support rural employment and job creation.

3.2.19. LEADER 3

Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements
Date:
Topic: LEADER 3
Description of the recommendation
LEADER - document the policy desirability and means by which access to appropriate expertise in the existing LAGs can be retained

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

The LEADER process will be open to all existing LAGs. This has been incorporated into measure design. Ireland has successfully implemented LEADER programmes over a number of programming periods, and it would be beneficial if this expertise was harnessed in the new RDP. The Expressions of Interest for selection of LAGs will be designed in a way that will incorporate this while also ensuring that an open process based on bottom up principles is in place.

3.2.20. LEADER 4

Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements

Date:

Topic: LEADER 4

Description of the recommendation

LEADER - clarify how the additional food measures are to be delivered using the LEADER approach

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

Following further consideration of the design of support in these areas, the support for these measures has been integrated into the LEADER measure. This will be clearly set out in the relevant Measure description.

3.2.21. LEADER 5

Category of recommendation: Other

Date:

Topic: LEADER 5

Description of the recommendation

LEADER - establish more specific and clear objectives for the measure to be delivered under the LEADER model
How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been incorporated into measure design. While certain LEADER themes have emerged from the preparatory analysis which are reflective of the Rural Development Priorities and Objectives set out in the Rural Development Regulation, the bottom up approach to the development of Local Development Strategies will also inform the process to a large extent.

3.2.22. LEADER 6

Category of recommendation: Programme implementing arrangements
Date:
Topic: LEADER 6
Description of the recommendation

LEADER - a detailed LEADER Measure Implementation Plan should be prepared prior to commencement and presented to the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This will be undertaken as LEADER is rolled out.

3.2.23. Land Mobility

Category of recommendation: Other
Date:
Topic: Land Mobility
Description of the recommendation

Given the importance of the issue of land mobility and the extent to which the low levels of mobility hamper structural development and growth within the sector, provision should be made for a major study to investigate the factors which influence the land market in Ireland, how it varies over time and in particular why the scale of land market activity is at such a low level. This study should inform future policy development.
The issue of land mobility is clearly highlighted in the SWOT and Needs analyses. In light of this, a number of specific measures have been designed to address the issue and elements of other scheme designs have also incorporated this issue. This has been done in a way that complements Pillar 1 supports and other supports outside of the CAP process (e.g. taxation measures).

In relation to the specific recommendation for a research project, the Managing Authority has undertaken an informal review aimed at identifying best practice for the new National Rural Network (NRN) to be established under the RDP. One theme emerging from this is the potential for the NRN to focus on key policy and structural issues in the sector. Accordingly, this recommendation will be taken into account in the development of the NRN’s Action Plan.

### 3.2.24. Locally Led Agri Environment Schemes

**Category of recommendation:** Programme implementing arrangements  
**Date:**  
**Topic:** Locally Led Agri Environment Schemes  
**Description of the recommendation**

Locally Led Agri-environment schemes - establish and develop the proposals for implementation structures for the Freshwater Pearl Mussel project(s), and the estimated timelines and delivery milestones for planning and implementation of all activities under this measure

**How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account**

Work is ongoing in relation to the development of this intervention, in close consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service. As noted above, the local targeted schemes, including the Freshwater Pearl Mussel scheme, will be introduced at an early date by way of amendment to the RDP. It is intended to introduce the scheme in the latter half of 2015.

### 3.2.25. Organic Farming

**Category of recommendation:** Establishment of targets, distribution of financial allocations  
**Date:**  
**Topic:** Organic Farming  
**Description of the recommendation**
Organic Farming Scheme - establish a programme target for the percentage of national UAA under organic production that reflects the financial provisions included in the RDP for this measure

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

As the development of the RDP progressed from the submission of the initial draft, a number of financial and indicator amendments were necessary. As part of this process both the financial allocation and associated targets for Measure 11 have been amended so that they correspond more closely to each other.

3.2.26. SWOT 1

Category of recommendation: The SWOT analysis, needs assessment
Date:
Topic: SWOT
Description of the recommendation

Some additional observations on gender equality and anti-discrimination should be incorporated into the SWOT and Needs analyses, even where only to observe their degree of relevance or non-relevance, the extent to which they arose in consultations, or the degree to which they feature as specific challenges in any areas.

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

Further material reflecting themes from the SWOT and consultation process has been added within character restrictions.

3.2.27. SWOT 2

Category of recommendation: The SWOT analysis, needs assessment
Date:
Topic: SWOT
Description of the recommendation

Some further discussion or analysis of the following should be integrated into the SWOT and Needs analyses where possible:
How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

Re AHW, further material reflecting themes from the SWOT and consultation process has been added within character restrictions

Re CPD, further material reflecting themes from the SWOT and consultation process has been added within character restrictions

Re on farm investment, further material reflecting themes from the SWOT and consultation process has been added within character restrictions

Re ANCs, further material from recent RDP 2007-2013 Annual Progress Report has been added within character restrictions.

Re OFS further material reflecting themes from the SWOT and consultation process has been added within character restrictions

3.2.28. Structural Issues

Category of recommendation: Other
Date:
Topic: Structural Issues
Description of the recommendation

For the same reason, where possible existing measures in the Programme should address the structural issues in agriculture wherever possible and appropriate
How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This has been taken into account in the design of particular measures. As noted above, it has not been possible to include prioritisation for young farmers in selection criteria for certain measures. However, the increased aid intensity available for young farmers under Measure 4 on farm capital investment, and the provision of support for collaborative farming will directly address this issue. In relation to the gender balance, there are areas where this will be taken up in the RDP, e.g.

- Support for collaborative farming will in effect provide greater access for new entrants including women
- The Action Plan to be developed for the NRN will include focus on specific sectoral challenges identified in the SWOT etc, including the gender issue.

It is important to note that the issue is also being addressed at national level. For example, the Agri Taxation Review Group has identified the issue as part of its ongoing work plan.

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<th>3.2.29. TAMS</th>
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<td><strong>Topic:</strong> TAMS</td>
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<td><strong>Description of the recommendation</strong></td>
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<td>TAMS - ensure all indicators to be required (whether they form part of the performance framework, wider indicator plan, or evaluation plan and preparation) are established and confirmed prior to any roll out, so application details and requirements can reflect them</td>
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How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

This is an important element of all measures, and has been incorporated into measure design (including application forms)

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<th>3.2.30. Technical Assistance</th>
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<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Technical Assistance</td>
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Description of the recommendation

While there are various references to technical assistance in the draft RDP documentation provided, some composite statement should be made regarding the strategic purpose to which the Technical Assistance resources will be put, and the ways in which it will support effective delivery and implementation.

How recommendation has been addressed or justification as to why not taken into account

More explicit reference to the role of technical assistance outlined in RDP, outlining the main areas where technical assistance expenditure will be focused. Key elements that will support the effective implementation of the RDP include the funding of the NRN, and evaluation activities.

3.3. Ex-ante Evaluation report
4. SWOT AND IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS

4.1. SWOT

4.1.1. Comprehensive overall description of the current situation of the programming area, based on common and programme-specific context indicators and other qualitative up-to-date information

This SWOT analysis draws on a range of information both from within the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and from external bodies and documents. In developing the analysis, the drawing of information from such a wide range of sources led to the situation arising whereby certain issues and factors were categorised as more than one of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The text below draws together a summary of all the information gathered during this process.

1. Overall description

This Situation Analysis is a comprehensive overall description of the current situation in Ireland. This is based on the EU common context indicators and programme specific context indicators, where appropriate, and also qualitative information. The text below draws together this information and is broken down into the following sections:

- Definition of rural areas
- Geography and physical description
- Demographic Information
- General economic context
- The rural economy
- Agriculture and agri-business
- Income levels
- Environment and land management

4.1.1.1 Definition of Rural Areas

Ireland is by its nature very ‘rural’ and has a much higher percentage of its territory and population living in rural areas than the EU 27 average. [1] For example information presented in the 2012 European Commission report “Rural Development in the EU – Statistical and Economic Information” [2] confirms the significance of rural areas in Ireland. However, different definitions of ‘rural’ can be used on different occasions and by different data sources. Therefore references to ‘rural areas’ in this document may refer to different definitions depending on the data that is available.

For the purposes of their work, in accordance with their terms of reference, the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA)[4] defined rural Ireland as “all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities.” Therefore the term “rural areas” was
used to encompass open countryside, in addition to small, medium and large towns. This is the definition adopted in the 2014-2020 RDP. All areas outside the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities on the date of approval of the RDP shall be considered “rural areas” for the full duration of the RDP 2014-2020.

This is particularly important for the support of the broader rural economy aspect of the RDP and in particular the community-led local development approach supported through LEADER. This will allow sub-regional areas to support the parts of their area where the most acute need is identified which may include rural towns and villages. These urban centres situated in rural areas are key to the sustainable development of their rural hinterlands and the importance of this is also highlighted in the CEDRA report. This is the primary reason for this chosen definition of rural areas.

4.1.1.2 Geography & Physical Description

Ireland is situated in the North Atlantic on the Western peripheral edge of Europe, and its geography generally consists of a flat low lying midlands part of the country surrounded by coastal hills and low mountains. The total area of Ireland is some 70,270 square kilometres, of which around 98% is land and 2% is comprised of water. The land area of Ireland is approximately 6.9 million hectares (ha) of which around 5 million ha is Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA). At the end of 2012, forestry accounted for around 10.5% of the total land area according to the National Forest Inventory. [6]

The North Atlantic coastal drift contributes to Ireland’s temperate climate which distinguishes it from other countries on the same latitude. Over the last approximately 50 years, average temperatures in Ireland have varied between 8 and 10.4 degrees Celsius. The thirty years moving average temperature shows that the average temperature is increasing. The average temperature for 1981-2010 was 0.5 degrees Celsius higher than the average for 1961-1990. The wettest year was 2009, when 1,503 mms of rain were recorded and the average rainfall per year for the period since 2000 has been 1,236 mm. (In comparison the driest year in a roughly 50 year period was 1971, when only 915 mms of rain were recorded.) [7] The thirty years moving average rainfall is also increasing.

2005 data, the most recent year for which comparable data is available, point towards the major inherent difficulties from both an environmental and economic viability perspective in farming certain land in Ireland: 77.5% of the UAA in Ireland is classified as Less Favoured Areas (formerly Disadvantaged Areas) compared to the EU 27 equivalent which is less than 55%. Accordingly, support for Less Favoured / Disadvantaged Areas has been central in previous programming periods in providing a multifaceted response to the range of challenges facing farmers in these areas. These viability and environmental challenges will continue to the fore in the new programming period also.
European Comparisons

In relation to the EU Common Context Indicator data, the latest available CORINE data for 2006 shows Ireland to be quite different from the EU27 in terms of the structure of its land cover. Ireland has a higher share of agricultural and natural land, but a lower share of some categories such as forestry land, woodland shrub and artificial land. For example the share of agricultural land in Ireland is more than 67% but the forestry land is only 4%.[8] The corresponding EU equivalents are around 47% and 30%.

Ireland has around 13% of its territory classified as Natura 2000, lower than the EU 27 equivalent which is almost 18%. In terms of the share of UAA and forestry area under Natura 2000, Ireland was also below the EU 27 average. Ireland has the smallest percentage of land in the EU designated as a Special Protected Area (SPA), under the EU Birds Directive, with only 3% of total land area designated as SPA in 2010. Ireland has proportionately less land designated as SCI (sites of community importance or SAC) (11%) under the EU Habitats Directive than the EU average of 14% in 2010.[9]

In territorial terms, more than 98% of Ireland is classed as Predominantly Rural (PR) and only 1.3% is defined as Predominantly Urban (PU) in the Eurostat definition. There is no territory classified as Intermediate in Ireland. In 2012 the EU average equivalents were 52% PR, 38% intermediate and 10% PU.

4.1.1.3 Demographic Information

2006 and 2011 CSO Census [10]

Ireland’s population in 2011 was almost 4.6 million inhabitants. This represents an increase of around 8% from the 4.2 million found in the 2006 Census. Very high birth rates combined with low death rates and estimated net migration account for the population increase of around 350,000 persons over this period according to the 2011 CSO Census.

In 2011 the total urban population was 2.85 million people and the total rural population was 1.74 million people. So the urban population was 62% of the total population and the rural population was 38% of the total. This compares to 61% and 39% for urban and rural population respectively in 2006, so there has not been any major change in the urban-rural spilt in the period.
Between 2006 and 2011 the average number of persons per household fell from 2.8 to 2.7. Urban households tend to be smaller than rural households, although this trend is not new and has been evident for around 30 years.[11]

Between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses there was a 17% increase in the number of students in Ireland. Education participation rates increased for those aged 15-24, reflecting both a long term trend towards increased participation in education and a greater uptake of third level education and the effects of the economic downturn which occurred in recent years. By 2012, almost 34% of those aged between 15-64 had a third level qualification compared to only 26.3% in 2006. By 2012, 71% of all persons aged 15-64 had attained education levels of higher secondary level or above compared to only 62% in 2006.[12] Levels of education tend to be lower in rural areas, compared to urban areas. This trend has also been noted in the CEDRA report.

Dependency ratios can provide a useful indication of the age structure of a population with young and old people shown as a percentage of the population of working age (i.e. aged 15-64). In Ireland, the total dependency ratio increased to 49.3% in 2011 from 45.8% in 2006, due to high birth rates. This indicates approximately one young or old person for every two people of working age. Urban areas have lower dependency ratio areas than rural areas in Ireland.

Ireland has been negatively affected by emigration as a result of the economic downturn in recent years. For example an estimated 89,000 people emigrated in the year ending April 2013, compared to immigration of 55,900. This has resulted in net emigration of 33,100. By way of contrast in the year ending April 2007, there was estimated net immigration of 67,300.[13] Emigration affects rural areas more than urban areas. According to a September 2013 UCC study, an estimated 27% of rural households have been affected by emigration compared to 15-17% of other households. [14]

**EU Comparisons**

EU Common Context Indicator data shows that, in 2012 around 72.5% of the total national population were living in Predominantly Rural (PR) areas and 27.5% were living in Predominantly Urban (PU) areas. Ireland was unusual in that it did not have any population living in Intermediate areas. The average figures for the EU27 were 22.5% in PR areas, 35% in Intermediate areas and 42.5% in PU areas.
In relation to age profile in 2012, overall almost 22% of the population was aged under 18, and only 12% was aged over 64 years of age. Very similar figures are found for rural areas. Across the EU the corresponding figures are 16% (aged under 18) and 18% (over 64 years of age), so Ireland has a lower share of old people compared to people of working age. Indeed, in 2011 Ireland had the lowest old-age dependency ratio (share of old people compared to people of working age) in the EU at 17%, compared to 26% for the EU.

The population density of around 70 inhabitants per square kilometre overall means that Ireland is much less densely populated than many other EU Member States, where this figure is 115 inhabitants per square km. However, population densities in rural areas are broadly similar in Ireland and the EU 27, with around 50 inhabitants per square km.

4.1.1.4 General Economic Context

The economic context at the start of the 2014–2020 RDP is markedly different to that found at the outset of the previous RDP. At the commencement of the 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme, the Irish economy was still on a strong upward path both with respect to growth and employment. After an average growth rate of about 5.7% in the years 2005-07, this trend halted when the economy shrank by 3% in 2008 and by over 5% in 2009. The major property bubble began to unwind from 2007, and the fall-out from this was exacerbated by the major deterioration in the external environment. As a result, GDP fell by around 15% from its peak in quarter four of 2007. Therefore, the economic environment is undoubtedly less propitious at the beginning of the 2014–2020 RDP than at the commencement of the 2007-2013 RDP.

Similarly, the labour market was extremely buoyant in the years previous to and including 2007 with strong growth in employment and very low levels of unemployment. In these years unemployment averaged about 4.5% and employment was growing by about 4% per annum. Employment in 2006 exceeded two million for the first time in the history of the state and the unemployment rate was only 4.3%. [15] In subsequent years unemployment began to increase, rapidly reaching 15% in 2012 with around 1.84 million people in employment.[16] The effects were particularly felt in rural areas as the construction sector went into rapid decline. According to Teagasc, between 2008 and 2010, the accumulated off-farm employment gain of farmers from the mid nineties was wiped out due to the economic crisis and in particular as a result of the construction crash.

Concerns remain about the increasing nature of long term unemployment. This accounted for almost 60% of all unemployment, and the long term unemployment rate was 8.1% in 2013.
The onset of the global financial crisis, combined with major domestic economic difficulties associated with the end of the ‘Celtic Tiger’, a collapse in property prices and the construction sector, and major difficulties in the banking sector have resulted in a much more straitened economic context for the 2014–2020 RDP than for the 2007-2013 RDP. For example there were three successive annual declines in the Irish economy from 2008 to 2010 and this resulted in a growing Government deficit and higher debt: GDP ratios. This culminated in the need for the Irish Government to enter the EU/IMF Programme of Financial Support.

This has since been followed by a more stable period, but with only very modest levels of economic growth being seen. The Irish economy grew slightly again in 2012 with the CSO indicating full-year growth in GDP during 2012 of 0.2%. There is some indication that the economy has gained momentum in the period since mid-2013. There are signs of a stabilisation in domestic demand, with data pointing to a gradual recovery in both consumer and investment spending. The strength of employment growth in recent quarters is also indicative of a modest recovery in domestic demand. In December 2013, Ireland emerged from the EU/IMF Programme of Financial Support.

Ireland, as a small open economy, continues to be driven by external economic events and the recovery of the Irish economy is heavily dependent on wider European and global economic growth. The Economic and Social Research Institute, and various economic commentators, have pointed out that any improvement in GDP growth looks set to be more subdued than previously had been expected as global economic activity is weaker. For 2013 real GDP growth of 0.2% is expected. In Budget 2014 (October 2013) real GDP growth of 2.0% (2014), 2.3% (2015) and 2.8% (2016) was forecast by the Department of Finance.[17]

The Government published its Medium Term Economic Strategy [18] in December 2013. This Strategy sets out the Government’s approach to building and sustaining a competitive economy that can pay its own way, serve society, and that can survive and thrive in a reformed Eurozone and an increasingly globalised international economy. It provides an overall framework for social and economic policies that are being developed and implemented by the Government. It includes the Government’s aim for a return to full employment by 2020, also reflected in the Action Plan for Jobs 2014,[19] and acknowledges the fact that improved economic regulation is a medium term priority for the Government, as this will enhance Ireland’s international economic competitiveness. Although forecasts for the years up to 2016 had been available as part of Budget 2014, real GDP growth of an average 3.4% between 2017 and 2020 was profiled, given assumptions of steady growth in the world economy.

4.1.1.5 The Rural Economy
A 2010 European Commission report on the Future of Rural Areas [20] noted that although the development of rural areas is likely to become increasingly driven by factors outside agriculture, many rural areas, in particular remote and depopulated ones and those that are dependent on farming, will probably face particular challenges in relation to economic and social sustainability. Nonetheless it was noted that these areas have significant potential to meet the growing demand for the provision of rural amenities and tourism and as a store of natural resources and highly valued landscapes. However, this potential remains closely linked in many rural areas to the presence of a competitive and dynamic agri-food supply chain. Therefore, it can be difficult to separate the “agriculture” from the “rural”, and this is particularly so in Ireland. Ireland is clearly a strongly rural country in population and territory terms, and this reaffirms the importance of a well funded, designed and managed Rural Development Programme for the 2014-2020 period both for agriculture and the wider rural economy.

Clearly agriculture, which is discussed specifically in the next section, has a crucial part to play in the rural economy. However, there are various other sectors that are important in terms of the rural economy. EU Common Context Indicators for 2012 showed that Ireland had an overall unemployment rate of 14.7%, youth unemployment rate of 30.4% and rural ( thinly populated) unemployment rate of 15.6%. The EU27 equivalents were 10.5%, 22.8% and 10% respectively. Rural employment accounted for 66% and urban employment accounted for 34% of the total employment in 2010. Due to Ireland’s more rural character as referred to above, these figures are quite different to the EU27 totals, where rural employment was the least prevalent (around 21% of the total); intermediate employment (34% of the total) and urban employment were the most significant (45% of the total).

The rural economy and rural communities have experienced the negative impact of the economic crisis due largely to their heavy reliance on declining employment sectors, particularly the construction industry. This has resulted in an increase of 192% in unemployment in rural areas when compared to 114% in their urban counterparts[21]. This has had a knock on effect on the overall rural economy, and quality of life in rural areas, particularly in small and medium sized towns where the evidence of small town decline is clear throughout Ireland.

In a 2010 report where rural poverty and social exclusion on the Island of Ireland was examined[22] it was noted that, while poverty and social exclusion is more difficult to identify in a rural setting, there was evidence to suggest that rural areas continue to register lower average living standards than their urban counterparts. Generally the ‘at risk of poverty’ rating is higher in rural areas with the 2011 CSO/SILC statistics showing that the risk of poverty in rural areas (18.8%) is higher than in urban areas (14.2%).

The CEDRA research process and the performance of the LEADER/CLLD element of the current RDP indicate both the importance and the potential of community participation in development processes in
Ireland is currently undergoing a process of local government reform that aims to facilitate a leadership role for local government in the local development process, and this will have an impact on the processes that support the delivery of rural development interventions. The aim is to create a system of local development, including rural development, that is coherent and cohesive and ensures that all funding opportunities available to rural areas are channelled through communities on the ground in order to maximise their impact. The new system will be fully cognisant of the need to involve rural communities in their own development choices, learning from the success of the LEADER approach to date to develop a local and rural development framework that will support the creation and development of sustainable rural communities into the future.

4.1.1.6 Agriculture and Agri-Business

*Food Harvest 2020*

The need for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth has been set out at the EU level in the EU 2020 Strategy. This principle also lies at the heart of the "Food Harvest 2020" strategy, which is a national, industry led vision for the Irish agri food sector up to 2020. The Irish agri-food sector has set itself a number of targets including:

- Increase the value of primary output in the agriculture and fisheries sector by €1.5 billion by 2020 (33% increase compared to the 2007 – 2009 average);
- Increase the value-added output by €3 billion by 2020 (40% increase compared to 2008);
- Achieve an export target of €12 billion by 2020 (42% increase compared to the 2007 – 2009 average); and
- Various sectoral targets such as growth of 20% in the output value of the beef sector and a 50% increase in the production of milk by 2020. (Both of these are based on an average of 2007–2009 as a baseline.)

The agriculture and food sector can be considered one of the more successful parts of the economy, despite the ongoing impact of the recession. The September 2013 Food Harvest 2020 Milestones For Success report [24] showed that there have been growth rates in the agri food sector in excess of 25% (primary production), 20% (value added) and 13% (exports) demonstrating significant progress towards
the overall targets for 2020.

Agriculture/Agri-Food in the Economy & Employment in the Agri-Food Sector

In the economy as a whole in 2012, the primary sector together accounted for 2.2% of Gross Value Added (GVA), the secondary sector accounted for 27.4% of GVA and the tertiary sector was responsible for 70.4% of GVA. This reflects a change since 2006, when the primary sector accounted for 2.5% of GVA, the secondary sector accounted for 35.1% of GVA and the tertiary sector was responsible for 62.5% of GVA, although the significance of the primary sector (agriculture, fishing and forestry) has not changed very much.

However, this understates the relative importance of the overall broader agri-food sector, which is taken to include primary production along with food, beverages & tobacco and wood processing sectors. The agri-food sector remains very important to the wider rural economy and in turn to the Irish economy overall. It is estimated that the agri-food sector accounted for almost 8% of GVA at factor cost for 2011, the most recent year for which data is available. In 2006 the equivalent figure was under 7%. [25]

In terms of the structure of total employment in Ireland, data for 2012 shows that 4.7% of people in employment were employed in the primary sector (agriculture, forestry and fishing), 18.4% in the secondary sector (industry and construction) and 76.9% in the tertiary sector (services and others). Employment in the agri-food sector accounted for almost 150,000 jobs. This was equivalent to 8% of total employment at the end of quarter four of 2012, which is similar to what was found in 2006. The composition of employment in the agri-food sector includes more than 90,000 people in agriculture, forestry and fishing and more than 47,000 people in food with the remainder, approximately 10,000 people, in beverages and wood processing.[26]

Agri-Food Exports [27]

Ireland’s agriculture and agri-food industry is heavily dependent on Ireland’s position as a small open economy and its ability to export. For example, Ireland successfully exports food products to 170 countries worldwide and is the largest net exporter of beef in Europe, and the fourth largest in the world. It is also a key player in the infant formula market and the largest exporter of infant formula in Europe.

Despite a more modest increase in exports in 2012 than in the two previous years, the food and drink
sector continued to perform well. Figures from the CSO show that total Irish merchandise exports increased by around 1% to €9.2 billion in 2012, of which around 10% was accounted for by food and drink exports as categorised by Bord Bia (the Irish Food Board). Furthermore, the agri-food sector provides a significantly higher percentage of the net foreign earnings from merchandise exports than its overall export share, due to its low import content and the smaller role of foreign owned businesses in its export activities.[28]

The dairy and beef sectors were still the biggest export categories in 2012, representing €2.7 billion (29%) and €1.9 billion (21%) of total food and drinks exports respectively. Prepared foods accounted for €1.4bn (15%), while beverages contributed €1.3bn (14%). There have been small increases in the share of dairy and beef and declines in prepared foods and beverages compared to 2006. For example, in 2006 dairy and beef accounted for 25% (€2.1 bn) and 20% (€1.6 bn) respectively and prepared foods accounted for €1.7bn (21%), while beverages contributed €1.4bn (17%).

The UK market accounted for 42% of total Irish food and drink exports in 2012 compared to 45% in 2006. Exports to other European markets were 31% of the total in 2012 and also in 2006. Further afield, the food & beverages trade to countries outside Europe has grown slightly and these international markets now account for 27% of the overall total.

4.1.1.7 Agricultural Structures [29]

Over time there has been ongoing change in the structure of agriculture with fewer and larger farms, less employment, more specialisation and concentration of production, and growth in part-time farming. The recent CSO Census of Agriculture showed there were 139,829 farms in June 2010 compared to 141,527 farms in June 2000, a reduction of 1.2%, or less than 0.1% per year. However, the number of farms fell from 170,578 in the 1991 Census to 141,527 in 2000, a decline of 17%, or at an annual rate of about 1.5%. The decline in the number of farms in the period from 1980 to 1991 was also very substantial, at about 24% or 1.8% per annum.

The total overall Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) was almost 5 million hectares (ha) in June 2010. Commonage accounted for 422,415 ha, or 8.5% of this total. Around 80% of the UAA (excluding commonage) is accounted for by permanent grasslands and meadows and approximately 20% is rough grazing and crop production. Therefore Ireland is very different from the EU average where arable land accounts for 60%, permanent grasslands and meadows accounts for 34% and permanent crops accounts for 6% of the total UAA.
Less than 2% of Irish farms were under the size of 5 ha in 2010, around 40% were between 5 and 20 ha, and around 40% were between 20 and 50 ha. 15% of farms were between 50 and 100 ha, and less than 4% of farms were greater than 100 ha. This is in contrast to the EU27 figures, where 70% of farms are less than 5 ha and only 25% of farms were between 5 and 50 ha (compared to 80% in Ireland). Some Member States have much larger numbers of farms compared to Ireland, and are more reliant on large numbers of subsistence and semi-subsistence farms on very small plots.

The average farm size increased to 32.7 ha in 2010. Although this makes the average Irish farm more than twice the size of the EU 27 average of 14.3 ha, this average masks great disparities between various Member States. For example 7 Member States have an average farm size of more than 50 ha according to European Commission Common Context indicator data. Within Ireland too there are differences in the average farm size to be found in the two regions. Smaller farm sizes were found in the Border, Midland and West (BMW) region where the average farm size was 27.3 ha compared to the Southern & Eastern (S&E) region where the average farm size was 38.6 ha. Indeed, within these regions there was further variability from 22.4 ha in Mayo to 37.1 ha in Westmeath in the BMW region, and, from 32.6 ha in Clare to 47.8 ha in Dublin in the S&E region.

The Census of Agriculture also shows other regional differences between farms, beyond the basic farm sizes. Dairy farms are more likely to be based in the S&E region. For example, more than 80% of national milk output and national cereal output is provided in the S&E region. Dairy and tillage farms tend to have a higher proportion of viable farms, greater income levels, greater returns per hectare and a lower reliance on the Single Farm Payment compared to sheep and cattle farms. The less profitable and viable sectors, such as cattle rearing and sheep, are more likely to be based in the BMW region. Of further note, sheep farmers have had a historically lower level of technology uptake than other livestock sectors in Ireland.

Ireland was home to 6.6 million cattle, 4.75 million sheep and 1.5 million pigs in June 2010. This is equivalent to around 5.8 million livestock units based on the co-efficient used to convert individual animals into livestock units. In 2010, Ireland accounted for 6.8% of the total cattle population of the EU, the fifth highest in the EU 27.[30]

There has been a decline in the numbers and proportions of farmers in the younger age categories over the period from 1991 to 2007, with the proportion of farmers aged 44 or younger decreasing from 33% to 25%, and the proportion of farmers aged 65 and over increasing from 23% to 25%. By 2010, more than half of all Irish farmers were over 55 years and only 6% were under 35 years of age. The age profile of Irish farmers is increasing as the number of farmers aged under 35 fell by more than 50% between 2000 and 2010. Across the EU27, 7.5% of farmers were under 35% years of age in 2010.
Training figures for Irish farmers show that only 31% had either basic or full training in 2010. However, within the under 35 age category, 51% had either basic or full training.

Other structural challenges in the sector include high levels of short-term land rental, fragmentation of holdings, and low levels of land mobility and land sales.

4.1.1.8 Income Levels

Despite the impact of the recession, in 2012 Ireland’s GDP per capita remained above the EU average. On an index where the EU27 is 100, the equivalent figure for Ireland was 127. However, rural GDP for capita was lower than the national figure, at only 103 on this index. The 2012 figures represent a decline on the 2006 figures when Ireland’s GDP per capita was 145 on the same index.

In 2011 the risk of poverty was higher for rural areas compared to urban areas. The figures for the “at risk of poverty rate” were 14.2% (urban) and 18.8% (rural) according to the CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions. Compared to 2006, this represents a decline in the at risk of poverty rate for rural areas and almost unchanged figures for urban areas. In 2006 these figures were 14.3% (urban) and 21.5% (rural) respectively. [31]

Results from the 2012 Teagasc National Farm Survey (NFS), which is carried out annually to fulfill the requirements of the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN), showed that Family Farm Income (FFI) in 2012 was an average of some €25,500. Although this was a decline on the 2011 levels, FFI in 2012 were at their second highest level since 2005, when they were some €22,500 on average. It should be noted that FFI tends to fluctuate over any given period. For example, FFI in current prices fluctuated between €13,499 and €24,861 in the years from 2000 to 2011.

4.1.1.9 Environment & Land Management

General Environment
The 2012 EPA report “Ireland’s Environment – An Assessment” [32] is an integrated assessment of all aspects of Ireland’s environment. This finds that overall Ireland’s environment is generally in a good condition. However, it notes that there is no room for complacency and that there will be various challenges in the upcoming years in order to meet EU commitments and targets. These include water, waste and air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Overall Ireland’s water quality can be considered as quite good and Ireland has a better than average water quality relative to other Member States. For example Ireland had the fourth best bathing water quality, comprising both coastal and inland bathing sites, in the EU in 2010, when 90% of sites complied with guide values. The same results were found in 2006. In terms of river quality there have not been major changes between the 2004-2006 period and the 2007-2009 period (the latest period for which data is available). The level of seriously polluted river water has fallen to less than 1%, and the moderately polluted amount remains at 10%. A decrease in the percentage of unpolluted rivers and an increase in the amount of slightly polluted rivers over the same period however highlights the need for continued action here.

Water quality indicators show that in relation to surface water (nitrates in freshwater), in 2010 around 75% of sites were considered to be of high quality, 24% of sites were of moderate quality and 1% of sites were considered poor quality. In relation to ground water (nitrates in freshwater), around 85% of sites were considered to be of high quality and 15% of sites were of moderate quality. For both of these indicators Ireland compares favourably to the EU average.

Overall, air quality in Ireland is of a high standard. Air quality in Ireland has improved quite considerably over the last decade and in 2010 it met all EU standards. By 2010, emissions for three of the four pollutants (sulphur dioxide, ammonia and non-methane volatile organic compounds) under the National Emission Ceiling Directive were below their respective emissions ceilings. However emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) are high, particularly in areas impacted by heavy traffic.

Greenhouse gas emissions have been falling in Ireland in recent years. In 2006, the total GHG emissions were almost 68.9 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent. Over subsequent years this declined by around 11% to around 61.3 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent.[34] After agriculture, the energy and transport sectors are the biggest contributors, and this was the case in both 2006 and 2010. In 2010, Ireland had the second highest level of per capita greenhouse emissions in the EU and was exceeded only by Luxembourg. However, in terms of per capita carbon dioxide emissions, at the same time, Ireland ranked the ninth highest in the EU.

Ireland’s primary energy requirement fell from around 16 million tonnes of oil equivalent (t.o.e.) in 2006 to 14.8 million t.o.e. in 2010. Final energy consumption as a proportion of the primary energy requirement was around 82% in both 2006 and 2010. Transport accounted for 40% of Ireland’s final
energy consumption in 2010 compared to only 2% accounted for by agriculture. Wind has become the main source of renewable energy production and accounted for more than 40% of the total in 2010. [35] Renewable energy production from agriculture and forestry is discussed in the next section.

In terms of waste, the amount of municipal waste generated in Ireland fell from 800 kilograms per capita in 2006 to 620 kilograms per capita in 2010. Nonetheless, Ireland still had the fourth highest waste generated per capita in the EU. Municipal waste sent to landfill was just below 1.5 million tonnes in 2010 which was an improvement on around two million tonnes in 2006. Recovery rates of packaging waste and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) collected from private households in Ireland are both quite high compared to European norms. [36]

Agriculture & Environment

The OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook for 2012-2021[37] has clearly noted that “The key issue facing global agriculture is how to increase productivity in a more sustainable way to meet the rising demand for food, fuel and fibre”. Agricultural production needs to increase by 60% over the next 40 years in order to meet the rising demand for food, brought about by an increasing global population as well as changing dietary patterns in certain countries as they develop. FAO analysis predicts that by 2050 the world population will increase to an expected 9 billion people. The FAO-OECD report also noted that much can be done to contribute towards these objectives in a complementary fashion. An Irish Government report on Delivering our Green Potential notes that “Ireland is in an enviable position to produce the type of food that a growing number of consumers are demanding in relation to high quality sustainable food production and environmental standards.”

Irish agriculture is predominantly extensive and grass-based. This system of livestock production has some inherent environmental advantages and Ireland has a very positive reputation in terms of its green credentials. This is evidenced by the European Commission Joint Research Committee report evaluating the Greenhouse Gas Effects of European Livestock (GGEELS report)[38]. Cattle tend to be grazed outdoors as opposed to being housed indoors and there is no dependence on irrigated land and low abstraction pressure on water bodies from the industry overall.

Between 2000 and 2010, Ireland reduced its GHG emissions from agriculture by more than 10%. Nonetheless, there are high GHG emissions from livestock production systems especially ruminants in Ireland. In 2012 agriculture accounted for 32.1% of total GHG emissions of 57.92 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent, corresponding to around 18.6 million tonnes.[39] Ammonia emissions were equal to 107,000 tonnes. GHG emissions are projected to increase by 7% between 2010 and 2020 and so increasing the carbon efficiency of agricultural production poses a challenge. While Ireland met its target for ammonia emissions under the National emissions ceilings (NEC) directive for 2010, Irish
agriculture contributes 98.5% of national ammonia emissions or 107,000 tonnes.

The agricultural area under organic farming in Ireland is relatively small, at just over 41,000 hectares, with some 11,000 in conversion in 2012. This is only around 1% of the overall UAA. For the EU 27 the equivalent figure is 3.7%.

In terms of the production of renewable energy from agriculture and forestry, in 2010 Ireland produced 34.4 kToe (kilo tonnes of oil equivalent) from agriculture and 197 kToe from forestry. Ireland is relatively more dependent on forestry than agriculture for renewable energy than other Member States. There have been acknowledged difficulties in getting bioenergy established in Ireland, in part owing to the high establishment costs. During 2011, agriculture and forestry were responsible directly for the use of 251 kToe and the food industry was responsible for the use of 474 kToe. [40] Also for 2011, agriculture and forestry were estimated to have used 47 kilograms of oil equivalent per hectare of UAA. This is around 70% of the EU27 equivalent of 66.8 kilograms of oil equivalent per hectare of UAA. This is testament to the green credentials and inherent sustainability of Ireland’s rain fed, grass based agricultural production systems.

In terms of farming intensity, defined as the UAA managed by farms with low, medium or high input intensity per hectare, in 2007 Ireland had 47% of its UAA classed as low intensity, 32% as medium intensity and 21% as high intensity. The EU27 figures were lower for low intensity and higher for high intensity farming. In 2010 for example, grazing accounted for around 45% of the total UAA in Ireland, more than the EU27 total which was under 30%.

The Farmland Bird Index figure for 2008 was 92.4, compared to a base index of 100 for the year 2000. However, work completed for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine by Birdwatch Ireland found that the state of Ireland’s common and widespread breeding bird populations overall is favourable for the period 1998 to 2009. While some species of conservation concern in Ireland are also faring well, showing stability during this period, other species such as the corncrake, hen harrier, chough, twite, grey partridge and breeding waders have declined. Most species that were selected as farmland indicators were stable or increased during this period.

Forestry

Total forest cover in Ireland in 2014 was estimated to be in the region of 744,000 ha or 10.7% of the total land area. Of this area, nearly 396,000 ha, or 54.1%, is in public ownership. Some 17,000ha of Irish forests are regarded as ancient or long established native woodland. Since 1990 Ireland has had the highest rate of increase in forest cover among EU Member States. Sitka spruce is the most common species, occupying 52.4% of the forest area. Over one quarter of the forest estate contains broadleaves. Of the broadleaves 54.5% are ‘Other broadleaf species’ (both long living and short
Ireland’s island status, the relative newness of the forest estate and the enforcement of plant health regulations have enabled its forests to remain free of many of the major European forest diseases and pests. However, with growing globalisation of the economy and the increase in air travel and tourism, maintaining Ireland’s relatively healthy forest status is increasingly challenging. In terms of specific biotic threats, there have been confirmed findings of Chalara fraxineam, or ash dieback, which was first identified in Ireland in October 2012, while Phytophthora ramorum is a relatively new serious disease of tree and shrub species which can cause significant damage.

[1] All statistics used pre-date the accession of Croatia to the European Union and so EU 27 figures are used as opposed to EU28 figures.


[8] This figure differs from that used elsewhere in the overall analysis as it comes from a different data source (CORINE 2006 vs. other data sources)


[20] Situation and Prospects for EU Agriculture and Rural Areas December 2010 (p. 41)
[21] CEDRA
[22] Rural Poverty and Social Exclusion on the Island of Ireland, Dr Kathy Walsh, October 2010,
[23]
[25] DAFM, Annual Review and Outlook, for various years
[26] These employment figures correspond to International Labour Organisation definitions and relate to persons who indicated that agriculture was their principal source of income in the week prior to the QNHS.
Therefore persons that work in agriculture but whose primary source of income is off-farm are not included.


[28] An estimate for 2005 was that the ‘bio-sector’ contributed 32% of net foreign earnings from merchandise exports.

[29] Results in this section from the CSO - Census of Agriculture 2010 – Final Results, December 2012 unless otherwise stated http://cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/industryandfishing/censusofagriculture2010-finalresults/


[38] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm?id=1410&obj_id=13010&dt_code=NWS


[40] Some estimation is required in the calculation of this data and that needs to be considered

4.1.2. Strengths identified in the programming area

A wide range of issues were identified as being currents strengths. These are summarised and grouped together under various sub-headings below.

Food Harvest 2020 and the Agri-Food Sector
Food Harvest 2020 sets out a cohesive roadmap for the agri-food industry to build capacity, adapt to challenges and grow in the context of emerging opportunities in the decade to 2020. The fact that this is an agreed plan from the major stakeholders in the agri-food industry is in itself a major strength. Its central message of supporting smart, green growth aims to build upon the sustainability, quality and brand recognition of Irish food.

Many of the themes central to FH2020 are coherent with the themes emerging from the wide ranging preparatory analyses underlying the development of Ireland’s RDP as well as with the objectives and priorities as set out in the Rural Development Regulation. For example, greater competitiveness in the sector, increased levels of innovation, coherence with environmental goals and challenges, regional development and security and growth in employment are common themes which reflect some of the shared policy goals which will underpin both national and European investment.

**Quality Assurance**

Robust quality assurance schemes are in place in the beef, pigmeat, poultry and horticulture sectors through Bord Bia. Carbon measurement is now part of the Bord Bia scheme and a dairy scheme is being piloted. Origin Green is a further innovation in this area in terms of demonstrating the commitment of Irish food and drink producers to sustainability in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, energy conservation, water management and biodiversity.

**Animal Welfare**

Ireland has robust disease monitoring systems and high animal welfare standards overall and its system of traceability in relation to food production has been acknowledged by stakeholders. However, it is clear that continued development in this area is required particularly given the strong economic rationale underlying investment in animal health and welfare. For example, the savings arising from the eradication of Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) are estimated at €102 million per annum, and the potential savings associated with Somatic Cell Count (SCC) reduction are of the order of €80 million per annum. Moreover, sheep farmers have historically had a lower level of technology uptake than other livestock sectors in Ireland. Increased technology uptake among these farmers could improve animal welfare.

**Education, research and knowledge transfer.**

Ireland has a well established and high quality public research and development system in general and in the agri-food and rural development sectors. There are various nationally funded programmes in these areas. Irish researchers have leveraged almost 2% of the available European research budget (Seventh Framework Programme) to support capacity building and innovation in the agriculture, food, forestry, marine and biotechnology research areas. The research performing organisations (Teagasc, Universities and Institutes of Technology) are well recognised and reputable and have experience in the areas of technology and product development. There are well developed inter and intra institutional collaboration fora, e.g. Science...
Foundation Ireland and Teagasc collaboration. Strategic research agendas for both sustainable agriculture production and food have been published and are being implemented. However, there is recognition that improvements are needed in terms of applying this research and strengthening its links to innovation.

A variety of bodies are capable of providing appropriate education to farming, forestry and rural enterprises. Farm advisory services are performing well. Teagasc in particular combines research and extension to deliver solutions and advice at the farm level. For example, in 2009 replies to Teagasc customer comment cards for recipients of the Teagasc advisory service indicated that 74% were very satisfied with the service and a further 21% were satisfied with the quality of service received [1]. There is ongoing development of education programmes by Teagasc, Universities and Institutes of Technologies. Discussion groups have been funded for the dairy, beef and sheep sectors. The BETTER farm programme (through Teagasc, Irish Farmers Journal and Industry Stakeholders) is exploring opportunities for improving profitability in beef. This will all help to facilitate knowledge transfer, and the analysis identifies this as an area of strength which can be built on.

A theme which emerged during this analysis was that this strength could be built upon by ensuring that advisory services are founded on the best available knowledge base, possibly via the provision on continued professional development for advisors.

EU Supports and Schemes

Ireland has benefited from participation in a range of EU schemes and supports and these continue to be a key support in rural Ireland. For example, direct payments contribute to the viability of existing farmers. The Single Farm Payment increases income and reduces income variability which is positive in relation to risk management as noted by the OECD.[2] Furthermore, participation in previous EU funded schemes and measures has provided DAFM with a valuable learning experience in a range of policy areas such as facilitating early retirement of older farmers and the installation of young farmers.

Ireland’s Green Reputation

The temperate Irish climate is generally well suited to its low cost grass based agriculture production systems and forestry. Ireland’s green reputation is well founded and it has very carbon efficient livestock production systems. In terms of dairy and beef production systems, Ireland ranks 1st and 5th respectively in the EU (EU & JRC Evaluation of the livestock sector's contribution to the EU greenhouse gas emissions report). Irish cattle spend more time grazing outdoors compared to indoor housing, which results in lower ammonia emissions and there has been a reduction in ammonia emissions over the past decade. For the meat and dairy sectors which are both traditionally intensive water users, low levels of water abstraction have been found for Irish production. This is because natural sources such as rainfall are more important than abstracted/irrigated water compared to other countries. Therefore there is low abstraction pressure overall on water bodies in Ireland as a result of these sectors. Furthermore, approximately 90% of Irish agricultural land is in permanent grassland and acts as an important carbon sink. This also minimises the risk of soil
erosion.

There has traditionally been a very high level of participation in agri-environment schemes in Ireland under the RDP. For example there was a peak participation of more than 60,000 farmers (around half of all farmers) in voluntary agri-environment schemes in 2009. Although participation varied greatly across different farming systems, it was more heavily concentrated amongst more extensive and smaller dry stock farmers on the Western sea-board, compared to the Southern and Eastern region.

Ireland has maintained an afforestation grant and premium scheme since the early 1980’s. The level of broadleaf planting as a percentage of overall afforestation has increased from 23% in 2003 to 31% in 2012 (the target is 30% broadleaf afforestation). Ireland has experience in running schemes designed to enhance biodiversity and the amenity value of woodlands. For example, schemes promoting investment in existing native woodlands and also in establishing new native woodlands. The Native Woodland Establishment Scheme has a mainly environmental focus and is aimed at extending native woodland cover and associated biodiversity in Natura 2000, acid sensitive sites and riparian areas. Support under this scheme is provided for the planting of native broadleaves and the retention of species rich habitats such as fens and species rich grasslands. Close to nature forest management is encouraged under this scheme.

There is also an extensive network of hedgerows and other landscape features which are central to ecosystem enhancement. Approximately 450,000 hectares is covered by hedgerows, individual trees and small woodland patches and scrubs as shown by the Teagasc Irish Hedge Map in 2010.

Irish forests established since 1990 will have sequestered 12 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over the 5-year commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (2008-2012). Private forestry is fast becoming a considerable wood and energy resource. Most of the private forest estate has been established over the past two decades, with many areas now entering into production and some small scale bioenergy schemes are already underway in Ireland.

Overall, Ireland’s water quality can be considered as quite good, and Ireland has a better than average water quality relative to other Member States. Based on the European Environment Agency’s water database, Ireland typically ranks within the top third of more than 30 countries assessed in terms of water quality (phosphate, ammonia, nitrate and biochemical oxygen demand) for the 2007-2009 period. Also, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 80% of around 1,500 water bodies have either high/good/moderate status. Only 20% therefore are seen as either poor or bad. Although the EPA also notes that there is no room for complacency, River Basin Management plans (under WFD) are now in place and could be further developed.

Ireland is an important staging post and destination for migratory birds with several Natura 2000 sites hosting significant populations of birds rare elsewhere in Europe as well as internationally important
wetland bird communities. This is acknowledged by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in “Actions for Biodiversity 2011–2016: Ireland’s National Biodiversity Plan”.

Ireland also has a network of Natura 2000 sites corresponding to 13% of the country’s area and there are an estimated 1.1 million hectares of High Nature Value farmland. Peat soils cover 20.6% of Ireland’s land area, with the greater part of this in the form of blanket bog in upland areas. This high level of peatland is a good carbon store in its undisturbed state. Near intact peatlands may actively sequester, on average, 57,400 tonnes of carbon per year.

Soil organic matter levels are not considered to be a particular challenge in Ireland, with the extensive grassland production systems being a key factor. Even on arable soils the average soil organic matter is a healthy 6.6%, with less than 1% of tillage parcels sampled found to be under the target value of 3.4%. These combined factors also mean that soil erosion risk are minimal in Ireland, and this is consistent with previous analysis carried out by the Joint Research Centre (JRC Pan European Soil Erosion Risk Assessment) showing that Irish soils are broadly categorised as low erosion risk.

Community Based Rural Development

Ireland has been delivering elements of Rural Development funding using the LEADER approach since 1991, and has a long history of local development led by communities themselves.

A central element in many local development projects has been tourism, and Ireland is an internationally renowned tourist destination and has a unique cultural identity all over the world. The number of overseas trips to Ireland increased to 6.6 million in 2011 and the total overseas tourism earnings increased to €3,580 million. Rural Ireland itself has a strong and recognisable identity and a high-quality and evocative landscape which has the capacity to act as a resource for its economic development. Rural tourism has grown during the 2007–2013 period and Ireland has become known for its superior product and interesting holiday options, including cycling and walking holidays. Some rural areas have been exemplary in their presentation of their areas in a tourism context, and there are many informal examples of networks supporting the rural tourism sector, including Traill Kilkenny and the Fuchsia branding initiative in West Cork.

There are well-established networks in rural areas which facilitate the establishment of community-based services and support economic activity in rural areas. The level of community based project activity indicates the presence of strong and self-reliant rural communities. Expenditure in the 2007-2013 RDP under the community measures made up 55% of the overall Axis 3 expenditure, and many of these projects are capital projects originating from community activity and the establishment of community networks. There is a wide-spread network of enterprise centres in smaller settlements, which can facilitate the establishment of micro-enterprises and SMEs.

Food and Food Chain

There is a relatively well developed network of farmers markets and country markets around Ireland and a
strong history of co-operative based production in dairying.

[1] These were the latest available surveys at the time of writing.


4.1.3. Weaknesses identified in the programming area

A wide range of issues were identified as being current weaknesses. These are summarised and grouped together under various sub-headings below.

The Economic Context

Overall, the general national and international macro-economic environment and outlook remains challenging. For example, the ESRI has concluded that improvement in GDP growth in 2013 looked set to be more subdued than previously thought as global economic activity is weaker. Any growth in the Irish economy, as a small open economy, continues to be driven by external events and the recovery of the Irish economy is heavily dependent on world economic developments.

The rate of unemployment remains at almost 14% (Quarter 2 2013) and on-going net emigration is the main driving force behind any reductions. The continued high unemployment rate and increasingly its long term nature is evident in Ireland, especially in rural areas. There are declining off-farm employment opportunities in rural Ireland in general. For example, in 2006 59% of farmers/spouses had off farm employment but in 2012 this was only 49% according to Teagasc.

Farm Viability

Within agriculture, the beef and sheep sectors in particular continue to experience low profitability, viability challenges and an over reliance on direct payments and subsidies. On average direct payments/subsidies accounted for 82% of Family Farm Income, across all farm types and sizes in 2012. This represents an increase from 73% in 2011. In 2012 the proportion of economically viable farms decreased to 38% from 41% in 2011. A higher proportion of viable farms were found in the dairying and tillage sectors and a lower proportion of viable farms were found in the beef and sheep sectors. For example, according to the 2012 Teagasc National Farm Survey, only 18% of cattle rearing farms and 29% of other cattle farms were considered viable.

Particular issues arise in areas designated as Less Favoured Areas (LFAs). For example, in 2010, FFI for farmers in receipt of LFA payment was €348 per hectare before the payment under the scheme was taken
into account. The figure for farmers not in the LFA Scheme was €609 per hectare. Output per hectare and gross margins per hectare are also higher for non LFA farms. CSO standard output data further reinforces the fact that in districts with non designated land, the returns are consistently higher than in districts with designated land. Teagasc have also undertaken viability analysis which shows that the viability rate, as measured by farms with incomes plus a return on investment greater than the minimum agricultural wage, is higher in non-LFA than LFA areas and farms. Addressing such viability issues is a key policy issue in its own right. However, it is important to note that there is also a fundamental link to issues of biodiversity maintenance, landscape preservation and environmental sustainability, in terms of supporting the continuation of environmentally sustainable farming practices on land that might otherwise fall out of use, or become abandoned.

Many Irish suckler farmers are very small scale and inefficient. Within sectors there are major differences between the efficient and inefficient producers. Amongst beef farmers there is a very low take-up of breeding technology and best practices which could contribute to greater efficiency at farm level. For example the Irish beef herd produces 80 calves per 100 cows and the average calving interval in 2011 was 407 days. However, the top fifteen per cent of farmers achieve 95 calves per 100 cows and a 365 day calving interval (Veterinary Ireland/ICBF).

A further sub-sector which faces particular challenges and restrictions is the island farming cohort. For example, particular viability challenges for island farmers include isolation, high infrastructure, input, and transport costs and land quality issues.

**Structural Issues**

51% of farmers are over 55 years, and only 6% are under 35 years of age, and the age profile of Irish farmers is getting worse. The number of farm holders aged under 35 fell by 53% between 2000 and 2010. This age imbalance affects farm viability and competitiveness in a number of ways. Older farmers are less likely to introduce innovative practices related to diversification, market orientation and restructuring. Furthermore, cultural and traditional ties to land ownership and resistance within farming to inter-generational transfer continue to work against early transfer to young farmers. Nearly half of farmers do not have an identified farming successor. This situation is compounded by the fact that there are limited options to enter farming, apart from the traditional inheritance option. Ireland has little tradition of share farming and low levels of partnerships and collaborative initiatives. There are few opportunities for inter-generational transfer of knowledge and young people are not working in tandem with older farmers on a widespread basis.

In undertaking the preparation of this RDP, the horizontal principles relating to anti-discrimination and equality were carefully considered. The issue of gender equality emerged most strongly from the consultation process in this regard. There is a significant gender imbalance within agriculture with more than 90% of farm holders being men. Women have higher education at school and university and this is manifested now in the employment rate of women under 35 being higher than for men. Within farm
households, women are now generating significant market incomes and are often the main breadwinner within the household, in addition to undertaking traditional non-market activities within the household. A continuation of this gender imbalance is thus detrimental in terms of the human capital capacity of the sector and may also inhibit technology uptake and structural change.

The low level of entrepreneurial and business skills among farmers also works against innovation, restructuring and enhanced competitiveness, as found by Teagasc in their report on this issue. Less than one third of Irish farmers had either basic or full agricultural training, so more than two thirds were without any formal agricultural education or training. There is poor awareness among farmers of risk management tools and the need for brand development and low levels of business acumen and skills has been noted.

Restructuring of the agriculture sector is difficult to achieve for a number of further reasons which can all be considered as weaknesses. There is a high level of short-term and conacre land rental and limited long term leasing in Ireland which works to discourage farmers from undertaking investment on land improvements. There is a low level of land sales which prohibits entry and restructuring - worsening farm fragmentation situation with an average of 3.8 parcels per farm in 2010 compared to 1.9 parcels in 1991. Finally, the limited average size of Irish farms at 32.7 hectares remains a key constraint.

Farmers in the market place

Within agriculture and the food sector there is a continued heavy reliance on the UK and EU markets in terms of exports. For example, in 2012 the UK accounted for around 44% of the total for agri-food, fish and forestry exports. The EU accounted for 75% and non EU (third country) markets were only 25% of agri-food, fish and forestry exports.

Irish farmers are generally price takers in commodity markets rather than price setters in short food supply chains. There are weaknesses in the bargaining power of producers and it can be challenging to break into the market due to the dominance of major multiples. There is a very high level of concentration at retail level with three multiples having close to 70% of the retail market. It can be costly to meet retailer demands and standards so entry to and maintenance of position in the retail trade is difficult. Distance from the market can also be a problem for primary producers.

Small farm size can limit opportunities to maximise efficiency in production and marketing. Farmers can encounter difficulties with the low availability of capital for investment in expansion, new product development and marketing. Overall the number of producer groups is small, there are only around 20 producer groups in the country producing lamb, milk and processed foods. There is no existing model of widespread organisation or co-operation in the beef sector and therefore no Beef Producer Organisations have formal recognition. All of these factors make it difficult to shorten the food supply chain.
Environmental and Biodiversity Issues

Nationally, although significant progress has been made in the past decade, biodiversity loss has not been halted in Ireland, as noted in the National Biodiversity Plan. In the 2013 ‘Status of EU Protected Habitat and Species in Ireland’, which includes updated information on the status of certain Natura 2000 sites only 9% of the habitats examined had a “favourable status”, 50% were “inadequate” and 41% were assessed as “bad”. Of the 61 species examined, 52% were assessed as “favourable”, 20% as “inadequate”, 12% as “bad” and a further 16% were “unknown”. While the level of High Nature Value (HNV) lands in Ireland has been noted above, the concept of HNV land is not yet fully established in Ireland and HNV land has not been specifically designated or mapped. However, some case studies/pilot studies have been completed and further information is expected soon through research funded by DAFM under the Research Stimulus Fund. While HNV land is not definitively mapped in Ireland HNV land generally refers to areas where agriculture is a major (usually the dominant) land use and where that agriculture supports, or is associated with, either a high species and habitat diversity or the presence of species of European conservation concern, or both. The basis used for specifying HNV land in Ireland is to reference land that is a Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Natural Heritage Areas designated nationally. Habitats associated with traditional farming practices are under pressure and in need of conservation. As farms are small and habitats are fragmented it can be difficult to disseminate information related to biodiversity. There could be improvements in the linkage between advisory services and the targeting of measures in priority ecosystems.

The EPA has noted that there are ongoing water quality issues in certain sensitive catchments and there is a need to address biodiversity loss and water quality in sensitive areas. Although nitrate levels are low, they are not decreasing. It is expected that the number of farmers requiring derogations will increase. There is scope for improvement in the governance and management of the river basin districts (RBDs). While other environmental practices have become well established amongst farmers through REPS and AEOS, the future need for increased water conservation and efficient use is not yet as fully appreciated. Uptake under the Rainwater Harvesting Scheme under the 2007–2013 RDP has been low, with only around 50 applications received by January 2013. Behavioural and cultural changes are required at farm level to adopt new practices.

Ireland has very high greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from agriculture as a proportion of total GHG emissions. In 2012 Ireland’s total GHG emissions were some 58 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent; 32% of this was from agriculture. This is due to the high dependence on animal production systems. Ireland was home to 6.75 million cattle, 5.17 million sheep and 1.57 million pigs in June 2012. Most ammonia mitigation is already in place, with a limited amount of cost effective mitigation measures remaining.

Despite longstanding support for afforestation (as referenced above) Ireland also has a low level of forestry cover, just under 11% of land area compared to an EU27 average of 38%.
There are also low levels of organic farm production. For example, across the EU in 2010, 5.7% of the total UAA was devoted to organic crops. However, in Ireland the corresponding figure was around 1.1%. While the organic sector in Ireland is relatively small in relation to agriculture as a whole, the sector does represent an area for potential growth and the target of 5% of UAA remains in place. Consequently, the Department should continue to directly support the sector.

Despite a near trebling in demand between 2003 and 2011 for renewable energy, there are still relatively low levels of production and use overall in Ireland. The contribution of renewable energy to overall energy demand was only 6.5% in 2011, whereas the target is to achieve 16% by 2020 under EU Directive 2009/28/EC. There is a lack of market development for the bioenergy sector due to the high investment costs required for energy sector development, lack of finance and problems with the supply chain for bioenergy production, in terms of the need to better join up supply and demand. The continued use of peat and turf as energy sources also erodes an important carbon sink. In many cases, individual farms are too small to consider investing in projects such as anaerobic digestion for renewable energy production and farmers that get involved in biomass production tend to do so on a small scale.

Broader Rural Economy

The nature of the evolution of rural areas in Ireland has resulted in a diverse range of challenges when it comes to supporting the development of the broader rural economy. The nature of poverty and disadvantage in rural areas is very hard to define. However there are some distinct characteristics to rural poverty that distinguish it for policy purposes. One of the main characteristics of rural disadvantage is the issue of peripherality and distance to/from larger service centres. Rural areas are often geographically remote and require individuals to travel to access public services. In the recent past this has resulted in the rationalisation of public services such as post offices, which for many has compounded the isolation and remoteness of some rural areas.

The 2010 update of the National Spatial Strategy found that growth in rural areas has been significantly below the national rate and the growth that has occurred has to a substantial extent been linked to growth in nearby urban centres[1]. CEDRA research has shown that there has been a significant population shift from more remote regions towards the core economic areas, but also from central urban areas to surrounding hinterlands. The relationships that characterise this pattern have developed over time and as a result of the many challenges faced by rural areas particularly in the last 20 years. In this context different types of rural areas face different challenges which in turn present significant challenges when designing and implementing operational programmes.

Infrastructural Issues for Rural Ireland

The 2011 Survey on Income and Living Conditions found that the risk of poverty in rural areas (18.8%) is
higher than in urban areas (14.2%). Remoteness and access to basic services are a contributory factor to poverty in rural areas and accessibility and availability of key services is a challenge. The reduction in the spread of available services and the very limited nature of rural public transport means that significant parts of the rural community can remain isolated from such services. This lack of access is often associated with the poorest members of society.

While broadband availability has improved in rural areas, the quality and cost of broadband services is still falling short of the standard required. This also acts to work against knowledge transfer and innovation. In April 2014, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources announced that the Government has committed to a major telecommunications network build-out to rural Ireland, with fibre as a cornerstone of its investment under the National Broadband Plan.

Education levels in rural areas are lower than in urban areas. In 2011, 28% of rural dwellers had a tertiary education qualification compared to 35% of urban dwellers. There are lower levels of life-long learning opportunities in rural areas, as access to such services is more difficult. Combined with the distance from markets and the cost of transporting goods to markets in the context of rising energy and fuel prices, these additional constraints to rural enterprises makes a difficult environment for innovation and entrepreneurship in rural areas.


4.1.4. Opportunities identified in the programming area

A wide range of issues were identified as being current opportunities. These are summarised and grouped together under various sub-headings below.

*The general policy context*

Notwithstanding the current economic difficulties there are many opportunities for agriculture and rural development. The FAO reports that globally there is an increasing demand for food due to worldwide population growth and increased demand for meat and dairy, major components of the Irish agri-food sector, as dietary patterns change in emerging economies. This presents the opportunity for a strong export performance.

Forthcoming EU wide policy changes such as the removal of milk quotas in 2015 will provide an
opportunity for expansion and for innovation in the dairy sector. This will reinvigorate the sector and restore a new dynamism for growth. For example, while dairy production has stagnated in Ireland since milk quotas were introduced in 1984, New Zealand underwent a large expansion with a deregulated agricultural market in dairy. Prior to 1984 both countries had expanded at a similar rate and both countries use a relatively extensive grass based dairy production system. The effective growth rate of New Zealand dairy production has been consistently around 5% per annum. Irish dairy production has the potential for expansion primarily because of the relatively competitive position of Irish dairy production relative to competitor countries. For example, the 110 cow Irish dairy farm has amongst the lowest cash cost base of any country (Teagasc, Thorne et al. 2011).

Research, Education and Training

The current enhanced image of the agri-food sector, as shown by the current high demand for third level agriculture courses, should help to attract young people and there is scope to harness the enthusiasm of young new entrants to farming and their innovation potential.

Current and future research, and the adaptation of it, can play an important part in, inter alia, maximising nutrient efficiencies, reducing emissions, informing adaptation and mitigating impacts of climate change. The EIP on Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability will encourage the alignment of research to the needs of end-users. Ireland’s small size, allied to its tradition of cooperation and the networks already in place augurs well for the creation of operational groups around the Bioeconomy and related issues.

There is an opportunity to better target and integrate training to identified needs and to tailor training of farmers in the delivery of environmental and public goods. Some examples might include the targeting of advice towards farmers in priority areas such as high status sites, fresh water pearl mussel catchments, Natura 2000 areas, HNV and holdings with specific derogations. It may also be possible to enhance animal welfare standards through promoting animal welfare in training courses, the use of advisory services and targeted support to assist in meeting standards. Further training opportunities existing in areas such as business skills, innovation, climate change, and collaboration.

The Teagasc food research and technology transfer programme is a mechanism for transferring innovative ideas to companies, SMEs and farmers. For example new technologies might be harnessed for food chain and risk management issues (e.g. tracking, data handling, logistics and waste reduction). At farm level the ongoing Teagasc monitor farm initiative offers potential for greater adoption of new practices/technology.

Addressing the Structural Challenges

Policy instruments (e.g. taxation policy or tailored support schemes) can be utilised to encourage generational renewal and the encouragement of restructuring or farm risk management could be
incorporated in broad policy measures.

The development of the farm partnership model offers potential to increase the numbers involved across all enterprises in collaborative initiatives. Partnerships and collaborative mechanisms can also be a risk management tool.

Discussion groups have been set up in various sectors and offer potential for improvements in efficiency, profitability and adoption of new technology. There is potential to increase the numbers participating in these discussion groups. Around 5,000 dairy farmers are currently engaged in discussion groups. However this is less than one third of the more than 15,000 specialist dairy farms in the country. There may be opportunities to develop and build on this model by widening the scope of groups to incorporate environmental aspects and renewable energy issues and by including a more output based focus.

Food and the Food Chain

In terms of food and the food chain there are many opportunities. The niche demand in certain areas of food could be an opportunity for SMEs in the food industry, for example in the area of organically farmed products. There is scope for the development of rural enterprises and the artisan food sectors and, at the same time, development of the market through amalgamation in the food sector. The further development of an image and brand of Irish food based on quality, environmental merit and good standards of animal husbandry and welfare is an opportunity. The possibility of promotional programmes focusing on food quality is another opportunity. Bord Bia’s voluntary Origin Green Initiative together with Quality Assurance Schemes can provide an evidence base to sustain Ireland’s green reputation internationally.

Building on Ireland’s Green Reputation

Despite Ireland’s green reputation there are opportunities for improvement. There is also an opportunity to capitalise on low GHG emissions and the level of carbon efficiency. With farmers investing in expansion there are clear opportunities to encourage investment in technologies that have improved energy and water efficiency, or to encourage the use of renewable sources of energy wherever possible. Increased carbon efficiency of animal production systems should be possible through improved breeding/genetic improvements in livestock, feeding and other management practices. There is the potential to support the uptake of low emission slurry application technologies (e.g. trailing shoe) to contribute to ammonia and climate targets, and to manage and use waste streams such as animal waste, brown bin waste, sewage sludge etc. for energy production. Larger scale investment projects under a co-operation measure (for example village/community projects that could provide combined heat and power) might be an opportunity to explore, provided that it is found to be cost effective. Generally speaking there are opportunities to better link up the supply and demand of bioenergy.
The greening of CAP in Pillar 1 provides the opportunity for enhanced and targeted environmental measures in Pillar 2. For example measures to protect common farmland habitats and create new habitats under an agri-environment scheme might be explored. The crop diversification element of greening may represent an opportunity for increasing habitat diversity and reducing the threat to farmland birds. Supporting farmers in addressing land abandonment and viability issues in Areas of Natural Constraint (formerly LFAs) represents a further opportunity in addition to the protection and restoration of priority habitats/species within and outside Natura 2000 sites that are under varying degrees of threat. There may also be the potential to encourage the more sustainable management of upland habitats and areas through specifically targeted uplands actions within an overall agri-environment scheme.

Increasing forest cover represents an opportunity to restore, preserve and enhance biodiversity including in Natura 2000 areas. As required under the Habitats Directive, in relation to SACs and SPAs, all applications for forestry approvals / licences and grant aid are subjected to screening, and where required, appropriate assessment, to ensure no possibility of a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The incorporation of innovative and best practices in particular sectors can also work to deliver environmental and climate change benefits. For example, the adoption of genomic technology in the beef could underpin efficiency gains which contribute to decreased carbon emissions per unit of output and deliver a range of direct benefits to the farmer.

The Efficient Use of Resources

Agricultural input energy costs have increased by more than 50% between 2005 and 2012. These rising energy costs provide a major challenge but also an opportunity for increasing the efficiency of energy use on farms, e.g. through farm energy plans. In terms of wind energy there is significant potential for income generation for farmers from the location of wind turbines on their land.

The proposed introduction of water charges and meters in 2014/2015 in accordance with the Water Framework Directive is an opportunity to incentivise the efficient use of water both within agriculture and more generally. In terms of water quality the results of Agricultural Mini-Catchment programme are expected to deliver information on farm measures which improve water quality. More generally there is an opportunity to develop in-stream measures to alleviate flooding, reduce soil erosion, improve aquatic quality and combat invasive species (for example riparian planting).

A suite of targeted measures, perhaps in conjunction with ICT developments, might be developed in order to improve fertiliser/manure efficiency which would contribute to protecting water quality and climate action. New fertiliser additives/inhibitors and the increased use of clover offers the possibility to significantly reduce nitrogen fertiliser usage. There may be a possibility to introduce farm nitrogen budgets to improve the efficiency of its use and reduce losses of nitrate and ammonia.
Although Irish soils are considered to have a generally good overall fertility status, Teagasc soil surveys show that there is considerable room for improvement in terms of maximising nutrient use efficiency, especially regarding inputs of lime, Phosphorus and Potassium. Teagasc soil analysis shows that approximately 60% of samples were below the optimum pH levels and over 40% of samples did not meet the target index for phosphorus or potassium.

The demand for biomass for energy is increasing. The average annual growth rate of residential biomass energy use was 18% between 2005 and 2010. Although industrial use of biomass for energy declined between 2006 and 2011, there is an opportunity for increased use of biomass for domestic purposes, for example through the further development of the wood chip/pellets market.

In terms of encouraging the fostering of carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry there are many opportunities. Carbon stores in old species rich grasslands can be protected from degradation and enhancement of hedges/trees/field margins can improve their carbon storage. In Ireland, peatlands can be a significant carbon store, so the development of a measure within an agri environment scheme to protect blanket bog and upland commonage is a possibility in order to conserve this store.

**Community Based Rural Development**

The OECD define local development as “a cross cutting and integrated activity where the physical development of a place is linked to the public service inputs, place management, and wider drivers of changes such as employment, skills, investment enterprise innovation productivity and quality of life”[1] Government proposals to align the work of Local Government and local development will support local development and ensure a more integrated approach to both the planning and implementation of development interventions at local level. Rural development is part of this process and the delivery of rural development interventions will benefit from a more streamlined and integrated approach to local development at a local level.

A community led approach will be a critical component of this reformed system to support local development. The system will rely heavily on the experience of the CLLD/LEADER approach, as it has been delivering successful rural development interventions in Ireland since the early 1990s, and will facilitate full and active participation of local communities in their development choices. However, what the system will also do is ensure that all interventions are planned in a way that will contribute to addressing the needs identified at national, regional and local level in a more comprehensive and practical way. All planning processes will be participative and will facilitate a greater understanding at local level of the need to address local needs while simultaneously considering regional and national priorities. Ireland would consider this a significant opportunity to support the future economic development of local areas and in particular rural areas supported through the EAFRD.
In general, as part of this more integrated approach to local development, there are a variety of specific opportunities that will form part of the planning processes to address rural needs including: the use of established social capital to facilitate more sustainable development and enterprise development, the use of community-based enterprise development to increase jobs, and the use of ICT and other innovative technology-based mechanisms to deliver and support the delivery of services in rural areas (thereby reducing barriers to access to services). The renewable energy sector and the development of eco-tourism and integrated activity-based tourism as an economic driver in rural areas are further opportunities for rural areas. Networks and targeted training might be better utilised in order to make information available in these areas.


4.1.5. Threats identified in the programming area

A wide range of issues were identified as being current threats. These are summarised and grouped together under various sub-headings below.

Economic, Social and Demographic Issues

Some overarching threats include the continued fallout from the global credit crisis and the potential for problems in recovery in the international and EU economy in the short term. This would impact severely upon the export reliant agriculture sector, as well as on rural areas through falling demand and associated knock on effects. Instability in the euro currency, wider currency fluctuations and the associated risk to Irish agri-food exports are also real threats to agriculture and the broader rural economy. The dependence on traditional markets and outlets for produce within agriculture and the fact that farmers are reluctant to avail of diversification supports are further potential threats to future income stability.

The continuation of the high level of unemployment poses a threat to both rural and urban economies. In the second quarter of 2013, although the unemployment rate had fallen slightly, it was still 13.7%. A particularly concerning trend is the increase in the long term unemployment rate, characterised as those being unemployed for 12 months or more. 58% of those currently unemployed are characterised as being long term unemployed. The European Commission have noted that, for some individuals, the experience of long term unemployment can lead to permanent alienation from the labour market, with subsequent risks of material deprivation, poverty and social exclusion.

As well as the pressure on the overall EU budget, the continued commitment to funding rural development is highly dependent on limited national exchequer funding, for which there is considerable competition in...
the short and medium term.

Reduced national financial resources and cutbacks in research, training and education budgets due to budgetary constraints may result in lower skills levels and the sub-optimal transfer of technology to farmers. The ageing farm population also represents a threat. The cultural and traditional ties to land ownership and resistance within farming to inter-generational transfer that continue to work against early transfer to young farmers have been noted already. Young people may move to other careers and areas if opportunities are not available in farming and rural areas.

Rural population decreased from 39% of Ireland’s total population in 2006 to 38% in 2011. Rural depopulation, in particular young people emigrating from rural areas, results in the loss of innovation potential. The ageing of the rural population increases poverty and exclusion and loss of enterprise development potential. Dependency ratios are lowest in urban areas. The continued reduction in service provision in rural areas, in particular in the context of increased transport and fuels costs could lead to a negative cycle of service loss and population loss and further pressure to leave those areas.

There is continued high unemployment, and particularly long term unemployment, in rural areas. There is potential for increased rural poverty as a consequence. The risk of poverty in rural areas (18.8%) is higher than in urban areas (14.2%) as shown by the CSO, 2011 Survey on Income and Living Conditions.

On a related issue, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report on Entrepreneurship in Ireland in 2011 noted that the negative change in the environment identified in its earlier reports continued to have an impact on the perception of entrepreneurship as an attractive career option. Only 26% of the respondents to a survey saw real opportunities for the development of new business. The prevalence of those aspiring to be an entrepreneur in Ireland in the future was very low in 2011, only 8.5%. This is a significant change to previously relatively high levels and places Ireland behind the average across the OECD and EU.

A higher proportion of individuals living in urban areas received non-formal education (22% vs. 15%) and lifelong learning (27% vs. 17%) when compared to rural areas. This raises the threat of the rural population failing to participate in the life-long learning and up-skilling required by the modern knowledge economy.

There is evidence of a high level of work related accidents on farms. The Health and Safety Authority have noted that over half of workplace deaths in 2010 occurred on farms and the fatality rate of accidents in agriculture is higher than for other sectors.
Competitiveness and Viability Threats

Rising input costs are a threat to competitiveness and viability in agriculture. Furthermore commodity price volatility within agriculture globally remains a threat. For example Ireland is more than 800% self sufficient in beef production and so is very susceptible to fluctuations and trends in international markets. Price volatility may discourage entry of young entrants (although it should encourage diversification). There is a high dependence on imported feed and fertilisers and increased volatility in these input prices. Rising energy and fuel costs also affect the cost of transport for food and agri-business.

Food safety scares (both Irish and international) have shown the inter-connectedness and complexity of the food supply chain in recent times. Animal and plant diseases (e.g. most recently Chalara fraxinea in Ash trees) and invasive species can spread quickly within and between countries. Reputational damage from any adverse scares could be serious and potentially long lasting.

Environmental Threats

Generally speaking as farms get more intensive and specialised there is a risk that this production is gained at the expense of the environment and may have negative environmental impacts. For example, Food Harvest 2020 targets could possibly result in intensification on marginal land in some areas. The potential skills and awareness shortage in relation to the environment and ecology in the farming and agricultural professional sector is a threat to the sector’s green reputation. Enhancing the skills of knowledge transfer providers through CPD will enhance their ability to deliver appropriate courses, thereby facilitating the transfer of the appropriate mix of skills required at farm level.

Generally the temperate Irish climate is one of the sector’s strengths, especially for grass based beef and dairy production which is less susceptible to drought than crops such as potatoes. However, the likely effects of climate change on Irish agriculture are a threat in future. In the longer term water availability may become more limited in parts of the country. Crops such as potatoes and cereals in the eastern part of the country are likely to be most at risk from summer droughts according to the European Centre for Climate Adaptation report for Ireland. Although the threat will initially be to crops from droughts due to climate change, it could potentially affect grass too, depending on severity of climate change. There is also the potential for greater risks of flooding in the West due to changed rainfall patterns. In general, there are also threats associated with extreme weather including more unreliable weather patterns. For example, recent years have seen heavy snowfall and flooding, and in 2013 there was a major fodder crisis due to unseasonable conditions. Unreliable weather patterns and their effects on agriculture are a cause for concern and a potential threat to the sector.

However, in general, Ireland’s geographic position means that it has not suffered natural disasters of the severity and scale witnessed elsewhere. For example, it does not usually suffer from the extremes of temperature experienced by many other countries at similar latitude because of the predominant influence of the Atlantic Ocean on the country’s climate.

Nationally and internationally there are pressures to further reduce GHG emissions from the agriculture
sector. Under the EU Effort Sharing Decision (ESD) binding emission reduction targets have been established for Member States to cover the period 2013–2020 for non-Emissions Trading Sectors including agriculture. It requires a 20% reduction in GHG emissions in Ireland by 2020 compared to its 2005 levels. In the absence of abatement measures, GHG emissions from agriculture are projected to increase by 7% between 2010 and 2020; equivalent to a 1% increase above the 2005 ESD reference year.

Approximately 20% of Ireland is categorised as peatland including raised bogs, blanket bogs, and fens. If intact, this is a good carbon store. However the EPA has noted that this peatland is threatened by domestic and industrial extraction, afforestation, wind farms and drainage for agricultural and other uses. Another threat is that Ireland would fail to meet its targets under the Gothenburg Protocol which sets emission ceilings for four pollutants: sulphur, NOx, VOCs and ammonia. Similar to GHG emissions, ammonia emissions from agriculture are also projected to increase.

Targets have been set under the EU Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC that the EU will reach a 20% share of energy from renewable sources by 2020. Ireland’s target is 16% but for 2011 this figure was only 6.5%. Failure to meet these targets is a major threat. Biomass production at farm level is at risk of lacking the necessary scale to be competitive or big enough to assure customers that continuity of supply is safe and this cycle could potentially re-enforce itself.

Ireland’s Prioritised Action Framework identifies key priorities for managing the Natura 2000 network, to achieve the objectives of the EU and National Biodiversity Strategies. It identifies threats to various endangered species associated with farmland including the freshwater pearl mussel, chough, hen harrier, geese and swans, twite, corncrake, grey partridge and breeding waders.

Land abandonment (potentially due to a combination of low productivity and the aging profile of farmers) is a threat to biodiversity, as it can reduce the habitat value for certain species. It could also lead to the encroachment of scrub. The threat of the abandonment of marginal land and of areas facing various constraints can be mitigated through support under the Areas of Natural Constraints scheme, which can have benefits (both from the point of view of economic viability as referenced already) but also importantly from an environmental point of view in terms of encouraging the continued farming in an environmentally sustainable manner of more marginal land in particular. This is an issue which was raised consistently during the consultation phases of RDP design.
### 4.1.6. Common Context Indicators

#### I Socio-economic and rural situation

**1 Population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Inhabitants</td>
<td>4,582,769</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>rural</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>82</td>
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*Comment: Context adapted based on the RDP specific definition*

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<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
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<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>% of total</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2012 p</td>
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**2 Age Structure**

<table>
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<th>Updated year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total &lt; 15 years</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>2012 p</td>
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<tr>
<td>total 15 - 64 years</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>66.5</td>
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<td>total &gt; 64 years</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
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<td>22.3</td>
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<td>% of total population</td>
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<td>rural &gt; 64 years</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>12.1</td>
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**3 Territory**

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<tr>
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<td>Km2</td>
<td>69,798</td>
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<td>urban</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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**4 Population Density**

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<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
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<tr>
<td>rural</td>
<td>Inhab / km2</td>
<td>49.1</td>
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**5 Employment Rate**

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>male (15-64 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>2012</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female (15-64 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* rural (thinly populated) (15-64 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total (20-64 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male (20-64 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female (20-64 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>2012</td>
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**6 Self-employment rate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total (15-64 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>2012</td>
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**7 Unemployment rate**

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total (15-74 years)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>2012</td>
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### Youth (15-24 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>2012</td>
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</table>

### GDP per capita

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Index PPS (EU-27 = 100)</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Rural</td>
<td>Index PPS (EU-27 = 100)</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2010</td>
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</table>

### Poverty rate

<table>
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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Rural</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>2010</td>
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</table>

### Structure of the economy (GVA)

<table>
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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>EUR million</td>
<td>148,529</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>2010</td>
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### Structure of Employment

<table>
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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1000 persons</td>
<td>1,838.5</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>2010</td>
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</table>

### Labour productivity by economic sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>80,788.1</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>38,358.6</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>120,408.2</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>73,894.7</td>
<td>2012 e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>66,766.7</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>95,983.6</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## II Agriculture/Sectorial analysis

### 13 Employment by economic activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>1000 persons</td>
<td>1,837.8</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture</td>
<td>1000 persons</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture % of total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forestry</td>
<td>1000 persons</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forestry % of total</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food industry</td>
<td>1000 persons</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food industry % of total</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tourism</td>
<td>1000 persons</td>
<td>119.7</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tourism % of total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 14 Labour productivity in agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>EUR/AWU</td>
<td>9,799.9</td>
<td>2010 - 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 15 Labour productivity in forestry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 16 Labour productivity in the food industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>EUR/person</td>
<td>153,620.7</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 17 Agricultural holdings (farms)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>139,890</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size &lt;2 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2,340</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size 2-4.9 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7,380</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size 5-9.9 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>15,750</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size 10-19.9 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33,580</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size 20-29.9 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>24,690</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size 30-49.9 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>30,670</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size 50-99.9 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>20,760</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm size &gt;100 Ha</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,720</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size &lt;2000 Standard Output (SO)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>17,920</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size 2.000 - 3.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>16,810</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size 4.000 - 7.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>25,150</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size 8.000 - 14.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>26,030</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size 15.000 - 24.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>17,570</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size 25.000 - 49.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>15,160</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size 50.000 - 99.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>11,160</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm economic size</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Updated value</td>
<td>Updated year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.000 - 249.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8,660</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>250.000 - 499.999 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1,040</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; 500.000 SO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>average physical size</td>
<td>ha UAA/holding</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>average economic size</td>
<td>EUR of SO/holding</td>
<td>30,722.11</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>average size in labour units (persons)</td>
<td>Persons/holding</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>average size in labour units (AWU)</td>
<td>AWU/holding</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2010</td>
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### 18 Agricultural Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total UAA</td>
<td>ha</td>
<td>4,991,350</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arable</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permanent grassland and meadows</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permanent crops</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2010</td>
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### 19 Agricultural area under organic Farming

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
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<tr>
<td>certified</td>
<td>ha UAA</td>
<td>24,850</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in conversion</td>
<td>ha UAA</td>
<td>6,780</td>
<td>2010</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of UAA (both certified and conversion)</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2010</td>
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### 20 Irrigated Land

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>ha</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of UAA</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td></td>
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### 21 Livestock units

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>lsu</td>
<td>5,787,400</td>
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### 22 Farm labour force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total regular farm labour force</td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>272,040</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total regular farm labour force</td>
<td>AWU</td>
<td>162,350</td>
<td>2010</td>
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### 23 Age structure of farm managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total number of farm managers</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>139,890</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of &lt; 35 y</td>
<td>% of total managers</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ratio &lt;35 / &gt;= 55 y</td>
<td>No of young managers by 100 elderly managers</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>2010</td>
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### 24 Agricultural training of farm managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>share of total managers with basic and full agricultural training</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of manager &lt; 35 y with basic and full agricultural training</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Updated value</td>
<td>Updated year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25 Agricultural factor income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>EUR/AWU</td>
<td>16,910.2</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total (index)</td>
<td>Index 2005 = 100</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>26 Agricultural Entrepreneurial Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard of living of farmers</td>
<td>EUR/AWU</td>
<td>11,717.4</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard of living of farmers as a share of the standard of living of persons employed in other sectors</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27 Total factor productivity in agriculture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total (index)</td>
<td>Index 2005 = 100</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>2009 - 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>28 Gross fixed capital formation in agriculture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFCF</td>
<td>EUR million</td>
<td>362.9</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of GVA in agriculture</td>
<td>% of GVA in agriculture</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>29 Forest and other wooded land (FOWL) (000)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>1000 ha</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of total land area</td>
<td>% of total land area</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>30 Tourism infrastructure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bed-places in collective establishments</td>
<td>No of bed-places</td>
<td>197,065</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rural</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intermediate</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### III Environment/climate

#### 31 Land Cover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>share of agricultural land</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of natural grassland</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of forestry land</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of transitional woodland</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of natural land</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of artificial land</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of other area</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 32 Areas with Natural Constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mountain</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 33 Farming intensity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>low intensity</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium intensity</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high intensity</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grazing</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>2010</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 34 Natura 2000 areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>share of the territory</td>
<td>% of territory</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of UAA (incl. natural grassland)</td>
<td>% of UAA</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of total forestry area</td>
<td>% of forest area</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 35 Farmland Birds index (FBI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total (index)</td>
<td>Index 2000 = 100</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 36 Conservation status of agricultural habitats (grassland)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>favourable</td>
<td>% of assessments of habitats</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unfavourable - inadequate</td>
<td>% of assessments of habitats</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unfavourable - bad</td>
<td>% of assessments of habitats</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>% of assessments of habitats</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 37 HNV Farming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>% of total UAA</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2007 e</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comment: 22% i.e. 1,117,667 hectares of HNV as % of overall UAA (Estimates based on 2007 data)

43% i.e. 2,154,800 hectares of HNV as % of overall UAA (Estimate based on range of data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>38 Protected Forest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class 1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>39 Water Abstraction in Agriculture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>40 Water Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential surplus of nitrogen on agricultural land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential surplus of phosphorus on agricultural land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates in freshwater - Surface water: High quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates in freshwater - Surface water: Moderate quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates in freshwater - Surface water: Poor quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates in freshwater - Groundwater: High quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates in freshwater - Groundwater: Moderate quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates in freshwater - Groundwater: Poor quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>41 Soil organic matter in arable land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total estimates of organic carbon content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean organic carbon content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>42 Soil Erosion by water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rate of soil loss by water erosion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agricultural area affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agricultural area affected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>43 Production of renewable Energy from agriculture and forestry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from forestry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>44 Energy use in agriculture, forestry and food industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture and forestry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use per ha (agriculture and forestry)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 45 GHG emissions from agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Updated value</th>
<th>Updated year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total agriculture (CH4 and N2O and soil emissions/removals)</td>
<td>1000 t of CO2 equivalent</td>
<td>18,370.6</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of total GHG Emissions</td>
<td>% of total net emissions</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.7. Programme-Specific Context Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Socio-economic and rural situation</td>
<td>PSCI3</td>
<td>Rural Territory</td>
<td>99.6</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment: The rural territory is 68,194.1 km² which is 99.6% of the overall State territory of 68,466 km².</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO Census 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Socio-economic and rural situation</td>
<td>PSCI1</td>
<td>Rural Population</td>
<td>3762043</td>
<td>persons</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment: This is 82% of the total population of 4,588,252. The remainder is considered urban i.e. the population of the five largest cities in line with the definition adopted in the 2014-2020 RDP.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO Census 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Socio-economic and rural situation</td>
<td>PSCI5</td>
<td>Rural Employment Rate</td>
<td>50.49</td>
<td>% Employment rate</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment: The number of rural persons over 15 is 2,911,959 and the number of rural persons over 15 employed is 1,470,113 which equates to a rural employment rate of 50.49%.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO Census 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Socio-economic and rural situation</td>
<td>PSCI4</td>
<td>Rural Population Density</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Persons per Km²</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment: Combining the rural population of 3,762,043 persons and the rural territory of 68,194.1 km² gives a rural population density of 55 persons per square km.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO Census 2011</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Socio-economic and rural situation</td>
<td>PSCI2.2</td>
<td>Rural Age Structure (15-64 years)</td>
<td>54.09</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment: 2,481,647 is the rural population between 15 &amp; 64 years of age. This is 54.09% of the overall national population.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO Census 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Socio-economic and rural situation</td>
<td>PSCI2.3</td>
<td>Rural Age Structure (&gt;64 years)</td>
<td>9.38</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment: 430,312 is the rural population over 64 years of age. This is 9.38% of the overall national population.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO Census 2011</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Socio-economic and rural situation</td>
<td>PSCI2.1</td>
<td>Rural Age Structure (&lt;15 years)</td>
<td>18.53</td>
<td>% of total population</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment: 850,084 is the rural population under 15 years of age. This is 18.53% of the overall national population.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO Census 2011</td>
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</table>
### 4.2. Needs assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (or reference) of the need</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P5</th>
<th>P6</th>
<th>Cross cutting objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1B</td>
<td>1C</td>
<td>2A</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>3A</td>
<td>3B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a - Effective Mechanism and Structure for Transferring and Sharing of Knowledge Amongst Farmers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b - Effective Mechanisms for identifying appropriate applications of research knowledge</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c - Targeted Training and/or Advisory Services for Agri Environment and Animal Health and farm level support for animal welfare</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d - Support for farmers in ANCs to increase farming viability, competitiveness and address key environmental challenges</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>e - Targeted on Farm Investments</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f - Targeted Investment Support to Young Farmers Entering into Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>g - Sectoral support to increase competitiveness and efficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h - Increase awareness of risk management and price volatility</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i - A well targeted and designed Agri Environment Scheme</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j - Protection of high status waters, improvement of water quality and appropriate usage of fertiliser</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k - Improved nutrient management planning and appropriate grazing levels amongst farmers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l - Better water usage in agriculture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m - Promote the efficiency of energy use in agriculture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n - Increase the supply of bioenergy and where possible facilitation of the bioenergy supply chain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Improved livestock breeding &amp; production systems &amp; targeted Agri-Environment Climate action to reduce GHG &amp; ammonia emissions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p - Protection of existing carbon stores, improvement of carbon sequestration combined with effective measurement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>q To contribute to a coordinated approach to the delivery of support for enterprise development and job creation in rural areas</td>
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| s Support & enhance communications initiatives to improve broadband & ICT infrastructure with a particular focus on rural areas | X | X | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
4.2.1. a - Effective Mechanism and Structure for Transferring and Sharing of Knowledge Amongst Farmers

Priorities/Focus Areas

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<td>1A)</td>
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<td>5D)</td>
<td>Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture</td>
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Cross cutting objectives

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<td>Innovation</td>
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Description

The need for support to increase and develop knowledge transfer to farmers was a strong theme in the public consultation, and was also identified as both a weakness and as an opportunity during the work on the SWOT analysis. This need has been identified in a broad range of farming sectors, for example in the beef, dairy, sheep, pigs, equine and tillage sectors. Developing the knowledge base can clearly take place through many different forms. However one approach, which was consistently referenced in the preparatory work for the RDP, was the use of knowledge transfer groups. Although some discussion groups exist already, a possible approach here would be to target increased participation levels while simultaneously developing the model to ensure a more strategic, integrated and output focused approach. In effect, this would not represent a continuation of existing discussion groups but rather a deepening and widening of the approach to date to contribute to expanding the knowledge base and foster the adoption of best practices and new technologies at farm level. The model represents an opportunity to address identified knowledge deficits across a range of strategically important areas identified as part of the SWOT and consultation process, including financial management, animal health, environmental and climate change actions and grass management.
### 4.2.2. b - Effective Mechanisms for identifying appropriate applications of research knowledge

#### Priorities/Focus Areas

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<td>1B)</td>
<td>Strengthening the links between agriculture, food production and forestry and research and innovation, including for the purpose of improved environmental management and performance</td>
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#### Description

A clear challenge has been identified in addressing the difficulties in technology transfer and the translation of research outputs to end users. Greater linkages between research and on farm implementation need to be established and this theme emerged during the public consultation process and also during the work on the SWOT analysis. Support under the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) has been highlighted as a possible vehicle to address this, particularly given the overarching framework of the EIP on Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability. There may be existing examples to learn from, even if they are not formal EIPs. For example, the BETTER farm programme was considered to be a strength in the SWOT analysis. As well as researchers, the beef industry and farming interests are also involved in this programme. EIP operational groups could be utilised to strengthen the role of research and innovation throughout the sector in a number of identified strategic areas.

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### 4.2.3. c - Targeted Training and/or Advisory Services for Agri Environment and Animal Health and farm level support for animal welfare

#### Priorities/Focus Areas

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5D) Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Innovation

Description

The importance of ongoing support for training (especially in the delivery of environmental and public goods) was a further theme emerging from the SWOT and consultation processes. In particular, focused training in relation to agri-environment actions has been linked to reductions in the error rates in agri-environment schemes. The delivery mechanism for agri-environment training has been considered carefully, and it is recognised that formal classroom style training sessions may not be the most appropriate for farmers in relation to agri-environment schemes. It may be necessary to combine on farm visits with targeted online presentations for farmers in relation to agri-environment education and training. Such training could be delivered as an integrated core requirement associated with participation in an agri-environment scheme.

Possible needs for more bespoke training in a wide range of areas were also identified as part of the RDP design process. The need for a prioritised focus on training that can be delivered means that dedicated funding cannot be linked to every area identified. However, in designing a suite of knowledge transfer measures, the possibility of including some of the issues arising as modules should be explored.

One area which emerged as a particular area requiring a targeted training intervention and where there is a clearly established economic benefit for intervention is animal health and welfare. While Ireland’s status in relation to animal disease was identified in the SWOT as a strength, it was also recognised that failure to maintain control of animal disease levels would have serious impacts on the agri-food sector. It is important that attempts are made to try and reduce the risks in this area. In particular, targeted and prioritised advisory services for farmers in relation to specific animal disease areas such as somatic cell count reduction and Johnes disease and Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) emerged as a priority for investment.

Moreover, the beneficial role that continuing professional development for agricultural advisors plays in areas such as environment and climate change actions was a recurring theme in the design phase of the new RDP. Up-skilling of advisors was seen as a measure which could complement and support other areas of intervention and ensure the achievement of greater value for money.

The need for support to address the limited bargaining power of Irish farmers was identified as a weakness in the SWOT analysis. This need has been identified in the beef sector. Developing organisation and cooperation in the beef sector represents an opportunity to assist farmers in setting up potential Producer
Organisations (POs) in the Beef Sector and to move the POs towards formal recognition. One approach, considered in the stakeholder consultation was that groups of farmers would employ advisors to ensure that high quality advice is available and provided to POs who wish to apply for recognition as a PO.

In addition, it was identified in the SWOT that technology uptake among sheep farmers has historically been low, and that increased uptake in technology among these farmers could improve animal welfare. Therefore, targeted support at farm level is required to increase use of such technology among sheep farmers and thereby increase animal welfare.

4.2.4. d - Support for farmers in ANC to increase farming viability, competitiveness and address key environmental challenges

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 4A) Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment

Description

The Less Favoured Areas scheme under the 2007 – 2013 RDP, which itself built upon the success of the Disadvantaged Areas Scheme under the 2000-2006 RDP, was very efficient in terms of its operation, particularly given its close linkages to the Pillar 1 Single Farm Payment Scheme. There remains a clear need to continue support for farmers in Less Favoured Areas (Areas of Natural Constraints) in order to simultaneously increase farming viability and competitiveness and also to assist in addressing key environmental challenges, such as supporting biodiversity, maintenance of landscapes, and avoiding land abandonment.

Over the course of the 2007 -2013 Rural Development Programme, the Less Favoured Areas scheme contributed significantly towards Family Farm Incomes and the economic viability of holdings, particularly along the Western seaboard and in the Border Midlands and Western (BMW) region. The various stages of the public and stakeholder consultation process consistently also showed major support for the scheme from a variety of different stakeholders.

Importantly, the scheme is also often closely associated with environmental and social benefits. For example, the LFA scheme has been seen to make an important contribution towards achieving environmental goals by supporting the continuation of farming in accordance with environmental standards
in areas facing particular constraints. This in turn delivers a range of benefits in areas such as the maintenance of habitats for biodiversity and also the preservation of landscapes and the delivery of associated public good benefits.

The importance of the various challenges addressed by support for ANCs is evidence by their clear referencing within the wording of Focus Areas 4A.

4.2.5. e - Targeted on Farm Investments

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 2B) Facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal
- 3B) Supporting farm risk prevention and management
- 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- 5B) Increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing
- 5D) Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Innovation

Description

The SWOT analysis and public consultation identified a need for capital investment over a wide range of areas, in order to, inter alia, target support at key sectors to enable growth and expansion, contribute to environmental and climate change objectives, support increased efficiency of holdings, and improve animal health and welfare.

A range of possible areas for investment emerged from the SWOT, including both productive and non-productive investments. NFS data show that average gross new investment per farm in 2012 was €8,713. However, the need for certain investments that have been identified by stakeholders and through the SWOT process, in particular rainwater harvesting and anaerobic digestion, must be considered against the backdrop of very low demand for certain previous schemes of this type.
The dairy industry, which is expected to expand significantly in the post quota era; milking and storage and cooling equipment emerged from the needs assessment process as a high priority as support to planned expansion. Another key area identified is the need for enhanced storage of farm organic nutrients such as soiled water facilities, soiled manure storage on poultry farms and potentially slurry storage. Other possible priority areas identified include support for the uptake of low emissions spreading technology and support for certain types of animal welfare, handling and safety equipment and the tillage sector which has been underfunded in the past with the traditional focus on dairy farmers and beef production enterprises.

The double dividend of increasing productivity while at the same time supporting actions to assist in the mitigation of the impacts of climate change is fundamental to the achievement of Food Harvest 2020 commitments. Therefore, energy intensive farming sectors were identified as areas where investment might also be targeted.

Proposed investment in on farm capital investment also emerged as a possible avenue for addressing certain structural challenges in the sector – namely the age profile of Irish farmers – given that the Rural Development Regulation allows for greater aid intensity to be directed at young trained farmers under on farm capital investments.

4.2.6. f - Targeted Investment Support to Young Farmers Entering into Agriculture

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 2B) Facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal
- 3B) Supporting farm risk prevention and management
- 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- 5B) Increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing
- 5D) Reducing greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Innovation

Description
An effective ladder of opportunity for trained young people to enter into and progress in farming and which will result in an improved age profile of farmers is a clear challenge for the sector. This has been clearly demonstrated in the public consultation process and in the SWOT analysis, and the availability of land through inter generational farm transfer is crucial to this need. However, broader cultural and socio-economic issues such as the long-standing Irish historical attitudes towards land ownership are central here and these are beyond the scope of the RDP.

It is important to note, however, that support to the agri-food sector is delivered across both Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 of the Common Agricultural Policy. In relation to Pillar 1 there are several innovative features of the new Common Agricultural Policy, including support for young farmers. This is incorporated in two elements of the new Direct Payment Regulation, namely the Young Farmers Scheme and the National Reserve. The essential purpose of the Young Farmers Scheme and the National Reserve is to assist young farmers in the initial stages of establishing a farming enterprise in their own name and to encourage generational renewal. As a complement to these measures, it is also an option to support young farmers under Pillar 2 via increased aid intensity under Article 17 and support for increased uptake of new and existing farm collaboration mechanisms could offer a further approach to this issue. This integrated approach is seen as a more effective approach to the identified need to support young farmers than a stand alone scheme of support for start up costs for young farmers. All Young Farmers will be able to avail of the full range of investment measure provided for in TAMS II including the dairy and tillage sectors.

4.2.7. g - Sectoral support to increase competitiveness and efficiency

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 3A) Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations
- 6B) Fostering local development in rural areas

Cross cutting objectives

- Innovation

Description

The need to support artisan food, organic food products and direct selling of farm products was evident in the stakeholder consultation and the SWOT analysis. In addition, the Food Harvest 2020 strategy recommended broadening opportunities, including local markets, for the purchase of local food. Increased co-operation is important in terms of the integration of producers into the supply chain. The use of quality
schemes and the organisation of Producer Groups are possible approaches to enhancing the producers’ position in the market. However, in order to ensure that food quality and safety concerns are not affected through small scale production and direct selling, there is a need to continuously improve and validate production quality.

The beef sector is a major component of the agri-food sector in Ireland, and the SWOT and consultation processes highlighted a number of challenges for that sector. It is essential that the reputation and competitiveness of the beef sector is maintained and enhanced in future, with forecasts in increasing global demand and increasing low cost global competition. At the same time beef farmers are amongst the most vulnerable in the farming sector in terms of their lower farm incomes and their higher dependence on direct payments in relation to farm incomes and output. This was shown in the SWOT analysis and the need for enhanced viability and competitiveness was also a theme in the Food Harvest 2020 strategy. Therefore support to this sector is needed, for example through assisting in production at the higher end of the value chain and continuing to support the distinctiveness of Irish beef.

Any sectoral supports should also be undertaken in a manner compatible with possible schemes under Pillar 1.

4.2.8. h - Increase awareness of risk management and price volatility

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 3B) Supporting farm risk prevention and management

Cross cutting objectives

Description

The findings of the public consultation and the SWOT analysis confirmed that Ireland is not generally prone to suffering from natural disasters, due to its geographic position. For example, it does not usually suffer from the extremes of temperature experienced by many other countries at similar latitude because of the predominant influence of the North Atlantic Gulf Stream on the country’s climate. Nonetheless, in compliance with EU requirements for member states to develop an integrated approach to the prevention and management of both natural and man-made disasters, the Office of Emergency Planning, published a national risk assessment for Ireland in 2012. However, pre-existing nationally funded measures are considered to be sufficient to address these possibilities.

While a need has been identified for support for risk management particularly in the case of animal plant and pest disease, there was divided opinion amongst stakeholders on the extent of this need in terms of support under the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme. Animal diseases might best be addressed through knowledge transfer and advisory services as referred to previously. In terms of risk management in
general it is believed that this could also be addressed via knowledge transfer mechanisms.

4.2.9. i - A well targeted and designed Agri Environment Scheme

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors
- 4A) Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes
- 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- 4C) Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management
- 5D) Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture
- 5E) Fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Description

The outcome from the public consultation and the SWOT analysis demonstrated a clear need for an effective agri-environment-climate measure with emphasis on general agri-environment challenges as well as more specific biodiversity issues. Well-designed, targeted, monitored and managed measures will contribute to meeting Ireland’s objectives under various directives, strategies etc., such as: the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, EU Habitats and Birds Directives and Water Framework Directives.

As referred to in the SWOT analysis, although significant progress has been made in the past decade, biodiversity loss has not been halted in Ireland. An agri environment-climate scheme is a crucial mechanism to help preserve and restore biodiversity. The need to implement support for overcoming the constraints relevant to farmers in designated Natura 2000 sites and for the protection of habitats and species were recurring themes in the SWOT and consultation processes. One possible approach identified was a tiered agri-environment scheme addressing general environmental needs at a basic level and more targeted environmental needs at a higher level dealing with particular needs such as uplands conservation for commonages, conservation of selected endangered bird species and farmland habitat conservation. There was clear support emerging for any such scheme to take cognisance of, for example, Ireland’s Prioritised Action Framework for Funding Natura 2000.

Other themes evident in the SWOT and public consultation included the importance of approved
agricultural planners, actions targeted at specific areas (as opposed to a whole farm approach), the need for record keeping of actions undertaken and the role of dedicated training in environmental practices and standards.

4.2.10. j - Protection of high status waters, improvement of water quality and appropriate usage of fertiliser

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors
- 4A) Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes
- 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- 4C) Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Description

The results of the stakeholder consultation pointed to a need to address water quality issues, particularly in the context of agri-environment climate measures. Relevant issues here included the protection of high status waters, the improvement of water quality in particularly sensitive areas, and riparian planting/management which can help to alleviate flooding and to protect water quality. In this context, buffer zones along water courses and fencing of water courses were highlighted as possible priority actions under an agri-environment climate measures.

Reliance on imported fertilisers and their volatile prices as an agricultural input was found to be a threat under the SWOT analysis and improved fertiliser usage efficiency was noted as an opportunity that might be exploited. Appropriate fertiliser levels were also identified as an important issue, particularly given the strong green reputation of Irish agriculture and the need to maintain and enhance this where possible.

4.2.11. k - Improved nutrient management planning and appropriate grazing levels amongst farmers

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors
- 4A) Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas
facing natural or other specific constraints and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes

- 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- 4C) Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Description

Soil management is an important element of environmental sustainability. The predominance of Ireland’s grass-based farming systems minimises the risk of soil erosion, and this was found to be one of the strengths during the SWOT analysis. Actions taken to improve water quality can also have a beneficial impact upon soil erosion, as was highlighted during the stakeholder consultation process. The analysis points to the fact that preventing soil erosion and improved soil management may be best addressed through specific measures or actions within any agri-environment scheme, such as crop management and appropriate grazing levels. In the past, over-grazing on upland areas was a major environmental issue. However, changes in management practices can sometimes lead to under-grazing, thus presenting environmental difficulties, and innovative actions may be needed to encourage a more cohesive and sustainable approach requiring greater co-operation among farmers at local level.

Appropriate fertiliser levels are also important in relation to soil management overall. The possible inclusion of a nutrient management plan within an agri-environment scheme thus arose as a theme in the SWOT and consultation phase. The requirement for nutrient management plans was a feature of previous agri-environment schemes under the 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme. For example a nutrient management plan was required for participants under the Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS) but it was not required under the Agri-Environment Options Scheme (AEOS).

4.2.12. 1 - Better water usage in agriculture

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Description

The SWOT analysis noted that Ireland already has low abstraction pressure on water bodies, particularly in the case of meat and dairy production which are traditionally seen as intensive water users. Low levels of irrigated and abstracted water usage in Irish agriculture were evident. Nonetheless there may be a need to increase efficiency in water use. The need for improved efficiency in water usage could also be met by investment measures under Article 17 in the Rural Development Programme. This point was noted with some frequency during the stakeholder consultation. In particular, the low uptake under the Rainwater Harvesting Scheme under the 2007-2013 RDP needs to be considered. It should also be noted that, due to costs involved in investing in rainwater harvesting, it only suits particular enterprises with especially heavy water usage such as dairy, horticulture, pigs and poultry. It is not intended that the water will be used for irrigation purposes but will be used for washing and spraying. It is a very significant capital investment and generally is seen as a low priority investment amongst farmers. Nevertheless, the issue of water efficiency in the context of WFD requirements remains as an important policy matter and this can be addressed via on farm capital investment where appropriate, and there is scope under the on farm capital investment measure to address this. It is intended to include investments in Rainwater Harvesting and Storage Schemes for the Tillage Sector and as a component of the Animal Housing and Welfare Scheme.

4.2.13. m - Promote the efficiency of energy use in agriculture

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 5B) Increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing

Cross cutting objectives

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Description

Rising energy costs were noted in the SWOT analysis as a major challenge for agriculture but also as a potential opportunity for increasing the efficiency of energy use on farms. Energy efficiency within agriculture also arose as an issue during the stakeholder consultation, albeit not as an over-riding concern when compared to some other environmental and climate change objectives. Nonetheless, there is an identified need to promote the efficiency of energy use in agriculture in certain circumstances. In particular, support might usefully focus on the more energy intensive sectors, such as the pig sector. It is also intended to support energy efficient measures in the tillage sector. The evidence gathered suggested that this need could be addressed via Article 17 capital investments.
4.2.14. n - Increase the supply of bioenergy and where possible facilitation of the bioenergy supply chain

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 5C) Facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by products, wastes, residues and other non food raw material for the purposes of the bio-economy
- 6B) Fostering local development in rural areas

Cross cutting objectives

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Description

The potential for supports for increased production of renewable energy under the RDP was a clear theme during the stakeholder consultation process. Renewable energy also arose as an issue during the SWOT analysis. Despite increases in recent years there are still relatively low levels of production and use overall in Ireland, as noted by the SEAI. Another weakness that was noted in this area was the problems in terms of the supply chain for bioenergy production, i.e. the need to better join up supply and demand.

Therefore, there is an identified need to facilitate the supply of renewable energy which may be enhanced by support for investment measures in renewable energy under priority 2. Renewable energy supply and demand should also be better linked and joined up and the use of co-operative or regional approaches might be facilitated. Short rotation forestry, energy crops or agro forestry can aid in the replacement of fossil fuels and energy intensive materials. In terms of bioenergy production under the 2007 - 2013 RDP, some problems have been experienced in relation to miscanthus in recent times, and it may be the case that willow in particular has a greater potential in terms of uptake. These factors must all be considered in any analysis of bioenergy schemes and renewable energy production.

4.2.15. o Improved livestock breeding & production systems & targeted Agri-Environment Climate action to reduce GHG & ammonia emissions

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 1A) Fostering innovation, cooperation, and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas
- 1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors
5D) Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Innovation

Description

As the level of green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture in general, and from ruminants in particular, is significant in Ireland there is a clear need to reduce these emissions through improved livestock breeding and production systems, the promotion of innovative approaches and best practice, and through targeted agri-environment action. This feature of our high emissions arose in the course of the SWOT analysis in different guises. For example, the fact that over 30% of our GHG emissions arise from agriculture was found to be a weakness. Nonetheless, the opportunity is clearly there to reduce emissions further and take advantage of the positive green and sustainable Irish reputation. The climate challenge was a particular feature of the stakeholder consultation with many stakeholders clearly aware of the challenges and opportunities ahead in terms of reducing GHG and ammonia emissions. There is a clear link to the Food Harvest 2020 strategy in terms of the requirement for smart, green growth. The double dividend of increasing productivity, and at the same time supporting actions to assist in the mitigation of the impacts of climate change, is fundamental.

Some of the actions that would be required in order to meet this need could be programmed under a variety of potential RDP measures including: Article 14 (Knowledge Transfer and Information Actions), Article 17 (Investments in Physical Assets), Article 28 (Agri-Environment-Climate) and also Article 35 (Co-operation). Regardless of the way in which such possible supports are designed, the need remains clearly established.

4.2.16. p - Protection of existing carbon stores, improvement of carbon sequestration combined with effective measurement

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 5E) Fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry

Cross cutting objectives

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Description

There is a need to protect existing stores of carbon and to improve carbon sequestration. Any increase in the forestry cover combined with targeted agri-environment action, including on wetlands and peatlands, would
assist in addressing this need. The issue arose to some extent during the public consultation process but perhaps more prominently during the SWOT analysis. That found, for example, that there were many opportunities in terms of encouraging the fostering of carbon sequestration in agriculture and forestry. Short rotation forestry, energy crops or agro forestry all have significant carbon sequestration potential. Carbon stores in old species rich grasslands can be protected from degradation through specific and targeted agri-environment action. The enhancement of hedges, trees and field margins can improve their carbon storage. In Ireland peatlands can be a significant carbon store, so the development of a measure within an agri-environment scheme to protect blanket bog and upland commonage is a possibility in order to conserve this store. However, as is the case of any environmental actions that affect carbon conservation and sequestration, the need to enhance and improve this must also be considered against the potential difficulties in terms of measurement, controls and verification of carbon sequestration. For example there is a need to assess how various land uses, coupled with soil and land management, can enhance soil carbon sequestration in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner so as to inform future land use and land management strategy.

4.2.17. q To contribute to a coordinated approach to the delivery of support for enterprise development and job creation in rural areas

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification
- 3A) Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations
- 5C) Facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by products, wastes, residues and other non food raw material for the purposes of the bio-economy
- 6A) Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation
- 6B) Fostering local development in rural areas
- 6C) Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas

Cross cutting objectives

- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Innovation

Description

Key issues that arose in this focus area are the high unemployment rate in, and emigration from, rural areas
and the need to respond via targeted training and support for enterprise development and job creation. Access to credit and finance in general is also an important aspect of initiatives that support enterprise development. There are a number of sectors within the rural economy that have been identified as having potential from the perspective of enterprise development and job creation. These sectors include:

1. Artisan Foods;
2. Renewable Energies;
3. Marine;
4. Social Enterprise; and
5. Creative Industries

In line with available evidence, individual Local Development Strategies (LDS) will be required to examine the potential of these sectors within the LDS process, and in the context of an integrated regional and local planning approach. It is envisaged that this integrated approach to planning at local level will not only maximise the impact of available support but also ensure that responsible bodies are working in a complementary way to ensure this, for example, in areas such as the marine. Support allocated through the LEADER element of the RDP will focus on the need to facilitate specific training and capacity building. This will support enterprise development with identified potential tailored to the LDS area, and working in cooperation with the overall integrated approach to regional and local planning proposed in ‘Putting People First - Action Programme for Effective Local Government’. Direct support to enterprise development will also be supported for enterprise initiatives in the SME sector in line with the regulatory framework. While all enterprise initiatives will be considered, the Programme will place a specific focus on the need to provide support to farm families to diversify and explore business opportunities outside the farm-gate.

4.2.18. r - To ensure effective and coordinated use of all available rural resources to support local development in rural areas

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 3A) Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations
- 5C) Facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by products, wastes, residues and other non food raw material for the purposes of the bio-economy
- 6A) Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation
- 6B) Fostering local development in rural areas
- 6C) Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas

Cross cutting objectives
- Environment
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Innovation

Description

Existing community structures and social capital can be harnessed to promote social inclusion and the development of rural areas with particular emphasis on all aspects of tourism, food, renewable energy and village renewal.

There is a body of evidence suggesting that rural towns and their hinterlands have felt the negative impacts of the economic downturn in the recent past more than other areas. As rural towns are often the centre of the rural economy, measures must be taken to address this as Ireland emerges from the current crisis or there is a danger that they will be unable to avail of opportunities going forward. In this context, locally based initiatives to stimulate local/rural development are required. Such initiatives should look at a more integrated approach to rural development and promote and utilise all available resources in a given area to promote development in a more coherent and effective way. This kind of initiative will be developed using the LEADER approach to tailor the solution to the particular problems of the areas concerned. The approach will be centred on the development of plans that are integrated into the county and community planning processes outlined in *Putting People First* as well as developed from the LDSs as required in the EU regulatory framework.

4.2.19. Support & enhance communications initiatives to improve broadband & ICT infrastructure with a particular focus on rural areas

Priorities/Focus Areas

- 1A) Fostering innovation, cooperation, and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas
- 1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors
- 6A) Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation
- 6B) Fostering local development in rural areas
- 6C) Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas

Cross cutting objectives

- Innovation

Description

A recurring theme in the SWOT and consultation process was the importance of the availability and use of
high speed broadband in the development of rural areas. The need for high quality broadband has also been identified in ‘Building Ireland’s Smart Economy – A Framework for Sustainable Economic Recovery’, and the report of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas. There is recognition that this challenge is being addressed in other fora.

For example, the investment priorities selected for the Regional OP under ERDF will complement the RDP by investing in high speed broadband services that will address a significant digital divide affecting rural areas thereby improving the environment for innovation, knowledge transfer and economic development in those areas.

However, more needs to be done to ensure that consideration is given to rural areas when working towards achieving national targets to ensure that the development of broadband capacity in rural Ireland does not fall behind that of its urban counterparts. A theme emerging from the preparatory analysis is the potential for the RDP to support infrastructural development in a complementary manner through, for example, training initiatives delivered via LEADER.
5. DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

5.1. A justification of the needs selected to be addressed by the RDP, and the choice of objectives, priorities, focus areas and the target setting based on evidence from the SWOT and the needs assessment. Where relevant, a justification of thematic sub-programmes included in the programme. The justification shall in particular demonstrate the requirements referred to in Article 8(1)(c)(i) and (iv) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

The process of identifying the needs to be addressed by RDP funding and of designing measures in order to address these needs in the most efficient and effective manner was a lengthy and complex undertaking. The foundation for this process was a complex and multi-layered overarching policy framework incorporating:

- Europe 2020,
- Ireland’s National Reform Programme,
- the EU Cohesion Legislative Package,
- the Common Strategic Framework, and
- Rural Development legislation.

At the national level, the policy context is framed by the Irish economy emerging from a deep recession in tandem with the strong implementation of and exit from the EU/IMF programme. Ireland’s Partnership Agreement sets out the national policy strategies and targets that have been developed in this framework. These targets are linked to each of the 5 headline areas of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Further framing the context for the development of the needs underlying the development of this RDP were a number of key sectoral strategies and reports. For example, the identification of the wider set of challenges and opportunities in rural Ireland identified by the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) was also of relevance.

Within this context, a comprehensive body of preparatory work has been undertaken in order to establish a sound basis for the identification of needs to be addressed via the RDP. One of the main principles underlying this process has been the need to link the needs to be addressed in the RDP to the real issues faced by rural Ireland. With this in mind, a comprehensive process of stakeholder consultation has underpinned the entire process of RDP development. Section 16 sets out in further detail the various stages of stakeholder consultation which have taken place. What is clear from Section 16 is that this consultation has been strategically targeted at key phases of the RDP development process and that the feedback received from a very wide range of stakeholders has had a tangible impact on the development of the needs, priorities and objectives to be addressed and the measures to be supported under this RDP. This partnership focused approach to the identification of needs and the development of measures was a key element in ensuring that RDP funding is to be targeted at very real and important issues in the sector. This partnership approach also sought to draw on existing expertise and knowledge in the Irish public sector and to engender an integrated and complementary approach to funding.

In tandem with these processes, the independent evaluators engaged to undertake the ex ante evaluation of the RDP were involved in the development of the preparatory analyses underlying the design of the RDP. Their involvement was on the basis of an ongoing engagement with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine as the preparatory work developed and the evaluators provided specific feedback and comments as the process progressed which ensured, inter alia, that the identification of needs to be
addressed in the RDP was based on a firm foundation. The involvement of the independent evaluators in this way provided an additional layer of external validation in relation to the justification of the needs identified.

The above approach provides a clear foundation for the extensive work which was involved in developing the Situation Analysis, SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment set out in Section 4. In particular, the Situation and SWOT analyses were designed and undertaken to ensure that a clear understanding of the issues underpinning the identification of investment needs was a central element of RDP design.

The clear link from the overarching policy framework set out in the Partnership Agreement which feeds from identified thematic objectives to the identification of needs in the sector based on the Rural Development Priorities provides a firm and evidence based approach to identifying the intervention logic which underlies this RDP.

The predominant theme which emerged during the development of the SWOT and Needs analyses was that a wide range of issues existed which cut right across the spectrum of the Rural Development Objectives, Priorities and associated Focus Areas. In considering the wide range of evidence and information emerging from the SWOT etc, the approach taken was to prioritise needs that were consistent with the overarching policy context set out above, which were firmly based in the evidence emerging, and which would provide a clear rationale for the investment of EU and national funds over the lifetime of this RDP.

One of the clear priorities for investment which emerged from the above process was the requirement for comprehensive and integrated support for a range of environmental, climate change and biodiversity issues. The need for investment in this broad range of investment needs draws from the importance of building on Ireland’s existing strength in this area and our ‘green reputation’ internationally. However, it is also clear that there remains a number of challenges and issues in this area which must be addressed, and these also underlie the identified need for investment via the RDP. Such challenges cut across many of the environmental, biodiversity and climate change themes, and include:

- the protection and maintenance of Natura sites
- the protection of habitats for specified species, and associated biodiversity challenges
- the protection and maintenance of high status water areas
- enhanced nutrient management practices
- support for the maintenance of landscapes and the continuation of farming practices which are beneficial in this regard
- the promotion of carbon sequestration and the management of carbon stores
- the promotion of a range of practices aimed at lower emissions levels
- increasing resource efficiency, and the sustainability of farming practices in general, and
- working within the framework of various EU directives and national and international targets as set out in Section 8.2.5.2 (GLAS).

The need to address this priority area encompasses not only the introduction of a broad based Agri-Environment and Climate Measure, but also included the need to address these issues in ways such as the
development of the relevant knowledge base and skills set, support for maintaining farming in accordance with relevant environmental standards on land that may otherwise be threatened with abandonment, and support for farmers to invest in their holdings to make them more efficient and thus more sustainable.

In addition to addressing these issues at national level, the preparatory analysis underlying the RDP also highlighted a requirement to address particular environmental and biodiversity challenges at a targeted and local level in order to ensure a more sustainable and efficient sector. This is in recognition of the fact that not all environmental challenges can be addressed at the national level. Rather a more focused approach based on local circumstances and conditions is appropriate in certain instances. Key needs in this regard include an extension of the Burren Farming for Conservation Programme and support for freshwater pearl mussel catchment areas. In addition, in the interest of identifying the most environmentally beneficial investments a competitive process will be put in place to identify a number of other specific projects. In order to ensure that support in this area is fully integrated with national level schemes, support here will be provided by way of the first amendment to the RDP, within twelve months of RDP implementation, and once the national measures are operational.

A further priority need identified in this RDP is the need to support continued viability and competitiveness in the sector. Central themes emerging in this regard from the preparatory analysis include the importance of providing support for farmers to develop and modernise their holdings via capital investment, and the importance of supporting farmers facing particular viability challenges or production challenges. Thus, the evidence emerging from the preparatory analysis underpins support for a range of areas where farmers will be able to target capital investment in order to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of their holdings, and where viability and competitiveness challenges can be addressed via particular measures.

Within this priority of enhanced viability and competitiveness, it also recognised that there are a number of key structural challenges which must be addressed. For example, the age profile and gender profile of Irish farmers is clearly referenced in the SWOT analysis. The identified need here thus centred around providing support for identified groups. Interventions aimed at opening up new channels of entry to farming and access to land and targeted investment support emerged from the preparatory analysis as important in this regard. It is also important to note that many of the investment priorities and needs identified in this process may be taken up in ways other than direct measure design. For example, in designing the National Rural Network, it is intended that the gender imbalance will feature as a key issue to be addressed. It should also be noted that, at the national level, the Agri-Taxation Review Group has included in its work plan the identification of any barriers to greater female participation in the sector.

A further priority for investment which has links to the various priority needs identified above is that of support for increasing levels of innovation and the knowledge base in the sector. This is a theme which emerged from the SWOT in a number of formats, including the need to develop the knowledge and skills base of farmers in key areas, the need to ensure that advisory services firmly rooted in best practice are in place, and the importance of strengthening links between innovative practice and on the ground practices.

Support for targeted, locally led development, is also an identified priority area in this RDP. This will be delivered via the LEADER mechanism on the basis of locally developed Local Development Strategies. While the content of these strategies cannot be pre-empted, it is clear that a wide range of potential investment areas arose from the preparatory analysis, including social inclusion issues, job creation and economic development in rural areas, support for training and basic services investments, and support for local small enterprises. As the RDP design process developed, a set of themes has emerged in relation to LEADER which reflect the priorities emerging from the preparatory analysis and are also linked to the
Rural Development Priorities. These themes include

- Rural Economic Development / Enterprise Development / Job Creation, incorporating rural tourism, enterprise development, broadband training and rural towns;

- Social inclusion through building community capacity, training and animation; and

- Rural environment

While LEADER will be programmed under Priority 6B, there is scope for LEADER projects to contribute to other Priorities and Focus Areas in a way that will complement other supports provided.

While the above areas represent the main priorities selected for investment in this RDP, it should also be noted that there were issues and challenges which arose during the preparatory analyses and which are not supported by investment in this RDP, or are afforded a more modest level of support. For example, while issues of weather related, natural and manmade risks and dependence on imported feed and fertilisers did arise during the SWOT analysis, they did not emerge as areas to be prioritised for investment in the RDP. Similarly, the issue of forestry arose during the SWOT analysis. However, in deciding not to include specific support for forestry in this RDP, it was taken into consideration that DAFM has submitted a proposal to the EU Commission for 100% state aid funding for a new Forestry Programme for the period to 2014 – 2020 based on 4 identified sectoral needs:

- Permanently increase forest cover to produce wood, capture carbon and assist mitigation;
- Sustainably increase forest-based biomass production to meet renewable energy targets;
- Support forest holders to actively manage their plantations; &
- Optimise the environmental and social benefits of new and existing forests.

In increasing forest cover, priority will be given to restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity including in Natura 2000 areas. The Programme proposes a range of measures that include supports for afforestation and woodland creation, construction of forest roads, forest reconstitution following significant natural damage, forest management operations, conservation of native woodlands, knowledge transfer and innovation, producer groups etc. Thus, it was felt that the forestry issue was being addressed nationally.

Support for bioenergy production was another thematic area emerging from the SWOT and Needs analyses. However, following on from a review of the operation of the Bioenergy Scheme in the 2007-2013 RDP, it has been decided to amend the design of the Scheme and to seek to run this new version of the Scheme as a pilot project via national funding in 2015. This approach is aimed at achieving a more efficient and effective policy response to the issue at hand.

In relation to peatlands, GLAS in Measure 10 includes a number of actions which will address peatlands management issues. However, when designing the RDP it was also recognised that there are other ongoing policy initiatives in the area of peatlands restoration. In particular, in January 2014, the Government published 3 significant documents for consultation, namely:
• a first ever draft National Peatlands Strategy,
• a draft National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan, and
• a Review of the Raised Bog Natural Heritage Area Network designated under national legislation.

Taken together, these three documents outline a comprehensive, strategic approach to the long-term management of peatlands in Ireland. They will drive the implementation of the most effective policies and actions at all levels as well as setting out clear and concrete plans for specific peatlands sites throughout the state.

Other issues which arose might be expected to feature in LEADER, although it is difficult to pre-empt what might arise in the development of Local Development Strategies. For example, it would be expected based on past experience that issues that arose in the preparatory analysis such as training for non-farmers, and support for diversification projects might feature in LEADER projects. Similarly, issues identified in the preparatory analysis relating to farmers position in the market will be addressed by three schemes (see section 8.2.10.2) to be delivered via LEADER. On the farmer’s position in the market, other thematic areas emerged from the SWOT and Needs analyses include the low update of technology in the sheep sector and lack of organisation or co-operation in the beef sector.

While the range of needs identified at a more detailed level is set out in Section 4, it is clear that a wide ranging set of needs emerged from the preparatory analysis which underlies the development of this RDP. These identified needs, which are logically linked to the issues identified in the SWOT and Situation analyses, have formed the basis for the choice of objectives, priorities and focus areas to be addressed in this RDP.

The emergence of a wide range of needs from the preparatory analyses set out in Section 4 underlies the approach to addressing investment priorities in this RDP. All the Rural Development Objectives and Priorities as contained in the Rural Development Regulation will be addressed by this RDP. As set out below, the cross cutting and integrated nature of measure design means that measures will necessarily contribute to multiple Priorities and related Focus Areas.

In relation specifically to Objectives set out in the Rural Development Regulation, it is clear from the issues which arose in the analyses in Section 4 that investment priorities exist in relation to each objective. Thus, the RDP will contribute to the three objectives as set out in Rural Development Regulation, namely

• fostering the competitiveness of agriculture,
• ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources and climate action, and
• achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities including the creation and maintenance of employment.

Similarly, the nature of the evidence which emerged from the preparatory analyses underlies the broad based approach evident in the RDP in relation to the expected contribution to particular rural development Priorities and Focus Areas. This is set out in greater detail below, as the particular measures which have been chosen on foot of the evidence arising from the preparatory analyses are set out in conjunction with relevant Focus Areas.
The process of selecting and designing rural development measures for inclusion in this RDP has been firmly based in the preparatory work such as the Situation, SWOT and Needs analyses contained in this RDP. Thus, the measures outlined in this RDP establish clear linkages between identified needs in rural Ireland, the Rural Development Priorities set out in the Rural Development Regulation, and the wider policy context set out in this RDP and in Ireland’s Partnership Agreement. Consequently, in selecting and designing measures, the need to ensure that measures are firmly rooted in a clear intervention logic was at all times central to the process.

**Choice and combination of measures**

The combination of measures relating to specific Priorities and Focus Areas is set out in Section 5.2. It should be noted that in linking up the needs identified and the measures to be delivered:

- the measures under consideration were designed to cut across a number of Rural Development Priorities and associated Focus Areas in order to maximise the benefit to be delivered. Thus, for example, the design of the on farm capital investment measure was designed in a manner that would make a contribution to a range of priority areas such as viability and competitiveness, environmental and sustainability issues, and animal health issues. This is a recurring theme in the outline of this RDP’s measures set out below.

- the measures were designed to cross cut with each other in a way that was mutually supportive and integrated. Thus, for example, the knowledge transfer measures outlined in the RDP will support the development of the sector’s knowledge base as an end in itself but will also be fundamentally linked to the benefits to be gained, for example, from the agri-environment and climate measures set out in this RDP.

It should also be noted that, in developing the measures contained in this RDP, cognisance was also taken of the experience gained in measure design and implementation in previous programming periods, the need to lessen administrative burden, complementarity with other funding mechanisms, and the need to target the achievement of value for money.

This strategy was reviewed in light of the transitional arrangements and the incorporation of the European Union Recovery Instrument (EURI) into the Rural Development Programme. It was considered that the strategy reflects the priorities identified in the transitional regulation for the EU Recovery Instrument for a resilient, sustainable and digital economic recovery in line with the objectives of the EU’s environmental and climate commitments and with the new ambitions in the European Green Deal. Therefore, no changes are proposed in the strategy. The existing measures under the RDP will continue maintaining environmental ambition and respecting the non-regression principle and providing continuity to the rural communities and farmers with an emphasis on preparations for the CAP Strategic Plan including knowledge exchange for farmers and advisors, development of baseline data, soils and environment studies and piloting the delivery of results based agri-environment actions through the Department’s systems at a national scale.

Programming of the EURI will provide additional funding to certain measures that will contribute to the achievement of the climate and environmental challenges including biodiversity loss through support for the organic farming sector, support for additional investments allowing more farmers to modernise their
holdings, invest in modern equipment, technologies and assist in addressing climate and environment challenges, and human and animal health and safety on their farms. Cooperation measures will be supported focussing on innovation and locally led approaches to health and safety, biodiversity including increased farmer and community engagement. In line with the national climate action plan support for mitigation measures are supported through straw incorporation in tillage soils (SIM). The LEADER programme will support the priorities identified in the RDP with a renewed focus on Smart Villages and supporting recovery from COVID and will include preparatory work for the next programming period.
5.2. The combination and justification of the rural development measures for each focus area including the justification of the financial allocations to the measures and the adequacy of the financial resources with the targets set as referred to in Article 8(1)(c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. The combination of measures included in the intervention logic shall be based on the evidence from the SWOT analysis and justification and prioritisation of needs referred to in point 5.1

5.2.1. P1: Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

5.2.1.1. 1A) Fostering innovation, cooperation, and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas

5.2.1.1.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)
- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.1.1.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The main measures selected to address this focus area are Measure 16 - EIP Operational Groups and support for Collaborative Farming, Measure 1 - Knowledge Transfer Groups, Measure 2 - CPD for advisors, Targeted Advisory Service for Animal Health and Welfare,

In each case, measure design has built on clearly established themes emerging from the SWOT analysis. Fostering innovation and enhancing the knowledge base will underpin a more efficient and effective sector. While mutually supportive, these measures are designed on varying delivery mechanisms targeted at specifically identified needs. The combined effect will lead to greater uptake of best practice and the more effective delivery of RDP support as a whole.

5.2.1.2. 1B) Strengthening the links between agriculture, food production and forestry and research and innovation, including for the purpose of improved environmental management and performance

5.2.1.2.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.1.2.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The main measure selected to address this focus area is Measure 16 - EIP Operational Groups.
Current and future research, and the adaptation of it, can play an important part in underpinning increased efficiency and competitiveness by nurturing best practice in a wide range of areas such as maximising nutrient efficiencies, reducing emissions, informing adaptation and mitigating impacts of climate change, and the introduction of cutting edge production methods. EIP Operational Groups in particular are designed to strengthen the links between research, innovation and on farm practices.

Measures 2(CPD for advisors) and 1(Knowledge Transfer Groups) will also ensure that the most up to date and innovative practices feed into the knowledge base of the sector and could be considered relevant to this focus area, although they are not programmed here. Finally, the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (measure 10) has at its centre the use of innovative techniques and research to underpin more efficient and climate friendly practices in the suckler herd.

Measure 16 EIP Operational Groups will explore different approaches to address health and safety on farm.

5.2.1.3. 1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors

5.2.1.3.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)

5.2.1.3.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The main measure selected to address this focus area are Measure 1 - Knowledge Transfer Groups.

Knowledge Transfer Groups will ensure the acquisition of new skills among farmers of all ages.

In addition, targeted training has been incorporated into the GLAS and BDGP design (measure 10) to ensure that environmental training continues to be delivered to farmers and that delivery of these schemes is optimised. This training will be delivered under measure 1.

CPD for advisors (measure 2) will similarly underpin the development of new knowledge and skills, although this is not programmed under this focus area.
5.2.2. P2: Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests

5.2.2.1. 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification

5.2.2.1.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)
- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.2.1.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The main measures selected to address this focus area are Measure 4 - On Farm Capital Investment (TAMS II) and Measure 16 - Collaborative Farming.

Measure 4 (TAMS II) responds to a wide range of areas identified during the preparatory analyses. The clear message that emerged was that renewed capital investment would underpin competitiveness by encouraging the upgrading and modernisation of holdings. The investment priorities identified will support farmers in responding to competitiveness challenges by investing in, for example, the upgrading of dairy equipment to allow expansion in a post quota market, and/or the modernisation of animal housing facilities. It is also intended to place particular emphasis on the Tillage sector as this sector has been underfunded in the past with traditional focus on dairy farmers and beef production enterprises. The inclusion of a separate strand for tillage farmers will contribute towards economic performance and modernisation.

The Collaborative Farming measure (measure 16) approaches the issue of economic performance and modernisation from the perspective of some of the structural issues highlighted in the SWOT, such as land mobility and demographics. Support for collaborative farming is designed to encourage an increased level of farm partnerships and other collaborative approaches with the attendant economic, structural and skills related benefits.

It should also be noted, that the integrated design of RDP measures which is firmly based on establishing a clear intervention logic linking back to the Rural Development Priorities means that there are a number of other measures in the RDP which would be expected to be beneficial in terms of the themes of economic performance, restructuring or modernisation but which would not be as focused on these themes as the aforementioned measures. For example, it would be expected that Knowledge Transfer Groups (measure 1), Targeted Animal Health Advice (measure 2), and EIP Operational Groups (measure 16) would also have beneficial effects.

Likewise, support for ANCs (measure 13) would be expected to provide an important support to the viability of particular farms, thus underpinning economic performance and competitiveness, although it has
not been programmed under this focus area.

5.2.2.2. 2B) Facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal

5.2.2.2.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.2.2.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The issue of entry to the farming sector and generational renewal were clearly identified in the SWOT and Needs analyses. The primary measures included in the RDP to address this Focus Area are the targeted support under Measure 4 - TAMS II and Measure 16 - Collaborative Farming.

One of the barriers identified to young farmers entering the sector, or expanding their venture, is the high cost of the necessary capital investment. This need is addressed in the overarching design of TAMS II (measure 4). However, in order to target support specifically at encouraging young farmers and to enable them to take on necessary infrastructural work the measure design incorporates a higher rate of aid intensity for young farmers as provided for under the terms of the Rural Development Regulation. Thus, young farmers as defined in the Rural Development Regulation are eligible for a grant support of 60% of the eligible costs for identified capital projects. This 60% rate compares very favourably to the general 40% rate, and is designed to be a significant support for young farmers (and as a complement to the Young Farmer Scheme under Pillar 1). All sectors are represented. As a complement to this, the Collaborative Farming measure (measure 16) has been designed to address some of the structural issues facing young farmers entering the sector and which inhibit generational renewal. In particular, the Collaborative Farming measure is designed to alleviate issues relating to land mobility and channels of access to the sector.

Thus, this focus area is approached from different perspectives in order to more fully address the underlying issues.
5.2.3. P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture

5.2.3.1. 3A) Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations

5.2.3.1.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.3.1.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

Themes emerging from the SWOT analysis relevant to this Focus Area include the challenges for primary producers in integrating themselves into the food chain, and the need to add value to agricultural products. In responding to these issues, stand alone measures had originally been considered. However, given the congruence with emerging LEADER themes, support in this area has now been integrated into the LEADER mechanism (the three schemes detailed in section 8.2.10.2). While these measures make a contribution under this Focus Area, they are to be programmed under 6(b) as they are to be delivered via LEADER. Further detail in relation to the Food measures to be delivered via LEADER is provided in Chapter 8.

Other specific challenges related to the areas under this Focus Area, and the manner in which they are addressed, are as follows.

The SWOT analysis and the Identification of Needs in Ireland’s Rural Development Programme identified that Irish farmers are generally price takers and that there are weaknesses in the bargaining power of producers. There is no existing model of widespread organisation or co-operation in the beef sector and therefore no Producer Organisation in the Beef Sector has formal recognition. As a result there is a need to fund advisors to assist farmers in setting up potential Producer Organisations in the Beef Sector. Beef POs will strengthen the bargaining power of the producers and ensure the viable development of the sector. Measure 02 was selected as the appropriate vehicle to deal with these challenges (rather than Measure 09) as it allows for the support of those providing advice in the set up phase, whereas Measure 09 only provides support directly to organisations that have formal recognition.

In addition, the SWOT analysis identified that continued development in the area of animal welfare is required. In particular a need was identified for targeted actions to increase animal welfare by increasing uptake of technology among sheep farmers. Measure 14 was chosen to address the area of animal welfare as it supports actions that go beyond the compulsory standards of animal welfare by improving the quality of life of the livestock.

Finally, measure 16 (European Innovation Partnerships sub-measures) may include projects that address the areas relevant to this Focus Area.
5.2.3.2. 3B) Supporting farm risk prevention and management

5.2.3.2.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)
- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.3.2.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The main measures aimed at addressing this Focus Area are Measure 2 - Targeted Animal Health and Welfare Advisory measure, Measure 1 - Knowledge Transfer Groups and Measure 4 (TAMS II). While animal welfare is referenced in the overarching priority 3 it is not referenced in a specific Focus Area. However, in designing this RDP, the theme of building on the current animal welfare systems in place and proactively addressing the risk of disease outbreaks emerged clearly from the preparatory analyses. Accordingly, a Targeted Animal Health and Welfare Advisory measure (measure 2) has been included to complement the other elements of knowledge transfer which are integrated across the RDP. This will strategically target a number of core areas where the economic rationale for managing the risk of animal disease is particularly prominent. Such areas include Johne’s disease, BVD, SCC and PRRS. In order to ensure a high quality, tailored response to this issue the measure will incorporate both training of the advisors and a farm specific delivery. The outputs which will enable farmers to better manage the risk of disease outbreak will be encapsulated in an action plan agreed with the advisor with specific, actionable recommendations.

While there was not a clear support / need emerging for a risk management scheme per se, the approach of including financial and risk management issues into knowledge transfer measures did emerge from stakeholder consultations. The Knowledge Transfer Groups (measure 1) will also include a focus on this particular area. Firstly, particular groups will include animal health and welfare issues as a complement to the above advisory measure. In addition, wider elements of risk and financial management and prevention have been incorporated into the outputs and actions to be delivered by certain Knowledge Transfer Groups. This latter element corresponds to a particular need identified in the preparatory analyses.

The Animal Welfare Safety strand of support under TAMS II (measure 4) will also address this focus area through its operation including sheep fencing.
5.2.4. P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

5.2.4.1. 4A) Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes

5.2.4.1.1. Measures for agricultural land

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)
- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)
- M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)
- M11 - Organic farming (art 29)
- M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)
- M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.4.1.2. Measures for forestry land

5.2.4.1.3. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The challenges relating to biodiversity, Natura 2000 areas, ANCs and landscape maintenance were clear themes emerging from stakeholder consultation and the SWOT. Under Measure 10, GLAS will make a clear contribution to this focus areas, including via the categorisation of actions related to particular species, commonages and private Natura sites as priority environmental assets and the provision of support for actions such as wild bird cover, traditional hay meadows, coppicing of hedgerows and bat and bird boxes. The incorporation of core mandatory requirements and the focus on the farmer delivering actions that will provide the most environmental benefit on their farm will ensure the optimum environmental impact.

Mandatory training for all GLAS participants is relevant to this focus area as it will provide an appreciation of the importance and preservation of Natura 2000 sites and important bird and wildlife habitats.

In keeping with the integrated approach to measure design and the significance attached to the environmental issues emerging, a number of other measures have been designed in order to reinforce and complement the benefits to be delivered by GLAS. At a more local level, it is expected that local targeted schemes to be developed as an amendment to the RDP will also make a clear contribution in this area.

ANCs (measure 13) will also make an important contribution to this Focus Area by supporting the continuation of farming in accordance with environmental standards in areas facing particular constraints. This will deliver a range of benefits in areas such as the maintenance of habitats for biodiversity and also the preservation of landscapes and the delivery of associated public good benefits.
The OFS (measure 11) will also make a clear contribution to this focus area. The farming practices it promotes contribute to improving soil & water quality, to mitigation of/ adaptation to climate change and to the improvement of biodiversity.

The GLAS Traditional Farm Buildings (measure 7) will make an important contribution to this focus as the measure seeks to enhance the significant positive contribution that traditional farm buildings make to the Irish rural landscape. Furthermore, restoring these buildings can also improve habitats and biodiversity, particularly for certain protected wildlife species, such as bats and birds. Additional voluntary agri-environment training in the transitional period for all active farmers under measure 1 will also contribute.

5.2.4.2. 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management

5.2.4.2.1. Measures for agricultural land

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)
- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)
- M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)
- M11 - Organic farming (art 29)
- M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)
- M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.4.2.2. Measures for forestry land

5.2.4.2.3. Combination and justification of rural development measures

Issues relating to improved water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management featured in the preparatory analysis for the RDP. Under Measure 10, GLAS will make a clear contribution. Relevant actions include support for riparian margins, high status water areas, protection of water courses, and low emission slurry spreading.

The Organic Farming Scheme (measure 11) will also make a clear contribution to this focus area. The farming practices it promotes contribute to improving soil and water quality, to mitigation of and adaptation
to climate change and to the improvement of the state of biodiversity e.g. by crop rotation, use of organic fertilisers, improvement to soil organic matter and by no use of synthetic plant protection products or synthetic fertilisers. Similar support for investment in physical assets under TAMS II (measure 4) will include investments relevant to this Focus Area, both in the specific organic capital investment, farm nutrient storage strands of support and rainwater harvesting. Fertiliser and pesticide management will be more efficient through support for precision GPS, spraying and yield monitoring equipment under TAMS II.

Support for knowledge transfer (measure 1) and advisory actions (measure 2) is also relevant here, not only via supporting increases in the environmental knowledge base generally in the sector but also specifically via a specific knowledge transfer group in the tillage sector which includes a focus on integrated pest management.

Mandatory training for all GLAS participants and additional voluntary training in the transitional period to be delivered under measure 1 is relevant to this focus area as it will include information on the consequences of agricultural pollution and nutrient management.

Voluntary training will be available in the transitional period for all farmers on biodiversity, climate and environment and health and safety (measure 1). EURI funding under TAMS II (measure 4) will provide a contribution to this focus area as well as Focus Area 4C.

5.2.4.3. 4C) Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management

5.2.4.3.1. Measures for agricultural land

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)
- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)
- M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)
- M11 - Organic farming (art 29)
- M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)
- M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.4.3.2. Measures for forestry land

5.2.4.3.3. Combination and justification of rural development measures

Again, many of the actions included in GLAS in measure 10 will make a key contribution to this Focus Area. These actions include green cover establishment, low input permanent pasture, minimum tillage,
catch crops, riparian margins and the maintenance of traditional hay meadows. The arable actions will be complemented by the low disturbance tillage equipment available under the tillage investments in Measure 4.

The Organic Farming Scheme (measure 11) will also make a clear contribution to this focus area. The farming practices it promotes contribute to improving soil and water quality, to mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change and to the improvement of the state of biodiversity e.g. by crop rotation, use of organic fertilisers, improvement to soil organic matter and by no use of synthetic plant protection products or synthetic fertilisers.

Support for knowledge transfer (measure 1) and advisory services (measure 2) will also make a contribution here by supporting the development of the knowledge base in the sector in general and in relation to environmental issues in particular. Mandatory training for all GLAS participants and additional voluntary training in the transitional period to be delivered under measure 1 is relevant to this focus area.

5.2.5. P5: Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors

5.2.5.1. 5A) Increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture

5.2.5.1.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.5.1.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

This focus area relates to the efficient use of water and more efficient irrigation systems (as indicated by the associated output target). General water efficiency issues remain an issue of national importance in the context of WFD requirements.

The RDP has a number of measures which address water quality issues (including measure 4 TAMS II and measure 10 GLAS) and sustainable water usage has been highlighted as a possible LEADER (measure 19) theme. However, these measures have not specifically been linked to this Focus Area.

Finally, measure 16 (European Innovation Partnerships sub-measures) may include projects that address the areas relevant to this Focus Area.
5.2.5.2. 5B) Increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing

5.2.5.2.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.5.2.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The main measure contributing to this focus area is Measure 4 - TAMS II, which will provide for support for more efficient energy usage. The preparatory analyses highlighted that energy input costs have been rising in the agri-food sector and that certain sectors are particularly energy intensive. For example, the pig and poultry sector has been identified as one such sector and TAMS II includes a strand which will specifically support, inter alia, pig and poultry energy related investments. In addition the use of precision farming equipment and low disturbance tillage equipment by tillage farmers will lead to efficiency gains and reduced use of inputs of energy, labour and machinery in the short and long term and fertiliser, water and pesticides in the medium and long term. Minimum/eco-tillage methods are very underdeveloped in Ireland and in order to address this the promotion of low disturbance tillage equipment under TAMS II complements the Minimum Tillage action available under GLAS, which will contribute to efficiencies in energy use.

A broad theme emerging from stakeholder analyses and the SWOT was the opportunity for expansion which is offered by the abolition of milk quotas in 2015. However, the abolition of quotas themselves will not offer automatic expansion and profitability for Irish farmers. In order to fully realise the potential for growth offered by the abolition of milk quotas, milk farmers must invest and expand in a way that improves the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations. In this regard, the On Farm Capital Investment measure has identified investment in dairy equipment as a priority for investment and elements of this support (e.g. for better storage and cooling equipment) will have positive impacts in terms of the efficiency of energy usage in the sector.

5.2.5.3. 5C) Facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by products, wastes, residues and other non food raw material for the purposes of the bio-economy

5.2.5.3.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)
5.2.5.3.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

Measure 16 (European Innovation Partnerships sub-measures) may include projects that address the areas relevant to this Focus Area.

Beyond Measure 16, it is possible that renewable energy will be an indicative theme for LEADER. While the relevant EU Commission Guidance suggests that all LEADER measures will be programmed under Focus Area 6(b) it is important to note the possible synergy for this Focus Area. While clarity in relation to actual projects to be supported under LEADER will only emerge once local development strategies have been developed, one of the themes arising in the preparatory work undertaken on LEADER to date is the issue of bio and renewable energy. The development of any such support under LEADER will of course take full cognisance of the nationally funded supports already in place to ensure a strategic and complementary approach.

5.2.5.4. 5D) Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture

5.2.5.4.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)
- M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)
- M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)
- M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.5.4.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

There are a number of measures in the RDP which will have a positive effect on emissions, including Measure 10 – GLAS and the Beef Data and Genomics Programme, Measure 4 - TAMS II, Measure 1- Knowledge Transfer Groups and Measure 2 CPD for advisors.

One of the major themes emerging from the SWOT analysis etc was the need to balance the development of the Irish agri-food sector with the possible consequent climate change effects and Ireland’s targets in relation to same. Accordingly, the issue of climate change and emissions has been prioritised in the design of the RDP.

GLAS (measure 10) includes actions targeted at emissions levels (such as support for low emissions slurry spreading and minimum tillage) and sequestration actions, and these actions are complemented by support under TAMS II (measure 4) for low emission spreading equipment, minimum tillage and precision farming equipment.

The Beef Data and Genomics Programme (measure 10) has also been designed with a core focus on lowering emissions via support for increases in herd quality and efficiency.
While the above measures clearly link to emissions benefits, it is also important that there is an appropriate knowledge base in the sector in relation to climate change issues if they are to be addressed in the most efficient manner. Accordingly, the Knowledge Transfer Groups (measure 1) and Beef Data and Genomics Programme will include a significant roll out of the Carbon Navigator model on a nationwide basis. Specific training in relation to the BDGP scheme and focussed training on the carbon navigator will be delivered under measure 1. Finally, CPD for advisors (measure 2) will ensure that best practice on climate change issues is disseminated across the sector.

It is also likely that, as the priority areas for EIP Operational Groups (measure 16) emerge, climate change or emissions issues may be one area where support is focused. Given the bottom up nature of support under this measure, however it is not possible to guarantee at this stage.

The Straw Incorporation Measure (measure 10) will support tillage farmers in incorporating chopped straw into their soils. This action is clearly aligned to this focus area and focus area 5E as it is designed to deliver sequestration and GHG emission benefits while improving the soil organic carbon and biological activity.

5.2.5.5. 5E) Fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry

5.2.5.5.1. Choice of rural development measures

- M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)
- M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

5.2.5.5.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The Measures contributing to this Focus Area are Measure 10 – GLAS and Measure 16 – European Innovation Partnerships.

The SWOT analysis identified potential opportunities for positive action in this area.

Building on this and the feedback received from stakeholder consultation, a number of actions have been built into the design of GLAS under Measure 10 in order to underpin carbon conservation and sequestration. These include support for enhancement of margins, planting a grove of native trees, and plating, laying and coppicing hedgerows, as well as positive linking to the nationally-funded afforestation programme.

The reintroduction of support for the GLAS Traditional Farm Buildings Scheme (measure 7) will also make an indirect contribution towards carbon conservation through encouraging the restoration and reuse of older buildings in place of new builds. However, it has not been programmed under this focus area.

Finally, measure 16 (European Innovation Partnerships sub-measures) may include projects that address the areas relevant to this Focus Area.
5.2.6. P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas

5.2.6.1. 6A) Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation

5.2.6.1.1. Choice of rural development measures

5.2.6.1.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

The EU Commission guidance suggests that all LEADER actions should be programmed under priority 6(b). Actions under this Focus Area will be incorporated into the development of local development strategies under LEADER.

While the RDP will not pre-empt the content of Local Development Strategies, some of the emerging indicative themes for LEADER are relevant to this Focus Area – for example Rural Economic Development / Enterprise Development / Job Creation incorporating rural tourism and enterprise development.

5.2.6.2. 6B) Fostering local development in rural areas

5.2.6.2.1. Choice of rural development measures


5.2.6.2.2. Combination and justification of rural development measures

As per the relevant EU Commission Guidance, LEADER measures will be programmed under this Focus Area.

The LEADER measure (measure 19) will be programmed to support the unique characteristics of the LEADER methodology where individual operations shall be eligible if they contribute to achieving the aims and objectives of the Local Development Strategy and correspond to the objectives and priorities indicated for support under LEADER in the Partnership Agreement and the RDP.

The SWOT and needs analyses have identified a number of strong themes that may be addressed through RDP interventions, including Rural Economic Development / Enterprise Development / Job Creation incorporating rural tourism, enterprise development, broadband training and rural towns;

Social inclusion through building community capacity, training and animation; and Rural environment.

There is also potential for LEADER to contribute to the objectives of the RDP across other Priorities and
Focus Areas in a way that is complementary to other Measures and that draws on clearly identified local needs.

EURI funding will be allocated to LEADER. It will be programmed under Measure 19.2 and Measure 19.4.

EURI funding will provide local communities and enterprises with an opportunity to respond to the emerging challenges, through rural development grant aid, to support measures that encourage employment and job creation while also providing resources for communities and community groups to respond, recover and adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, and also for preparatory work for the next CAP in line with Regulation (EU 2020/2220 Transitional Regulation.

In line with the Community-led local development model (CLLD), the funding will support **locally-led projects**, with the decision on awarding aid under the LEADER Programme resting with the Local Action Group (LAG).

Decisions on funding projects will be made in line with the approved LAG Local Development Strategies, which while they differ across the LAG areas, the funding will be provided for the following areas; (which is not exhaustive) including supports to business, community projects including social inclusion, new innovative projects in climate and environmental protection, green, bio and circular economy, broadband and digital economy including skills and remote working facilities and Smart Villages.

5.2.6.3. **6C) Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas**

5.2.6.3.1. **Choice of rural development measures**

5.2.6.3.2. **Combination and justification of rural development measures**

The EU Commission guidance suggests that all LEADER actions should be programmed under priority 6(b). Actions under this Focus Area will be incorporated into the development of local development strategies under LEADER.

While the RDP will not pre-empt the content of Local Development Strategies, some of the emerging indicative themes for LEADER are relevant to this Focus Area. In particular, potential support for training in ICT / broadband is relevant here.
5.3. A description of how the cross-cutting objectives will be addressed, including the specific requirements in Article 8(1)(c)(v) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

The Rural Development Regulation sets out that all the Rural Development Priorities shall contribute to the cross-cutting objectives of innovation, environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Accordingly, these three cross-cutting themes were at the forefront of the design process for this RDP.

**Innovation**

Strengthening Research, Technological Development and Innovation is one of the Thematic Objectives flowing from the Europe 2020 process. The theme of supporting and fostering innovation was also one which emerged strongly from the stakeholder consultation process and the development of the SWOT and Needs analyses. It is clear that the promotion of innovation is seen as a vital element in addressing the challenges and opportunities evident in rural Ireland, and this is reflected in the prominent position accorded to the issue of innovation in the measures outlined in this RDP.

A vital element in supporting innovative practices is ensuring that the appropriate knowledge base is in place. Support for an enhanced knowledge base is a central theme running through the design of the measures in this RDP. For example, the support provided for Knowledge Transfer Groups will enable large numbers of farmers to update their knowledge base and skills profile which will in turn enable them to take on new and innovative practices.

The establishment and support of European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups is a further important support in this regard. By their very nature, these EIP operational groups will act as a catalyst for change in helping to bring grassroots innovative ideas to implementation using an interactive and bottom up approach. EIP operational groups will establish linkages between cutting edge research and technology and mobilise stakeholders to develop innovative solutions aimed at enhancing productivity, efficiency and effectiveness. The operational groups will also be required to disseminate their findings, thus ensuring that innovative approaches become more widely accessible and available.

The Beef Data and Genomics Programme is also fundamentally rooted in encouraging innovative practice. The support for genetic advances and genomics will underpin innovative practice which will deliver significant climate change gains in a strategically important sector of the Irish agri-food sector.

In addition to the above elements where the primary focus of the measure includes innovation, support for innovation is also integrated in to the design of measure design in a range of areas, including:

- The provision of targeted advisory services on animal health issues will encourage new approaches to these vital issues by farmers.
- The inclusion of training for farmers and the mandatory use of an approved planner in GLAS will ensure that best and innovative practice is embedded across the implementation of the measure.
- The provision of continuing professional development for approved planners will ensure that the most up to date knowledge and advice is central to RDP implementation in key policy areas identified.
- Support for collaborative farming will help to encourage the pooling of knowledge and skills sets thus encouraging innovative approaches.
- Support for young farmers will help more young farmers enter the sector and establish themselves. Young farmers tend to be more open to taking on new and innovative approaches.
- Support for locally targeted approaches to particular environment problems will encourage the
development of innovative solutions based on particular local conditions (to be developed as an amendment to the RDP).

- TAMS II will provide direct support for farmers to invest in innovative practices in areas such as low emission spreading, slurry storage, minimum tillage and the sowing of catch crops encouraged by complementary actions in GLAS.
- LEADER measures will include support for innovative actions, and innovative approaches have been a cornerstone of the LEADER approach in previous programming periods.

**Environment**

Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency is one of the Thematic Objectives flowing from the Europe 2020 process. Again, the importance of ensuring that developments in the sector take real and prioritised cognisance of the environmental consequences of particular actions and of the environmental challenges facing Ireland was a central theme emerging from the stakeholder consultation process and the development of the SWOT and Needs analyses.

Thus, the environment cross-cutting objective was also a central consideration at all stages of the RDP design process and this is clearly reflected in the design of the measures selected for investment.

The RDP includes a number of measures that can be grouped thematically together as primarily addressing this cross cutting objective. Firstly, GLAS is obviously focused on the provision of clear environmental benefits across a wide range of areas. Drawing on the experience of support for agri-environment schemes in the previous RDP period, a number of design features have been put in place to ensure that the environmental benefits accruing from this support are maximised. These design features include

- a tiered structure allowing for general environmental needs to be addressed at one level while more targeted needs can also be addressed
- the introduction of mandatory requirements in relation to record keeping, the involvement of a planner, the use of a nutrient management plan and knowledge transfer
- a new focus on requiring farmers to undertake the actions of most benefit to their holding, and
- a recognition of the constraints on farmers in Natura 2000 areas and the importance of addressing particular habitat and biodiversity threats.

As a complement to the national level GLAS scheme, targeted and locally led output based environmental projects will also be supported. This support is provided in the context of establishing a strong sustainable base for Irish agriculture, which not just respects the environment but shows itself capable of responding effectively and appropriately to a range of environmental challenges. This support also recognises the fact that not all environmental challenges are best addressed at the national level, and this measure thus complements the approach under GLAS as part as an integrated and mutually supportive set of measures which contribute to the environment cross-cutting objective.

The Organic Farming scheme also clearly contributes to this cross-cutting theme by its very nature. Support aimed at encouraging new entrants to the sector and at maintaining those within the sector will directly lead to increased levels of farming practices that contribute to environmental benefits in areas such as soil and water quality, biodiversity challenges, and reduced levels of synthetic chemicals.

While the above three measures can be seen to be primarily aimed at environmental issues, a characteristic
of measure design has been to also incorporate this cross cutting theme across the RDP. This is reflective of the aim of developing a RDP design with integrated and mutually reinforcing measures. Thus, further positive contributions to environmental issues are evident across the range of measures. For example,

- Support for knowledge transfer outside of the mandatory training in GLAS will ensure that best practice in relation to environmental issues is clearly set out both for farmers in knowledge transfer groups and advisors undertaking continuing professional development.

- There is potential for the outcomes of EIP operational groups to feed into best environmental practice and to identify new solutions to environmental problems.

- Support under the Areas of Natural Constraint measure will provide valuable support to farmers facing increased costs and lower incomes and thus contribute to their continued farming of land in compliance with the requirements to keep the land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition.

- On farm capital support will have positive environmental impacts by supporting more efficient holdings in general as well as specifically supporting investment in areas specifically aimed at providing environmental benefits, such as slurry storage, tillage and rainwater harvesting.

- The Beef Data and Genomics Programme will support a more efficient, and thus more environmentally friendly, sector, while support for collaborative measures will also encourage efficiencies which will have positive environmental effects.

- The design process for LEADER measures identified environmental issues, including the protection and sustainable use of water resources and the protection and improvement of local biodiversity as key themes emerging for funding under the RDP. While not pre-empting the LDS process, it is anticipated that a rural environment theme will feature in the LDS design process, and the design of support in this regard will include cross cutting linkages to collective actions in other agri-environment and climate supports.

**Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation**

Promoting climate change adaptation, risk management and prevention is one of the Thematic Objectives flowing from the Europe 2020 process. Again, the importance of ensuring that developments in the sector focus on the climate change impacts of particular actions and of the linked challenges facing Ireland was a central theme emerging from the stakeholder consultation process and the development of the SWOT and Needs analyses.

In recognition of this, consideration of climate change mitigation and adaptation has been integrated into the measure design process across the RDP. As with the environmental cross –cutting theme, this is most obvious in the makeup of the suite of agri-environment and climate measures. GLAS contains a number of actions which are designed to provide climate change benefits, including support for low emission slurry spreading, minimum tillage, tree planting, new hedgerows, the protection of riverbanks from erosion, and the preservation of margins and habitats. This theme is then reinforced in other measures of the RDP. For example, support under TAMS II for investing in trailing shoe technology clearly reinforces the policy direction of the relevant measures in GLAS.

The knowledge transfer measures also play a key role in this area. Continuing Professional Development for Advisors and Knowledge Transfer groups will work to ensure that the best and most up to date advice in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation is available to farmers and advisors. In addition, the
Measure 1 - Knowledge Transfer Groups and Measure 10 - Beef Data and Genomics Programme have incorporated a large scale roll out of the carbon navigator into the measure design. The Carbon Navigator will enable farmers to understand how their farms produce greenhouse gases, put in place procedures to identify their mitigation capacity, and set targets to reduce their emissions.

EIP operational groups offer the potential for particular climate change issues to be addressed, while the targeted advisory service on animal health issues also has an established link to climate change issues. For example, the greenhouse gas savings arising as a result of eradicating BVD are estimated to be in the order of €26m per year, while control of Johne’s disease and dairy cow mastitis (SCC reduction) would also be expected to contribute positively to greenhouse gas abatement.

The Beef Data and Genomics Programme will also provide clear climate change benefits. Some of the main benefits that will accrue on farms supported by this measure have been identified in research by Teagasc (the Irish Agriculture & Food Development Authority) as the three most cost-efficient climate change mitigation measures. These beneficial outputs of the measure are:

- Support for the establishment of an Economic Breeding Index which allows farmers to identify quality issues at birth and select the highest quality animals
- Extended grazing periods. The measure will also underpin the selection of higher quality animals that will be suited to Ireland’s grass based system.

The measure design process has identified renewable energy as a theme emerging for investment under LEADER and support for this type of intervention at sub-regional level will be encouraged as part of the local development strategy process.
### 5.4. A summary table of the intervention logic showing the priorities and focus areas selected for the RDP, the quantified targets, and the combination of measures to be used to achieve them, including the planned expenditure (table automatically generated from the information provided in sections 5.2 and 11)

#### Priority 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
<th>Planned expenditure</th>
<th>Combination of measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>T1: percentage of expenditure under Articles 14, 15 and 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 in relation to the total expenditure for the RDP (focus area 1A)</td>
<td>3.82%</td>
<td></td>
<td>M01, M02, M16</td>
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<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>T2: Total number of cooperation operations supported under the cooperation measure (Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013) (groups, networks/clusters, pilot projects...) (focus area 1B)</td>
<td>1,760.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>M16</td>
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<tr>
<td>1C</td>
<td>T3: Total number of participants trained under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (focus area 1C)</td>
<td>211,600.00</td>
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<td>M01</td>
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#### Priority 2

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<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
<th>Planned expenditure</th>
<th>Combination of measures</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>T4: percentage of agricultural holdings with RDP support for investments in restructuring or modernisation (focus area 2A)</td>
<td>10.01%</td>
<td>155,919,649.00</td>
<td>M01, M02, M04, M16</td>
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<tr>
<td>2B</td>
<td>T5: percentage of agricultural holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investments for young farmers (focus area 2B)</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
<td>265,503,179.00</td>
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#### Priority 3

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<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
<th>Planned expenditure</th>
<th>Combination of measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>T6: percentage of agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets and short supply circuits, and producer groups/organisations (focus area 3A)</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>107,807,694.00</td>
<td>M02, M14, M16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of agricultural holdings supported under the animal welfare measure (Farms)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B</td>
<td>Number of Participants in Knowledge Transfer Groups (focus area 3B) (Persons)</td>
<td>26,600.00</td>
<td>39,870,433.00</td>
<td>M01, M02, M04, M16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Priority 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
<th>Planned expenditure</th>
<th>Combination of measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4A (agri)</td>
<td>T9: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts supporting biodiversity and/or landscapes (focus area 4A)</td>
<td>21.99%</td>
<td>4,037,949,190.00</td>
<td>M01, M02, M04, M07, M10, M11, M12, M13, M16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B (agri)</td>
<td>T10: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management (focus area 4B)</td>
<td>22.07%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Priority 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
<th>Planned expenditure</th>
<th>Combination of measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5A</td>
<td>Number of Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects Operational Groups (Groups)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>M16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5B</td>
<td>T15: Total investment for energy efficiency (€) (focus area 5B)</td>
<td>104,000,000.00</td>
<td>41,600,000.00</td>
<td>M04, M16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T16: Total investment in renewable energy production (€) (focus area 5C)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C</td>
<td>Number of Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects Operational Groups (Group)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T17: percentage of LU concerned by investments in live-stock management in view of reducing GHG and/or ammonia emissions (focus area 5D)</td>
<td>3.83%</td>
<td>460,970,264.00</td>
<td>M01, M02, M04, M10, M16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5D</td>
<td>T18: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts targeting reduction of GHG and/or ammonia emissions (focus area 5D)</td>
<td>11.19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5E</td>
<td>T19: percentage of agricultural and forest land under management contracts contributing to carbon sequestration and conservation (focus area 5E)</td>
<td>0.66%</td>
<td>88,120,120.00</td>
<td>M10, M16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Priority 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
<th>Planned expenditure</th>
<th>Combination of measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6B</td>
<td>T21: percentage of rural population covered by local development strategies (focus area 6B)</td>
<td>82.02%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T22: percentage of rural population benefiting from improved services/infrastructures (focus area 6B)</td>
<td></td>
<td>320,000,000.00</td>
<td>M19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T23: Jobs created in supported projects (Leader) (focus area 6B)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5. A description of the advisory capacity to ensure adequate advice and support for the regulatory requirements and for actions related to innovation to demonstrate the measures taken as required in Article 8(1)(c)(vi) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

This section sets out the type of actions envisaged during the RDP programming period to ensure availability and sufficient advisory capacity on a) the regulatory requirements and b) actions relating to innovation.

**Regulatory Requirements**

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine encompasses the Managing Authority for the EAFRD, and within the Department the Rural Development Division assumes the primary responsibility for overseeing effective implementation of the regulatory requirements set out in the Rural Development Regulation and other relevant EU legislation. In order to ensure that the Managing Authority remains up to date in relation to these regulations, it will continue to attend relevant meetings and implementation information events as they arise at EU level. The Managing Authority will then also act as the conduit for the relevant information to be circulated from the EU to the relevant implementing divisions within the Department.

The Managing Authority will also be the conduit for any queries in relation to the regulatory requirement which require clarification with the EU Commission. In this way, a clear channel of communication will be maintained which will help to ensure that the integrity of the flow of information in relation to regulatory requirements is maintained. As part of this role, it is also intended that the Managing Authority will organise information seminars for implementing divisions as the RDP measures are rolled out. These seminars will ensure that key staff are aware of the regulatory and reporting requirements attached to RDP funding.

As part of the design process for the RDP, a coordinating committee was established. This committee was chaired by the Managing Authority and drew together all the line divisions involved in RDP design. This committee will remain in place to support the implementation phase of the new RDP, and this will act as a further channel to ensure consistency of information in relation to regulatory requirements.

Given that the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency for the EAFRD both are situated within the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, there is a clear opportunity to ensure that they share a common understanding in relation to the regulatory requirements arising out of the EAFRD. The Managing Authority and Paying Agency are as a matter of course in ongoing contact, and have put in place a standing meeting between the two at regular intervals to ensure that there is a shared clarity in relation to regulatory requirements.

In relation to LEADER elements of the RDP, the Department of the Environment, Community and Local
Government is a delegated Paying Agency. In order to maintain the consistency of information flow, the Managing Authority will also act as the conduit for any information relating to regulatory requirements as they apply to LEADER measures. Regular standing meetings are also in place with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government to ensure a shared understanding of regulatory requirements. As part of the roll out of RDP measures, a central communications plan will be developed which will include information in relation to core regulatory requirements for beneficiaries. As a matter of course during the previous programming periods, implementing divisions undertook a range of actions to ensure that there was clarity of information for beneficiaries in relation to the regulatory requirements attached to EAFRD funding. These actions included the provision of clear but detailed terms and conditions for beneficiaries (via the Department’s local office network, standard post, and online), the regular briefing of agricultural advisors to ensure the provision of accurate regulatory information to their clients, the organisation of road shows to coincide with measure launches and to provide an opportunity for one on one interaction with beneficiaries in relation to regulatory requirements, and the provision of specific regulatory information at specified times via the farming press. It is intended that these actions will continue to be delivered in the 2014-2020 period as the need arises.

In summation, a range of activities are either planned or are already underway which are relevant to ensuring a sufficient advisory capacity on regulatory requirements, including

- Planned internal DAFM seminars in relation to the role of the Managing Authority and Paying Agency, and the duties and responsibilities of divisions dealing with EU funding.
- Follow up support from the Managing Authority for all line divisions in relation to monitoring and evaluation and data requirements
- Provision of internal information portal for line divisions where guidance documents and fiches and relevant EU regulations are available.
- Provision of financial management guidance material for line divisions
- Circulation of relevant information by the Managing Authority and Paying Agency from relevant EU meetings etc
- Provision of information to beneficiaries is already underway via RDP presence at Ploughing Championships in September 2014, the publication of a booklet on draft measures, and the series of information seminars for commonage farmers held by DAFM.
- Launch of measures will be accompanied by appropriate press material and provision of information for relevant actors and beneficiaries.

One of the key focuses of this RDP is the need to promote more environmentally sustainable practices. This in turn creates a need for sufficient advisory capacity and other support mechanisms to be in place in relation to environmental, biodiversity and climate change issues. These supports will play a key role in ensuring the effective implementation of RDP measures. In this regard, the following arrangements are of particular relevance:

- There is a cohort of professional agricultural advisors in the sector. At the time of writing, there were some 570 Farm Advisory Service (FAS) registered advisors, with this number expected to rise to 850 on foot of upcoming training. There is also a cohort of advisors with NFQ Level 8 qualifications but who are not FAS registered. This advisory service is provided both via Teagasc and private sector providers. These advisors provide advice on a range of issues for farmers, including on environmental, biodiversity and climate change issues.
- In recognition of the role that these advisors play, DAFM has rolled out extensive training for advisors with a particular focus on the new CAP requirements. This has included GLAS specific
training on commonages, all aspects of cross compliance, and issues associated with Greening.

- As part of the RDP design process, DAFM has engaged in ongoing consultations with agricultural advisors (Teagasc and the private sector professional representative bodies).
- This approach has been complemented by the provision of Continued Professional Development (CPD) for advisors under Measure 2 of this RDP. The CPD will ensure that the advisors’ role in supporting RDP implementation is strengthened by their continued up skilling. This will incorporate up skilling in relation to environmental issues.
- Finally, in planning the roll out of the new CAP, care has been taken to schedule the launch of measures to ensure that the overlap between measures where advisory capacity is required is minimised.

Building on the advisory services available to farmers, there are also a number of other supports in place by way of professional services which will help to underpin the successful implementation of the RDP. For example:

- The provision for Knowledge Transfer Groups under Measure 1 of this RDP will also feed into the successful realisation of the environmental aims of the RDP. The provision of one to one time for the farmer with the knowledge provider in preparing Farm Improvement Plans (FIP) will allow the development of key tools such as a carbon navigator/sustainability plan while also allowing a farmer’s FIP to be specifically tailored to the specific environmental issues which apply on his/her farm.
- All applications for GLAS must be prepared by a trained GLAS advisor, while some of the actions for which aid is available under that measure require further specific input by trained professionals in the preparation of sustainable management plans for Natura land and for Commonages. Further targeted training will be delivered to GLAS participants, including demonstration trips, and it will be mandatory for all GLAS participants to attend these.
- Similarly, mandatory training will be in place for participants in Measure 10 (Beef Data and Genomics) to ensure that the necessary knowledge base is in place to ensure delivery of the environmental benefits being targeted in this Measure.
- While the work plan for the National Rural Network is currently being designed, it is envisaged that it will also have a role to play here via the establishment of specific sub networks to support, for example, organic farmers.

Innovation

As set out in this document, knowledge transfer and innovation are themes which are integrated throughout the RDP. In order to ensure a coordinated approach to this issue, a knowledge transfer and innovation unit has been set up within the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. This unit will oversee the delivery of the specific knowledge transfer measures (i.e. Knowledge Transfer Groups, EIP operational groups and Continued Professional Development for Advisors). The unit will also serve to ensure that the theme of innovation is implemented in a strategic and consistent manner across RDP measures. For example, the unit’s role will include ensuring that the innovation element of EIP operational groups or Knowledge Transfer groups is linked to the development of measures such as GLAS.

As part of the preparatory work for the RDP, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
undertook an informal review of the National Rural Network function as it operated across Member States in the previous RDP period. The objective of this review was to examine key lessons that could be taken from the previous RDP period and to identify elements of best practice that could be usefully incorporated into the National Network Function for the 2014-2020 RDP period in Ireland. Arising from this process, it is intended to include a function for the new National Rural Network in relation to providing a supporting network for innovation measures. This may link in particular to the dissemination of outcomes from measures such as the EIP operational groups, but it is expected that a wider innovation role will be incorporated.

One of the characteristics of the LEADER element of the RDP is that the interventions funded through LEADER are often inherently innovative. Their innovation lies in the way they address the challenges presented in a local context as many ideas that are presented as innovative locally are very specific to the challenge that they address. Innovation is a natural element of the LEADER methodology and it is envisaged that the flexibility presented in the LEADER programme for the 2014-2020 as well as the integrated way in which LEADER interventions will become part of sub-regional planning will facilitate more innovative approaches to challenges in rural communities.

Innovation will continue to be a dominant theme during the Transitional Period. The support of existing measures using innovative and collaborative mechanisms will continue.
6. ASSESSMENT OF THE EX-ANTE CONDITIONALITIES

6.1. Additional information

Not applicable. As referenced in the table above.
6.2. Ex-ante conditionalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicable ex-ante conditionality at national level</th>
<th>Applicable ex-ante conditionality fulfilled: Yes/No/Partially</th>
<th>Assessment of its fulfilment</th>
<th>Priorities/Focus Areas</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P4.1) Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC): standards for good agricultural and environmental condition of land referred to in Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 are established at national level</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
<td>M10, M11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4.2) Minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products: minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products referred to in Article 28 of Chapter I of Title III of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 are defined at national level</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
<td>M11, M10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4.3) Other relevant national standards: relevant mandatory national standards are defined for the purpose of Article 28 of Chapter I of Title III of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled</td>
<td></td>
<td>M10, M11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5.1) Energy efficiency: actions have been carried out to promote cost effective improvements of energy end use efficiency and cost effective investment in energy efficiency when constructing or renovating buildings.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1) Anti-Discrimination: the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union anti discrimination law and policy in the field of ESI Funds.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2) Gender Equality: the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union gender equality law and policy in the field of ESI Funds.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3) Disability: the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) in the field of ESI Funds in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G4) Public Procurement: the existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union public procurement law in the field of the ESI Funds.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td>P4, 6B, 5D, 3B, 2A</td>
<td>M16, M19, M02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G5) State Aid: the existence of arrangements for the effective</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td>6B</td>
<td>M19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of Union State aid rules in the field of the ESI Funds.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6) Environmental legislation relating to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): the existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union environmental legislation related to EIA and SEA.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td>P4, 5A, 5B, 5E, 5D, 5C, M10, M13, M11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7) Statistical systems and result indicators: the existence of a statistical basis necessary to undertake evaluations to assess the effectiveness and impact of the programmes. The existence of a system of result indicators necessary to select actions, which most effectively contribute to desired results, to monitor progress towards results and to undertake impact evaluation.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
<td>P4, 5C, 6B, 3B, 1A, 5B, 5E, 5D, 1B, 2B, 1C, 2A, 5A, M10, M01, M11, M19, M02, M04, M13, M16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicable ex-ante conditionality at national level</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Criteria fulfilled (Yes/No)</td>
<td>Reference (if fulfilled) [reference to the strategies, legal acts or other relevant documents]</td>
<td>Assessment of its fulfilment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Energy efficiency: actions have been carried out to promote cost effective improvements of energy end use efficiency and cost effective investment in energy efficiency when constructing or renovating buildings.

P5.1.a) Measures to ensure minimum requirements are in place related to the energy performance of buildings consistent with Articles 3, 4 and 5 of Directive 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and the Council.

Yes

This conditionality has been fulfilled. The Energy Efficiency Directive was transposed in 2014, in Statutory Instrument 131/2014. [1]High-level goals are set out in the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan.[2]

Ireland has had a national energy efficiency target in place since 2009 - 20% energy savings by 2020, and 33% reduction in public sector energy use. Also, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, on behalf of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources, has developed a National Energy Services Framework to help develop the energy efficiency market in the non-domestic sector, including through energy performance contracting.


P5.1.b) Measures necessary to establish a system of certification of the energy performance of buildings consistent with Article 11 of Directive 2010/31/EU.

Yes


Ireland has had a national energy efficiency target in place since 2009 - 20% energy savings by 2020, and 33% reduction in public sector energy use. Also, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, on behalf of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources, has developed a National Energy Services Framework to help develop the energy efficiency market in the non-domestic sector, including through energy performance contracting.


Yes

This conditionality has been fulfilled. The Energy Efficiency Directive was transposed in 2014, in Statutory Instrument 131/2014. [1]High-level goals are set out in the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan.[2]

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P5.1.d) Measures consistent with Article 13 of Directive 2006/32/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on energy end use efficiency and energy services to ensure the provision to final customers of individual meters in so far as it is technically possible, financially.

Yes

This conditionality has been fulfilled. The Energy Efficiency Directive was transposed in 2014, in Statutory Instrument 131/2014. [1]High-level goals are set out in the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan.[2]

Ireland has had a national energy efficiency target in place since 2009 - 20% energy savings by 2020, and 33% reduction in public sector energy use. Also, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, on behalf of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources, has developed a National Energy Services Framework to help develop the energy efficiency market in the non-domestic sector, including through energy performance contracting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G1) Anti-Discrimination: the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union anti-discrimination law and policy in the field of ESI Funds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable and proportionate in relation to the potential energy savings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1.a) Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the involvement of bodies responsible for the promotion of equal treatment of all persons throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including the provision of advice on equality in ESI fund related activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAFM has invited input from the bodies responsible for the promotion of equal treatment of all persons, both as part of the extensive consultation process and through membership of the successive RDP Monitoring Committees. There is also a Disability Liaison officer within DAFM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G1.b) Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of Union anti-discrimination law and policy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAFM conducted an extensive training programme on Equality and Diversity which covered Anti-discrimination and Gender Equality. This training is also part of induction course for newly recruited staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G2) Gender Equality: the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union gender equality law and policy in the field of ESI Funds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAFM has invited input from the bodies responsible for the promotion of equal treatment of all persons, both as part of the extensive consultation process and through membership of the successive RDP Monitoring Committees. There is also a Disability Liaison officer within DAFM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G2.a) Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the involvement of bodies responsible for gender equality throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including the provision of advice on gender equality in ESI Fund related activities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAFM conducted an extensive training programme on Equality and Diversity which covered Anti-discrimination and Gender Equality. This training is also part of induction course for newly recruited staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G2.b) Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of Union gender equality law and policy as well as on gender mainstreaming.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAFM conducted an extensive training programme on Equality and Diversity which covered Anti-discrimination and Gender Equality. This training is also part of induction course for newly recruited staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>DAFM has invited input from the bodies responsible for the promotion of equal treatment of all persons, both as part of the extensive consultation process and through membership of the successive RDP Monitoring Committees. There is also a Disability Liaison officer within DAFM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G3.a) Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the consultation and involvement of bodies in charge of protection of rights of persons with disabilities or representative organisations of persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAFM conducted an extensive training programme on Equality and Diversity which covered Anti-discrimination and Gender Equality. This training is also part of induction course for newly recruited staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G3.b) Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of applicable Union and national disability law and policy, including accessibility and the practical application of the UNCRPD as reflected in Union and national legislation, as appropriate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAFM conducted an extensive training programme on Equality and Diversity which covered Anti-discrimination and Gender Equality. This training is also part of induction course for newly recruited staff. DAFM has also appointed Access Officers in accordance with section 26(2) of the Disability Act 2005. Access Officers are responsible for providing or arranging for, and co-ordinating assistance and guidance, to persons with disabilities accessing services provided by the offices and generally to act as a point of contact for people with disabilities wishing to access such services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This conditionality has been fulfilled.
| G3.c) Arrangements to ensure monitoring of the implementation of Article 9 of the UNCRPD in relation to the ESI Funds throughout the preparation and the implementation of the programmes. | Yes | The National Disability Authority (NDA), as the independent statutory body provides information and advice to the Government on policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities. Their role is to assist the Minister for Justice and Equality in the coordination of disability policy. Their policy advice spans the range of areas covered in the National Disability Strategy and in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including disability services and supports, employment, transport, social welfare, housing, health, the justice system, independent living and social inclusion. DAFM liaises with the NDA as required and the NDA will be invited to participate in the RDP Monitoring Committee. |
| G4.b) Arrangements which ensure transparent contract award procedures. | Yes | Arrangements are in place to ensure that appropriate public procurement rules are applied and that there is adherence to the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination and transparency. Procedures include the appropriate publication of transparent selection and award criteria in any call for tenders and the communication of relevant Treaty principles and procurement rules to staff involved in the implementation of the RDP. |
| G4.c) Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the ESI funds. | Yes | Relevant material to assist line divisions is also available via the DAFM intranet. The CPU also has a role in scrutinising tenders drafted by the purchasing units before they issue, suggesting changes for improved outcomes and ensuring compliance with legal requirements in tender documents. |
| G4.d) Arrangements to ensure administrative capacity for implementation and application of Union public procurement rules. | Yes | It is also relevant that there the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) has recently been established in alignment with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Once the OGP is fully resourced and has fully engaged with all departments/agencies, the sourcing and tendering function will be transferred to the OGP, i.e. the tendering process for services/suppliers under the RDP will at some stage migrate to the OGP. |
| G5) State Aid: the existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union State aid rules. | G5.a) Arrangements for the effective application of Union State aid rules. | Yes | The EU State Aid rules constitute applicable Union law for interventions planned under the RDP. The Rural Development Regulation (Articles 81 and 82) sets out the position in relation to the application of these rules to rural development expenditure by Member States, including in relation to additional national financing during the programming period. |
in the field of the ESI Funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G5.b) Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the ESI funds.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Fulfilled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G5.c) Arrangements to ensure administrative capacity for implementation and application of Union State aid rules.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Fulfilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6.b) Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the EIA and SEA Directives.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Fulfilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6.c) Arrangements to ensure sufficient administrative capacity.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Fulfilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7) Statistical systems and result indicators: the existence of a statistical basis necessary to undertake evaluations to assess the effectiveness and impact of the programmes. The existence of a system of result indicators necessary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Fulfilled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This conditionality has been fulfilled. Arrangements are in place to ensure application and implementation of EU State Aid rules via a well-established notification and approval process.

In DAFM there is a dedicated section within EU Division that provides advice and assistance, based on advice from the Commission and from previous state aid experience, to ensure that schemes operated by DAFM and its agencies comply with applicable State Aid rules. This provision of advice is also facilitated and supported by the DAFM Legal Division. The Irish Authorities are represented on the Advisory Committee on State Aid of the Directorate-General of Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission where the latest developments in State Aid regulations are discussed and all presentations are disseminated to line divisions with responsibility for the operation of the various schemes. The Irish authorities are in ongoing contact with the Commission on any issues that might arise regarding implementation of State Aid rules. The Irish authorities further comply with the provisions of the Agriculture State Aid regulations by completing annual scheme expenditure reports on the State Aid Reporting Interactive system (SARI).

The dedicated section within DAFM ensures that all relevant sections are involved in consultations on the review of the State Aid rules, that legal advice is sought when necessary and that any issue requiring legal clarity or certainty is raised directly with the Commission. Training courses are also provided and relevant staff are kept informed of development by way of office notices and circulars.

DECLG ensures that all entities involved in the delivery of LEADER interventions are fully cognisant of the rules regarding State Aid and this will continue in the 2014-2020 period. The operating rules for LEADER 2007-2013 contain guidance regarding State Aid implications and DECLG will support future LAGs to comply with relevant State Aid requirements through capacity building/training and the provision of comprehensive guidance as part of the operating rules for the 2014-2020 period.

This conditionality has been fulfilled. EIA (Agriculture) regulations (SI 456/2011)[1] provide the basis for the effective application of Union environmental legislation in this area. Under these regulations, DAFM has an EIA Screening and Consent system in place for certain farm restructuring works.


An Inspectors’ Procedures Manual has been produced, and DAFM inspectors - who have been authorised by Ministerial Order - have received appropriate training, which is ongoing, as required. Administrative staff who are administering the system in DAFM have also received training.

In addition to the training for inspectors, DAFM implements the Government’s Workforce Planning Initiative in order to forecast resource demands in the context of current and emerging business demands.

This conditionality is fulfilled through the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System. The requirements for statistical reporting and evaluation have been integrated into the measure design process.
to select actions, which most effectively contribute to desired results, to monitor progress towards results and to undertake impact evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G7.b) Arrangements for timely collection and aggregation of statistical data with the following elements are in place: arrangements for publication and public availability of aggregated data</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>This conditionality is fulfilled through the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System. The requirements for statistical reporting and evaluation have been integrated into the measure design process. The evaluation systems will also be kept under review and managed by the RDP Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Group within DAFM (as referenced in Section 9). This conditionality has been fulfilled.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G7.c) An effective system of result indicators including: the selection of result indicators for each programme providing information on what motivates the selection of policy actions financed by the programme</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>This conditionality is fulfilled through the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System. The requirements for statistical reporting and evaluation have been integrated into the measure design process. The evaluation systems will also be kept under review and managed by the RDP Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Group within DAFM. This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7.d) An effective system of result indicators including: the establishment of targets for these indicators</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>This conditionality is fulfilled through the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System. The requirements for statistical reporting and evaluation have been integrated into the measure design process. The evaluation systems will also be kept under review and managed by the RDP Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Group within DAFM. This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7.e) An effective system of result indicators including: the consistency of each indicator with the following requisites: robustness and statistical validation, clarity of normative interpretation, responsiveness to policy, timely collection of data</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>This conditionality is fulfilled through the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System. The requirements for statistical reporting and evaluation have been integrated into the measure design process. The evaluation systems will also be kept under review and managed by the Evaluation sub-committee within DAFM. This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7.f) Procedures in place to ensure that all operations financed by the programme adopt an effective system of indicators</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>This conditionality is fulfilled through the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System. The requirements for statistical reporting and evaluation have been integrated into the measure design process. The evaluation systems will also be kept under review and managed by the Evaluation sub-committee within DAFM. This conditionality has been fulfilled.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.1. List of actions to be taken for general ex-ante conditionalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicable ex-ante conditionality at national level</th>
<th>Criteria Not Fulfilled</th>
<th>Action to be taken</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Bodies responsible for fulfillment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6.2.2. List of actions to be taken for priority linked ex-ante conditionalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicable ex-ante conditionality at national level</th>
<th>Criteria Not Fulfilled</th>
<th>Action to be taken</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Bodies responsible for fulfillment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


7. **DESCRIPTION OF THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK**

7.1. Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Applicable</th>
<th>Indicator and measurement unit, where appropriate</th>
<th>Target 2025 (a)</th>
<th>Adjustment top ups (b)</th>
<th>Adjustment EURI (C)</th>
<th>Target absolute value (A-B-C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P2: Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Number of agricultural holdings with RDP support for investment in restructuring or modernisation (focus area 2A) + holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investment for young farmers (focus area 2B)</td>
<td>21,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Total Public Expenditure P2 (EUR)</td>
<td>421,422,828.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>421,422,828.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Total Public Expenditure P3 (EUR)</td>
<td>147,678,127.00</td>
<td>50,000,000.00</td>
<td>6,813,481.00</td>
<td>90,864,646.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Number of supported agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets/short supply circuits, and producer groups (focus area 3A)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Area</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Total Public Expenditure P4 (EUR)</td>
<td>4,037,949,190.00</td>
<td>174,170,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agricultural land under management contracts contributing to biodiversity (ha)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,428,019.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(focus area 4A) + improving water management (ha) (focus area 4B) + improving soil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>management and/preventing soil erosion (ha) (focus area 4C)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5: Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Total Public Expenditure P5 (EUR)</td>
<td>590,690,384.00</td>
<td>68,220,138.00</td>
<td>522,470,246.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agricultural and forest land under management to foster carbon sequestration/conservation (ha) (focus area 5E) + Agricultural land under management contracts targeting reduction of GHG and/or ammonia emissions (ha) (focus area 5D) + Irrigated land</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>596,875.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas</td>
<td>switching to more efficient irrigation system (ha) (focus area 5A)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Number of investment operations in energy savings and efficiency (focus area 5B) + in renewable energy production (focus area 5C)</td>
<td>900.00</td>
<td>400.00</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Total Public Expenditure P6 (EUR)</td>
<td>320,000,000.00</td>
<td>20,000,000.00</td>
<td>300,000,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Number of operations supported to improve basic services and infrastructures in rural areas (focus areas 6B and 6C)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Population covered by LAG (focus area 6B)</td>
<td>3,082,317.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,082,317.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.1.1. P2: Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests

7.1.1.1. Number of agricultural holdings with RDP support for investment in restructuring or modernisation (focus area 2A) + holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investment for young farmers (focus area 2B)

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 21,000.00
Adjustment top ups (b): 
Adjustment EURI (C): 0.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 21,000.00

7.1.1.2. Total Public Expenditure P2 (EUR)

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 421,422,828.00
Adjustment top ups (b): 
Adjustment EURI (C): 0.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 421,422,828.00

7.1.2. P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture

7.1.2.1. Total Public Expenditure P3 (EUR)

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 147,678,127.00
Adjustment top ups (b): 50,000,000.00
Adjustment EURI (C): 6,813,481.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 90,864,646.00

7.1.2.2. Number of supported agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets/short supply circuits, and producer groups (focus area 3A)

Applicable: No
Target 2025 (a): 0.00
Adjustment top ups (b): 
Adjustment EURI (C): 0.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 0.00
7.1.2.3. *Number of agricultural holdings participating in risk management schemes (focus area 3B)*

Applicable: No
Target 2025 (a): 0.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EURI (C): 0.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 0.00

7.1.3. P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

7.1.3.1. *Total Public Expenditure P4 (EUR)*

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 4,037,949,190.00
Adjustment top ups (b): 174,170,000.00
Adjustment EURI (C): 89,466,381.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 3,774,312,809.00

7.1.3.2. *Agricultural land under management contracts contributing to biodiversity (ha) (focus area 4A) + improving water management (ha) (focus area 4B) + improving soil management and/preventing soil erosion (ha) (focus area 4C)*

Applicable: No
Target 2025 (a): 1,428,019.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EURI (C): 58,000.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 1,370,019.00

7.1.4. P5: Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors

7.1.4.1. *Total Public Expenditure P5 (EUR)*

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 590,690,384.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EURI (C): 68,220,138.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 522,470,246.00
7.1.4.2. Agricultural and forest land under management to foster carbon sequestration/conservation (ha) (focus area 5E) + Agricultural land under management contracts targeting reduction of GHG and/or ammonia emissions (ha) (focus area 5D) + Irrigated land switching to more efficient irrigation system (ha) (focus area 5A)

Applicable: Yes  
Target 2025 (a): 596,875.00  
Adjustment top ups (b):  
Adjustment EUR (C): 40,000.00  
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 556,875.00

7.1.4.3. Number of investment operations in energy savings and efficiency (focus area 5B) + in renewable energy production (focus area 5C)

Applicable: Yes  
Target 2025 (a): 900.00  
Adjustment top ups (b):  
Adjustment EUR (C): 400.00  
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 500.00

7.1.5. P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas

7.1.5.1. Total Public Expenditure P6 (EUR)

Applicable: Yes  
Target 2025 (a): 320,000,000.00  
Adjustment top ups (b):  
Adjustment EUR (C): 20,000,000.00  
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 300,000,000.00

7.1.5.2. Number of operations supported to improve basic services and infrastructures in rural areas (focus areas 6B and 6C)

Applicable: No  
Target 2025 (a): 0.00  
Adjustment top ups (b):  
Adjustment EUR (C): 0.00  
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 0.00

7.1.5.3. Population covered by LAG (focus area 6B)

Applicable: Yes  
Target 2025 (a): 3,082,317.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EURI (C): 0.00
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 3,082,317.00
### 7.2. Alternative indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Applicable</th>
<th>Indicator and measurement unit, where appropriate</th>
<th>Target 2025 (a)</th>
<th>Adjustment top ups (b)</th>
<th>Adjustment EURI (C)</th>
<th>Target absolute value (A-B-C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Overall number of Participants in Knowledge Transfer Groups (measure 1)</td>
<td>26,600.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Overall number of beneficiaries supported</td>
<td>34,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Total Area of Support under Priority 4 for Measure 10 (GLAS) and Measure 13 (ANCs)</td>
<td>3,051,579.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,051,579.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Number of Operations supported to improve basic services through LEADER (measure 19)</td>
<td>2,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.2.1. P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture

7.2.1.1. *Overall number of Participants in Knowledge Transfer Groups (measure 1)*

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 26,600.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EUR (C):
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 26,600.00

7.2.1.2. *Overall number of beneficiaries supported*

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 34,000.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EUR (C):
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 34,000.00

7.2.2. P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

7.2.2.1. *Total Area of Support under Priority 4 for Measure 10 (GLAS) and Measure 13 (ANCs)*

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 3,051,579.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EUR (C):
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 3,051,579.00
7.2.3. P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas

7.2.3.1. Number of Operations supported to improve basic services through LEADER (measure 19)

Applicable: Yes
Target 2025 (a): 2,000.00
Adjustment top ups (b):
Adjustment EURI (C):
Target absolute value (A-B-C): 2,000.00
### 7.3. Reserve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Performance reserve (€)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P2: Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests</td>
<td>9,574,127.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture</td>
<td>3,421,991.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry</td>
<td>93,665,106.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5: Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors</td>
<td>15,277,727.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas</td>
<td>9,460,005.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>131,398,959.18</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. DESCRIPTION OF THE MEASURES SELECTED

8.1. Description of the general conditions applied to more than one measure including, when relevant, definition of rural area, baselines, cross-compliance, intended use of financial instruments, intended use of advances and common provisions for investments, including the provisions of Articles 45 and 46 of regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

**Definition of rural areas**

Ireland has a much higher percentage of its territory and population living in rural areas relative to the EU-27 average. The significance of rural areas in Ireland is confirmed in published Commission data. However, because there is no single agreed definition of ‘rural’ as a concept, different definitions are used by different bodies.

For the purposes of its work, the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) defined rural Ireland as ‘all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities.’ Therefore, the term ‘rural areas’ was used to encompass open countryside, as well as small, medium and large towns. This is the definition adopted in the RDP.

Analysis carried out by Teagasc for the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, combining population criteria and socio/economic criteria, confirmed that considering a similar area for Local Development Strategies in the RDP was also appropriate.

**Baselines / cross-compliance**

Baseline and cross-compliance details can be found in the respective measure descriptions.

**Intended use of financial instruments / advances**

The option for beneficiaries of investment measures to receive an advance payment of up to 50% of aid assistance, as provided for in Article 45(4) of Regulation 1305/2013, is not included in the RDP. However, advances for Local Action Groups as per Article 42(2) are provided for.

Ireland will keep the possible use of financial instruments under review during the programming period. In particular, the possibility of formulating a Financial Instrument support in the dairy sector which would address key challenges related to planned post-quota expansion and price volatility will be explored by way of the required ex-ante evaluation. Any such measure would then be included in the RDP by way of Programme modification.
EU Recovery Instrument (EURI) Funding

EURI programme projects and expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

Common provisions for investment

With regard to Articles 45 & 46 on investments, the latter is not applicable because no irrigation measures are proposed in the draft RDP.

Under Article 45, investment operations likely to have negative environmental effects shall, where appropriate, be preceded by an environmental impact assessment (EIA).

Environmental Protection Legislation

There are a number of environmental directives and international agreements that can potentially have linkages with the RDP. Where it is required to establish these in Irish law, there are also corresponding domestic enforcement regulations. The relevance and importance of these regulations is that many set the legal framework of environmental rules and requirements under Irish law within which rural development takes place. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The Habitats Directive is implemented in Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011).
- The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) is implemented through a series of regulations, the most recent of which was the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No.31 of 2014).
- The Environmental Protection Agency (Industrial Emissions) (Licensing) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 137 of 2013) are part of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) licensing legislation implementing the EU Directive on the licensing of emissions.

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment is implemented in Ireland through a range of regulations, including cross-cutting regulations on planning and development.

- European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 456 of 2011) provide that farmland developments relating to ‘restructuring of rural holdings’, ‘commencing to use uncultivated land or semi-natural land for intensive agriculture’ and ‘land drainage works on land used for agriculture’ may be subject to EIA depending on their scale and location.

Equivalence

Under Measure 10 it is possible to have a catch crop commitment under GLAS over a farmer’s entire arable area (except temporary grassland) for the duration of the GLAS contract, with the GLAS payment being limited to 32 hectares. This commitment can serve to fulfil the crop diversification requirement under the greening legislation by way of equivalence as provided for in Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013. In line with Regulation 639/2014 a predetermined amount of one third of the estimated greening payment will be deducted from the farmer’s GLAS payment to ensure that no double funding arises.

The catch crops must be sown by 15 September in each of the five years of the agri-environment commitment. The catch crops cover must remain in situ from the date of sowing to the 1st December annually. The catch crops must consist of at least two crops taken from those crops listed below. Additional species may also be considered eligible provided the objectives of the measure are met, including:

- Buckwheat
- Phacelia
- Crimson Clover
- Rye
- Tillage Radish
- Mustard
- Vetch
- Oats (& Black Oats)
- Leafy Turnip

A catch crop shall not be required to be sown on temporary grassland as such a practice would from an ecological and environmental point of view be problematic. This is due to the fact that one would be ploughing up and removing a crop already in place that prevents leaching of Nitrogen, prevents soil erosion, improves water filtration, increases organic matter and generally improves soil structure. These are all the benefits that catch crops offer. Temporary grassland will always be in the ground longer than a catch crop and would therefore be of greater benefit to the environment.

Greening and double funding

The premium for Organics is based on both additional costs and income foregone when compared to conventional farming practice. There is no specific payment for crop-rotation and in any case, the premium only partially compensates for the calculated loss.
Revision clauses for operations under certain Articles.

In line with Article 48 of Regulation 1305/2013, there is provision for revision clauses in relation to operations undertaken pursuant to Articles 28 (Measure 10) and 29 (Measure 11). This provides for

- Adjustment in the case of amendments to the relevant mandatory standards, requirements or obligations set out in Articles 28 and 29 beyond which commitments must go;
- Adjustments needed to avoid double funding of the practices referred to in Article 43 of 1307/2013 in the case of amendments to those practices; and
- The inclusion of a revision clause for operations under Articles 28 and 29 which extend beyond the current programming period in order to allow for their adjustment to the legal framework of the following programming period.

Active farmer

The definition of an active farmer used in this RDP is as notified to the Commission in accordance with Art. 9 of Reg. 1307/2013.

Minimum activity

No payment will be made with respect to the minimum activity as defined in accordance with Art. 4(1)(c)(iii) of Reg. 1307/2013.

8.2. Description by measure

8.2.1. M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)

8.2.1.1. Legal basis


**8.2.1.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives**

The Knowledge Transfer measure is expected to contribute to the following Focus Areas:

- 2A - Economic performance, modernisation & restructuring
- 3B - Farm risk prevention & management
- 4A – Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas
- 4B – Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- 4C – Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management
- 5D - Reducing GHG & ammonia emissions.

This measure consists of:

- Submeasure 1.1 – support for vocational training and skills acquisition actions – Knowledge Transfer Groups
- Submeasure 1.1 – support for vocational training and skills acquisition – training delivered in support of Measure 10 (GLAS and Beef Data and Genomics Programme)
- Submeasure 1.1 – support for vocational training and skills acquisition – training delivered to all farmers

While the logic underlying Measure 10 training is integrated with that Measure design, these training interventions are set out as separate submeasures here and the funding allocation will be allocated to Measure 1. The training for the Burren Programme is delivered by the Burren Team and funded as part of the general contract of the Burren Team under Measure 20.

**Knowledge Transfer Groups**

Available evidence suggests that profitability levels on many Irish farms are under threat and that many farms, particularly in the beef sector, rely on direct payments and other subsidies to remain viable. Matters linked to production quality, input costs, meeting regulatory standards in the areas of environmental protection, animal welfare and health and breed improvement were identified as issues affecting the various sectors. The concept of Smart, Green Growth set out in Food Harvest 2020 encompasses the idea of enhancing knowledge transfer and the report recommends that primary producers be encouraged to optimise efficiency by adopting new technology and best commercial practice. Furthermore the RDP SWOT/Needs and stakeholder consultation process identified deficiencies in the knowledge base in areas such as business skills, environmental and climate change issues and animal health and welfare issues.

Increasing the knowledge base in the sector can contribute to increased efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness by addressing identified knowledge gaps in areas such as financial and risk management, grass management practices and animal health and welfare. Similarly, knowledge transfer in relation to environmental, bio-diversity and climate change issues will contribute to the development of a more sustainable sector. To ensure that these wide range of skills are delivered, DAFM is now implementing innovative delivery solutions that will go beyond the traditional approach followed in previous discussion.
groups and which will avail of additional expertise such as that of veterinary practitioners as appropriate.

The setting up of sectoral Knowledge Transfer Groups will see farmer meetings facilitated by highly qualified advisors and will involve the transfer and exchange of information and best practice. All participating farmers will also be required to develop a Farm Improvement Plan (FIP) in the initial year of participation and to update it in each of the 2nd and 3rd years of the scheme. This Plan will be developed in association with both the qualified facilitator and a qualified veterinary practitioner as appropriate.

Specific identified issues are integrated into the design of the measure both by ensuring that a greater level of expertise and technical knowledge is available at facilitator level and by ensuring a more targeted focus at knowledge transfer meetings. In this regard scheme design includes a more enhanced focus on environmental and climate change issues reflecting the multifunctional role of agriculture. This measure also takes into account the need for increased best practice and knowledge transfer in relation to environmental issues highlighted in the Environmental Impact Analysis of Food Harvest 2020.

Accordingly, the proposed Knowledge Transfer Groups will build on the progress made under previous discussion groups and enhance the level of knowledge transfer by incorporating a more output focused approach concentrating on priority areas as identified in the SWOT/Needs analyses and stakeholder consultation process.

Furthermore, by ensuring that horizontal issues, such as climate change and sustainability, are incorporated in the scheme design, Knowledge Transfer Groups will also have a significant role to play in the successful delivery of other proposed measures in the new RDP – e.g. Agri-Environment and Climate Change measures.

Knowledge Transfer Groups will also support the reduction of greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture as they will provide an ideal vehicle with which to roll out the Carbon Navigator on a country wide basis. The Carbon Navigator/Sustainability Plan developed by Teagasc and Bord Bia allows farmers to understand how their farms produce greenhouse gas, identify mitigation capacity and set targets and a pathway to reduce emissions. Again, this will form part of the annual FIP where appropriate.

The Knowledge Transfer Groups will include a focus on supporting farm risk prevention and management as particular groups will include animal health and welfare issues together with wider elements of risk and financial management. This will be achieved by the innovative scheme design that makes it a compulsory requirement that all participants complete a FIP in collaboration with the Knowledge Transfer facilitator and a qualified veterinary practitioner where appropriate.

In order to allow qualified facilitators tailor the knowledge transfer meetings towards specific groups DAFM will not be prescriptive about the topics to be discussed at individual knowledge transfer meetings.
Nonetheless, DAFM will prepare a schedule of recommended topics by sector from which a qualified facilitator will be able to select. While these suggested topics will attempt to cover a wide range of aspects of farming from profitability to herd health, qualified facilitators will not be limited to the recommended topics. General topics to be recommended for all groups include farm profitability, risk management, expansion and progression planning, collaborative farming and environmental sustainability. Recommended sector specific topics which will not be relevant to all groups include animal health and welfare, grassland management, milk quality issues and animal fertility and breeding.

Specifically, it is expected that Knowledge Transfer Groups will:

- Encourage efficiency and effectiveness of work,
- Help farmers to deal with complex issues,
- Build capacity of individuals in a group environment,
- Ensure farmers engage in a process of continuous improvement,
- Encourage innovation and new ideas, and
- Enhance the delivery of other related measures proposed under the RDP.

**Measure 10 Training**

Training will be provided to approved beneficiaries of Measure 10 in order to optimise delivery of these schemes. The intervention logic, contribution to focus area and cross cutting objectives are as per Measure 10 for each type of training provided. The funding for the training is allocated to Measure 1. The training for the Burren Programme is delivered and funded under Measure 20. In the transition period, voluntary training will be provided to active farmers under Measure 1 on agri-environment including a health and safety element.

8.2.1.3. **Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary.** For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.1.3.1. **Knowledge Transfer Groups**

Sub-measure:

- 1.1 - support for vocational training and skills acquisition actions

8.2.1.3.1.1. **Description of the type of operation**

All the Knowledge Transfer Groups will be run via call for proposals using a common administrative framework. The selection of the project proposals will be based on quality, transparency, equality of treatment and impartiality. The requirement that each participating farmer must complete a tailored Farm Improvement Plan will ensure that the time spent at the knowledge exchange meetings is supplemented by
one-to-one contact between the farmer and his advisor and veterinary practitioner (where appropriate) for each year the farmer is participating in the scheme.

Knowledge Transfer Groups will focus on all aspects of a farm’s performance including financial management, animal health and welfare, grass management, sustainability, breeding and integrated pest management.

They will be delivered in the following sectors:

- Dairy
- Beef,
- Sheep,
- Poultry,
- Tillage, and
- Equine.

Groups will run for a period of 3 years and farmers may participate in two Knowledge Transfer Groups in different sectors – eg one beef group and one sheep group. In such cases, a reduced payment rate of 50% for both the farmer and the facilitator will apply for the second KT Group i.e. 150% payment for participation in two KT Groups.

Following the ranking and selection process successful facilitators (beneficiaries) will notify DAFM of the composition of each group they have been awarded. Each group will contain a maximum of 18 farmers (12 in the case of Poultry), except in exceptional circumstances to be specified and approved by DAFM. DAFM expects that the average group size will be 15 and 10 in the case of poultry.

DAFM will in turn validate each group and notify the facilitator that s/he may commence delivering the measure to approved groups. From that point facilitators will be authorised to commence holding knowledge exchange meetings and to start the process of developing individual FIPs.

The primary focus of the 2 hour Knowledge transfer meetings is to provide a suitable forum for learning to take place. To encourage flexibility and to allow the facilitator adapt to a group’s specific needs there will be no prescribed format to individual meetings. Facilitators are trained to identify suitable topics to be introduced as part of discussion that will be of most benefit to individual groups at a specific point in time. This transfer of information will be facilitated by the trained advisor with a high level of interaction between advisors and farmers as appropriate. Ideally topics will be selected through an interactive process between the advisor and group participants. These topics will be selected in advance and will form part of an agenda
set out by the advisor in advance of the meeting.

Beneficiary (Facilitator) Actions

For each approved group a facilitator will arrange knowledge transfer meetings for participating farmers with meeting topics to be selected from a menu of topics covering farm management issues. The menu of topics will be sector specific and will include areas such as grassland management, pest management, herd health, breeding, risk management, health and safety, progression planning and nutrient management.

Facilitators will also be required to prepare a Farm Improvement Plan in conjunction with each farmer in their approved group. This Plan must be updated in each of the years 2 and 3. The Plan will be sector specific and tailored for each individual farmer. It will be developed during one-to-one contact between the respective farmer and his facilitator and veterinary practitioner as appropriate.

The Farm Improvement Plan in respect of farmers for whom the KT Group is the second group, will not include the areas of commonality e.g. Profit Monitor & Health & Safety. Thus there will be a reduction in the one on one time the facilitator is required to spend on the Farm Improvement Plan.

Farmer Actions

Each participating farmer will be required to attend a minimum of 5 knowledge transfer meetings/DAFM accredited national events per year relevant to that sector. For farmers participating in two KT Groups they will attend five meetings per year for each Group i.e. ten in total. The knowledge transfer meetings will be run by the group’s approved facilitator.

In addition each participating farmer will be required to prepare a FIP in association with his approved facilitator. Each FIP will be both sector specific and tailored to an individual farmers need. Depending on the sector concerned it may include a Profit Monitor, a Machinery Cost Calculator, an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Survey, a Carbon Navigator/Sustainability Plan, a Grassland Management Plan, a Herd Health Plan and a Breeding Plan. The animal health and welfare element of the FIP must be completed in conjunction with a qualified veterinary practitioner.

The Farm Improvement Plan in respect of farmers for whom the KT Group is the second group, will not include the areas of commonality e.g. Profit Monitor & Health & Safety.

Formation of Groups

Groups will be registered with the Department by facilitators on a dedicated IT system. Participants will be validated by the Department prior to the group being approved and any meetings taking place. It is intended
that an expressions of interest process will be put in place and then facilitators who come through that process will identify groups in line with DAFM stipulations. Facilitators are required to hold a minimum of 5 meetings per year per group. Prior notice of these meetings will be recorded with the Department to facilitate controls. Such prior notice will allow the DAFM inspectorate to preselect meetings for inspection on a risk/random basis. The notification will be submitted to DAFM on a dedicated meeting notification system and will include details of the group that is meeting and both the meeting time and location.

8.2.1.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Support will be by way of an annual grant.

All payments in respect of eligible costs will be made in accordance with the requirements of Article 14 of Regulation 1305/2013.

8.2.1.3.1.3. Links to other legislation

Costs are in accordance with Article 67(5) of Reg (EU) 1303/2013.

8.2.1.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries will be the advisors/trainers. Under the scheme the eligible costs for the advisors/trainers and farmers are broken down and separately identified.

8.2.1.3.1.5. Eligible costs

**Beneficiary (Facilitator)**

Eligible costs are the facilitator costs associated with running the knowledge transfer meetings. This comprises the time it takes to prepare and run each knowledge transfer meeting. Also, the time it takes to prepare and update each FIP is included. Finally, the facilitators’ administrative costs associated with operating a Knowledge Transfer Group are included.

**Farmer**

Each participating farmer is compensated for the time element (replacement farmer cost) and travel cost
associated with attending knowledge transfer meetings/DAFM accredited national events. In addition, each farmer will also be compensated for the time element (replacement farmer cost) associated with the development of the FIP. While the farmer will engage a Veterinary Practitioner to assist in the development of the herd health aspect of the plan the veterinary costs incurred by the farmer will not be eligible under this measure. However, the farmer time taken to both prepare for this meeting and engage with the veterinary practitioner will be eligible.

8.2.1.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

DAFM will identify Knowledge Transfer Groups to be provided and set a maximum number of groups to be funded by sector. Course facilitators will apply to manage and facilitate groups provided they comply with the following basic eligibility criteria

- A minimum educational qualifications to Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications or another specified qualification deemed eligible by DAFM
- indemnity insurance up to €150,000.

8.2.1.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The selection of the facilitators will be done based on pre-determined eligibility and ranking and selection criteria.

The opportunity to register eligibility as a facilitator will be advertised and will be made available through the DAFM’s dedicated online portal. Subsequent calls for proposals will be advertised by the use of a publicity campaign in the national print media along with national information meetings. Calls for proposals will be issued annually with sectors to be decided based on DAFM policy priorities.

Only eligible facilitators will be put forward for ranking and selection. These criteria will be based on the quality of the individual proposals submitted and will ensure transparency, equality of treatment and impartiality.

The proposed online application process will entail eligible facilitators being ranked and selected based on clearly defined criteria that will include scoring where

- A facilitator has relevant qualifications in excess of NFQ level 8.
- A facilitator introduces additional relevant expertise (e.g. Accountant, Agronomist, Veterinary Surgeon).
- A facilitator includes in his approach a meeting to address Farm Progression Planning.
- Groups established to have greater than 20% new members

In effect, a 3 stage process is in place as regards eligibility and selection criteria
• **Stage 1** – this is an expression of interest stage for people who wish to facilitate knowledge transfer groups. Only beneficiaries fulfilling the eligibility requirements will be successful at this stage. All eligible beneficiaries will then be entered onto the DAFM database of Knowledge Transfer group facilitators.

• **Stage 2** – in order to rank and select beneficiaries, beneficiaries on the DAFM database will be asked to set out their proposals for Knowledge Transfer Groups. Each proposal will then be awarded marks based on the criteria set out above and ranked accordingly.

• **Stage 3** – there are two steps here as facilitators move from their proposals for Knowledge Transfer Groups to actually establishing groups. Firstly, as beneficiaries are approved to set up groups, the first two elements of the selection criteria are checked – ie do they have the group composition and qualifications they set out in their proposal? A group will only be approved if it passes this check. Then, for the remaining two selection criteria (additional expertise and inclusion of a meeting on farm progression planning) it is not possible to check these prior to the running of a group. However, these two elements will be included in the inspection regime and linked to penalties for non-compliance.

### 8.2.1.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support will be based on the eligible costs as set out above.

Each facilitator (beneficiary) will be paid an annual grant of €500 per participating farmer. While there will be a maximum of 18 members per group, or 12 in the case of Poultry (due to the size and structure of that sector), subject to DAFM approval to allow group size to exceed these maxima in exceptional circumstances, DAFM expects that the average group size will be 15 and 10 respectively. Accordingly the average facilitator grant per group per year is €7,500 or €5,000 in the case of poultry groups.

Each participating farmer will be paid an annual grant of €750.

Amounts to be paid are based on the estimated standard costs.

Farmers that participate in two Knowledge Transfer Groups will receive a reduced payment rate of 50% for the second KT Group. This reduced rate will also apply to the associated KT Facilitator.

### 8.2.1.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

#### 8.2.1.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Implementation risks will arise from two sources namely facilitators (beneficiaries) and participating
With regard to facilitators (ie. the beneficiaries) the identified risks include:

- Inability to competently facilitate knowledge transfer meetings. This includes a number of possibilities such as poor delivery, inability to ensure full participation and inappropriate or irrelevant topics.
- Failure to accurately record farmer attendance.
- Failure to oversee appropriate completion of FIP by individual farmers.
- Risks relating to the selection of beneficiaries (ie facilitators).

As regards participating farmers the risks include:

- Failure to attend the minimum required number of meetings/events.
- Failure to appropriately complete FIP.

There is also a risk of double funding linked to the possibility of farmers participating in more than one group concurrently and the farmers and facilitators being paid the full amount for the second KT Group instead of the 50% reduced rate.

### 8.2.1.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

The managing division will ensure that an appropriate control environment is in place coupled with a suitable penalty schedule. This control environment consists of a dual approach of administrative and on the spot checks.

The administrative checks will be carried out by the operating division and will involve desk checks and the use of internal and external databases. The on the spot checks are based on normal risk criteria and will involve professional staff from the Department’s Agricultural Structures and Environment Division.

The penalty schedule comprises a proportionate deterrent against failure to comply and is based on the published EU Regulations. It is linked to each aspect of the scheme and comprises distinct penalties for both facilitators and participating farmers.

In relation to the selection of beneficiaries, a clear system has been put in place drawing on the relevant experience within DAFM to ensure that the selection of beneficiaries is managed effectively. This system is set out in Section 8.2.1.3.1.7.

In order to control the risk of double funding, the Knowledge Transfer system will record the Business Identification number of each farmer registered for a Knowledge Transfer Group. Where a number appears twice this will automatically be flagged and a reduced payment rate of 50% for both the farmer and the facilitator will apply to the second KT Group registered.
For the purposes of selecting candidates for control, a mixture of randomly selected cases and cases selected by pre-determined risks will apply.

Controls will be carried out on:

1. facilitators - this will be achieved through a combination of meeting inspections and inspections of their completion of individual FIPs, and
2. participants – this will be achieved through the inspection of their attendance at meetings and their completion of their FIP.

At meetings penalties will be incurred by facilitators for the failure to accurately pre-register a meeting with the Department. Attendance record discrepancies will also incur penalties as will the failure to conduct a legitimate meeting. Penalties will be proportionate and will increase in cases of repetition. Facilitators will be inspected separately to assess the Farm Improvement Plans for the groups they manage. Irregularities will incur penalties up to and including suspension of payment to the facilitator and removal of their facilitator accreditation with the Department.

Facilitators who refuse to co-operate with an inspection or where it is determined that they are being deliberately deceptive or misleading in their dealings with the Department will see all of their payments withheld and the removal of their facilitator accreditation with the Department.

Administrative controls with regard to the return of attendance sheets, the correct registration of meetings and signature discrepancies will also be carried out. Penalties will be proportionate and will increase in cases of repetition. System controls will prevent payment in cases where scheme criteria have not been met by participants.

Risks have also been considered in relation to the ability of facilitators to deliver the programme. This is mitigated by the requirements that facilitators participate in Continuous Professional Development and that they have achieved a minimum of NFQ Level 8 or equivalent. The risk that a facilitator may not see a group through to completion is also mitigated by the facilitator requirement to have indemnity insurance in place to provide participating farmers a mechanism to pursue compensation if appropriate.

8.2.1.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. This involves the identification of risks in relation to both the knowledge providers and farmers.

8.2.1.3.1.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

All costings are based on the eligible knowledge transfer actions carried out by both facilitators (scheme beneficiaries) and participating farmers. They are based on the standard cost approach. The details associated with each element of the costings, by sector, are as follows.

**Beef, Dairy & Sheep Costings**
Facilitator Standard Cost Payment- €22,500 or €7,500 per annum (Based on an average group size of 15)

Farmer Standard Cost Payment - €2,250 or €750 per annum

Cost Breakdown

**Facilitator element**

The facilitator has to arrange 5 knowledge transfer meetings for participating farmers each year. Each meeting will take the facilitator 5 hours – 3 hours preparatory time and 2 hours meeting time costed at €80 per hour. The total cost over the three year period is €6,000 per group.

The facilitator is required to collaborate with each participating farmer in developing a Farm Improvement Plan over the period of participation in the programme. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor, Carbon Navigator, Herd Health Plan and Breeding Plan as appropriate. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will take the facilitator 6 hours in the initial year and 3 hours in each of the years 2 and 3. Based on the average group size of 15 the total cost over the three year period is €14,400 per group.

Each facilitator will also incur an administration cost associated with their involvement with individual farmers and DAFM. It is estimated at 2 hours per year per farmer and is costed at €25 per hour. Based on the average group size of 15 the total cost over the three year period is €2,250.

**Farmer element**

Each farmer will attend 5 meetings per year. Including the travel time a replacement farmer will be required for 4 hours per meeting. At a replacement farmer cost of €20 per hour this will cost €1,200 over the three year period.

To attend each meeting, on average each farmer will drive 70 kms. This results in an eligible travel cost of €483 over the three year period.

Each farmer will collaborate with his facilitator in developing a Farm Improvement Plan. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor, Carbon Navigator, Grassland Management Plan, Herd Health Plan and Breeding Plan as appropriate. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will involve farmer preparatory time plus time directly engaging with his facilitator and Veterinary Practitioner for a combined period of 12 hours in the initial year and 8 hours in each of the years 2 and 3. Using the farmer replacement cost rate of €20 per hour the total cost over the three year period is €560 per farmer.

See Beef, Dairy and Sheep Knowledge Transfer Group Costings Table below.
Tillage Costings

Facilitator Standard Cost Payment - €22,500 or €7,500 per annum (Based on an average group of 15)

Farmer Standard Cost Payment - €2,250 or €750 per annum

Cost Breakdown

Facilitator element

The facilitator has to arrange 5 knowledge transfer meetings for participating farmers each year. Each meeting will take the facilitator 5 hours – 3 hours preparatory time and 2 hours meeting time costed at €80 per hour. The total cost over the three year period is €6,000 per group.

The facilitator is required to collaborate with each participating farmer in developing a Farm Improvement Plan over the period of participation in the programme. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor/Machinery Cost, IPM Survey, Nutrient Management Plan and Monitoring Key Crop/IPM Indicators as appropriate. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will take the facilitator 6 hours in the initial year and 3 hours in each of the year 2 and 3. Based on an average group size of 15 the total cost over the three year period is €14,400 per group.

Each facilitator will also incur an administration cost associated with their involvement with individual farmers and DAFM. It is estimated at 2 hours per year per farmer and is costed at €25 per hour. Based on an average group size of 15 the total cost over the three year period is €2,250.

Farmer element

Each farmer will attend 5 meetings per year. Including the travel time a replacement farmer will be required for 4 hours per meeting. At a replacement farmer cost of €20 per hour this will cost €1,200 over the three year period, averaging at €400 per year.

To attend each meeting, on average each farmer will drive 40 kms to attend each meeting. This results in an eligible travel cost of €276 over the three year period. This equates to €92 per farmer per year.

Each farmer will collaborate with his facilitator in developing a Farm Improvement Plan. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor/Machinery Cost, IPM Survey, Nutrient Management Plan and Monitoring Key Crop/IPM Indicators. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will involve farmer preparatory time and the farmer engaging directly with his facilitator for a period of 14 hours in the initial year and 13 hours in each of the years 2 and 3. Using the farmer replacement cost rate of €20 per hour the total cost over the three year period is €800 per farmer, equating to €267 per year.
In total, the eligible cost per farmer of fully complying with the scheme is €758 per year.

See Tillage Knowledge Transfer Group Costings Table below.

Poultry Costings

Facilitator Cost - €15,000 or €5,000 per annum (Based on an average group of 10)

Farmer Cost - €2,250 or €750 per annum

Cost Breakdown

Facilitator element

The facilitator has to arrange 5 knowledge transfer meetings per year for participating farmers. Each meeting will take the facilitator 4 hours – 2 hours preparatory time and 2 hours meeting time costed at €80 per hour. The total cost over the three year period is €4,800 per group.

The facilitator is required to collaborate with each participating farmer in developing a Farm Improvement Plan over the period of participation in the programme. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor, Sustainability Plan, Herd Health Plan and Breeding Plan as appropriate. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will take the facilitator 6 hours in the initial year, 3 hours in year 2, and 2 hours in year 3. Based on an average group size of 10 the total cost over the three year period is €8,800 per group.

Each facilitator will also incur an administration cost associated with their involvement with individual farmers and DAFM. It is estimated at 2 hours per year per farmer and is costed at €25 per hour. Based on an average group size of 10 the total cost over the three year period is €1,500.

Farmer element

Each farmer will attend 5 meetings per year. Including the travel time a replacement farmer will be required for 4 hours per meeting. At a replacement farmer cost of €20 per hour this will cost €1,200 over the three year period.

To attend each meeting, on average each farmer will drive 70 kms. This results in an eligible travel cost of €483 over the three year period.
Each farmer will collaborate with his facilitator in developing a Farm Improvement Plan. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor, Carbon Navigator/Sustainability Plan, Herd Health Plan and Breeding Plan as appropriate. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will involve farmer preparatory time plus time directly engaging with his facilitator and Veterinary Practitioner for a combined period of 12 hours in the initial year and 8 hours in each of the years 2 and 3. Using the farmer replacement cost rate of €20 per hour the total cost over the three year period is €560 per farmer.

See Poultry Knowledge Transfer Group Costings Table below.

Equines

Facilitator Standard Cost Payment- €22,500 or €7,500 per annum (Based on an average group of 15)

Farmer Standard Cost Payment - €2,250 or €750 per annum

Cost Breakdown

Facilitator element

The facilitator has to arrange 5 knowledge transfer meetings each year for participating farmers. Each meeting will take the facilitator 5 hours – 3 hours preparatory time and 2 hours meeting time costed at €80 per hour. The total cost over the three year period is €6,000 per group.

The facilitator is required to collaborate with each participating farmer in developing a Farm Improvement Plan. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor, Herd Health Plan and Breeding Plan. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will take the facilitator 6 hours in the initial year and 3 hours in each of the years 2 and 3. Based on an average group size of 15 the total cost over the three year period is €14,400 per group.

Each facilitator will also incur an administration cost associated with their involvement with individual farmers and DAFM. It is estimated at 2 hours per year per farmer and is costed at €25 per hour. Based on an average group size of 15 the total cost over the three year period is €2,250.

Farmer element
Each farmer will attend 5 meetings per year. Including the travel time a replacement farmer will be required for 4 hours per meeting. At a replacement farmer cost of €20 per hour this will cost €1,200 over the three year period.

To attend each meeting, on average each farmer will drive 70 kms. This results in an eligible travel cost of €483 over the three year period.

Each farmer will collaborate with his facilitator in developing a Farm Improvement Plan. This plan involves the completion of a Profit Monitor, Carbon Navigator/Sustainability Plan Herd Health Plan and Breeding Plan as appropriate. It is estimated that the completion of this plan will involve farmer preparatory time plus time directly engaging with his facilitator and Veterinary Practitioner for a combined period of 12 hours in the initial year and 8 hours in each of the years 2 and 3. Using the farmer replacement cost rate of €20 per hour the total cost over the three year period is €560 per farmer.

See Equine Knowledge Transfer Group Costings Table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All €</th>
<th>Meeting Cost</th>
<th>Travel Cost</th>
<th>FIP Collaboration</th>
<th>Total Payment</th>
<th>Annual Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poultry Costing Table Average Group Size 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitator</strong></td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>8,800</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farmer</strong></td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tillage Costing Table Average Group Size 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitator</strong></td>
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<td>14,400</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>22,500</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farmer</strong></td>
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<td>276</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equine Costing Table Average Group Size 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitator</strong></td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>14,400</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>22,500</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farmer</strong></td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.2.1.3.1.11. Information specific to the operation

Definition of appropriate capacities of bodies providing knowledge transfer services to carry out their tasks in the form of staff qualifications and regular training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge providers will be required to have a NFQ Level 8 qualification, or another specified qualification deemed eligible by DAFM.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In addition, the providers will also have to commit to undertake the Continued Professional Development delivered via Measure 2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definition of the duration and content of farm and forest exchange schemes and visits as referred to in Article 3 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

| n/a |
8.2.1.3.2. Measure 10 related Training

Sub-measure:

- 1.1 - support for vocational training and skills acquisition actions

8.2.1.3.2.1. Description of the type of operation

Training will be provided to beneficiaries under two Measure 10 schemes, namely GLAS & the Beef Data and Genomics Programme, in order to optimise delivery of these schemes. Additional voluntary agri-environment training will be made available to farmers in the transition period.

**BDGP**

There are two elements to the BDGP training

a. General BDGP training

Participants in the Beef Data and Genomics programme will be required to attend an approved training course which will:

- Provide clear information as regards what is required at individual farm level and equip farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise delivery of the commitments undertaken;
- Increase the participants’ knowledge of genomics and breeding selection, focusing on the shifting emphasis to maternal traits in order to bring about efficiencies that will result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

These courses are designed to provide:

- An introduction to the BDGP, it’s regulatory basis, the objectives of the scheme and funding
- Information on the individual actions covering areas such as data collection, genotyping, genomic indices and the bull/heifer replacement strategy
- Information on controls, inspections and sanctions
- Training on the understanding and optimal use of breeding indices for maternal breeding strategies
- Training on the importance of data collection and maternal breeding traits, and the linkage with carbon efficiency at scheme level

Training will be delivered by a training provider to be selected following an open and transparent public procurement process.

The course content will be set out in the tender documentation. The course will last for 4 hours with attendance compulsory for all scheme participants. The training will be provided in a group setting with attendance verified to DAFM by the course provider.
Courses will be delivered at various locations to facilitate ease of access to training for farmers.

b. Focused training on the carbon navigator

The BDGP includes a commitment for the farmer to undertake a range of actions related to the Carbon Navigator. In order to ensure the most effective take up of the Carbon Navigator all BDGP beneficiaries must undergo two hours of preparatory training. This training will be delivered in a one on one setting by approved advisors who have undergone a relevant DAFM approved Continuous Professional Development module under Measure 2.3 (CPD for Agricultural Advisors)

GLAS

Under GLAS, beneficiaries will be required to attend approved training courses. Courses will provide GLAS beneficiaries with information on environmental benefits arising from the Agri-environment Measure and clarification on all relevant requirements at individual farm level and will equip farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise delivery of the commitments undertaken.

These courses are designed to provide:

- An introduction to the GLAS scheme, it’s regulatory basis, the objectives of the scheme and funding
- Information on the individual commitments covering areas such as nutrient management, farming practices, record keeping, delivery timelines etc.
- Information on controls, inspections and sanctions
- Education on the consequences of agricultural pollution and its avoidance (including reference to climate change awareness, and mitigation of and adaptation to its effects)
- An appreciation of the importance and preservation of Natura 2000 sites and important bird habitats, wildlife habitats, etc.

Training will be delivered by professional advisors who, having received additional specific training on the GLAS scheme, are registered with the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine as having the necessary competencies to advise farmers on the requirements of the scheme. With each tranche of GLAS, DAFM will invite proposals from these advisors to run local training course for GLAS participants.

Courses will be delivered at various locations to facilitate ease of access to training for farmers. Courses will be delivered in groups of 20-30 farmers, and will entail 6 hours of training.

Agri-environment training

Courses will provide beneficiaries with information on environmental benefits arising from the agri-environment measures and clarification on the relevant requirements and will equip farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise participation in agri environment measures.

These courses are designed to provide:
• An update on environmental issues and an introduction to recent developments at EU and National level,
• Lessons learnt from GLAS participation - information on the individual commitments and issues arising including controls. Actions to be viewed on farm.
• Key ecological concepts including an appreciation of the importance and preservation of Natura 2000 sites and important bird habitats, wildlife habitats, etc.
• Introduction to the concept of results based agri environment measures and payments including the use of score cards.
• Information on farm health and safety standards.

Training will be delivered by professional advisors who, having received additional specific training, are registered with the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine as having the necessary competencies to train farmers.
Courses will be delivered at various locations to facilitate ease of access to training for farmers. Courses will be delivered in groups of farmers, and will entail 6 hours of training.

8.2.1.3.2.2. Type of support
Type of support: Grants

All payments in respect of eligible costs will be made in accordance with the requirements of Article 14 of Regulation 1305/2013.

**BDGP**

a. General BDGP training

Payment to the training provider will be made based on the price specified in the winning tender following successful completion of the specified number of training courses and confirmation of attendance by scheme participants.

Payment to scheme participants will be in the form of a once off payment following successful attendance at the training course.

b. Carbon Navigator Training

Payment will be made to the training provider upon completion of the training.

**GLAS and Agri- Environment Training**

Payment to the training provider will be by way of a grant paid on successful delivery of courses.
Payment to scheme participants will be in the form of a once off payment following successful attendance at the training course.

8.2.1.3.2.3. Links to other legislation

n/a

8.2.1.3.2.4. Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries will be the facilitators/trainers in all cases.

8.2.1.3.2.5. Eligible costs

**BDGP**

a. General BDGP training

*Beneficiary (Knowledge Provider)*

The Knowledge Provider will be paid the amount set out in the winning tender. Eligible costs will be linked to the organisation and delivery of the training.

*Farmer*

Each participating farmer is compensated for the time element (replacement farmer cost) and travel cost associated with attending the measure specific training. As per Regulation 1305/2013, this payment will be processed via the beneficiary.

b. Carbon Navigator Training

The eligible costs are the professional fee and preparation costs of the advisor delivering the training.

**GLAS and Agri- Environment Training**

*Beneficiary (Knowledge Provider)*

The Knowledge Provider will be paid the amount set by DAFM for delivery of courses. Eligible costs are linked to the organisation and delivery of the training.

*Farmer*
Each participating farmer is compensated for the time element (replacement farmer cost) associated with attending the measure specific training. As per Regulation 1305/2013, this payment will be processed via the beneficiary.

8.2.1.3.2.6. Eligibility conditions

**BDGP**

a. General BDGP training

Eligibility will be determined by

- The provider must have trainers with qualifications in relevant disciplines at National Framework of Qualifications Level 8.
- Appropriate indemnity insurance arrangements must be in place.

b. Carbon Navigator Training

Eligibility will be determined by

- The provider must have a qualification in a relevant discipline at National Framework of Qualifications Level 8.
- The provider must have attended the DAFM approved CPD module delivered under Measure 2.3

**GLAS and Agri-Environment Training**

Providers must be registered professional advisors with DAFM. This entails

- Having a relevant National Framework of Qualifications Level 8 qualification
- Having received the GLAS specific training delivered for advisors by DAFM
- Being FAS registered and trained

8.2.1.3.2.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

**BDGP**

a. General BDGP training

The provider of the knowledge will be selected on the basis of an open and transparent public procurement process.

The selection criteria will be on the basis of the quality of the proposals submitted and will ensure
transparency, equality of treatment and impartiality. The selection criteria will include criteria relating to:

- Price,
- Educational qualifications of personnel proposed to carry out the training
- Capacity to deliver a country-wide schedule of training
- Experience in carrying out similar training.

b. Carbon Navigator Training

The pool of eligible advisors will be ranked and selected centrally by reference to

- Educational qualification
- Experience in delivering similar training
- Geographic spread

Following this process, the list of selected potential beneficiaries will be made available to BDGP farmers via the DAFM website and the farmer will choose which advisor to use to avail of the required training.

GLAS and Agri- Environment Training

As eligible advisors apply to deliver courses, they will be selected with reference to

- Previous experience of delivering similar courses, and
- Geographical spread

8.2.1.3.2.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

**BDGP**

a. General BDGP training

The total payment to the service provider will be as set out in the winning tender.

The eligible costs of the participating farmers will be €166 for attendance at the 4 hour training course.

b. Carbon Navigator training

Each one on one training support delivered corresponds to a payment at the rate of €160.

**GLAS and Agri- Environment Training**

The total amount payable per attendee at the training courses is €238. €158 of this total is in respect of the farmers costs for attendance at the training.

In the transitional period, the total amount payable per attendee at the training courses is €246. €156 of this
total is in respect of the farmers costs for attendance at the training, if training is carried out remotely, this payment is reduced to €112 and the total to €202.

8.2.1.3.2.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.1.3.2.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

**BDGP**

a. General BDGP training

The identified risks include:

1. Inability of service provider to adequately deliver training course
2. Failure to accurately record and verify farmer attendance
3. Training not undertaken by the farmer

b. Carbon Navigator training

The identified risks include:

1. The provider may not have the relevant expertise to successfully deliver the training
2. The required training may not be delivered

**GLAS and Agri- Environment Training**

The identified risks include:

1. The course syllabus may be inappropriate
2. Farmers may not attend courses
3. Facilitator/farmer ratio may be too high for effective information transfer
4. Training may not be provided in time to ensure effective GLAS implementation

8.2.1.3.2.9.2. Mitigating actions

**BDGP:**

a. General BDGP training

In respect of the above risks, the following risk mitigation processes are in place

1. Experience and relevant qualifications are included in the selection and eligibility criteria
2. DAFM will put in place oversight via attendance at a selection of courses.
3. The beneficiary will be required to confirm farmer attendance to DAFM as the training is
mandatory.

b. Carbon Navigator training

In respect of the above risks, the following risk mitigation processes are in place

1) Providers will be required to have a relevant qualification and be required to undergo the relevant CPD module

2) The provider will be required to provide a documented confirmation that the training has been delivered in advance of payment being made.

**GLAS and Agri-Environment Training**

In respect of the above risks, the following risk mitigation processes are in place

1. Provider must submit proposed course content for each course to DAFM for pre approval
2. The provider will be required to submit attendance registers to DAFM
3. A minimum and maximum number of attendees will be fixed for each course (between 20 and 30 attendees per course)
4. In the case of GLAS, training will be required to be completed by the end of Year 2 of a GLAS contract.

8.2.1.3.2.9.3. *Overall assessment of the measure*

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.1.3.2.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

**BDGP**

a. General BDGP training

Knowledge Provider element

- The total payment to the service provider will be set out in the winning tender.

Farmer element

- A 4 hour training course with 2 hour travel time gives rise to 6 hours in respect of a replacement farmer requirement at a cost a cost of €20 per hour. This gives rise to a cost of €120.
- An average 100km return journey calculated at the midpoint of civil service travel rates gives a cost
of €46.

b. Carbon Navigator Training

The support rate is based on two hour delivery time at a rate of €80 per hour.

**GLAS and Agri-Environment Training**

Knowledge Provider element

The €80 per attendee rate for the knowledge provider is based on the cost associated with delivery and preparation time, and relevant costs relating to venue hire, insurance, course materials and delivery costs.

Farmer element

• A 6 hour training course and 1 hour travel time gives rise to 7 hours in respect of a replacement farmer requirement at a cost of €20 per hour. This gives rise to a cost of €140.

• An average 40km return journey calculated at the midpoint of civil service travel rates gives a cost of €18.

Knowledge Provider element of Agri-Environment Training

In the Transitional period, the €90 per attendee rate for the knowledge provider is based on the cost associated with delivery and preparation time, course materials and delivery costs.

Farmer element

• A 6 hour training course carried out remotely gives rise to a cost of €112 increasing to €156 if travel expenses are included.

8.2.1.3.2.11. Information specific to the operation

Definition of appropriate capacities of bodies providing knowledge transfer services to carry out their tasks in the form of staff qualifications and regular training

**BDGP**

Course providers will be required to have a NFQ Level 8 in a relevant discipline. In relation to the Carbon Navigator training, relevant CPD will also be required.

**GLAS and Agri-Environment Training**

Providers must be registered professional advisors with DAFM. This entails

- Having a relevant National Framework of Qualifications Level 8 qualification
- Having received the GLAS specific training delivered for advisors by DAFM
- Having received agri-environment specific training delivered for advisors by DAFM
• Being FAS registered and trained.

Definition of the duration and content of farm and forest exchange schemes and visits as referred to in Article 3 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

n/a

8.2.1.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.1.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.1.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.

8.2.1.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As referenced above.

8.2.1.5. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

As referenced above.

8.2.1.6. Information specific to the measure

Definition of appropriate capacities of bodies providing knowledge transfer services to carry out their tasks in the form of staff qualifications and regular training

As referenced above.
Definition of the duration and content of farm and forest exchange schemes and visits as referred to in Article 3 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

As referenced above.

8.2.1.7. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

Knowledge Transfer

Discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that the sector will have capacity to provide the required level of Knowledge Transfer Groups. As the requirements increases over the period of the programme this capacity will need to expand to cope with demand and it is expected that if the process is managed over time the sector will cope with the additional capacity.

As regards qualifications and training, experience gained from operating the discussion group model has shown that the level of expertise provided by facilitators is extremely high. The SWOT analysis confirmed this. However, where gaps have been identified, this will be addressed by ensuring there is an appropriate linkage to CPD provided under the RDP and by ensuring the scheme design encourages facilitators to avail of additional skills.

Measure 10 Training

BDGP

Course providers will be required to have a NFQ Level 8 in a relevant discipline. In relation to the Carbon Navigator training, relevant CPD will also be required.

GLAS and Agri-Environment Training

Providers must be registered professional advisors with DAFM. This entails

- Having a relevant National Framework of Qualifications Level 8 qualification
- Having received the GLAS specific training delivered for advisors by DAFM
- Having received agri-environment specific training delivered for advisors by DAFM
- Being FAS registered and trained.
8.2.2. M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)

8.2.2.1. Legal basis


8.2.2.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

Under this measure there are a number of separate elements as follows:

A. Submeasure 2.3 - Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Agricultural Advisors.
B. Submeasure 2.3 Animal Health & Welfare - Training for advisors
C. Submeasure 2.1 Animal Health & Welfare - On farm advice
D. Submeasure 2.1 – Support for the setting up of Producer Organisations

This measure contributes to focus areas

- 2A – economic performance and modernisation
- 3A - competitiveness of primary producers
- 3B – farm risk prevention and management
- 5D – greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions.

Measure 10 will also include an advisory element for farmers in GLAS and is the dominant Measure in this regard. This involves the development of Natura and Commonage Plans where applicable. This is fully integrated into the design of Measure 10. The obligatory use of the services of an approved planner to submit GLAS applications, however, is an unpaid commitment, neither remunerated under Measure 2 nor under Measure 10.

A. Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

The effective transfer of existing best practice to farm level is dependent on a highly skilled and well-informed advisory service. Support for CPD for the advisors engaged in all aspects of the on farm advisory services will ensure that the most up to date and relevant information and skills are employed in the delivery of the advisors’ service to farmers.

The beneficial role that CPD for agricultural advisors plays in areas such as environmental actions and climate change actions was a recurring theme in the design phase of the new RDP and especially the SWOT analysis. Up-skilling of advisors is a measure which will complement and support other areas of
intervention and ensure the achievement of greater value for money.

The adoption and effective application of new technologies by farmers is a critical requirement for the sustainable growth of the agriculture sector and will provide farmers with the wherewithal to respond in an innovative and sustainable way to the changing demands of the market. However, in order to manage their enterprises and to respond to change in an effective way, farmers need the most up-to-date information and methods. Ongoing training and development of advisors will ensure that they can respond to these demands.

Participation in continuing professional development activities will allow advisors to enhance their knowledge base on an ongoing basis and ensure that they are familiar with the latest techniques and regulatory requirements in a rapidly changing agricultural industry. It will promote the development of knowledgeable, professional and competent advisors, and thereby enhance the quality of service provided to farmers. This in turn will underpin more efficient and effective practices feeding into more competitive and environmentally efficient farming practices.

Additional CPD training for advisors will be made available in the transitional period.

Specifically, it will contribute to:

- The maintenance of professional competence,
- Enhancement of existing knowledge and skills, and
- Development of new knowledge and skills.

This will result in a more efficient delivery of the proposed Knowledge Transfer Groups in the various sectors. Additionally, the success of a number of measures proposed under the RDP, including GLAS and the Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Schemes, will depend on suitably qualified advisors dispensing up-to-date advice to farmers. Thus, this measure will contribute to a wide range of Rural Development objectives.

B and C. Targeted Advisory Service on Animal Health and Welfare

Given the high animal health and financial costs associated with animal diseases, there is a strong economic rationale for targeting investment at efforts to manage and eliminate a number of diseases. This measure will strategically target a number of core areas in this regard such as Johne’s disease, BVD, SCC, TB, IBR and other significant animal health issues in the pig sector and sectors affecting species as listed under Regulation EU 2016/429 of the EU Animal Health Law. Species include ‘kept animals’, as listed in Annex II, ‘hoofed animals’ as listed in Annex III of Regulation EU 2016/429 and terrestrial gastropods as listed in Annex 1 of Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 intended for human consumption. Also included are other species that may be reared for food production, for example insects to allow for the potential of novel animal-based food production systems in the future.

The savings arising from the eradication of Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) are estimated at €102 million / annum, and the potential savings associated with Somatic Cell Count (SCC) reduction are of the order of €80 million / annum.

The advice offered will be farm-specific and provided to individual farmers on request. Increased animal health, including biodiversity, parasitic control, biosecurity and welfare, will enhance production efficiency,
the sustainable management of natural resources, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The measure provides an effective structure for transferring research findings into practice, as it provides a clear linkage between the collation and peer-review by the existing Animal Health Ireland Technical Working Groups, the development of disease control programmes by these groups in conjunction with the relevant Implementation Groups, the training and approval of the specialist advisor, and the delivery by that advisor of farmer training. A national database will hold information on the number of completed interventions between the trained specialist advisor and the farmer, and on the outcome of these. This information will be directly accessible by DAFM allowing the required information to be gathered centrally.

There is a complementary link between this Measure and Measure 1 – Knowledge Transfer Groups. The focus in this regard will be to ensure that animal health topics covered in the Knowledge Transfer Groups cover the general principle of the control of the diseases to be covered in the animal health and welfare advisory service and signpost farmers towards the advisory support available.

D. Submeasure 2.1 – Support for the setting up of Producer Organisations

Under this sub-measure, advisors will receive funding to provide advice to potential Beef Producer Organisations.

Regulation No 1308/2013 provides for the recognition of Producer Organisations in a number of sectors including the beef and veal sector. Some of the other sectors provided for in the regulation, such as the fruit and vegetable sector and the dairy sector, are much more developed sectors in Ireland in terms of either a) having previously received EU support for POs in the case of fruit and vegetables and b) having existing models of co-operation and member organisations such as in the dairy sector where co-operatives process and market the product of their members/suppliers. There is no current existing model of such widespread organisation or co-operation in the beef sector, therefore support is targeted at the beef sector. The decision to recognise POs in the beef sector was taken after extensive consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

Ireland has a number of well-established bodies capable of providing education and training to farmers in a variety of areas. Funding is targeted at advisors to ensure that high quality advice is available and provided to POs who wish to apply for recognition as a PO. Support is also targeted at those groups of farmers who would, in the absence of such support, fail to take the necessary steps to examine whether establishing a PO would strengthen their position in the marketplace.

Groups of farmers will employ these advisors and use their skills to help them to come together with a view to establishing a Beef Producer Organisation. The initial hurdle that any group will face is the skills around group governance, business and financial planning and sourcing adequate supply to build scale. Advisors will be able to assist greatly in identifying step by step tasks to carry out to guide the group in its early stages and will have local or regional knowledge with regards to identifying potential new members.
8.2.2.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.2.3.1. A. Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Sub-measure:

- 2.3 - support for training of advisors

8.2.2.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

CPD for advisors will be offered to advisors who have attained a minimum of National Framework of Qualifications Level 8 educational qualification (in a relevant discipline) or another specified qualification as deemed eligible by DAFM. It will be offered in the form of training courses to be provided by appropriately qualified service providers.

CPD has been designed to incorporate

- Identification of appropriate areas for skills enhancement. The identification of the areas in which courses will be provided will arise out of an ongoing stakeholder consultation process.
- Structured calls for proposals for appropriately qualified professionals/organisations to deliver the necessary training for advisors across the range of identified areas. The proposals will be open tender applications that adhere to all public procurement guidelines and will be open to both public and private bodies.
- Clear selection criteria to ensure value for money – The selection criteria will be open and transparent and will ensure that the most appropriate tender application will be successful.

Having identified a topic that qualified advisors need to be upskilled on, the Department will advertise an open tender competition and allow qualified service providers to submit tender proposals to provide this training. The tender proposals will be evaluated based on predetermined selection criteria. The successful tenderer will then provide the training to qualified advisors based on the specifications set out in the tender proposal.

Additional CPD training for advisors will be made available in the transitional period.

8.2.2.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Payment will be made based on the price set out in the successful tender application, by means of a direct payment as service is provided.
### 8.2.2.3.1.3. Links to other legislation

National and EU public procurement rules will be respected, in particular (a) Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC, (b) Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU once transposed into national legislation, (c) Directives 89/665/EEC and 92/13/EEC and (d) the general public procurement principles derived from the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

### 8.2.2.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries will be the training providers who succeed in the tender competition.

### 8.2.2.3.1.5. Eligible costs

The eligible costs are the costs incurred in organising and delivering the training to the advisors. The eligible costs will include the salaries of the service providers, the service providers’ travel costs, materials prepared for course delivery, associated administration costs and costs linked to hosting the training course. These eligible costs will be set out in the tender application with cost comprising part of the tender evaluation criteria.

### 8.2.2.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

DAFM will identify areas linked to specific policy areas, regulatory issues or scheme compliance where it has been identified that a gap exists in the existing knowledge base of the advisory services. Once this has been identified DAFM will operate an open call for proposals to interested and qualified providers to tender to provide the specified training. National Framework of Qualifications (or another specified qualification as deemed eligible by DAFM) Level 8 educational qualification is required for eligibility.

Details in relation to training will be included in the tender and T&C documents.

### 8.2.2.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

Successful providers will be selected using an open tender process that will be based on quality, transparency, equality of treatment and impartiality. Ranking and selection will be based on clearly defined eligibility criteria that will include:

- Price,
- Ability to deliver the training specified in the form of qualified staff and expertise in the area in which the advice will be provided,
- Experience in delivery of similar courses, and
• Proposed methodology and resources available.

8.2.2.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support will be based on the price set out in the tender documentation, subject to a maximum amount of €200,000 per three years per service provider. The aid intensity will be 100% of the cost specified in the successful tender.

8.2.2.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.2.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

There will be a risk that the identification of the areas in which the training courses will be provided will be inadequate.

There is a risk that the tender applications will not be evaluated accurately.

There is a risk that the successful tenderer will not provide the training as set out in the tender documentation or to the level prescribed in the tender submission.

8.2.2.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

The managing division has an appropriate control environment and payment mechanism in place.

The identification of appropriate training topics will arise from an extensive stakeholder consultation process.

The managing division will be adequately trained in Public Procurement Guidelines and will avail of the expertise in the Department’s Central Procurement Unit and the Office of Government Procurement at all stages in the tender design and evaluation.

National and EU public procurement rules will be respected, in particular (a) Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC, (b) Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU once transposed into national legislation, (c) Directives 89/665/EEC and 92/13/EEC and (d) the general public procurement principles derived from the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.
Appropriate administrative and on the spot checks will be conducted by the operating division.

### 8.2.2.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. Appropriate checks have been designed to ensure controllability.

### 8.2.2.3.1.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Support will be based on the price of the successful tender submission.

### 8.2.2.3.1.11. Information specific to the operation

General principles to ensure appropriate resources in the form of regularly trained and qualified staff and advisory experience and reliability with respect to the field of advice. Identification of the elements that the advice will cover

CPD for agricultural advisors will result in training courses being delivered by qualified providers on a range of topics including financial management, animal health and welfare, environment and climate change, scheme delivery and regulatory matters.

A Level 8 National Framework of Qualifications (or another specified qualification as deemed eligible by DAFM) educational qualification is required for eligibility.
8.2.2.3.2. B. Targeted Advisory Service on Animal Health and Welfare – Training for Advisors

Sub-measure:

- 2.3 - support for training of advisors

8.2.2.3.2.1. Description of the type of operation

The operation will involve the specialist training of the practitioners/veterinarians to deliver an on-farm animal health and welfare advisory service. The advice to be provided on farm will strategically target a number of core areas such as Johne’s disease, BVD, IBR, SCC, TB, parasite control and other significant animal health and welfare issues in the pig sector and sectors affecting species as listed under Regulation EU 2016/429 of the EU Animal Health Law. Species include ‘kept animals’, as listed in Annex II, ‘hoofed animals’ as listed in Annex III of Regulation EU 2016/429 and terrestrial gastropods as listed in Annex 1 of Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 intended for human consumption. Also included are other species that may be reared for food production, for example insects to allow for the potential of novel animal-based food production systems in the future.

8.2.2.3.2.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Payment will be made to a specialist trainer (for each specified disease) for the training of up to the 450 practitioners/veterinarians who will then go on to deliver on farm advice under submeasure 2.1.

Additionally, during the transitional period, payment will be made to a specialist trainer for the training of 400 advisors/veterinarians on parasite control measures.

Payments will be made to the trainer based on the costs set out in the successful tenders.

Support under this measure shall be limited to the maximum support rates laid down in Annex II of of Regulation (EU) no. 1305/2013.

8.2.2.3.2.3. Links to other legislation

National and EU public procurement rules will be respected, in particular (a) Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC, (b) Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU once transposed into national legislation, (c) Directives 89/665/EEC and 92/13/EEC and (d) the general public procurement principles derived from the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

8.2.2.3.2.4. Beneficiaries

The beneficiary will be the body/authority selected via a procurement process to provide specialist training to the advisors who will then deliver the on farm animal health and welfare advisory service under
submeasure 2.1.

8.2.2.3.2.5. Eligible costs
The eligible costs are the costs incurred in organising and delivering the training to the advisors. The eligible costs will include the salaries of the service providers, the service providers’ travel costs, materials prepared for course delivery, associated administration costs and costs linked to hosting the training course.

These eligible costs will be set out in the tender application with cost comprising part of the tender evaluation criteria.

8.2.2.3.2.6. Eligibility conditions
DAFM will identify areas linked to specific animal health and welfare policy areas, where it has been identified that a gap exists in the existing knowledge base of the advisory services. Then DAFM will operate an open call for proposals to interested and qualified bodies to tender to provide the specified training.

Eligible trainers will be qualified veterinary surgeons who are registered with the Irish Veterinary Council with a relevant National Framework of Qualifications Level 9 qualification.

8.2.2.3.2.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria
Successful providers will be selected using an open tender process. Ranking and selection will be based on clearly defined eligibility criteria that will include:

- Price,
- Ability to deliver the training specified in the form of qualified staff and expertise in the area in which the advice will be provided,
- Experience in delivery of similar courses, and
- Proposed methodology and resources available.

The tender process will set out clear criteria.
8.2.2.3.2.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support will be based on the price set out in the tender documentation, subject to a maximum amount of €200,000 per three years per service provider.

The total support payable will be calculated on the basis of the number of disease training sessions required. It is envisaged that there will be 30 training sessions per annum with 15 veterinary participants per session with a maximum of €2,200 per session.

During the transitional period, the total support payable will be calculated on the basis of the number of training sessions required. It is envisaged that training will be delivered via 20 training courses to approx. 400 advisors (veterinarians) with a maximum of €3,333 per session.

8.2.2.3.2.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.2.3.2.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

There is a risk that the identification of the areas in which the training courses will be provided will be inadequate.

There is a risk that the tender applications will not be evaluated accurately.

There is a risk that the successful tenderer will not provide the training as set out in the tender documentation or to the level prescribed in the tender submission.

8.2.2.3.2.9.2. Mitigating actions

The managing division has an appropriate control environment and payment mechanism in place.

The identification of appropriate training topics will arise from an extensive stakeholder consultation process.

The managing division will be adequately trained in Public Procurement Guidelines and will avail of the expertise in the Department’s Central Procurement Unit and the Office of Government Procurement at all stages in the tender design and evaluation.

National and EU public procurement rules will be respected, in particular (a) Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC, (b) Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU once transposed into national legislation, (c) Directives 89/665/EEC and 92/13/EEC and (d) the general public procurement principles derived from the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

Appropriate administrative and on the spot checks will be conducted by the operating division.

8.2.2.3.2.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure.
design. Appropriate checks have been designed to ensure controllability.

8.2.3.2.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Support will be based on the price set out in the tender documentation, subject to a maximum amount of €200,000 per three years per service provider and will be calculated on the basis of the number of disease training sessions required. It is envisaged that there will be 30 training sessions per annum with 15 veterinary participants per session with a maximum of €2,200 per session.

During the transitional period, the total support payable will be calculated on the basis of the number of training sessions required. It is envisaged that training will be delivered via 20 training courses to approx. 400 advisors (veterinarians) with a maximum of €3,333 per session.

8.2.3.2.11. Information specific to the operation

General principles to ensure appropriate resources in the form of regularly trained and qualified staff and advisory experience and reliability with respect to the field of advice. Identification of the elements that the advice will cover

The implementation of the measures on affected farms would be expected to significantly improve animal health and welfare outcomes associated with BVD, TB, IBR, Johne’s disease, dairy cow mastitis and other significant animal health issues in sectors affecting species as listed under Regulation EU 2016/429 of the EU Animal Health Law. Species include ‘kept animals’, as listed in Annex II, ‘hoofed animals’ as listed in Annex III of Regulation EU 2016/429 and terrestrial gastropods as listed in Annex 1 of Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 intended for human consumption. Also included are other species that may be reared for food production, for example insects to allow for the potential of novel animal-based food production systems in the future. Similarly, the measure would be expected to address the problem of antimicrobial and anti-parasitic resistance by reducing the need for antimicrobial and anti-parasitic interventions and by highlighting the need for the appropriate use of these substances. In addition, the measure addresses animal health issues in a manner that contributes to a more sustainable livestock production system and will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the sector. Providers of the training to advisors will be qualified veterinary surgeons who are registered with the Irish Veterinary Council who have a relevant National Framework of Qualifications Level 9 qualification.
8.2.2.3.3. C. Targeted Advisory Service on Animal Health and Welfare – On Farm advice

Sub-measure:

- 2.1 - support to help benefiting from the use of advisory services

8.2.2.3.3.1. Description of the type of operation

The operation will involve the delivery of specialist animal health and welfare advice on a request basis at individual farm level. This on farm advice will be targeted at the prioritised areas in which advisors have been trained under submeasure 2.3 above.

8.2.2.3.3.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Payment will be made directly to the beneficiary in respect of advice imparted by the practitioner at individual farm level based on a maximum 3-hour rate.

During the transitional period, payment will be made directly to the beneficiary in respect of advice imparted by the practitioner at individual farm level based on a maximum 5-hour rate.

8.2.2.3.3.3. Links to other legislation

n/a

8.2.2.3.3.4. Beneficiaries

The beneficiary will be the trained practitioners delivering on farm advice on animal health and welfare issues.

8.2.2.3.3.5. Eligible costs

The eligible cost will be the professional fee invoiced in respect of animal health and welfare advice delivered on farm by the beneficiary.

8.2.2.3.3.6. Eligibility conditions

The beneficiaries will be qualified veterinary surgeons who deliver the on farm advice. Eligibility also requires the advisor to have undergone the specialist training of advisors under submeasure 2.3 and to hold a
8.2.2.3.3.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

Ranking and selection criteria will be applied to the pool of eligible applicants. These criteria will include:

- Geographical location
- Availability to deliver advice
- Experience in the relevant animal health area
- Relevant qualifications

The criteria will be transparent, and marks will be awarded in relation to each. A minimum threshold score will be required in order to be selected. Once beneficiaries have been selected in this way, the administrative support service supported via Technical Assistance will match beneficiaries to farmers seeking advice in consultation with DAFM.

8.2.2.3.3.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Training will be based on a 3-hour advisory session at individual farm level, for which the professional fee will be payable, limited to a maximum rate of €80 per hour.

During the transitional period, training will be based on a 5-hour advisory session at individual farm level, for which the professional fee will be payable, limited to a maximum rate of €120 per hour.

8.2.2.3.3.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.2.3.3.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risks relate to ensuring the quality of advice provided, ensuring the advice is implemented, and the need to ensure a tangible output.

8.2.2.3.3.9.2. Mitigating actions

Outputs from the service will include an action plan agreed between the advisor and farmer with specific, actionable recommendations. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the delivery of the advisory services will be carried out by a combination of targeted site visits, the surveying of the target groups, and the analysis of the action plans and farm-specific information held on the relevant national database.
8.2.2.3.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. Appropriate checks have been designed to ensure controllability.

8.2.2.3.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

The support available to beneficiaries will amount to an hourly rate for professional advice to cover 3 hours, limited to a maximum rate of €80 per hour.

The maximum rate for the professional fee in respect of the 3 hours on farm training takes account of the following:

(i) current fees paid by DAFM to private Veterinary Practitioners performing TB testing.

(ii) current rates charged by Private Veterinary Practitioners to their clients for call outs and

(ii) Fees charged by farm advisors

During the transitional period, the support available to beneficiaries will amount to an hourly rate for professional advice to cover 5 hours, limited to a maximum rate of €120 per hour.

8.2.2.3.11. Information specific to the operation

General principles to ensure appropriate resources in the form of regularly trained and qualified staff and advisory experience and reliability with respect to the field of advice. Identification of the elements that the advice will cover

The implementation of the measure on affected farms would be expected to significantly improve animal health and welfare outcomes associated with BVD, TB, IBR, Johne’s disease, and dairy cow mastitis, as well as other significant diseases in the sector and sectors affecting species as listed under Regulation EU 2016/429 of the EU Animal Health Law. Species include ‘kept animals’, as listed in Annex II, ‘hoofed animals’ as listed in Annex III of Regulation EU 2016/429 and terrestrial gastropods as listed in Annex 1 of Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 intended for human consumption. Also included are other species that may be reared for food production, for example insects to allow for the potential of novel animal-based food production systems in the future. Similarly, the measures would be expected to address the problem of antimicrobial and anti-parasitic resistance by reducing the need for antimicrobial and anti-parasitic intervention and by highlighting the need for the appropriate use of these substances. In addition, the measure addresses animal health issues in manner that contributes to a more sustainable livestock production system and will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the sector.

Providers of the advisory service will be qualified veterinary surgeons who are registered with the Irish Veterinary Council, and they will be required to engage in specialist training to be provided via submeasure 2.3.
8.2.2.3.4. D. Support for the setting up of Producer Organisations

Sub-measure:

- 2.1 - support to help benefiting from the use of advisory services

8.2.2.3.4.1. Description of the type of operation

The operation will involve the provision of advice to prospective Producer Organisations of active beef suppliers.

The Department will conduct a public procurement exercise, in line with the public procurement rules, to identify suitable advisors that will provide advice to prospective Producer Organisations to assist them with start-up requirements for formal recognition. The public procurement exercise will involve a two stage process; (i) to ensure eligibility conditions are met and (ii) the formation of a list of approved advisors based on pre-defined selection criteria.

Groups of farmers wishing to come together within a Producer Organisation can apply for advice from the approved list of advisors under two categories:

1) Advice on business planning, production planning, membership of PO,

2) Advice on establishment and registration of PO as a legal entity and drafting Statutes of PO

Funding will be provided to the advisors on a per advice basis – only one advice per category will be eligible for payment at a maximum rate of €1,500 per advice per PO. Any further provision of advice, beyond the one advice per category, will have to be borne by the PO themselves. As a result, the maximum support provided to each PO will be €3,000 if the prospective PO receives advice under category 1) and 2) above.

Support is only granted to provide for the engagement of an approved advisor(s) as a once-off payment per PO.

Role of the advisor(s)

- Advisors will assist POs in the organisation and marketing of their products and ensure any other requirements for POs as laid down by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and (EU) Regulation 1308/2013 are complied with. This will involve a recruitment of suitable members of a PO, engagement with existing prospective members of a new PO, at least one collective group meeting with members and where necessary, meetings with chairperson or other relevant individuals of the PO and the generation of a business plan.

- The advisor and PO/prospective PO shall make any arrangements necessary to ensure the provision of advice throughout the process of the consideration of establishing a PO and the application for
recognition of a PO.

- The advisor will be required to provide a written agreement with the PO or prospective PO for the engagement of the advisor for the provision of advice.

- The advisor(s) will undertake to make themselves available for a 3 hour meeting approximately one month after recognition.

- Advisors will be required to record attendance at all meetings held and submit timesheets for any preparation of business plans. After an initial consultation, it is recommended that a business plan will be agreed, including a strategy for contract negotiations with meat factories and a member recruitment strategy, and the advisor(s) and PO will draw up statutes for the recognition application.

- Advisors will be paid a once-off payment following a decision by DAFM on the recognition or not of the prospective PO. The payment will reflect the following conditions:
  - 100% of the total funding will be paid if the PO receives recognition
  - 80% of the total funding will be paid if the PO submitted an application for recognition but were unsuccessful.
  - 47% of the total funding will be paid for if no application for PO recognition is received

It shall be necessary to provide support for work carried out by advisors even though not all prospective groups of POs apply for or achieve recognition. Such scenarios can arise where for example after full consideration of the requirements for operation or recognition as a PO the formation of a PO is not suitable for that group for reasons such as the demographics of the group of producers etc. Support should still be provided to advisors where advice has been provided in such situations. Similarly a group of producers may lose members from the group after the application for or evaluation of recognition as a PO and therefore not meet the minimum number of producers as required by the provisions of Irish regulations for the recognition of POs and therefore not achieve recognition. Support should be provided for advice given up until these stages therefore a proportion of the funding is contingent on both the submission of an application for recognition and a further proportion of the funding is contingent on recognition as a PO.

8.2.3.4.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

The payment to advisors(s) is based on the numbers of advice per Producer Organisation or prospective Producer Organisation on a once-off basis.
8.2.2.3.4.3. Links to other legislation
N/A

8.2.2.3.4.4. Beneficiaries
The beneficiary will be the selected advisor delivering advice to the prospective PO.

8.2.2.3.4.5. Eligible costs
Eligible costs are the advisor costs associated with providing the advice – i.e. the salaries of the advisors, travel costs to attend meetings with the prospective POs, material and other costs related to arranging the establishment and recognition of a PO.

8.2.2.3.4.6. Eligibility conditions
DAFM will identify through a public procurement exercise, in line with public procurement rules, a panel of advisors who satisfy the following eligibility conditions.

- A minimum educational qualification to level 8 of National Framework of Qualifications or another specific qualification/experience deemed eligible by DAFM.

8.2.2.3.4.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria
Selection criteria will be applied to the pool of eligible applicants. These criteria shall include:

- Geographical location
- Availability to deliver advice
- Knowledge and experience in the setting up of POs

In addition, separate selection criteria will be applied for the provision of advice in both Category 1 and Category 2.

The selection criteria for the provision of advice in Category 1 shall include knowledge and experience of:

- The beef sector including knowledge of the primary production and processing sectors
- Business planning for farm businesses in the livestock sector
The selection criteria for the provision of advise in Category 2 shall include knowledge and experience of:

- Company or co-operation formation

The criteria will be transparent, and marks will be awarded in relation to each. A minimum threshold score will be required in order to be selected as an approved advisor.

A list of approved advisors will then be published by category and by geographical area to allow a PO/prospective PO to choose the advisor(s) that best suits their needs. Eligibility and selection of applicants will be carried out as one process.

### 8.2.2.3.4.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

The categories of advice eligible for support are as follows:

1. Advice on business planning, production planning, membership of PO,
2. Advice on establishment and registration of PO as a legal entity and drafting Statutes of PO

The payment to an advisor will be €1500 per advice per PO or prospective PO and is based on 12.5 hours total engagement at a rate of €120/hour. Advisors will be required to submit timesheets and meeting records as evidence of work carried out and payments will be reduced pro rata if the minimum requirement of 12.5 hours of total engagement is not achieved. The maximum support provided to each PO will be €3,000 if the prospective PO receives advice under categories 1) and 2) above.

### 8.2.2.3.4.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

#### 8.2.2.3.4.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

The risks related to the scheme include:

- Risk 1: Failure to arrange and attend meetings with the PO; to accurately record attendance at meetings or failure to hold post-recognition meeting with PO
- Risk 2: Failure to record work completed on behalf of the PO or failure to prepare a business plan for the PO
- Risk 3: Failure to provide proof of agreement between advisor and PO
- Risk 4: Failure to apply for recognition; failure of a PO to obtain recognition from DAFM.
8.2.2.3.4.9.2. Mitigating actions

In order to mitigate the risks under the scheme:

- **Risk 1**: DAFM will ensure appropriate controls are in place through appropriate inspections and administrative checks of POs and advisors including meeting records.
- **Risk 2**: DAFM will ensure that appropriate controls are in place to check, through appropriate inspections, that work carried out by the PO is documented and that a business plan has been prepared.
- **Risk 3**: The advisor will be required to provide the written agreement between the PO and the advisor to DAFM. Risk based inspections will identify any groups who engage an advisor but do not subsequently submit an application for recognition as a PO.
- **Risk 4**: To guard against poor advice, a stepped payment system will be implied. The payment will be once-off and provided to the advisor within 4 months following a decision by DAFM on the recognition or not of the prospective PO. The payment will reflect the following conditions:
  - 100% of the total funding will be paid if the PO receives recognition;
  - 80% of the total funding will be paid if the PO submitted an application for recognition but were unsuccessful;
  - 47% of the total funding will be paid for if no application for PO recognition is received.

8.2.2.3.4.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.2.3.4.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

The rate per advisor is based on cost associated with recruitment of members and prospective POs, meetings, preparation and delivery of business plans, preparation of Statutes and relevant administration costs.

8.2.2.3.4.11. Information specific to the operation

General principles to ensure appropriate resources in the form of regularly trained and qualified staff and advisory experience and reliability with respect to the field of advice. Identification of the elements that the advice will cover:


- **Statutory Instrument number 49 of 2016. European Union (Beef Producer Organisations)**
8.2.2.4. **Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations**

8.2.2.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.2.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.

8.2.2.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As referenced above.

8.2.2.5. **Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant**

As referenced above.

8.2.2.6. **Information specific to the measure**

General principles to ensure appropriate resources in the form of regularly trained and qualified staff and advisory experience and reliability with respect to the field of advice. Identification of the elements that the advice will cover.

As referenced above.

8.2.2.7. **Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure**

As referenced above.
8.2.3. M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)

8.2.3.1. Legal basis


8.2.3.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

Measure 4 consists of

- TAMS II with various strands of support under the measure. As the strands of support are rolled out some of them may be merged for the purposes of simplification from a national administrative perspective. However, all of TAMS II is programmed under sub-measure 4.1 – support for investments in agricultural holdings.
- A number of non-productive investments (submeasure 4.4), which are delivered nationally via the GLAS Agri-environment and Climate Measure. The logic underlying this submeasure is intrinsically linked to GLAS in Measure 10, and the funding is allocated under that dominant Measure.
- A number of non productive investments (submeasure 4.4), which are delivered nationally in the Burren region via The Burren Programme. The logic underlying this submeasure is intrinsically linked to the agri-environment Measure 10, and the funding is allocated under that dominant Measure.

This measure has been designed according to the overall intervention logic and overarching RDP strategy to contribute towards a range of focus areas as follows:

- Focus area 2A – Economic performance, modernisation & restructuring
- Focus area 2B – Facilitating the entry of framers and generational renewal
- Focus area 3B - Farm risk prevention & management
- Focus area 4A – Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 200 areas
- Focus area 4B – Improving Water Management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- Focus area 5B - Efficiency in Energy Use
- Focus area 5D - Reducing GHG & ammonia emissions
**Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Schemes II (TAMS II)**

Investment in physical assets will enable the sector to respond to a wide range of policy challenges, including the cessation of milk quotas from 2015, the need for more modern and efficient infrastructure, animal health and welfare issues, etc.

The SWOT analysis and public consultation identified a need for capital investment over a wide range of investments. The areas prioritised for investment in the current proposal for TAMS II will contribute to a number of central themes in the farming sector, including:

- Enabling growth and competitiveness
- Environmental and climate change issues
- Supporting increased efficiency of holdings
- Improved animal health and welfare

In addition, it is proposed that this measure will also address one of the key structural constraints identified in the sector – namely age profile. As a complement to supports under Pillar 1 and supports outside of the CAP framework (e.g., taxation measures), TAMS II will specifically target support at young farmers by offering them a greater rate of aid intensity.

The areas identified for funding are:

- The RDP preparatory analysis identified a need for capital investment over a wide range of areas in order to target support towards key sectors. The main targeting in relation to this strand of support is at the cattle sector – this will form the majority of the animal welfare, safety and nutrient storage strand of support as well as dairy equipment. Sheep and goat sectors are also targeted for support but, numerically, this is expected to be at a much lower level. Targeting of the organic sector provides for an integrated framework of supports as growth in this sector will bring much wider environmental benefits. Other sectors addressed include the equine, pig and poultry sector and the tillage sector. Young farmers, Organic Capital Investment, Solar Investment scheme, Lower Emission Slurry Spreading, and Farm Safety Scheme are supported at an enhanced grant rate subject to certain eligibility conditions.

**Dairy equipment.** Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset. Support will be provided for grant-aid for investment in a select range of items, including important equipment for the dairy sector such as robotic milking machines, bulk milk tanks, milking equipment, storage and cooling equipment.

**Low emission spreading equipment.** Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset – Support will be provided for grant-aid for the investment in mobile slurry tanks and umbilical systems attached to low emission spreading equipment. From 1st Jan 2023, Support will be provided for grant-aid for capital investments at an enhanced grant-rate of 60% in respect of investments in the specific strands of support under the Low emission spreading equipment outlined above which are funded by EURI. In order to encourage the purchase by farmers of this specialised type of equipment, this strand of support under the measure will not be subject to the overall investment ceiling which will be applicable under the other strands of support introduced under TAMS II. From 15 April 2020 it is mandatory (under SI 40/2020) for derogation farms to use LESS. In accordance with the
provisions of EU Reg 1305/2013 LESS scheme approvals cannot issue to such farms after 15 April 2021. Under SI 529/2020 the use of LESS on all farms above 170kgs/ N per hectare is mandatory from 15 April 2021 therefore, in addition to the above, scheme approvals cannot issue to farms above 170kgs/ N per hectare after 15 April 2022. LESS equipment will continue to be available to farms below 170kgs/ N per hectare, subject to no further changes in legislation.

**Animal Welfare, Safety and Nutrient Storage Scheme.** Article 45.2(a) the construction, acquisition, including leasing or improvement of immovable property and Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset. Support under the category Animal Welfare and Safety will be provided for grant-aid for investment in a select range of items, including sheep fencing, calf rearing equipment and isolation facilities and important safety elements such as replacement slats and safety rails/fencing, solid covers for slurry stores, handling facilities, calving and isolation facilities, aeration systems and some upgrading works includingrewiring. Support will also be provided for grant-aid for the investment in the construction of new animal housing on Irish farms. The conversion of existing buildings will not be permitted (except in the case of organic applicants). Support will be provided for grant-aid for investment in a select range of items including loose houses for cattle, solid floor calf housing, sheep housing, goat housing, equine housing and facilities, slatted houses, cubic houses, unroofed slatted feed areas, roofing of livestock feed yards, automatic slurry scrapers, isolation boxes, calving pens, bull pens and enclosures and associated works, crushes and enclosures and associated works and rainwater harvesting and storage. On rain water harvesting it is not intended that the water will be used for irrigation purposes but will be used for washing and spraying. Support under the category nutrient storage will be provided for grant-aid for the investment in the construction of farm nutrient storage facilities on farms.

**Pig and poultry investments** in energy, water meters and medicated feed/water dispensers, Article 45.2(a) the construction, acquisition, including leasing or improvement of immovable property and Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset - Support will be provided for grant-aid for the upgrading of existing buildings in the two sectors mentioned and the construction of new pig housing. For example: medicated feed/water dispensers, solar panels, heat recovery units, heat pumps, biomass boilers, ventilation and insulation.

**Organic Capital Investment** (organic farmers only), Article 45.2(a) the construction, acquisition, including leasing or improvement of immovable property and Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset - Support will be provided for grant-aid for capital investments across a wide range of areas specifically targeted at the organic sector. From 1st Jan 2023, alongside the current support rate of 40% which will remain available for all licensed organic producers, support will be provided for grant-aid for capital investments at an enhanced grant-rate of 60 % to current participants of the RDP funded Organic Farming scheme or the CSP funded Organic Farming scheme across a wide range of areas specifically targeted at the organic sector. For example: Animal housing and nutrient storage facilities, grain, hay, straw and farm product stores, safety elements on existing farm structures, animal handling equipment, dairy milking and storage equipment, horticulture structures, polytunnels, specialised organic machinery and equipment. From 15 April 2020 it is mandatory (under SI 40/2020) for derogation farms to use LESS. In accordance with the provisions of EU Reg 1305/2013 LESS scheme approvals cannot issue to such farms after 15 April 2021. Under SI 529/2020 the use of LESS on all farms above 170kgs/ N per hectare is mandatory from 15 April 2021 therefore, in addition to the above, scheme approvals cannot issue to farms above 170kgs/ N per hectare after 15 April 2022. LESS equipment will continue to be available to farms below 170kgs/ N per hectare subject to no further changes in legislation.

**Young Farmer Capital Investment** Article 45.2(a) the construction, acquisition, including leasing or
improvement of immovable property and Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset – Support will be provided for grant-aid for capital investments at an enhanced grant-rate of 60% in respect of investments by young farmers in the specific strands of support under the measure outlined above. In addition, support will be provided for grant-aid for dairy buildings specifically for qualifying young farmers. From 15 April 2020 it is mandatory (under SI 40/2020) for derogation farms to use LESS. In accordance with the provisions of EU Reg 1305/2013 LESS scheme approvals cannot issue to such farms after 15 April 2021. Under SI 529/2020 the use of LESS on all farms above 170kgs/ N per hectare is mandatory from 15 April 2021 therefore, in addition to the above, scheme approvals cannot issue to farms above 170kgs/ N per hectare after 15 April 2022. LESS equipment will continue to be available to farms below 170kgs/ N per hectare, subject to no further changes in legislation.

*Tillage investments* Article 45.2(a) the construction, acquisition, including leasing or improvement of immovable property and Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset Support will be provided for grant-aid for capital investments across a wide range of areas specifically targeted at the tillage sector. For example: precision farming equipment, grain stores and grain storage equipment, low disturbance tillage equipment, and rainwater harvesting and storage. On rain water harvesting it is not intended that the water will be used for irrigation purposes but will be used for washing and spraying.

*Solar Investment Scheme* Support will be provided for grant-aid for the investment in solar pv systems to assist farmers in maximising their contribution to the production of renewable energy through the installation of Solar PV Technology along with battery storage on Irish farms. The solar PV systems grant aided will include Solar PV panels and Solar PV Rechargeable Batteries and Solar panels for water heating.

In order to encourage the purchase by farmers of this type of equipment, this strand of support under the measure will not be subject to the overall investment ceiling which will be applicable under the other strands of support introduced under TAMS II. Instead, it will be ring fenced with its own investment ceiling of €90,000 and will be grant aided at the enhanced rate of 60%. It is hoped that the ring-fenced investment ceiling and higher grant rate will encourage increased take up in solar applications encouraging self-consumption of renewable energy on the holding and lowering the energy costs at farm level. Also deployment of renewables at farm level contributes to lowering the carbon footprint of primary production and supports the objective of a climate neutral farm and a more resilient agriculture sector.

*Farm Safety Scheme* Article 45.2(a) the construction, acquisition, including leasing or improvement of immovable property and Article 45.2 (b) the purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset. From 1st Jan 2023, support will be provided for grant-aid for capital investments at an enhanced grant-rate of 60% in respect of investments in the specific strands of support under the Farm Safety Scheme outlined above. Suggested investments in the farm safety scheme include animal handling units (mobile and fixed), head scoops, calving pens, rewiring farm buildings, slat replacement, tank covers, fence of existing slurry stores, safety agitation platforms.

EURI funding will be programmed to support the investments under TAMS II, in line with Article 58a of Regulation 1305/2013 as amended by Regulation (EU) 2020/2220. EURI funding will support a number of priority areas including farm risk prevention and management, through animal welfare under the Animal Welfare, Safety and Nutrient Storage Scheme; restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry through support for the organic farming sector, and other sectors through the Farm...
Nutrient Storage and Tillage Capital Investment Scheme promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in the agriculture, food and forestry sectors including through the Solar Investment Scheme, Farm Safety Scheme, Pig and Poultry Investment Scheme and Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment Scheme (LESS). EURI programme projects and expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

**Non Productive Investments (delivered via GLAS)**

This submeasure incorporates support for a number of non productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives as pursued under Measure 10 in particular.

For the applicant, these non productive investments are potentially available as part of the GLAS scheme, and thus where chosen will form part of GLAS applications. The non productive investments as set out in the GLAS tier 3 list of actions are:

- Bee boxes
- Bird boxes
- Bat boxes
- Planting new hedgerow
- Traditional orchards
- Planting a grove of native trees
- Laying Hedgerows
- Coppicing Hedgerows
- Twite B
- Grey Partridge
- Riparian Margins
- Conservation of Solitary Bees (Sand)

Further information in relation to all these actions can be found in the GLAS Specification document attached as an Annex to the RDP.

**Non-productive investments (delivered via The Burren Programme)**

This sub-measure incorporates support for a number of non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives as pursued under Measure 10 in particular.

In particular, the farmer will be reimbursed for a proportion of the cost of capital investments in site enhancement works designed to improve the environmental dividend delivered by the holding.

The funding rate for non-productive investments varies depending on the relative environmental value of the category (75%, 50%, 25%). Non-productive investments include the following categories (the full list of
eligible non-productive investments and their relevant aid intensity is in Chapter 8.2.3.3.11):

- Stone wall repair (wall repair & drawing stones)
- Scrub removal
- Habitat restoration
- Access Tracks
- Fencing equipment
- Water equipment
- Feed equipment

To avoid any possible double-funding with TAMS, the investment items supported under Burren Intervention 2 will be ineligible for support under TAMS.

8.2.3.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.3.3.1. Non Productive Investments (delivered via GLAS)

Sub-measure:

- 4.4 - support for non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives

8.2.3.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

This submeasure incorporates support for a number of non productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives as pursued under Measure 10 in particular.

For the applicant, these non productive investments will form part of the GLAS scheme, and thus they will form part of GLAS applications. The non productive investments as set out in the GLAS tier 3 list of actions are:

**Creation of bird, bee and bat habitats**

The following actions involve the purchase or creation of a suitable habitat and includes both capital and agri-environment elements.

- Bee boxes
- Bird boxes
- Bat boxes
- Conservation of Solitary Bees - Sand

**Landscape Features**

The following actions deliver landscape and biodiversity benefits under Measure 10. The capital costs
refer to purchase of units where applicable e.g. trees, plants and to other elements such as establishment of fencing. These are integrated actions with both a capital and agri-environment elements such as the control of vegetation, which ensure delivery of the required environmental dividend:

- Planting new hedgerows
- Traditional orchards
- Planting a grove of native trees
- Laying Hedgerows
- Coppicing Hedgerows

**Establishment of Fence**

The following are integrated actions, with the establishment of fencing ensuring that the desired habitat/margin is created/maintained.

- Twite B
- Grey Partridge
- Riparian Margins

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**8.2.3.3.1.2. Type of support**

Type of support: Grants

This is an investment support measure which is integrated with GLAS, and delivered under Measure 10. Support will be paid via the payment made via GLAS / Measure 10. Costings are based on standardised costs, which have been verified by an independent authority, as part of the Measure 10 verification process. The non productive investments are linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives.

**8.2.3.3.1.3. Links to other legislation**

Regulation 1306/2013 as regards GAEC and relevant SMRs.

**8.2.3.3.1.4. Beneficiaries**

The beneficiaries are eligible GLAS farmers who have the relevant non productive investments incorporated into their GLAS plans. They will carry out the relevant agri-environment work for these actions under Measure 10.
8.2.3.3.1.5. Eligible costs

Eligible costs will be in line with Article 45 of Regulation EU No. 1305/2013 and Article 65 of Regulation EU No. 1303/2013. Eligible costs will include the construction or improvement of immovable property. Standard costs will be used.

8.2.3.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

All beneficiaries must be an approved GLAS/Measure 10 applicant.

8.2.3.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The selection criteria will be those applying to GLAS applications.

8.2.3.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

The applicable rates are as set out for the individual actions in the GLAS costings (see measure 10). The breakdown between investment and agri-environment costs is shown in the table below. The support rate is 100% of independently verified standard costs (with exception of Planting New Hedgerow action where the rate is 60% overall).

Note – while the payment rates are expressed nominally on a hectare basis, the underlying standard costs have been calculated on a per unit basis – eg the number of whips/trees, the number of bat boxes etc.
8.2.3.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.3.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As support is delivered via GLAS, much of the detail here is integrated into the corresponding text under GLAS in Measure 10.

However, there are also risks linked to the investment based nature of the actions in this submeasure, including

- The risk that the investment will not be delivered
- The risk that the investment will not be delivered to the required standard

8.2.3.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

As support is delivered via GLAS, much of the detail here is integrated into the corresponding text under GLAS in Measure 10.

In relation to the specific investment related risks, the risk of non delivery will be mitigated by the inspection regime. The risk related to delivery to a required standard will be mitigated by the inspection regime, the GLAS training course, and the involvement of a professional planner in developing a farmer’s...
8.2.3.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As support is delivered via GLAS, the detail here is integrated into the corresponding text under GLAS in Measure 10.

8.2.3.3.1.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Support is calculated on the basis of Standard Costs and the methodology and payment rates have been independently verified. As support is delivered via GLAS, the detail here is integrated into the corresponding text under GLAS in Measure 10.

Please see note in section 8.2.3.7.1.8 in relation to the calculation of the standard costs.

8.2.3.3.1.11. Information specific to the operation

Definition of non productive investments

Investments that do not lead to any significant increase in the value or profitability of the agricultural holding and are linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives under Measure 10.

Definition of collective investments

Not applicable.

Definition of integrated projects

Measure 10 commitments that require non productive investments under Measure 4 to fully achieve agri-environment-climate objectives.

Definition and identification of the eligible Natura 2000 sites and other eligible areas of high nature value

Not applicable.

Description of the targeting of the support to farms in accordance with the SWOT carried out in relation to the priority referred to in Article 5(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013
As support is delivered via GLAS, the targeting here is integrated into the targeted and prioritised structure of GLAS which draws heavily and directly on the themes emerging from the RDP preparatory analyses.

List of new requirements imposed by Union legislation for complying with which support may be granted under Article 17(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Not applicable.

Where relevant, the minimum standards for energy efficiency referred to in Article 13(c) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Not applicable.

Where relevant, definition of the thresholds referred to in Article 13(e) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Not applicable.
8.2.3.3.2. Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Schemes II (TAMS II)

Sub-measure:

- 4.1 - support for investments in agricultural holdings

8.2.3.3.2.1. Description of the type of operation

As indicated above, the objective of the measure is to encourage investment in a number of particular target areas which will promote, in particular, increased competitiveness and sustainability in those sectors in which grant-aid will be made available. The provision of a higher aid intensity for young farmers is aimed at supporting young farmers wishing to enter the sector or improve their holdings.

It is intended to use a similar structure to that which was in place for TAMS under the RDP 2007-2013. Thus, under the overarching structure of TAMS II a separate strand of support will be established for each investment area in as far as is possible. This structure will facilitate a streamlined application process.

In order to ensure that approvals are issued to farmers on a regular basis, the application period will, in most cases, be divided into tranches and a separate financial ceiling fixed for each individual tranche. Where insufficient funding is available in a particular tranche, applications will be rolled forward for consideration under the next tranche.

EURO funding will support the investments under TAMS II, respecting the percentage thresholds set out in Article 58a of Regulation 1305/2013 as amended by Regulation (EU) 2020/2220.

8.2.3.3.2.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

This is a capital investment grant scheme. The standard rate of grant will be 40%, with young farmers attracting a higher rate of 60% under a dedicated scheme.

From 1st January 2023, the standard rate of grant will remain at 40%, with young farmers continuing to attract a higher rate of 60% under a dedicated scheme. In addition, a higher grant rate of 60% will also be offered to applicants investing in the support strands of:

- Organic Capital Investment (funded from EAFRD and subject to certain eligibility conditions)
- Solar Investment scheme (funded from EURI)
- Lower Emission Slurry Spreading (funded from EURI)
- Farm Safety Scheme (funded from EURI).
8.2.3.3.2.3. Links to other legislation

It is not envisaged that any of the strands of support under the measure will provide specific assistance to enable an applicant to meet an impending or recently introduced EU agricultural standard. However, in several cases, the measure will have to take account of existing EU requirements such as the Nitrates Directive (Directive 91/676) and the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60), and Council Regulation 834/2007 on organic production and labelling. Any proposed investments under the measure will take account of environmental legislation i.e. new structures would improve the environmental benefits; increased storage capacity would add to the buffering capacity in adverse weather conditions low emission spreading technology will reduce ammonia emissions and precision farming equipment will reduce the level of inputs required.

8.2.3.3.2.4. Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries will be active farmers, with the possibility of groups of farmers as beneficiaries, with young farmers (as defined in Article 2(1)(n) of the Rural Development Regulation No 1305/2013) benefiting from an increased rate of aid. In order to ensure that as many young farmers as possible can avail of the enhanced scheme, it is proposed to use the maximum flexibility available and accept applications from young farmers who commenced farming during the five years preceding date of application. Registered Farm Partnerships and Legal Persons will also be potential beneficiaries under the scheme, provided that they meet the eligibility criteria.

8.2.3.3.2.5. Eligible costs

Eligible costs will be specified in advance as part of the terms and conditions attaching to each of the strands of support under the measure. These will be in line with Article 45 of Regulation EU No. 1305/2013 and Article 65 of Regulation EU No. 1303/2013. Eligible costs will include inter alia: the construction or improvement of immovable property and the purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset.

8.2.3.3.2.6. Eligibility conditions

Farmers in all areas of the country will be entitled to apply for grant-aid under TAMS II, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria laid down in each individual strand of support under the measure.

The eligibility conditions are as follows for the different strands of support under TAMS II:

**Strand of Support under TAMS II - Eligibility Criteria**

**Solar Investment Scheme**

The applicant must:
- Hold a Department identifier
- Have a minimum of 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS or 20 production units for pig/poultry farming

**Young Farmers’ Capital Investment**

The applicant must:

- Hold a Department identifier
- Be between 18 years and not more than 40 years of age at application
- Have not received grant-aid under a previous Installation Aid Scheme
- Meet the requirements of set-up for the first time within five years of application
- Have ownership or lease of a development site
- Have a minimum of 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS or 20 production units
- Meet specific educational qualifications
- Have effective control of the holding
- For equine investments have a minimum of 3 equines and 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS

**Dairy Equipment**

The applicant must:

- Hold a Department identifier
- Have ownership or lease of a development site
- Have a minimum of 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS

**Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment (LESS)**

The applicant must:

- Hold a Department identifier
- Have a minimum of 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS or 60 production units for pig farming
- LESS scheme approvals for derogation farms cannot issue to such farms after 15 April 2021.
- LESS scheme approvals cannot issue to farms above 170kgs/ N per hectare after 15 April 2022.

**Organic Capital Investments**

The applicant must:

- Be a licensed organic producer
- Hold a Department identifier
- Have ownership or lease of a development site
- Have a minimum of 3ha land declared under BPS or BISS, or in the case of horticulture enterprises, a minimum of 1ha

To qualify for a higher grant rate of 60%, a licensed organic producer must also:
• Be a current participant of the RDP funded Organic Farming Scheme or the CSP funded Organic Farming Scheme

In case of young farmers, the applicant must also:

• Be between 18 years and not more than 40 years at age of application
• Have not received grant-aid under a previous Installation Aid Scheme
• Meet the requirements of set-up for the first time within five years of application
• Meet specific Educational Qualification
• Have effective control of holding

**Pig and Poultry Investment**

The applicant must:

• Have ownership or lease of a development site
• Have a minimum of 20 production units from pig or poultry
• Hold a Department identifier

**Tillage investments**

The applicant must:

• Hold a Department identifier
• Have ownership of or lease the development site
• Have a minimum area of 15 hectares of cereals / potatoes / field vegetable declared

**Animal Welfare Safety and Nutrient Storage**

The applicant must:

• Have ownership or lease of a development site
• Have a minimum of 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS or a minimum of 20 production units from intensive enterprise
• Hold a Department identifier
• In terms of animal housing, as sector support is rolled out, the requirement to be a farmer in the relevant sector will be included in the terms and conditions.
• For equine investments have a minimum of 3 equines and 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS

**Farm Safety Scheme**

The applicant must:

• Have ownership or lease of a development site
• Have a minimum of 5ha land declared under BPS or BISS or a minimum of 20 production units
Intensive enterprises are pigs, poultry, rabbits, protected horticultural crops and the production of nursery stock. The table below sets out how Production Units on the holding are calculated in order to meet the minimum 20 production units requirement. For example, a pig finishing enterprise with 400 pig places would equate to 24 production units on the basis of 100 pig units converting to 6 units as per the table.

In the case of the Organic Scheme proof of organic status will be required. Where appropriate, specific groups of farmers may be given preference in the selection criteria laid down under each strand of support under the measure.

In several cases the measure will have to take account of existing EU requirements such as the Nitrates Directive (Directive 91/676) and the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60), and Council Regulation 834/2007 on organic production and labelling. For example in the case of applicants under the nutrient storage investments, no grants will be payable if the applicant is not in a position to prove that he/she is in compliance with existing EU requirements for example in the case of the Nitrates Directive (Directive 91/676).

All eligible applications must be in line with relevant environmental legislation.
8.2.3.2.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The selection criteria will be set out following consultation with the RDP Monitoring Committee in accordance with Article 49 of Regulation EU No. 1305/2013. These selection criteria will be clearly transparent and made available to potential beneficiaries through the application forms and terms and conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Intensive Enterprise</th>
<th>Conversion into Production Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sow Breeding Only</td>
<td>1.1 units per 100 pig places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sow Breeding and Finishing</td>
<td>6.0 units per 100 pig places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs Finishing Only</td>
<td>6.0 units per 100 pig places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ducks</td>
<td>3.0 units per 1000 bird places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broilers</td>
<td>3.0 units per 1000 birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broiler Breeders</td>
<td>8.0 units per 1000 birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layers</td>
<td>3.0 units per 1000 birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkeys (fattening)</td>
<td>3.0 units per 1000 birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Range Egg Production</td>
<td>1.5 units per 100 birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
<td>20 units per 30 metre tunnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasshouse (crops)</td>
<td>125 units per hectare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery (liner) production</td>
<td>75 units per hectare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrub production (containers)</td>
<td>50 units per hectare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ornamental trees, field grown</td>
<td>25 units per hectare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbits</td>
<td>1.0 unit per 100 does</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
conditions. They will be applied in a non discriminatory manner.

A point based system will apply with a minimum threshold for selection of operations/ projects. Points/marks will be allocated to applicants in accordance with the various specific selection criteria that will apply under each strand of support under the measure. Some common selection criteria are envisaged across the various strands of support under the measure. These could include:

- the size of holding/enterprise (specific marks will be awarded on a per hectare or per production unit basis, with marks allocated as scale increases)
- New calculation based on nitrates returns
- holding in an Area of Natural Constraint.

8.2.3.3.2.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

A general 40% rate of aid is available. However, this will be increased to 60% in the case of young farmers as defined in the relevant legislation. In order to ensure that the available budget is respected, a super ceiling for investment of €80,000 per holding over the lifetime of the RDP is in place. Exceptionally, for the pig and poultry investment scheme a super-ceiling of €200,000 will apply.

In order to encourage the purchase by farmers of specialised low emissions slurry-spreading equipment, however, that particular strand of support under the measure is excluded from the application of the super-ceiling. However, from 2021 the availability of lower emission slurry spreading equipment will be limited to farmers under 170kgs /N in 2019 - SI 529/2020 & SI 40/2020.

From 1st January 2023, the standard rate of grant will remain at 40%, with young farmers continuing to attract a higher rate of 60% under a dedicated scheme. In addition, a higher grant rate of 60% will be offered for organic investments (funded from EAFRD and subject to certain eligibility conditions), Lower Emission Slurry Spreading (funded from EURI), Solar Investment Scheme (funded from EURI) and Farm Safety Scheme (funded from EURI).

A higher grant rate for investments in LESS, Farm Safety, and solar renewables funded through EURI is proposed under the TAMs scheme M04. These areas are included in the areas judged of particular importance in meeting the EURI objectives of a resilient, sustainable and digital economic recovery and where percentage targets for spending have been included in the Transitional Regulation (EU) 2020/2220. Support for farm safety investments contributes to rural resilience and will support sustained recovery. Investment in LESS and solar equipment will have a particular impact on a sustainable and resilient recovery and the achievement of the European Green Deal. Increasing the support for solar panels to encourage greater renewables and energy security is a top priority for Europe at this moment and is coherent with the aims of RePower EU.

A higher grant rate for capital investments in organic farming is proposed under the TAMs scheme M04. During the time period of the CSP, Ireland’s support for investments will be provided initially through the RDP (2023 – 2025) and thereafter by the CSP (2026 – 2027). The TAMs programme in the RDP is being designed to support both RDP and CSP implementation. The CSP and RDP must operate in a coherent manner to ensure the achievement of objectives in the CSP and RDP. The CSP includes an ambitious target of 7.5% of agricultural area for organics. This is a challenging target, and all supports must work coherently to ensure this.
Additionally, from 1st January 2023, the super-ceiling for investment will reset to €90,000 per holding and €160,000 per Partnership for the remaining years of the RDP. The investment ceiling for the LESS scheme will also be reset to €40,000. The super-ceiling for investment for the pig and poultry investment strand of support will increase to €500,000.

With the requirement for pig farms to upgrade their facilities to reduce the usage of anti-microbials and to rear pigs without the need to routinely dock tails, pig farmers will need to dramatically increase their overall housing stock. To meet the new stocking density/animal welfare requirements, pig farmers will need to increase the fattener house areas by 45% and weaner house area by 20%. Additionally with the conversion to free farrowing, farmers will need to increase the farrowing house area by a multiple of 3. The current investment ceiling of €200,000 provides limited support to pig farmers in undertaking the required changes.

It could be estimated that a typical 750 sow unit would need to spend in the region of €2.5m to provide the extra fattener and weaner space required to enable rearing pigs with intact tails. This does not include the required expenditure on upgrading existing houses or upgrading the farrowing houses to free farrowing places.

The housing stock of the poultry industry is aging and needs significant upgrading to enable birds to be reared with reduced anti-microbial usage. Poultry housing needs significant upgrading to provide for the indirect heating of houses to enable improvements in air-quality and drier litter to improve bird health. This will require significant investment in heating systems, feeding and drinking systems and ventilation systems.

8.2.3.3.2.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.3.3.2.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

A number of risks can be associated with the implementation of the strands of support under the investment measure proposed under the new Programme, many of which were identified during the course of the 2007-1013 RDP. These risks include –

Provision of financial ceilings to strands of support under the measure:

There will be significant demand by farmers for the suite of investment supports proposed in the RDP. Whilst it is always difficult to gauge the likely demand for investment over a seven-year period, it is reasonable to assume that the value of applications, in grant terms, for many of the investment items proposed will exceed the financial allocation allocated to each strand of support under the measure within TAMS under the RDP.
Risk of double funding between TAMS II and Intervention 2 of the Burren Scheme.

Failure to complete investment works to correct technical specifications:

A risk under any investment measure is that applicants will not complete the investment works to the standards required by the Department.

Commencement of investment works prior to issue of approval.

A further risk which arises under the RDP is that farmers might commence the proposed investment works prior to the issue of Department approval.

A risk can arise in relation to the reasonableness of costs and it must be ensured that grant-aid is payable only on costs which are considered to be reasonable.

### 8.2.3.3.2.9.2. Mitigating actions

In the case of the risks identified above, the following mitigating actions will be taken as part of the control measures adopted as part of the RDP:

- Provision of limited financial allocations to strands of support under the measure:

In order to avoid the risk of possible financial exposure under the new investment supports over and above the amounts allocated, steps will be taken to ensure that the value, in grant terms, of approvals issued does not exceed the amount of funding available. (Or, where appropriate, within a certain level above that amount, in order to take account of those farmers who may not proceed with the approved investment).

In the case of each strand of support under the measure, a series of tranches, with fixed financial ceilings, will be opened in which all eligible applications received will be ranked in accordance with the relevant selection criteria applicable. Following the ranking of each application, approvals will only issue to farmers up to the appropriate level vis a vis the financial allocation available under the tranche concerned. Eligible applications which do not receive an approval in a particular tranche will be rolled forward for consideration.
under the following tranche.

To avoid any possible double-funding with TAMS II, the investment items supported under Burren Intervention 2 will be ineligible for support under TAMS II.

Failure to complete investment works to correct specifications:

In conjunction with application forms, the Department is preparing new technical specifications or revising existing specifications in relation to the strands of support under the investment measure in the RDP. Assurance that investment works have been completed according to the Department’s technical specifications will result from the on-the-spot inspections which will be carried out on investment works completed under the Programme. The control measures for each new measure will include a pre-determined level of on-the-spot pre-payment inspections where it will be verified that the Department’s technical specifications have been fully complied with by the applicant. Where the investment works involve the construction of buildings, a programme of on-the-spot visits will also take place whilst the works are being carried out, for example to ensure that foundations have been completed appropriately.

Commencement of investment works prior to issue of approval:

Checks to ensure that works have not commenced prior to their approval will be included as part of a pre-approval inspection regime which will also be introduced under the Rural Development Programme. Where appropriate, such checks will be carried out on a risk analysis basis.

In relation to ensuring reasonableness of costs, the use of the system set out in the ‘methodology for calculation of the support rate’ section below is the mitigating action.

8.2.3.3.2.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. Appropriate desk and field based checks have been incorporated.

8.2.3.3.2.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

A system of reference costs will be put in place under each strand of support under the measure in order to ensure that grant-aid is payable only on costs which are considered to be reasonable. Under each strand of
support under the measure, applicants will be required to include their proposed costs for each investment item set out in the grant application. In some instances, it may be decided to make use of the flexibility provided under the simplified costs provisions to operate solely on a standard costs basis, while in other cases, a combination of reference costs and receipted costs will be applied. Where Simplified Cost Options are used, the relevant amounts will be publicly available prior to the launch of the relevant Scheme.

In situations where a combination of reference costs and receipted costs apply, the grant amount will be calculated on the basis of the lowest of the following three amounts:

- The proposed costs indicated by the applicant;
- The Department’s reference costs;
- The eligible amount of receipted costs submitted by the applicant.

The reference costs are developed as a maximum ceiling that can be paid for grant-aided buildings and equipment. For equipment that needs to be installed to operate, the reference cost calculated must also cover the cost of installation. The reference costs are independently calculated by the Engineering Unit of the Agricultural Environment and Structures Division (formerly the Engineering Unit of the Nitrates, Biodiversity and Engineering Division).

The reference costs are calculated by undertaking the following:

- CSO construction index figures shall be obtained for the period being reviewed to act as a guide for the potential expected increases in the prices of equipment and buildings.
- Where relevant, receipted costs shall be downloaded from the TAMS computer system to compare the actual claimed costs for the relevant items over the preceding year with the reference costs.
- Quotations shall be obtained from at least three separate reputable supplier companies for each item that reference costs are being developed for. Once all of the quotations have been received, the average cost is calculated for each item. This ensures that the average obtained is reflective of the true market cost of the items.

8.2.3.3.2.11. Information specific to the operation

Definition of non productive investments

Not applicable.

Definition of collective investments

Registered Farm Partnerships and legal persons are allowed to participate in each of the strands of support under the measure, provided that they meet the eligibility criteria. However, there is no higher aid intensity
provided for collective investments.

Definition of integrated projects

Not applicable.

Definition and identification of the eligible Natura 2000 sites and other eligible areas of high nature value

Not applicable.

Description of the targeting of the support to farms in accordance with the SWOT carried out in relation to the priority referred to in Article 5(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

The measure is a targeted one in accordance with the SWOT analysis and public consultation which identified a need for capital investment over a wide range of investments. The areas prioritised for investment under the measure will contribute to a number of central themes in the farming sector. This has facilitated strategic targeting on a thematic and a sectoral basis as set out in the description of the Measure.

The setting of selection criteria is a further channel through which support can be better targeted. For example, in relation to the specific Animal Housing strand of support under the measure, this will be further targeted via a combination of the following:

- Competitiveness - on the basis of costs proposed and used as part of the assessment process,
- Region - more points for Areas of Natural Constraints,
- Size of holding - Specific marks will be awarded on a per hectare or per production unit basis, with marks allocated as scale increases.

List of new requirements imposed by Union legislation for complying with which support may be granted under Article 17(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Not applicable.

Where relevant, the minimum standards for energy efficiency referred to in Article 13(c) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Not applicable.
Where relevant, definition of the thresholds referred to in Article 13(e) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

| Not applicable. |
8.2.3.3.3. The Burren Programme

Sub-measure:

- 4.4 - support for non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives

8.2.3.3.3.1. Description of the type of operation

This sub-measure incorporates support for a number of non productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment-climate objectives as pursued under Measure 10 in particular.

As indicated above, the farmer will be reimbursed for a proportion of the cost of capital investments in site enhancement works designed to improve the environmental dividend delivered by the holding.

8.2.3.3.3.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

This is a non-productive capital investment grant scheme. The rate of grant contribution varies depending on the relative environmental value. A 75% rate is applied where the environmental benefit is considered greater than agricultural benefit. Investment's include permanent scrub works, internal stone wall repair and habitat restoration. A rate of 50% applies where the environmental benefit is considered equal to agricultural benefit. Items include troughs, feed bins (field), pumps, tanks, gates, external stonewall repair, wire fencing and PPE safety equipment. A 25% rate is applied where the environmental benefit is considered less than agricultural benefit. These investments deliver benefits for the environment by facilitating access and management of high nature value fields but also have benefits for the farmer as they improve management conditions, therefore a higher proportion of the burden is covered by the farmer. Access tracks are included in this rate.

Payment is determined based on receipts and a self-declaration of hours worked.

8.2.3.3.3.3. Links to other legislation

n/a
8.2.3.3.4. Beneficiaries

All beneficiaries must be an approved Burren Programme applicant. They will carry out the relevant agri-environment work for these actions under Measure 10.

8.2.3.3.5. Eligible costs

Eligible costs will be in line with Article 45 of Regulation EU No. 1305/2013 and Article 65 of Regulation EU No. 1303/2013. Standard costs will be used.

8.2.3.3.6. Eligibility conditions

All beneficiaries must be an approved Burren Programme applicant.

8.2.3.3.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The selection criteria will be those applying to the Burren Programme applications.

8.2.3.3.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

The applicable rates are as set out for the individual actions in the Burren Programme costings (see Chapter 8.2.3.3.3.11). With the funding rate varied under each (75%, 50%, 25%), as per above:

8.2.3.3.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.3.3.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As support is delivered via the Burren Programme, much of the detail here is integrated into the corresponding text under Measure 10. However, there are also risks linked to the investment based nature of the actions in this sub-measure, including:

- The risk that the investment will not be delivered
- The risk that the investment will not be delivered to the required standard
- The Burren Programme will be subject to the principle of no double funding. It is envisaged that many participants in the new Burren Programme will also be participants in GLAS and TAMS II

8.2.3.3.9.2. Mitigating actions

As support is delivered via the Burren Programme much of the detail here is integrated into the
corresponding text under Measure 10

In relation to the specific investment related risks, the risk of non delivery will be mitigated by the inspection regime. The risk related to delivery to a required standard will be mitigated by the inspection regime, the Burren Programme training course, and the involvement of an advisor in developing a farmer’s plan.

To Avoid any double funding with GLAS areas in payment for LIPP, THM and Farmland Bird actions under GLAS will be deemed ineligible for area-based payment under the Burren Intervention 1. For other parcels receiving area-based payment under GLAS, the performance related payments under the Burren Intervention 1 will only be initiated when a score of 5 or more is achieved. To avoid any possible double-funding with TAMS II, the investment items supported under Burren Intervention 2 will be ineligible for support under TAMSII.

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<th>8.2.3.3.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure</th>
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<th>8.2.3.3.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant</th>
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<th>8.2.3.3.11. Information specific to the operation</th>
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<td>Definition of non productive investments</td>
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Definition of collective investments
Definition of integrated projects

Definition and identification of the eligible Natura 2000 sites and other eligible areas of high nature value

Description of the targeting of the support to farms in accordance with the SWOT carried out in relation to the priority referred to in Article 5(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

List of new requirements imposed by Union legislation for complying with which support may be granted under Article 17(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Where relevant, the minimum standards for energy efficiency referred to in Article 13(c) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Where relevant, definition of the thresholds referred to in Article 13(e) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

8.2.3.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.3.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.3.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.
8.2.3.4.3. **Overall assessment of the measure**

As referenced above.

8.2.3.5. **Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant**

As referenced above.

8.2.3.6. **Information specific to the measure**

**Definition of non productive investments**

Not applicable.

**Definition of collective investments**

Not applicable.

**Definition of integrated projects**

Not applicable.

**Definition and identification of the eligible Natura 2000 sites and other eligible areas of high nature value**

Not applicable.

**Description of the targeting of the support to farms in accordance with the SWOT carried out in relation to the priority referred to in Article 5(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

Not applicable.

**List of new requirements imposed by Union legislation for complying with which support may be granted under Article 17(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

Not applicable.
Where relevant, the minimum standards for energy efficiency referred to in Article 13(c) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Not applicable.

Where relevant, definition of the thresholds referred to in Article 13(e) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Not applicable.

8.2.3.7. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

Not applicable.
8.2.4. M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)

8.2.4.1. Legal basis


8.2.4.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

This measure will contribute to Focus Area 4A – Biodiversity, HNV farming and landscapes.

The Traditional Farm Buildings measure will build upon the success of the Heritage Buildings Scheme which operated under REPS 4 (2007–2013 RDP). The objective of this measure is to ensure that small traditional farm buildings and other structures, which are of significant cultural and heritage value, are restored and conserved for renewed practical agricultural use as part of the normal working life of the farm. Domestic dwellings, currently in occupation or intended for occupation, are not included.

There are various multi-functional benefits which will arise as a result of this measure in areas such as landscape, biodiversity, climate change, enhancement of traditional skills and contribution to the broader rural economy.

Although changes in farming practices have left many old farm buildings underused, they remain a valued feature in the landscape and their conservation allows these buildings to remain in active use on the farm. Primarily, the measure seeks to enhance the significant positive contribution that traditional farm buildings make to the Irish rural landscape.

Additionally, these traditional buildings can be important habitats in their own right, particularly for certain protected wildlife species, such as bats and birds. The cross compliance with wildlife legislation will ensure the discovery and conservation of protected wildlife species roosting in these buildings, thereby creating a holistic approach to the management of the built and natural environment.

Environmental benefits will be further enhanced as restoration of these old buildings to functional use produces fewer GHG emissions and reduces the amount of material to be sent to landfill when compared with new buildings.

The measure will also help to ensure continued knowledge amongst the farm population of traditional building materials and techniques. Many of the older farm buildings were laid out using local tried and tested materials and built to patterns and arrangements that made optimum use of resources and have harmonised over time with their settings. It is possible to foster the passing on of traditional skills through empowering owners and allowing them to continue to be the curators or guardians of these buildings. These skills are then available locally for other buildings, both on- and off–farm. The project buildings serve as exemplars for the repair of others on the farm, and indeed in the rural locality.

Lastly, the measure will also contribute to the broader rural economy. It will indirectly provide employment in rural areas for professionals and local contractors and materials suppliers.
The measure will be delivered in a manner consistent with planning processes at a local Government level in accordance with article 20.3 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013.

8.2.4.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.4.3.1. Traditional Farm Buildings Scheme

Sub-measure:

- 7.6 - support for studies/investments associated with the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages, rural landscapes and high nature value sites including related socio-economic aspects, as well as environmental awareness actions

8.2.4.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

The measure will provide once-off grant aid for approved conservation work to traditional farm buildings and associated structures. All traditional buildings which are now used for agricultural purposes, or available for such use, will be considered as part of the measure. Works, which will focus on ensuring long term structural integrity, should be carried out using traditional building techniques and materials to ensure continued visual appeal and cultural value.

Applicants will submit details of proposed conservation projects, including an estimate of costs, which will then be assessed by an expert selection committee. As part of the conservation works, the habitat value of the buildings concerned will also be assessed and protected.

It is intended to use a similar structure to that which was in place for the Heritage Buildings Scheme which operated under REPS 4 in the 2007-2013 RDP. Therefore, the measure will be administered on behalf of DAFM by The Heritage Council, a statutory body whose function it is to propose policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of the national heritage.

8.2.4.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Support will be by way of grants to carry out approved conservation work to small farm buildings and associated structures (historic yard surfaces, landscape features around the farmyard – walls, gate pillars, gates, millraces).
8.2.4.3.1.3. Links to other legislation


8.2.4.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

GLAS (Measure 10) participants or participants in RDP or CSP funded schemes including Agri-environment schemes, Eco-schemes, EIPs or Organic Farming Schemes are the potential beneficiaries.

8.2.4.3.1.5. Eligible costs

As with the preceding scheme under REPS 4, the approach taken is flexible in enabling costs to be tailored to the needs of the project concerned. The maximum grant in any individual case will not exceed 75% of total costs up to a maximum grant of €30,000.

However, eligible costs will be in line with Articles 45.2(a) and 45.2(c) of Regulation EU No. 1305/2013 and Article 65 of Regulation EU No. 1303/2013. These eligible costs will relate to “the improvement of immovable property”.

8.2.4.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

This is a complementary measure to GLAS, and for the transitional period will also be extended to participants under RDP or CSP funded Agri-environment schemes, eco schemes, EIPs and Organic Farming schemes. It is intended to encourage a holistic approach which increases understanding and management of both the natural and built/cultural heritage present on individual farms. Accordingly, participation in GLAS, RDP or CSP funded schemes including Agri-environment schemes, eco schemes, EIPs and Organic Farming schemes is the prime eligibility condition.

8.2.4.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

All applications will be reviewed by a specially convened selection committee who will make their decisions based on a matrix for scoring the value of each application with reference to landscape and biodiversity benefits arising, mitigation of climate change, value for money and geographical spread.

8.2.4.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Each project will be costed individually. The maximum allowable support will be 75% of total costs, up to a maximum grant of €30,000. From 1st January 2023, the ceiling for investment will reset to €30,000 per holding for the remaining years of the RDP.
8.2.4.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.4.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risks here include

- The possibility of the supported work not being carried out to completion
- Risks in relation to the quality of work carried out
- Risks related to the relevance of costs claimed.

8.2.4.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

An annual inspection scheme has been in place for the Heritage Buildings Scheme which operated under REPS 4 and has proven to be very successful. A similar system will form the basis for risk mitigation in this Measure. Pre- and post-inspection of each project will be carried out and a full photographic record kept. From 1st Jan 2023, pre- and post-inspection of projects on a risk assessment and random basis will be carried out and a full photographic record kept. Applicants will also be required to submit an interim report including photographs. The applicant’s conservation professional will sign-off on costs being claimed, and only costs relating to the agreed works can be claimed. Following final inspection, and if the applicant has complied with all grant conditions, the Heritage Council will recommend that the Department pay the grant. DAFM will also carry out checks on 5% of projects approved by the Heritage Council.

8.2.4.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.4.3.1.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

The Heritage Council will assess whether costs are appropriate to the works necessary. All applicants must submit an estimate of costs at application stage. The Heritage Council will assemble a panel of approximately 6 conservation/heritage professionals to assess shortlisted grants. If the panel considers that works are not properly costed, the Heritage Council will write to the applicant to request the submission of revised estimates on the works that can be supported.

8.2.4.3.1.11. Information specific to the operation

Definition of small scale infrastructure, including small scale tourism infrastructure as referred to in Article 20(1)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Notwithstanding that this measure is programmed under article 20.1.f, small scale infrastructure is defined
as small traditional farm buildings, ancillary to the main dwelling, and other associated structures such as historic yard surfaces and landscape features around the farmyard.

If applicable, specific derogation allowing to support bigger scale infrastructure for investments in broadband and renewable energy

Not applicable.

Information on the application of the grace period referred to in Article 2(3) of Delegated Regulation No 807/2014

Not applicable.

The minimum standards for energy efficiency referred to in Article 13(c) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Definition of the thresholds referred to in Article 13(e) of [DA RD – C(2014)1460]

Not applicable.

8.2.4.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.4.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.4.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.

8.2.4.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As referenced above.
### 8.2.4.5. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

As referenced above.

### 8.2.4.6. Information specific to the measure

**Definition of small scale infrastructure, including small scale tourism infrastructure as referred to in Article 20(1)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

As referenced above.

If applicable, specific derogation allowing to support bigger scale infrastructure for investments in broadband and renewable energy

Not applicable.

Information on the application of the grace period referred to in Article 2(3) of Delegated Regulation No 807/2014

Not applicable.

The minimum standards for energy efficiency referred to in Article 13(c) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014

Not applicable.

Definition of the thresholds referred to in Article 13(e) of [DA RD – C(2014)1460]

Not applicable.

### 8.2.4.7. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

n/a
8.2.5. M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)

8.2.5.1. Legal basis


8.2.5.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

This Measure contains the following four sub-measures

- 10.1, payment for agri-environment-climate commitments – the Green Low Carbon Agri-Environment Scheme (GLAS)
- 10.1, payment for agri-environment-climate commitments – the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP)
- 10.1, payment for agri-environment-climate commitments - Straw Incorporation Measure (SIM)
- 10.1, payment for agri-environment-climate commitments - The Burren Programme

The Measure will contribute to the following Focus Areas

- 4A – restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas
- 4B – improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management
- 4C – preventing soil erosion and improving soil management
- 5D – reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture
- 5E – carbon conservation and sequestration.

In order to support the efficient and effective implementation of the Measure, targeted training has been designed for GLAS, the Burren Programme and BDGP. The training for GLAS and BDGP is delivered and funded under Measure 1. The training for the Burren Programme is delivered by the Burren Team and funded as part of the general contract of the Burren Team under Measure 20.

The premia calculated for these submeasures are based on compensation for costs incurred and income foregone. In certain cases, partial compensation is foreseen.

Each submeasure sets out the relevant contract period. The possibility for the conversion or adjustment of commitments, including the extension of the duration of the commitment as provided for under Article 14 of Commission Regulation 807/2014 is foreseen.

Given the structure of Measure 10, there will be farmers who are beneficiaries under both GLAS, the Burren Programme and/or BDGP. In such cases, there may be cases where commitments under both sub measures overlap. However, given the clear environmental benefits arising and the multifaceted nature of these
benefits (in keeping with the strong environmental focus of Ireland’s RDP) the ceiling set for annual payments under Measure 10 in Annex II of Regulation 1305/2013 can be increased in such cases. There are also situations where a combination of GLAS actions on a given parcel may have a similar result. Again, given the separate but complementary environmental impacts of these the ceiling set for annual payments under Measure 10 in Annex II of Regulation 1305/2013 can be increased in such cases.

**Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP)**

Agriculture is a significant constituent of the Irish economy with ruminant livestock representing the bulk of Irish agricultural output. Ireland has the fourth largest beef cow herd in the EU and specialist beef production is the predominant type of farming enterprise in the country.

The agriculture sector overall contributes 32% to Ireland's total national greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions which is by far the highest among EU member states; the average agri emissions across the EU is approximately 10%. The high level of agri emissions in Ireland is mainly associated with our large ruminant herd. Within this, excluding dairy production, other cattle (i.e. beef) account for approx 50% of agricultural GHG emissions. In light of this, Ireland has been seeking to put in place measures that seek to reduce GHG emissions from the agri sector (and the beef sector in particular) in an innovative manner. Within this RDP, a range of actions are supported in this context – from supports for knowledge transfer related to GHG to a number of focused actions within the GLAS and Measure 4 (TAMS). However, the BDGP sets out to target the suckler herd specifically in attempting to put in place a broad based and strategic approach to GHG emissions in the agri – sector.

Breeding strategies followed by the suckler beef sector have focused on improving the terminal traits of progeny in response to market demands. Terminal traits such as carcase weight and conformation have been improving steadily in response to market demand for efficient and high output beef animals. However, this has been to the detriment of maternal/efficiency traits such as fertility and milk yield which are equally important but for which there is no clear market signal.

Research in Ireland has demonstrated that introducing genetically superior animals in terms of improved maternal traits (e.g. with shorter calving intervals, calving at a younger age, and producing heavier weanlings) can lead to measurable reductions in GHG output. In the preparatory analysis undertaken in designing the BDGP, GHG savings of between 92kt and 300kt were calculated. There are also a range of other associated additional climate benefits such as the production of lighter cows better suited to climate change adaptation, improved cow survivability and reduced replacement rates.

As a result, a key national policy priority is to encourage better uptake of efficient breeding stock with a greater emphasis on the maternal traits which can deliver more climate efficient animals, and, consequently, reduced GHG emissions.

Accordingly, the Beef Data and Genomics Programme has been designed to deliver these targeted climate change benefits. This will be done via data collection and the introduction of innovative genomic technologies in the suckler herd which will aid the identification and selection of the desired multi-trait breeding stock.

The Programme requires beneficiaries to undertake a range of actions designed to deliver accelerated genetic improvement in the quality of the beef herd and, as a result, the associated climate benefits. The establishment and maintenance of a large scale data collection system is central to the approach; this will be
done through the collection of data from commercial suckler cows herds. This then feeds into a genomics based breeding index (which ranks the efficiency of animals on a star based system, with 5 star being the most efficient) which will inform farmers in selecting robust and resource efficient suckler cow and bull replacements. Collecting data centrally across all farms and breeds allows for a more rapid increase in the reliability of the index.

To further support the realisation of this genetic potential, the linked knowledge transfer proposals in Measure 1 will improve farmer understanding as regards the use of genomics, data collection, and breeding selection with a view to delivering the GHG reduction envisaged. Measure 1 will also provide for training for the initial completion of the Carbon Navigator which will then form a central plank of the BDGP over the 6 years of the Programme. The Carbon Navigator has been developed to promote the uptake of carbon-efficient farming practices and demonstrates, for the scheme participant, the level of emissions from his/her farm, and sets indicative targets for reducing GHG emissions. It focuses on length of grazing season, age at first calving, calving rate, growth rate, nitrogen efficiency and slurry management.

It is intended that the Beef Data and Genomics Programme will serve as a ‘kick-start’ to the widespread application of genomics in the suckler herd over the 6 years of the Programme and a renewed focus on a multi-trait breeding strategy that more fully incorporates maternal traits. It is expected that the use of these practices would become self-sustaining in future programming periods.

Given the innovative nature of this support, DAFM will provide for an independent evaluation of the Programme at mid-term which will evaluate the roll out of the technologies with reference to issues such as take up rates and the cost structure of the Programme. In addition, the operation, cost structure, and take-up of the scheme will be subject to ongoing review and modification as appropriate (See Section 9 – Evaluation Plan).

G.L.A.S. (Green Low-Carbon Agri-Environment Scheme) and GLAS+

The proposed new GLAS scheme adopts an integrated approach to achieving objectives under Article 28 of the Rural Development Regulation and ties in with the green vision for Irish agriculture as contained in Food Harvest 2020 and as promoted by Bord Bia in the Origin Green campaign. The scheme is green as it preserves our traditional hay meadows and low input pastures, low-carbon as it retains the carbon stocks in soil through margins and habitat preservation and practices such as minimum tillage, and agri-environment as it promotes agricultural actions which introduce or continue to apply agricultural production methods compatible with the protection of the environment, water quality, the landscape and its features, endangered species of flora and fauna and climate change mitigation.

The inclusion of an agri-environment climate measure is compulsory under the Rural Development Regulation. GLAS will deliver overarching benefits in terms of the rural environment whilst addressing the issues of climate change mitigation, water quality and the preservation of priority habitats and species.

GLAS has been designed to achieve the delivery of targeted environmental advice and best practice at farm level. It aims to work within the framework for environmental sustainability as set down by the following EU Directives and national and international targets:

- The EU Climate Change and Renewable Energy Package and the Kyoto Protocol.
• The Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive and the European target of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2020.

This measure also takes into account the need for a targeted Agri-Environmental Scheme highlighted in the Environmental Analysis of Food Harvest 2020.

The outcome from the public consultation and the SWOT analysis demonstrated a broad need for a targeted agri-environment scheme to include emphasis on Natura 2000 sites and on water quality. Well-designed, targeted, monitored and managed measures will contribute to meeting Ireland’s objectives under the Rural Development Programme and also the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, EU Habitats and Birds Directives, Water Framework Directives and Climate Change.

The structure of GLAS responds to the needs identified in the SWOT analysis. Designated Natura 2000 land within the farmed environment comprises in the main of land in agricultural production, and the integration of both Natura and agri-environment measures within GLAS will result in administrative and output efficiencies. The targeted approach will permeate down to farm level where individual farmers will be required to address environmental priorities specific to the holding.

GLAS is a highly targeted scheme. Key to its design is the identification of a number of Priority Environmental Assets – primarily vulnerable landscapes (inc Natura and uplands), species at risk (primarily endangered birds), and high-quality watercourses. All holdings with these physical assets have been pre-identified and the areas of importance mapped at farm level. Presence of one or more of these assets on any farm guarantees priority access to the new scheme, but in return all required actions to protect and enhance these assets, as laid down by the Irish authorities, must be accepted on foot of standard payment-packages offered to the applicant. Environmental assets and actions of lesser importance have also been identified, and these can be addressed once the over-riding objective of addressing the Priority Environmental Assets has been met.

In addition, it is envisaged that, within the limits of budget availability, some farmers who undertake particularly challenging actions or who are compelled to take on a high number of compulsory actions, may qualify for a higher package-payment of up to €2,000 per annum under what is known as GLAS+. GLAS+ is targeted at farmers who have to undertake a high number of mandatory actions under the Tier 1 Priority Environmental Assets and Actions as set out in the Tier table for GLAS (see below), but will automatically include those managing endangered bird habitat.

Ireland’s main farming system is grassland based livestock and dairy production with approximately 8% of land in tillage. The range of actions proposed responds to the identified needs in the areas of water quality, climate change, biodiversity and Natura 2000. New actions specifically for tillage farmers have been included in order to encourage uptake and to increase the number of actions contributing to climate change objectives.

All applicants will be required to engage the services of a advisor in the preparation of their application and successful applicants will be required to have a nutrient management plan prepared for the farm. The importance of training to ensure proper delivery of commitments and to protect against the occurrence of error rates is also recognised and training modules in environmentally sustainable framing practices will be delivered under the knowledge transfer measure.

It is envisaged that the approach outlined above will lead to the achievement of significant environmental
benefits. However, the Irish authorities reiterate their intention to bring forward plans for a separate locally-led measure, targeting specific challenges of key environmental importance requiring individual design solutions. These include protection of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel and expansion of the Burren Farming for Conservation Project, and further focus on the needs of the hen harrier. The proposed measure will include a competitive element, based on periodic calls for proposals, with conservation/restoration of upland peats specifically included.

**Straw Incorporation Measure (SIM)**

This submeasure is an Agri-Environment and Climate intervention targeted specifically at the tillage sector in Ireland. It seeks to support tillage farmers in undertaking actions which will increase soil organic carbon levels and deliver reductions in GHG emissions. The submeasure is thus designed to further improve the environmental sustainability of the sector in Ireland.

The Measure will contribute to the following Focus Areas

- 5D – reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture
- 5E – carbon conservation and sequestration.

Many tillage farmers do not have an on-farm supply of organic manures for application to their soils. The chopping of straw in situ is a relatively unused method of returning organic matter to tillage soils and improving levels of soil organic carbon and biological activity such as earthworms and soil microbes. The measure will encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops. This will sequester carbon in tillage soils, thereby reducing GHG emissions and will further improve the environmental sustainability of the sector. There are additional potential environmental benefits in terms of reducing soil compaction often associated with removal of straw and subsequent application of imported manures. The measure is an Agri-environmental and climate measure that will operate during the transitional period funded by EURI. The measure will also raise awareness amongst farmers and other stakeholders in the tillage sector of the need to manage/protect soils.

**The Burren Programme**

The Burren Programme is a locally-led measure under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, introduced under Article 28 of Regulation 1305/2013. It is an agri-environmental measure focussed specifically at the conservation of the unique farming landscape of the Burren in counties Clare and Galway. It aims to promote a particular farming model that couples traditional farming practices with scientific assessment of environmental health at field level. The Burren Programme is designed to reward those farmers who deliver the highest environmental outputs (i.e. result-based).

The Burren Programme builds on the success and experience of similar programmes for the Burren piloted under the Burren LIFE Project (2005-2010) and the Burren Farming for Conservation Programme (2010-2015). The programme is based on both actions undertaken by the farmer and on performance in reaching qualitative environmental goals, measured through field assessment. The programme consists of two types of interventions, firstly a performance/results-based intervention and secondly a capital investment-based intervention.
To avoid any possible double-funding, areas in payment for LIPP, THM and Farmland Bird actions under GLAS will be deemed ineligible for area-based payment under the Burren Intervention 1. For other parcels receiving area-based payment under GLAS, the performance related payments under the Burren Intervention 1 will only be initiated when a score of 5 or more is achieved. See comments on baseline in chapter 8.2.5.3.3..10. A similar model will be applied for Organic farmers supported under the OFS. To avoid any possible double-funding with TAMS, the investment items supported under Burren Intervention 2 will be ineligible for support under TAMS. Similar linear actions under GLAS and the Burren programme (stone wall maintenance) will only be payable under one scheme/programme.

8.2.5.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.5.3.1. Beef Data and Genomics Programme

Sub-measure:

• 10.1 - payment for agri-environment-climate commitments

8.2.5.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

The BDGP will entail farmers undertaking a 6 year commitment to carry out a pre defined set of actions designed to underpin the delivery of a more climate friendly suckler herd. These actions are set out below. As per Article 28(5) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants.

Record Keeping and Event Recording

Participating farmers will be obliged to record specific animal events data, such as:

• For each calf born in the herd: sire details, calving ease, docility, vitality, size, quality and health traits
• For cows: milk score, docility and culling reasons
• For bulls: docility, functionality and culling reasons

This data will be combined with genomic information for use in genetic evaluation to determine an economic breeding value (Eurostar rating) for each animal. Farmers have to then base the selection of sires and replacement heifers on the Eurostar rating to improve the genetic merit of his/her herd. The data collected will also include questions on animal health to improve aggregate national data on herd health.

Genotyping
Participating farmers will be obliged to genotype priority animals in his/her herd. This will involve taking a tissue sample from the selected animals. This tissue sample will then be submitted for DNA extraction and subsequent genotyping.

The measure will oblige participant farmers to undertake a core set of actions to include:

- Using tissue tags to take samples from animals selected for testing by the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation;
- Sending selected samples for DNA extraction/genotyping;

The number of animals each year to be tested will equal to 60% of the number of reference animals on the farm.

Separately, Measure 1 will also include training for the farmer outlining how to interpret and utilise the data returned to the beneficiary following the submission of data and DNA.

**Replacement Strategy**

Following on from the collection of sufficient information to allow for the development of a reliable genomic breeding index, it is vital for the success of the Programme that the animals identified as being of superior genetic merit, with lower associated GHG emissions, are then utilised as replacement stock on participating herds. This measure will require beneficiaries to introduce replacement animals as follows:

- Beneficiary herds must use a genotyped 4 or 5 star bull (or use equivalent AI) by the end of the 6 year programme.
- By the end of the programme, 50% of female replacement animals in the beneficiary herd must be animals genotyped 4 or 5 stars on the maternal index.
- Beneficiary herds must have achieved above replacement strategy requirements to avail of an annual extension after the initial 6 year programme. Beneficiary herds must also maintain these requirements in any extension period.

It is not proposed to pay for the replacement of animals. The cost assigned for the Replacement Strategy only covers the additional net cost of this action, primarily the income foregone for that farmer from retaining animals on his/her herd which would otherwise have obtained a higher price on the market relative to replacement stock of a lower genetic merit. Where the replacement must be sourced outside the herd, this represents the additional net cost incurred of purchasing an animal of higher genetic merit over and above what the farmer would otherwise purchase.

**Carbon Navigator**

Each participant must complete the Carbon Navigator. There are two elements to this.

BDGP beneficiaries will receive expert coaching to assist them in both (i) retrieving the required information for completion of the Carbon Navigator and (ii) interacting with the Carbon Navigator using the information inputted and the resulting outcomes displayed. This will be delivered via Measure 1.

Following the initial completion of the Carbon Navigator through Measure 1, beneficiaries under this measure will be required to provide information for the annual completion of the Carbon Navigator so as to allow for continuous annual assessment of farming practices relative to the Carbon Navigator reports developed each year.
In addition to the above actions, and as noted above, beneficiaries will be required to undergo tailored training in order to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the BDGP. This targeted training is detailed in and supported via Measure 1.

8.2.5.3.1.2. Type of support
Type of support: Grants

An annual payment will be made to each farmer who meets the requirements of the BDGP. Each scheme participant will sign up to a six-year contract to cover the lifetime of the BDGP. As per Article 28(5) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants. Following the termination of that extension as per Article 7(2) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 a further annual extension may be offered.

8.2.5.3.1.3. Links to other legislation
n/a

8.2.5.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

The scheme will target active suckler farmers.

8.2.5.3.1.5. Eligible costs

The costs have been calculated based on the cost incurred and income foregone associated with undertaking the eligible actions underlying the scheme. Costs are measured in units of time required to complete the actions, the cost of genotyping, or the net additional cost of replacement animals as explained in section 8.2.5.3.1.1. In calculating the costs, all elements that would impact on improved productivity (and thus possibly give rise to revenue) have been deducted from the amount of support. Transaction costs have also been included in the calculation of costs.

The number of actions payable under this scheme in each year is based on the number of suckler cows calving in each herd during 2014 ("reference animals"), with a provision for a different year to be used as an alternative base year where 2014 would not be appropriate (e.g. for new entrants).

A co-efficient of 1.5 LU/ha is used in order to convert the number of "reference animals" into the number of hectares eligible for the scheme. These will be the “reference hectares” for payment under the BDGP in each of the years of the Programme. The "reference hectares" remain stable throughout the scheme. A farmer who has a number of hectares in his/her possession which is inferior to the number of "reference hectares" calculated, will still be eligible for participation in the scheme, but will only receive payment for the number of hectares he/she actually possesses.

In accordance with Article 47 of Regulation 1305/2013, a farmer’s number of eligible hectares under this
scheme may vary from year to year. The maximum variation allowed in this regard is a 20% decrease compared to the initially defined "reference hectares".

8.2.5.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

All applicants must have a herd number and possess registered beef breed animals.

Applicants must submit a Basic Payment Scheme application form for each year of the programme on which all land parcels are declared.

Applicants will be ineligible where persistently infected (PI) Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) animals born since 1st January 2012 have not been removed from the herd with the exception of those animals which, on the date of the application, are within 7 weeks of the date of the initial test.

Furthermore, all animals with a current positive or inconclusive BVD test result must be removed to the knackery on an ongoing basis and have a date of death recorded on the Animal Identification Movement (AIM) system within 7 weeks of the date of the initial test.

8.2.5.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The scheme will be open to all registered suckler beef farmers who commit to completing in full the mandatory actions under the scheme over the full duration of the Programme.

In the event of the measure being oversubscribed, selection of beneficiaries will be based on criteria designed to achieve the best climate return and may include:

- Previous engagement in delivery of DAFM schemes in the suckler cow herd;
- New entrants to suckler farming;
- Holding size.
- Previous engagement in the Agri-Environment Scheme AEOS, from the 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme

8.2.5.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

The rates payable under the BDGP are based on the costings assigned to all the actions required which have then been converted to an eligible hectare based payment using a stocking density coefficient. In addition to these costs, the possible economic benefits arising from the BDGP have been factored in. This has resulted in a final net payment of €142.50 for the first 6.666 eligible hectares operated by the beneficiary.

A degressive payment of €120 will apply on the remaining eligible hectares. This degressivity is introduced
with a view to achieving maximum value for money from expenditure under the scheme and reflects the economies of scale which will arise on farms with a higher number of animals / eligible hectares. This approach is based DAFM’s experience in administering schemes across the sector and the preparatory work which underlies the calculation of the relevant costs. For example, as familiarity with data recording requirements increases this will lead to efficiencies in undertaking this action when undertaken with greater frequency. Similarly, efficiencies will in the farmer undertaking the Carbon Navigator actions on a greater scale.

Participants under this measure will also benefit from support under Measure 01 (Knowledge Transfer) in the form of both BDGP training and initial completion of the Carbon Navigator.

8.2.5.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.5.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

The risks related to the scheme include:

- Submission of incomplete information;
- Reduced pool of replacement 4 and 5 star maternal heifers/bulls where suitable animals are sent for slaughter rather than placed on the market for breeding;
- Failure of beneficiaries to understand or utilise the information provided through the measure to make optimal breeding decisions;
- Failure to complete carbon navigator or attend training course
- Large clawbacks where the replacement requirement is not adhered to at the end of the programme

8.2.5.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

The following steps will be taken in order to mitigate the risks under the measure as follows:

- Cross checks will be conducted with the DAFM herd register & the Animal Identification and Movement (AIM) system;

- The requirement to remove all PI infected animals will be verified using the AHCS system;

- A helpsheet will issue with application forms and Terms and Conditions along with an information campaign which will coincide with the application process to ensure applicants are aware of the obligations under the scheme;
- Detailed training and ongoing supply of information will ensure improved beneficiary awareness of the value of genomics and the importance of making suitable replacement animals available;

- A percentage of applications will be selected for on-the spot control visit.

- Audits of breeding data

- Audits of genotyping data

8.2.5.3.1.9.3. **Overall assessment of the measure**

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.5.3.1.10. **Information specific to the operation**

Identification and definition of the relevant baseline elements; this shall include the relevant mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1) (c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and other relevant mandatory requirements established by national law

Referenced elsewhere.

The minimum requirements for fertilisers must include, inter alia, the Codes of Good Practice introduced under Directive 91/676/EEC for farms outside Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, and requirements concerning phosphorous pollution; the minimum requirements for plant protection products use must include, inter alia, general principles for integrated pest management introduced by Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, requirements to have a licence to use the products and meet training obligations, requirements on safe storage, the checking of application machinery and rules on pesticide use close to water and other sensitive sites, as established by national legislation

Referenced elsewhere.
List of local breeds in danger of being lost to farming and of plant genetic resources under threat of genetic erosion

Not applicable.

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic assumptions and parameters including the description of the baseline requirements as referred to in Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, which are relevant for each particular type of commitment used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs, income foregone resulting from the commitment made and level of the transaction costs; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account aid granted under Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, including payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, in order to exclude double funding; where appropriate, the conversion method used for other units in accordance with Article 9 of this Regulation

Referenced elsewhere.
8.2.5.3.2. G.L.A.S. (Green Low-Carbon Agri-Environment Scheme) and GLAS+

Sub-measure:

- 10.1 - payment for agri-environment-climate commitments

8.2.5.3.2.1. Description of the type of operation

**Tiered structure**

- GLAS has a **three tier hierarchy**, with Tier 1 receiving priority over Tier 2, and Tier 2 over Tier 3. This structure is designed to ensure the targeted and prioritised delivery of environmental benefits drawing from the extensive preparatory analysis underlying the RDP. Tier Table (below) provides full details.

- **Tier 1** is the most important Tier, comprising in Tier 1(a) of all the Priority Environmental Assets identified for support through GLAS, targeting vulnerable landscapes, species at risk and protection of high-status watercourses. Tier 1(b) also identifies a series of Priority Environmental Actions for intensive farmers, targeting climate change mitigation and farmland birds. (Intensive farmers are classified as having a whole farm stocking rate exceeding 140kg Livestock Manure Nitrogen per hectare (produced on holding) or more than 30 hectares of arable crops). Organic farmers also receive priority access to the scheme under Tier 1 in their own right. It is envisaged that at least 60% of all participants in GLAS will be drawn from Tier 1 as whole, and that 80-90% of the available funds will be targeted here as well.

- **Tier 2** is the next most important tier and focuses in Tier 2(a) on water-quality, through protection of predetermined vulnerable water-courses, while also accepting proposals under Tier 2(b) from other farmers who are prepared to take on predetermined actions again targeting climate change mitigation and supporting farmland birds.

- **Tier 3** is largely a feeder menu of complementary environmental actions for applicants approved into Tiers 1 and 2. It consists of actions such as the protection of traditional hay meadows, species-rich pastures, important landscape features like archaeological monuments, hedgerows and stone-walls, as well as provision of bird, bat and bee nesting facilities and the planting of small groves of native trees. Applications based entirely upon Tier 3 actions will also be invited.

- There is an internal hierarchy within GLAS of ‘**Assets over Actions**’. For example, in the case of Tier 1, expenditure will be targeted at the Priority Environmental Assets first (**Tier 1a**) before accepting intake from ‘intensive’ farmers adopting the Priority Environmental Actions (**Tier 1b**). Budgetary management over the Programme period is in place to maintain this prioritisation.

- The actions proposed under GLAS include a number of ‘integrated’ actions which incorporate non-productive capital investments as set out in M4.4. These include bee, bird and bat boxes, planting new hedgerows, traditional orchards, planting a grove of native trees, laying or coppicing hedgerows, Twite B, Grey Partridge, riparian margins and conservation of the solitary bee.

**Tier Table for GLAS**

**Recruitment process**

- Intake for **Tier 1(a)** will be structured on the basis of a ‘package’ offered to eligible candidates on
foot of predetermined areas, predetermined actions and predetermined populations, with maximum package-values of €5,000 and €7,000 (the latter under what is known as GLAS+, where particularly demanding environmental commitments are required). Candidates in Tier 1(a) who conserve small areas of important PEAs, but attract a payment of less than €5,000, may (but are not required to) select additional complementary actions from Tier 3 to bring their commitment in line with the total package of €5,000. Our projections are to attract some 25-30,000 farmers under Tier 1(a).

- Intake for Tier 1(b) will be structured on the basis of a package offered to eligible candidates on foot of predetermined populations with predetermined characteristics and again requiring commitment to predetermined actions. The maximum package-value in this case is €5,000. In GLAS Tranche 3, under Tier 1(b), GLAS+ will also apply in cases when two Priority Environmental Actions (Catch Crops and Minimum Tillage) are taken together which would result in higher environmental delivery and would also exceed the standard package value of €5,000 per annum. As with Tier 1(a) candidates attracting a payment of less than €5,000 may (but are not required to) select additional complementary actions from Tier 3 to bring their commitment in line with the total package of €5,000. Despite the size of the potential pool of applicants (c.20,000), it is not expected that intake will be numerically significant: national targets are to attract about 5,000 in all. This a relatively small proportion of the overall intake projected for GLAS (50,000) but significant in terms of the cohort being targeted, which consists of a pool of farmers who do not usually consider AECM schemes as relevant to them. However, in the event that the call is oversubscribed, selection criteria will be employed. The principles underpinning selection are shown separately.

- Intake for Tier 2(a) and (b) will follow the same recruitment model, but with maximum package values of €5,000 in each case. In the case of Tier 2, and for both category (a) and (b) applications, selection criteria will be employed if the call is oversubscribed. The principles underpinning selection are shown separately.

- Subject to availability of funds, independent intake from Tier 3 may be accepted. Intake will be recruited on the basis of proposals from individual holdings based on a maximum package value of €5,000 per holding. All applications will then be assessed on the basis of predefined selection criteria designed to rank proposals in order of environmental merit. The principles underpinning selection are shown separately.

- The overall approach is a cascading one, as articulated through the Tier 1, 2 and 3 structure, and the overarching principle is designed to meet thematic environmental priorities. In effect, those proposals meeting the criteria for Tier 1 will be ranked first, with Tier 2 and 3 following sequentially.

- To ensure a continued balance between European Commission priorities over the period of the programme, these priorities and the order in which they are filled may be varied, for each tranche of applications.

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**Core requirements**

In the first instance all farmers in GLAS must comply with the following list of core requirements:

a. An approved agricultural advisor must prepare the GLAS application.

b. A Nutrient Management Plan for whole farm must be prepared in the first year of participation.

c. Knowledge transfer by means of a training course for specific actions complemented by on-line demonstrations/advice on good environmental practices.

d. Record-keeping.
These are mandatory scheme conditions but are not construed as eligibility criteria in themselves. The aim is to ensure that all proposals are designed and presented to the highest standard, by a trained professional, and that farmers achieve an enhanced level of environmental knowledge, evidenced by attendance at dedicated training modules, and records kept of actions delivered, underpinned by an overall plan for nutrient resource efficiency on their holding. Items (a), (b) and (d) represent unpaid commitments on the part of the GLAS participant, except in relation to Commonsages, and Farmland Habitat (privately-owned Natura) where the adviser input is factored into the proposed per-hectare payment. In the case of (c), these training courses are being developed and funded under M1, and will include an allowance to each participant to cover time/replacement labour and travel costs.

Other requirements

- All Bird PEAs will automatically qualify for the higher package of €7,000 without the need for combination with another PEA. However, in the case of the Hen Harrier, specific consideration will be given to the possibility of an additional support mechanism under the planned Locally-Led measure, which would target those farmers managing large tracts of Hen Harrier habitat (in excess of 20 hectares).
- In relation to the Low Impact Slurry Spreading action, take-up of this action will be specifically assessed as part of the monitoring/evaluation process, having regard to the fact that the technology has already evolved into a baseline requirement in some Member States. Participants who opted for this action but who subsequently applied, in 2020, for nitrates derogation will no longer thereafter be eligible to receive funding for this action, as the 2020 Nitrates Derogation Terms and Conditions introduced further requirements for derogation farmers including the use of low emission slurry spreading (LESS) equipment for all slurry spread after 15 April 2020.
- Actions involving reduced fertiliser inputs will be supported by way of ongoing advisory supports, as well as compulsory mid-cycle review of the Nutrient Management Plan, and reactive review should the farming system or intensity change at any time.

Detailed description of GLAS actions is given in an annex to the RDP called "GLAS Specification". The Irish authorities are committed to reviewing the effectiveness of GLAS throughout the implementation period and these reviews have resulted in amendments to the GLAS Specification. The 23rd February 2015 GLAS specification applies to GLAS Tranche 1, the 30th December 2015 GLAS Specification applies to GLAS Tranche 2 and the 3rd November 2016 GLAS Specification applies to GLAS Tranche 3. All three specifications were updated in September 2018 and again in August 2020 and are attached as annexes to the Programme. Other requirements for commonages and peatlands included under point 8.2.5.3.2.10 due to space limit here.

GLAS Tier Tables
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8.2.5.3.2.2. Type of support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of support:</strong> Grants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**GLAS Tier Tables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE</th>
<th>Tier 1 Priority Environmental Assets and Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 1(a) All farmers with PEA's get first priority access into the Scheme in Year One and subsequent years. If any of these Priority Assets are applicable to the holding, they must be chosen and the relevant actions planned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All of these requirements are compulsory:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An approved agricultural planner must prepare the GLAS application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nutrient Management Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training in environmental practices and standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Record keeping of actions delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Type of support: Grants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TIER 1 Priority Environmental Assets and Actions**

- Farmland Habitat (private Natura sites)
- Farmland Birds (Breeding Waders and Curlews, Whych, Corncrake, Geese/Swans, Grey Partridge, Hen Harrier, Twite)
- Commonages (80% target participation in GLAS Commonage Plan)
- High Status Water Area
- Rare Breeds

**TIER 2 Environmental Assets and Actions**

- Tier 2(b) If an applicant (whether beef, sheep or dairy) with a whole farm stocking-rate exceeding 140 kg Livestock Manure Nitrogen per hectare produced on the holding, or any farmer with more than 30 ha of arable crops, wishes to be considered under Tier 1, s/he must adopt at least one of the following four mandatory actions:
  - Minimum Tillage (arable farm ≥ 30 ha)
  - Catch crops Establishment from a Sown Crop (arable farm ≥ 30 ha)
  - Low-Emission Slurry Spreading (livestock farm ≥ 140 kg N/ha only)
  - Wild Brd Cover (livestock farm ≥ 140 kg N/ha only)

Registered Organic farmers will qualify for priority access to the scheme under Tier 1(b), by selecting actions appropriate to the farm. However, if any of the assets listed in the first set of bullet-points above apply, they must be chosen first. Commitments under the Organic Farming Scheme will not qualify for payment under GLAS.

It is not guaranteed that all eligible applicants in Tier 1(b) will get into the Scheme and a scoring matrix will apply if necessary.

**TIER 2 Environmental Assets and Actions**

- Tier 2(b)(i) the absence of a Vulnerable Water Area, an applicant may still qualify for Tier 2 access provided one of the following actions are chosen and planned for:
  - Minimum Tillage (arable farm ≥ 30 ha)
  - Catch crops Establishment from a Sown Crop (arable farm < 30 ha)
  - Low-Emission Slurry Spreading (livestock farm ≥ 140 kg N/ha or arable farm < 30 ha)
  - Wild Brd Cover (grassland farm, i.e. < 30 ha of arable and more than 75% grass, < 140 kg N/ha)

It is not guaranteed that all eligible applicants in Tier 2 will get into the Scheme and a scoring matrix will apply if necessary.

**TIER 3 General Actions**

**These actions aim to enhance the climate change, water quality and biodiversity benefits delivered and can be chosen in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 actions or on their own (choosing only General Actions will not guarantee entry to the Scheme):**

- Arable Margins
- Bat boxes
- Bird boxes
- Catch Crops
- Conservation of solitary bees
- Coppicing Hedgerows
- Environmental Management of Fallow Land
- Laying Hedgerows
- Low-emission Slurry Spreading
- Low-input Permanent Pasture
- Minimum Tillage
- Planting a Grove of Native Trees
- Planting New Hedgerows
- Protection of Archaeological Sites
- Protection of Water Courses from Bovines (not in High Status or Vulnerable Areas)
- Riparian Margins
- Traditional Hay Meadow
- Traditional Orchards
- Traditional Stone Wall Maintenance
- Wild Brd cover

A scoring matrix will be used to allow farmers join GLAS by means of these actions if take-up of Tier 1 and Tier 2 actions permits
Support under GLAS will be by way of fixed-value packages for a minimum contract period of five years. As per Article 28(5) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants. Following the termination of that extension as per Article 7(2) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 a further annual extension may be offered.

A maximum payment of €5,000 per annum will apply in most cases, based on the value of the actions to be adopted, either on a compulsory basis or by selection from a menu of options, or by a combination of both.

Within budget limits, a higher-value package known as GLAS+ will be offered to a limited number of farmers who take on particularly challenging actions which deliver an exceptional level of environmental benefit. This package includes additional payment of up to €2,000 per annum, or a total package value of €7,000 in all. GLAS+ will apply in cases where the combined cost of delivering mandatory actions for a number of PEAs exceeds the standard package value of €5,000 per annum. However, farmers managing extensive areas of endangered bird habitat will qualify automatically for GLAS+, without the need for a second PEA, and if they manage sufficient area. In GLAS Tranche 3, under Tier 1(b), GLAS+ will also apply in cases when two Priority Environmental Actions (Catch Crops and Minimum Tillage) are taken together which would result in higher environmental delivery and would also exceed the standard package value of €5,000 per annum. As per Article 28(5) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants.

8.2.5.3.2.3. Links to other legislation

All actions under Article 28 must go beyond the GAEC, SMR and Greening baseline for the Basic Payment Scheme. Broader links include The EU Climate Change and Renewable Energy Package; the Kyoto Protocol; The Water Framework Directive; the Groundwater Directive; the Nitrates Directive; The Habitats Directive; the Birds Directive; and the European target of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2020. GLAS includes payments for voluntary commitments undertaken on Natura sites (Farmland Habitat Conservation, Conservation of Farmland Birds and Commonages).

8.2.5.3.2.4. Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries will be active farmers and the scheme will be open countrywide to all categories of farmer.

8.2.5.3.2.5. Eligible costs

Eligible costs include cost of compliance, income foregone and transaction costs where applicable. The specific costings in relation to each action will respect the maximum per hectare amounts set out in Annex II to the Rural Development Regulation. The detailed costings, which have been independently verified, are set out in the following tables. These include a number of ‘integrated’ actions which incorporate non-productive capital investments as set out in M4.4. These include bee, bird and bat boxes, planting new hedgerows, traditional orchards, planting a grove of native trees, laying or coppicing hedgerows, Twite B,
Grey Partridge, riparian margins and conservation of the solitary bee.

GLAS Costings Table
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>€ per metre/year</th>
<th>€ per ha/year</th>
<th>€ per unit/year</th>
<th>€ per m³/year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arable grass margins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 3 metre margin</td>
<td>€0.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4 metre margin</td>
<td>€0.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 6 metre margin</td>
<td>€0.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bat boxes</td>
<td>€13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird boxes</td>
<td>€6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonages</td>
<td>€120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of solitary bees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Box</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>€6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Sand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>€45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppicing hedgerows</td>
<td>€2.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental management of fallow land</td>
<td>€750</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm land birds</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Breeding Waders and Curlews</td>
<td>€366</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Chough Farm scheme</td>
<td>€365</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Concrake</td>
<td>€364</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Geese and Swans</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Grey Partridge</td>
<td>€2.10</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Hen Harrier</td>
<td>€370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Twite A – Semi-natural/semi-improved grassland field management option</td>
<td>€375</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Twite B – Improved grassland field management option</td>
<td>€1.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Twite C - Winter Feed Option</td>
<td>€900</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm land habitat (private Natura sites)</td>
<td>€79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Catch Crops</td>
<td>€155</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Laying hedgerows</td>
<td>€3.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>€1.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-emission slurry spreading (per m² per year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-input permanent pasture</td>
<td>€314</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum tillage</td>
<td>€40</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planting new hedgerows</td>
<td>€5.00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection of archaeological sites</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Tillage option</td>
<td>€146</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Grassland option</td>
<td>€120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection of water courses</td>
<td>€1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rare breeds (per LU)</td>
<td>€200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Riparian margins</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>a. 3 metre margin</td>
<td>€0.90</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 6 metre margin</td>
<td>€1.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 10 metre margin</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d. 30 metre margin</td>
<td>€3.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planting a Grove of Native Trees</td>
<td>€0.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional hay meadow</td>
<td>€315</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional orchards</td>
<td>€23.50</td>
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<td>Traditional stone wall maintenance</td>
<td>€0.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wild Bird Cover</td>
<td>€900</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8.2.5.3.2.6. Eligibility conditions

Any active farmer, whose holding lies within the state, will be eligible to apply to join the scheme.

8.2.5.3.2.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

As described above, a tiered approach is being applied to entry into the Scheme. The tiers are based on a consideration of priority of the various environmental assets and actions and have been set out above.

Where required, selection of beneficiaries will be based on a scoring matrix, based on achieving best environmental return. The principles to be followed will include:

- Inherent environmental value of the actions chosen
- Relative environmental value of the actions to any notified themes
- Complementarity of the actions with each other
- Targeting existing environmental needs/potential of the farm
- Achieving regional balance, taking account of existing intake
- Achieving balance in holding size, taking account of existing intake
- Achieving balance in operational direction of participating holdings
- Previous engagement in delivery of AECMs (limited to situations where it clearly adds value in achieving environment-climate objectives).

The relative scoring may change from tranche to tranche, to ensure the best mix of projects overall. The process will be transparent, notified in advance of any tranche, identifying the required ‘pass-mark’ and ranking all eligible projects thereafter. Selection criteria will always be applied to candidates seeking to join GLAS via Tier 3, and may also be applied to candidates in Tier 1(b), and Tier 2.

8.2.5.3.2.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support under GLAS will be by way of fixed-value packages for a minimum contract period of five years. As per Article 28(5) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants. A maximum payment of €5,000 per annum will apply in most cases, based on the value of the actions to be adopted, either on a compulsory basis or by selection from a menu of options, or by a combination of both.

Within budget limits, a higher-value package known as GLAS+ will be offered to a limited number of farmers who take on particularly challenging actions which deliver an exceptional level of environmental benefit. This package includes additional payment of up to €2,000 per annum, or a total package value of €7,000 in all. GLAS+ will apply in cases where the combined cost of delivering mandatory actions for a number of PEAs exceeds the standard package value of €5,000 per annum. In GLAS Tranche 3, under Tier 1(b), GLAS+ will also apply in cases when two Priority Environmental Actions (Catch Crops and Minimum Tillage) are taken together which would result in higher environmental delivery and would also exceed the standard package value of €5,000 per annum. However, farmers managing extensive areas of endangered-bird habitat will qualify automatically for GLAS+, without the need for a second PEA, and if they manage
sufficient area.

8.2.5.3.2.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.5.3.2.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures include

- Error Rates higher than anticipated
- Double funding of actions under GLAS and other measures e.g. Greening, Equivalence, Organic Farming scheme and Interventions 1 and 2 of the Burren programme.
- Management of Low Input actions
- Imbalance in achieving of main objectives
- Management and control, given the range of actions in GLAS.

8.2.5.3.2.9.2. Mitigating actions

In relation to the first risk identified, DAFM will undertake a series of thematic and geographic analyses to determine any patterns in the higher levels of error rates identified in previous schemes. One of the issues to emerge in the course of the previous Rural Development Programme has been the high level of error-rates encountered, particularly observed in the administration of the agri-environmental schemes. A number of factors were at the root of this, including farmer unfamiliarity with the application process and its implications, a lack of clarity about what was required for some measures, and a certain proportion of simple non-compliance.

A key consideration in the design of the GLAS scheme has been to address these issues. Under GLAS, all applications must be submitted by a qualified agricultural advisor, and these advisors will be trained in advance on what is required. This will ensure much greater consistency across all applications, while the advisor will be able to explain to the farmer what exactly is required and work with them to develop a farm plan that responds effectively to the relevant environmental priorities, and with which the farmer is comfortable and capable of delivering. Further training/advice will be organised for all farmers admitted to the scheme to compliment the efforts of individual advisors in increasing awareness of scheme requirements at farm level.

A full online application system will be in place, and will be mandatory for those seeking to join GLAS. This system gives the farmer, through his advisor, full access to all datasets relating to his land, including identification of all environmental priorities, as well as species under threat and vulnerable or high quality watercourses that require protection. It will also have mandatory fields that must be completed to address the key environmental priorities identified at individual farm level. The application will be predominantly map-based, with the advisor identifying online the areas under action, or the location and extent of linear actions, and accessing the specific environmental prescriptions applying. This ensures complete
transparency as to what actions are being undertaken under GLAS, and where these actions are planned.

New controls are being implemented in relation to the subdivision of parcels which removes a major area of potential error.

In addition, some measures are being revised to reduce the potential for error for example the grove of native trees action where some of the difficulties encountered with individual plantings under previous schemes are avoided, while the environmental value is actually enhanced.

With regard to the second bullet point above, the possibility of double-funding exists and therefore a computerised cross-check will be developed across GLAS and other schemes to protect against double payment for the same commitment. This will include identification of parcels used for equivalence or as EFAs, while a matrix of compatible GLAS and Organic actions will also be compiled. (Similar controls will be applied to remaining participants in existing agri-environment schemes, where a risk of double funding may exist following introduction of the new greening requirements). In the case of a risk of double funding with the Burren Scheme, areas in payment for LIPP, THM and Farmland Bird actions under GLAS will be deemed ineligible for area-based payment under the Burren Intervention 1. For other parcels receiving area-based payment under GLAS, the performance related payments under the Burren Intervention 1 will only be initiated when a score of 5 or more is achieved.

Actions involving reduced fertiliser inputs will be supported by way of ongoing advisory supports, as well as compulsory mid-cycle review of the Nutrient Management Plan, and reactive review should the farming system or intensity change at any time. On-the-spot inspections will include examination of farm records and sward condition, checking for the required species diversity and visual evidence of non-compliance with Nitrogen inputs.

As regards the fourth risk identified above, this will be counteracted by careful application of priorities and selection criteria to ensure that progress is made on achieving our objectives across the three main priorities of biodiversity, water quality and climate change mitigation.

In relation to the management and control of the range of actions, mitigating actions such as training and advisor input are built into the measure design. In addition, a regime of on the spot inspection and administrative checks will mitigate the risk here and build on the experience of previous programme periods.

8.2.5.3.2.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. In particular, experience from previous programming rounds has been taken into account in the form of a number of key design features which will ensure that error rates are minimised and that an appropriate control regime is in place.

8.2.5.3.2.10. Information specific to the operation

Identification and definition of the relevant baseline elements; this shall include the relevant mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European
Parliament and of the Council, the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1) (c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and other relevant mandatory requirements established by national law

See annexes, including new thematic table and listing of national legislation.

**Other Core requirements** continued from point 1 - *Description of the type of operation.*

For **Commonages** the key components of the GLAS approach are as follows:

- Submission of a single plan, by a single qualified agricultural adviser, acting for all participating shareholders;
- Achieving the maximum participation possible from all active shareholders;
- Developing a plan which combines both individual and group-based actions;
- Implementing a grazing regime to which everyone contributes, with an individual and group stocking requirements;
- Flexibility and time to meet the targets set, including some sharing of the burden of grazing at Group level;
- Application to both UAA and non-UAA lands (subject to certain exclusions, e.g. roads, lakes, areas of afforestation);
- Commitment to additional environmental action, over and above the grazing-regime;
- Open to new members joining plan in subsequent years to achieve optimum participation.

The prime environmental prescription for commonages is a balanced grazing regime: in the past we have seen the very serious effects of overgrazing on some commonages, while more recently we have seen what is a different, but equally insidious, effect of under-grazing on many more commonages.

When a group of shareholders applies to join GLAS, a specific Commonage Plan must be drawn up on their behalf by a qualified agricultural advisor, approved and trained by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The cost of this plan is factored into the per hectare rate proposed for Commonages. The advisor will first assess the commonage, comparing its current state with previous assessments and taking full account of the landscape character, including habitats and peatlands. On the basis of this inspection, the advisor must decide whether the existing recommended stocking levels should still apply, or if not what adjustments need to be made and on what basis. This establishes an overall minimum and maximum stocking level for the commonage as a whole, which in turn is converted into individual stocking requirements for each shareholder, based on the share they hold in the commonage.

The GLAS Commonage Plan will run for at least five years with the intention of establishing a balanced grazing regime over that period, supported by whatever additional actions the group sees as important for the good management of the commonage. These could include prescribed burning, removal of rubbish, or even predator control (which is important where parallel bird restoration projects are in place on the commonage).

One of the objectives of this scheme is to encourage as many shareholders as possible on any
commonage to work together in the best interests of the environmental health of their shared land.

While a high initial uptake is envisaged once the scheme is up-and-running, it is expected that some shareholders may not join immediately. For this reason it is intended to let new members join the Group in later years, up to Year 3 (when the final grazing requirement is to be reached), but not after that point. This will enable the grazing burden to be more evenly distributed, if desired, as well as bringing as much grazing effort as possible on the commonage into an environmentally-driven management regime. All members of the Group will undertake at least five years’ of commitment, irrespective of when they join the Commonage Plan.

**Peatlands**

The conservation of blanket bogs is addressed primarily through the Commonage measure and through privately-owned Natura areas, both of which are classified as PEAs guaranteeing priority access to the measure. The Specification detailing the required actions will make this clear. In addition, the conservation/restoration of upland peats will be a specific theme for inclusion in the call-for-proposals under the planned new Locally-Led measure.

The minimum requirements for fertilisers must include, inter alia, the Codes of Good Practice introduced under Directive 91/676/EEC for farms outside Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, and requirements concerning phosphorous pollution; the minimum requirements for plant protection products use must include, inter alia, general principles for integrated pest management introduced by Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, requirements to have a licence to use the products and meet training obligations, requirements on safe storage, the checking of application machinery and rules on pesticide use close to water and other sensitive sites, as established by national legislation.

**Fertilisers**

The minimum requirements for fertilisers are set out in the Good Agricultural Practice for the protection of waters regulations 2014 (SI 31 of 2014). These regulations will be enforced through SMR 1 and GAEC 1. Ireland has adopted a whole territory approach to implement these regulations; therefore the regulations apply to all farms. The main elements of these Regulations include:

- Adherence to a limit on livestock + organic manure permissible. i.e. not greater than 170 kg of nitrogen per hectare in a year (unless qualifies as derogation farmer)
- Farmers must adhere to prohibited spreading periods for chemical and organic fertilisers. The prohibited periods vary depending on the type of fertiliser and relevant ‘zones’ in Ireland.
- Further precautions when applying fertilisers include using appropriate machinery, timing to suit appropriate weather conditions and adhering to buffer zones for spreading chemical and organic fertilisers for different kinds of water bodies (lakes, rivers, wells etc)
- Farmers must adhere to overall maximum fertilisation rates for nitrogen and phosphorus (i.e., organic and chemical fertiliser combined). In general, applications must match crop needs/off-takes.
- Livestock farmers must have sufficient storage capacity to meet the minimum requirements of the Regulations (which vary according to zone), and all storage facilities must be kept leak-proof and structurally sound.
- The rules about ploughing and the use of non-selective herbicides must be followed in order to
maintain a minimum soil cover during certain defined risk periods.

• A minimum level of record keeping is required; including records of the fertilisers brought onto the holding or exported. Records must also include area farmed, cropping regime, types and numbers of livestock, and storage facilities on farm.

Baseline requirements of all farmers using plant protection and biocidal products (SMR 10)

• Only authorised or registered plant protection and biocidal products may be stored and used.
• Plant protection and biocidal products must be stored, handled and used properly as specified on current approved product labels.
• Plant protection products must, when appropriate, be used in accordance with the principles of integrated control.
• Plant protection products must be used in accordance with the principles of good plant protection practice.
• Records of acquisition, use and disposal of plant protection and biocidal products must be maintained and be produced for inspection.
• Plant protection and biocidal products that are no longer approved for use must not be retained.

Under Irish legislation all professional users of plant production products (PPP) are legally obliged to apply the general principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as set out in Annex III to Directive 2009/128/EC. IPM involves careful consideration of all available plant protection methods, to ensure that PPP use is reduced to levels that are economically and ecologically justified, thereby minimising risks to human health and the environment. Furthermore, it is a legal requirement to maintain sufficient records to demonstrate the application of these principles. A template of the record keeping requirements that should be maintained at farm level can be found at http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/compliance/plantprotectionproductscompliance/crosscompliance/crosscompliancerecordkeeping/ Where chemical control is deemed the most appropriate crop protection measure, individual PPPs have particular authorisation conditions which include restrictions on application timing e.g. pesticides should not be applied when heavy rainfall is forecast, insecticides applied when pollinators not actively foraging, etc. These requirements are not compensated for under GLAS. The application of IPM crop specific guidelines is considered an entirely voluntary process.

List of local breeds in danger of being lost to farming and of plant genetic resources under threat of genetic erosion

**Rare Breeds (number of breeding females listed in italics in each case)**

Cattle (Irish Maol 200, Kerry 590 and Dexter 200), Horses and Ponies (Connemara Pony 3,493, Irish Draught 530 and Kerry Bog Pony 96) and Sheep (Galway 1,050).

The Irish Cattle Breeders Federation (ICBF) is approved by the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine to co-ordinate native breed conservation programmes for cattle, sheep and horses in Ireland. Extensive research on the population genetics of native Irish rare breeds has been conducted by the ICBF. The Federation actively suggests ways to ensure genetic diversity within the breeds is maintained, which is critical to ensure that they remain a key part of Ireland’s unique biological diversity. The ICBF fulfils the
function of the recognised scientific body foreseen under Art.7(3) of Regulation 807/2014 and has certified the numbers of breeding females and the endangered status of the listed breeds.

The relevant technical bodies foreseen in the regulation are as follows:

- The Connemara Pony Breeder’s Society
- Kerry Cattle Society of Ireland
- Dexter Cattle Society
- Irish Moiled Cattle Society
- Horse Sport Ireland (*Irish Draught*)
- Kerry Bog Pony Society
- Galway Sheep Breeders Society

The bodies concerned possess the necessary skills and knowledge to identify animals of the breeds in danger.

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic assumptions and parameters including the description of the baseline requirements as referred to in Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, which are relevant for each particular type of commitment used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs, income foregone resulting from the commitment made and level of the transaction costs; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account aid granted under Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, including payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, in order to exclude double funding; where appropriate, the conversion method used for other units in accordance with Article 9 of this Regulation

GLAS is an action-based measure. Costings for the various actions have been finalised on the basis of cost of compliance and income foregone. Financial data and statistics from the Teagasc National Farm Survey and Management Data for Farm Planning were used in these calculations. Where appropriate, a transaction cost is also allowed. The costings have been independently verified by Teagasc, a body which is administratively independent of DAFM. Standard costs will be used when calculating amounts payable in respect of capital investments. See also new thematic table.
8.2.5.3.3. Straw Incorporation Measure (SIM)

Sub-measure:

- 10.1 - payment for agri-environment-climate commitments

8.2.5.3.3.1. Description of the type of operation

The purpose of the Measure is to encourage tillage farmers to increase soil organic carbon levels by chopping and incorporating straw from cereal crops. This will sequester carbon in tillage soils, thereby reducing GHG emissions. The incorporation of straw will also have positive impact on soil biology and soil workability. This will further improve the environmental sustainability of the tillage sector.

Application for this measure will be incorporated into the annual BPS application process. Where a tillage farmer declares eligible crops (wheat, oats, barley, rye, oilseed rape) they will have the option to then apply for this measure. They will be required to identify the relevant parcels on which they will chop straw and incorporate it into the soil. All eligible crops on parcels applied on for the Measure are combined, straw is chopped, spread evenly and incorporated into soil. The straw will be chopped and spread at time of harvest by engaging a chopping and spreading mechanism on the combine harvester. The straw will subsequently be incorporated into the soil by a shallow cultivator such as a disc harrow.

The Teagasc Marginal Abatement Cost Curve identifies such straw incorporation as an action that can contribute to carbon sequestration. The action of chopping and incorporating straw is required to be carried out in the year of application.

The measures will be funded entirely by EURI and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

8.2.5.3.3.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Support will be by way of an annual area based payment per hectare. The per hectare payment is fixed at €250 per hectare for cereal crops (barley, wheat, oats, rye) and at a rate of €150/ha for oilseed rape given the lower market value for oilseed rape straw.

8.2.5.3.3.3. Links to other legislation

All beneficiaries are subject to the applicable GAEC and Cross Compliance Requirements.
8.2.5.3.4. Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries will be tillage farmers declaring barley, oats, wheat, rye and oilseed rape on their basic payment scheme application in the relevant year who undertake to chop straw and incorporate it into the soil.

There are currently circa 13,000 farmers growing tillage crops with 6,900 specialist tillage farmers as per the Teagasc National Farm Survey 2019.

8.2.5.3.5. Eligible costs

The support payment will compensate the farmer for the additional cost of the chopping, spreading and incorporation of straw into the soil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cereals - Range</th>
<th>Cereals €/ha</th>
<th>OSR €/ha</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Straw Value ex field net of processing i.e baling (Teagasc crop costs and returns 2021)</td>
<td>€198 -€300/ha</td>
<td>249.00 (midpoint)</td>
<td>€125</td>
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<td>Cost of chopping (FCI 2021 Recommended Contractor charges)</td>
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<td>12.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultivation Cost (FCI 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income foregone and Cost of participation</td>
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<td>332.50</td>
<td>208.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of retained nutrients in straw (Teagasc)</td>
<td>€45-€70/ha</td>
<td>57.50 (midpoint)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cost to applicant</td>
<td></td>
<td>275</td>
<td>182.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposed rate of payment</td>
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<td>150</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8.2.5.3.6. Eligibility conditions

In order to be eligible, beneficiaries must submit a valid BPS application on which the eligible crops of barley, wheat, oats, rye and oilseed rape are declared. As part of the application for this scheme, applicants must select and declare the land parcels and sub parcels on which the straw will be chopped and incorporated. A minimum level of 5 hectares declared as the eligible crops is required in order to be eligible.
for the measure.

8.2.5.3.3.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The scheme will be open to all eligible tillage farmers who commit to the action of chopping and incorporating straw on the particular parcels of land declared on their application.

In the event of the measure being oversubscribed, selection of beneficiaries will be based on criteria designed to achieve the best environmental return and may be based on the following structure:

- Tier 1: Applicants declaring oats parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application with less than 15% of area on the holding declared as grass/permanent pasture on their BPS application who are not beneficiaries under GLAS delivering a crop cover action.

- Tier 2: Applicants declaring oats parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application with less than 15% of area on the holding declared as grass/permanent pasture on their BPS application.

- Tier 3: Applicants declaring oats parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application who are not beneficiaries under GLAS delivering a crop cover action.

- Tier 4: Applicants declaring oats parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application.

- Tier 5: Applicants declaring wheat and/or rye parcels for inclusion in the Measure with less than 15% of parcels on the holding declared as grass/permanent pasture on their BPS application who are not beneficiaries under GLAS delivering a crop cover action.

- Tier 6: Applicants declaring wheat and/or rye parcels for inclusion in the Measure with less than 15% of parcels on the holding declared as grass/permanent pasture on their BPS application.

- Tier 7: Applicants declaring wheat and/or rye parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application who are not beneficiaries under GLAS delivering a crop cover action.

- Tier 8: Applicants declaring wheat and/or rye parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application.

- Tier 9: Applicants declaring barley parcels for inclusion in the Measure with less than 15% of parcels on the holding declared as grass/permanent pasture on their BPS application who are not beneficiaries under GLAS delivering a crop cover action.

- Tier 10: Applicants declaring barley parcels for inclusion in the Measure with less than 15% of parcels on the holding declared as grass/permanent pasture on their BPS application.

- Tier 11: Applicants declaring barley parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application who are not beneficiaries under GLAS delivering a crop cover action.

- Tier 12: Applicants declaring barley parcels for inclusion in the Measure on their BPS application.
• Tier 13: Applicants declaring OSR parcels on their BPS application who are **not beneficiaries under GLAS delivering a crop cover action**.

• Tier 14: Applicants declaring OSR parcels on their BPS application.

In the event that selection criteria are required, priority will be given to Tier 1 and so on.

8.2.5.3.3.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

The support rate is €250/ha in respect of the area on which chopped straw is incorporated on eligible cereal crops (wheat, barley, oats, rye) and €150/ha on parcels declared with oilseed rape. There will be a minimum eligible area of 5 hectares and a maximum area of 40 hectares.

8.2.5.3.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.5.3.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

There is a risk that applicants may not fulfil the commitment to chop, spread and incorporate straw but bale and offer straw for sale or use on farm.

8.2.5.3.9.2. Mitigating actions

A series of controls will be in place in order to address the above risk. Applications will be subject to a 5% on the spot inspection specifically under this measure. Where there is no clear evidence of straw having being chopped and incorporated the inspecting officer will be required to dig a trial hole to confirm whether or not the straw has being incorporated or not.

In addition, the standard administrative and on the spot verifications in place as part of the BPS serve to provide further assurance.

8.2.5.3.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. The incorporation of the application process into the BPS system underpins the accuracy of the area declaration, and on the spot inspections serve to confirm the delivery of the measure commitment.
8.2.5.3.3.10. Information specific to the operation

Identification and definition of the relevant baseline elements; this shall include the relevant mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1) (c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and other relevant mandatory requirements established by national law.

The measure which requires the chopping and incorporation of straw from eligible crops into soil goes beyond the baseline minimum definition of agricultural activity defined in Reg EU 1307/2013 and other minimum requirements related to fertilisers and plant protection product and other mandatory requirements to limit erosion and protect soils.

The minimum requirements for fertilisers must include, inter alia, the Codes of Good Practice introduced under Directive 91/676/EEC for farms outside Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, and requirements concerning phosphorous pollution; the minimum requirements for plant protection products use must include, inter alia, general principles for integrated pest management introduced by Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, requirements to have a licence to use the products and meet training obligations, requirements on safe storage, the checking of application machinery and rules on pesticide use close to water and other sensitive sites, as established by national legislation referenced elsewhere.

List of local breeds in danger of being lost to farming and of plant genetic resources under threat of genetic erosion

N/A

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic assumptions and parameters including the description of the baseline requirements as referred to in Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, which are relevant for each particular type of commitment used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs, income foregone resulting from the commitment made and level of the transaction costs; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account aid granted under Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, including payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, in order to exclude double funding; where appropriate, the conversion method used for other units in accordance with Article 9 of this Regulation.

The measure does not give rise to double funding, and there is no measure commitments in existing RDP or Direct Payment schemes regarding straw chopping and incorporation or addition of other carbon rich materials to soils.
8.2.5.3.4. The Burren Programme

Sub-measure:

- 10.1 - payment for agri-environment-climate commitments

8.2.5.3.4.1. Description of the type of operation

**Structure**

The Burren Programme is an agri-environment climate scheme which encompasses both results-based habitat management and complementary non-productive capital investment site works and aims to deliver qualitative environmental goals on the participating holdings in the Burren region. The Programme is based on actions undertaken by individual farmers in line with a dedicated Burren Programme (BP) farm plan drawn up in consultation with, and based on the advice of, a professional Burren Farm Advisor.

The Programme will be managed on the ground by a specialist locally-based intermediary layer appointed through competitive tender, the ‘Burren Team’ (which will be funded under Measure 20, Technical Assistance). This Team will provide training and advice to the Burren Farm Advisor, will approve farm plans and will review on an ongoing basis the work of the Advisor. The Burren Team will also conduct training workshops for participants and will, in general, manage, monitor and promote the Programme.

The Burren Farm Advisor works with the participant in drawing up the BP farm plan and scores environmental performance annually, using a field assessment system. The Advisor is paid directly by the participant. A panel of such advisors will be drawn up and approved by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and will undergo an intensive initial training course given by the Burren Team and will attend refresher courses annually.

A Steering Group including representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the National Monuments Service, a Burren farmer representative and a Burren Farm Advisor will oversee the entire Programme.

**Interventions**

The Programme is delivered by means of two types of interventions which participants will undertake in line with a BP farm plan, firstly a performance/results-based intervention and secondly a complementary capital-investment-based intervention:

**Intervention 1:** A performance-related (results/output based) intervention, based on the participant reaching specific qualitative environmental goals which reflect habitat condition, richness of biodiversity, soil health, water-quality etc. It involves the management of species-rich limestone grasslands and associated grazed habitats, and contains two sub-categories as follows:

- **Burren Winterage Grasslands:** This unique landscape of limestone rock and rough grasslands requires careful management, which includes traditional low-input winterage grazing methods, to ensure its optimum environmental and ecological status.
- **Burren Lowland Grasslands:** This category of ‘Meadow-like’ grassland (also includes Wet
grasslands) is a rare habitat which generally occurs on potentially fertile lowland areas. Therefore these more productive grasslands are at an intrinsically higher risk of intensification, and also require a different level of management to winterage grassland, to ensure their optimum environmental condition.

**Intervention 2:** The reimbursement to the farmer for a proportion of the cost of capital investments in site enhancement works designed to improve the environmental dividend delivered by the holding. There are three categories of investments under this intervention, with the funding rate varied under each (75%, 50%, 25%), as detailed under Measure 4.

**Results-based assessment and payment**

- For Intervention 1, each eligible field is scored from 1-10 on the basis of a range of criteria relating to its environmental health, with higher scores attracting higher payment. All fields can progressively increase their environmental score and associated payment over the lifetime of the farm-plan. Performance on the part of the farmer in creating the conditions that lead to higher environmental values is thereby directly incentivised.
- No payments will be made for scores in the range 1-4. A field score of 5 will be acceptable for payment in years 1 and 2 of the participant’s plan only, and no payment will be made in the 3rd year onwards for a field score of 5 as insufficient improvement will have been shown. Scores 1-2 are considered to be deliverable from baseline requirements. The management levels required to achieve scores 3, 4 are considered to be above the baseline management requirements, however these scores are also excluded from payments to ensure a clear gap between the baseline requirements and higher-level requirements which are eligible for the initial payments in this Programme to eliminate any possible overlap.

**Recruitment process for participating farmers**

- Applications for participation in The Burren Programme will be invited by way of regular tranches
- Eligible applicants will be scored against key selection criteria in accordance with the principles outlined in 8.2.5.3.3.7
- Contracts will be for five years. As per Article 28(5) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants. Following the termination of that extension as per Article 7(2) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 a further annual extension may be offered.

**Core Commitments by Burren Participants**

- With the advice of an approved and trained Burren Advisor, draw up and submit a BP farm plan setting out the details of their participation in the Programme and providing an overview of the planned interventions type 1 and type 2.
- Implement that plan over the full contract period.
- Attend all required training organised by the Burren Team.
Training for participants

Training workshops on farming for conservation will take place every year delivered by the Burren Team. Attendance at workshops is mandatory for all Programme participants. Workshops will focus on practical farming for conservation issues including:

- Identifying Annex 1 habitats
- Sustainable grazing regimes
- Approved feeding systems
- Best practice for wall maintenance
- Best practice for water provision
- Best practice for scrub removal
- Recognising and protecting archaeological monuments.

Additional specialist training courses may also be offered to participants on an elective basis.

Burren Programme Farm plan

A BP farm plan will be a simple, 1-page plan drawn up in consultation with a Trained Burren Advisor and paid for by the participant. The plan will set out details of participation in the Programme including interventions under Intervention 1 and Intervention 2.

8.2.5.3.4.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

- The scheme is delivered via two types of intervention. The first is an area based annual payment (result oriented, stepped and banded) and the second is an investment support for environmental area enhancement as set out in Measure 4 description.
- Under Intervention 1, the maximum package available to any participant will be €10,000 annually, subject to the scoring and payments rates outlined at 8.2.5.3.3.5. This payment ceiling per participant has been introduced to optimise value for money. On the basis of previous experience, it is expected that the average annual payment under Intervention 1 is likely to be under €3,000.
- Under Intervention 2, the maximum funding available will be linked to the area of habitat entered in the Programme. The funding ceiling will be made available at a rate of €100 per hectare per year of digitised area as listed on DAFM’s LPIS system of SAC/Annex I habitats, subject to a maximum ceiling of €35,000 over the period of the plan (or up to €42,000 if the plans are extended for 1 year or up to €49,000 if the plan is extended for a further year beyond that). For example, a farmer with 50 hectares of land, 45 hectares of which is SAC/Annex I habitat, would be able to avail of up to €27,000 (45 ha x €100 x 6) over 6 years under this measure for undertaking a range of works which will be determined by the Farm Advisor and listed in the farm plan.
8.2.5.3.4.3. Links to other legislation

Not Applicable

8.2.5.3.4.4. Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries under the scheme will be active farmers registered in DAFM and the scheme will be open to eligible farmers in the Burren region (as per Appendix A of the Burren Scheme Appendices)

8.2.5.3.4.5. Eligible costs

Eligible costs include income foregone, additional costs of implementation and transaction costs where applicable. The specific costings in relation to each action will respect the maximum per hectare amounts in Annex II of the Rural Development Regulation. The detailed payment rates are set out in the following tables. The capital investment costings are set out under Measure 4. These include stone wall repair, access tracks, fencing equipment, water equipment, feed equipment, scrub work and labour.

Burren Payment Rate Tables

Table 1: Scores and proposed payment rates Intervention 1 (a) Management of Burren winterage grasslands

Table 2: Scores and proposed payment rates Intervention 1 (b) Management of Burren Lowland Grasslands

Further information

- To encourage participants to focus more on those areas of the farm where improved management is most urgently required, fields with a lower environmental ‘score’ (undergrazed, overgrazed, damaged etc.) are paid first.
- SAC land is paid on before additional Annex I areas. See Chapter 8.2.5.3.3.10 “Description of the methodology” for further information.
8.2.5.3.4.6. Eligibility conditions

- Be an active herd owner

- The farm holding must include at least one grazed Annex I habitat in the Burren region as defined in the EU Habitats Directive (See map in Appendix B of the Burren Scheme Appendices)

8.2.5.3.4.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

- Previous participation and performance in Burren Life and preceding projects
- Area of designated land in the Burren on holding
- Proportion of designated land in the Burren on holding
- Area of lands which are grazed under a Grazing Agreement with the NPWS.

Farms in the Burren region that have little or no designated land but those whose land does contain undesignated Annex I habitats and unlisted monuments and/or complexes will be considered in Tranche II and subsequent tranches.

8.2.5.3.4.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

As set out above
8.2.5.3.4.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.5.3.4.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures include:

**Risk 1:** That the Burren Advisor fails to produce a viable plan to deliver real environmental gain on the participant’s holding, or that annual reporting of environmental outcomes is inaccurate.

**Risk 2:** That the participating farmer fails to implement the plan over the full contract period resulting in a reduction in the environmental dividend being achieved.

**Risk 3:** That a participating farmer is paid twice for the same action under either GLAS, the Organic Farming Scheme, or TAMS, i.e. risk of double funding.

8.2.5.3.4.9.2. Mitigating actions

**Risk 1:** Firstly, all Burren Advisors must complete a specialised training course designed and delivered by the Burren Team. This will include practical training on the ground in the preparation of plans and in the scoring of environmental outcomes. Advisors must participate in annual ‘refresher’ courses on farming for conservation in the Burren. Advisors must be FAS registered and trained. Training and advisor inputs are built into the measure design and build on the experience of previous programmes periods. Secondly, all draft Farm Plans submitted will be reviewed by the Burren Team before approval. Thirdly, the Burren Team will review the scores submitted by all Burren Advisors on an ongoing basis.

**Risk 2:** Where the Burren Team observes a decline in field-scores from one year to the next, all such cases will be investigated to ascertain the underlying cause. Where it can be shown that this results from a failure on the part of the farmer to implement the agreed plan, appropriate steps will be taken and any necessary sanctions applied. It is recognised, however, that in a result-based scheme there will be factors outside the control of the farmer that may influence the scores achieved. The Burren Team will assess in each instance whether this is the case.

**Risk 3:** Areas in payment for Low Input Permanent Pasture, Traditional Hay Meadow and Farmland Bird actions under GLAS will be deemed ineligible for area-based payment under the Burren Intervention 1. For other parcels receiving area-based payment under GLAS, the performance related payments under the Burren Intervention 1 will only be initiated when a score of 5 or more is achieved. See comments on baseline in chapter 8.2.5.3.3.10. A similar model will be applied for Organic farmers supported under the OFS. Similar linear actions under GLAS and the Burren Programme (stone wall maintenance) will only be payable under one scheme/programme. Finally, to avoid any possible double-funding with TAMS, the investment items supported under Burren Intervention 2 will be ineligible for support under TAMS.

8.2.5.3.4.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. In particular, issues in relation to any possible double funding and monitoring and control have been addressed in line with the relevant Commission guidance and appropriate systems for control are in place.
8.2.5.3.4.10. Information specific to the operation

Identification and definition of the relevant baseline elements; this shall include the relevant mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1) (c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and other relevant mandatory requirements established by national law

Baseline considerations

Intervention 1 payments are not payable on Low Input Permanent Pasture, Traditional Hay Meadow and Farmland Bird actions under GLAS or Species Rich Grassland or Traditional Hay Meadow actions under AEOS. Under Pillar I, the retention of permanent grassland is the only relevant measure in this region and no additional conditions or payments are applicable in this regard. See Appendix D for Burren Baseline Requirements. The Basic Payment is made at score 2 while the Burren Programme is only paid at score 5 and above.

The minimum requirements for fertilisers must include, inter alia, the Codes of Good Practice introduced under Directive 91/676/EEC for farms outside Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, and requirements concerning phosphorous pollution; the minimum requirements for plant protection products use must include, inter alia, general principles for integrated pest management introduced by Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, requirements to have a licence to use the products and meet training obligations, requirements on safe storage, the checking of application machinery and rules on pesticide use close to water and other sensitive sites, as established by national legislation

Please see Appendix D of the ‘Burren Scheme Appendices’ included as an annex to this RDP for overview of all actions, including relationship to baseline.

List of local breeds in danger of being lost to farming and of plant genetic resources under threat of genetic erosion

N/A

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic assumptions and parameters including the description of the baseline requirements as referred to in Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, which are relevant for each particular type of commitment used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs, income foregone resulting from the commitment made and level of the transaction costs; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account aid granted under Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, including payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, in order to exclude double funding; where appropriate, the conversion method used for other units in accordance with Article 9 of this Regulation
Some of the key assumptions underpinning the results-based stepped payment rate system are as follows:

- The design of this intervention aims to incentivise participants to improve management on all areas of limestone grassland on the farm. Payment rates are calculated on the basis of income foregone and costs incurred associated with actions required to deliver a score of 10 i.e. on the management conditions likely to deliver optimal ecological integrity.
- In the case of the Burren lowland grasslands action, costs are determined based on income foregone (from not increasing productivity on these grasslands in line with their agricultural potential), the additional time required to herd the livestock over a longer period than normal (‘additional herding costs’) and transaction costs. In the case of the Burren winterage grasslands action, costs are determined based on the time required to herd the livestock over a longer period than normal (‘additional herding costs’) as well as the production loss entailed in delayed calving of cows, the additional feeding cost for outwintering cattle and transaction costs. An explanation of the Burren grassland payments is given in Appendix E of the Burren Appendices.
- Each field is marked under all of the below parameters, and each parameter is given a score using an assessment scale. The total of all the parameters are then summed to give an overall field score. This score is used to calculate a final health rating for the field on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent).
- Criteria used in field scoring:
  
  o Grazing levels,
  o litter level,
  o damage around feed sites (if any),
  o damage around natural water resources (if any),
  o bare soil and erosion (if any)
  o level of immature scrub (if any)
  o Presence of bracken (if any)
  o Presence of purple moor grass (if any)
  o Extent of ‘weeds’ & /or agriculturally favoured species
  o Ecological integrity of field, including any damaging activity to any habitat present during the past year

Payment rates are attributed to each field score. The payment rates are stepped backwards (from the maximum score rate) to encourage a phased improvement of management over time from the initial field score. See tables 1 and 2 in Chapter 8.2.5.3.3.5. The highest per hectare payments at a rate of 95% of cost for winterage grassland and 88% of cost for lowland grassland are given for the achievement of the maximum score rate (score 10). As per the stepped back method, payments are reduced as the field scores reduces. In general, the payment for score 5 (the minimum field score which payment is made) is one-third of the maximum rate.

- Payments per hectare are further divided into bands according to farm size. For winterage grasslands there are five bands, an initial rate for the first 10 hectares, a second band of 30ha and the remaining
in bands of 40ha, with each successive band yielding allowances/payments of 50% of the preceding band due to economies of scale. For lowland grasslands, there are two bands, an initial rate for the first 10 hectares and a reduced rate for anything over that (it is not anticipated that any farm will contain in excess of 20 ha of lowland grassland).

- The banding of payments in reference to the size of the holding is designed to take into account economies of scale achieved on larger holdings, with the payments rates progressively reduced as holding size increases to account for such efficiencies.
- Furthermore, in order to encourage participants to focus more on those areas of the farm where improved management is most urgently required, fields with a lower environmental ‘score’ (undergrazed, overgrazed, damaged etc.) are paid first.
- SAC land is paid on before additional Annex I areas. This order of payment (by category) encourages farmers to suitably maintain all priority lands and not just focus on certain areas which might suit from a management perspective. Thus the stepped payment rate system above encourages participants to maximise scores on their priority areas, where the highest payments are available. For example a farmer has 60 ha of priority habitat, 10 ha has scored an average of 6 and the remaining 50 ha scored 8. The farmer gets paid on the 10 ha first (the lower scoring land) 10 x €144, and receives 30 x €96, and 10 x €48 for the remaining land which scored 8, but is now in the second and third band of rates.

8.2.5.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.5.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.5.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.

8.2.5.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As referenced above.

8.2.5.5. Information specific to the measure

Identification and definition of the relevant baseline elements; this shall include the relevant mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1) (c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the
relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and other relevant mandatory requirements established by national law

Referenced elsewhere.

The minimum requirements for fertilisers must include, inter alia, the Codes of Good Practice introduced under Directive 91/676/EEC for farms outside Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, and requirements concerning phosphorous pollution; the minimum requirements for plant protection products use must include, inter alia, general principles for integrated pest management introduced by Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, requirements to have a licence to use the products and meet training obligations, requirements on safe storage, the checking of application machinery and rules on pesticide use close to water and other sensitive sites, as established by national legislation

Referenced elsewhere.

List of local breeds in danger of being lost to farming and of plant genetic resources under threat of genetic erosion

Referenced elsewhere.

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic assumptions and parameters including the description of the baseline requirements as referred to in Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, which are relevant for each particular type of commitment used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs, income foregone resulting from the commitment made and level of the transaction costs; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account aid granted under Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, including payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, in order to exclude double funding; where appropriate, the conversion method used for other units in accordance with Article 9 of this Regulation

Referenced elsewhere.

8.2.5.6. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

Additional information specific to the Measure concerned

Please see the GLAS thematic tables and Appendix D of the Burren Appendices for an overview of all actions, including relationship to baseline, basis for payment and any Annex II Ceiling implications.
8.2.6. M11 - Organic farming (art 29)

8.2.6.1. Legal basis


8.2.6.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

This measure is expected to contribute towards the following Focus Areas:

- 4A – Biodiversity, HNV farming and landscapes,
- 4B – Water, fertiliser and pesticide management,
- 4C – Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management

In the rural development context, organic farming is mainly expected to establish and maintain a sustainable management system for agriculture. The farming practices it promotes contribute to improving soil and water quality, to mitigation and adaptation to climate change and to the improvement of the state of biodiversity e.g., by crop rotation, use of organic fertilisers, improvement to soil organic matter and by no use of synthetic plant protection products or synthetic fertilisers.

The support under this measure aims to encourage farmers to convert from conventional farming methods and to apply organic farming methods as defined in Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 (now replaced by Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council), as well as maintain these methods after the initial period of conversion (which will be a maximum period of two years), thus answering societal demand for the use of environmentally friendly farming practices. Organic production thus responds to consumer demand for organic production and also contributes to environmental, animal welfare and rural development issues.

The overall objective of the Organic Farming Scheme is to deliver enhanced environmental and animal welfare benefits and to encourage producers to respond to the market demand for organically produced food.

One of the issues identified in the SWOT analysis is the low level of organic production in Ireland. In 2010, across the EU27 Member States, 5.7% of the total Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) was devoted to organic crop area. In Ireland, the corresponding figure was 1.1%. While the organic sector in Ireland is relatively small in relation to agriculture as a whole, the sector does represent an opportunity for growth and Food Harvest 2020 endorsed the target of 5% of UAA and recommended that the Department should continue to directly support the sector through the Organic Farming Scheme and the Schemes of Grant Aid for the Development of the Organic Sector.

A theme emerging from stakeholder consultation is that the additional support for farmers via the Organic Farming Scheme is the key factor underlying conversion and promoting continuance within the sector, thereby responding to the market demand for organically produced food.
Under the 2007 – 2013 RDP, the Organic Farming Scheme did not encourage enough farmers to convert to organic agriculture. There was in fact a decline in the numbers joining the Organic Farming Scheme since 2010. This highlights the necessity for a more incentivised and targeted scheme in the 2014 – 2020 RDP in order to help meet the demand that exists for organically produced food.

The general structure and implementation/administration of the existing Organic Farming Scheme will be continued, which entails an annual area-based payment over a maximum initial contract period of 5 years and 11 months, but with increased payment per hectare and a reduced differential between the conversion and maintenance rates, along with some targeted incentives aimed at areas that are in deficit. As per Article 29(3) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants. Following the termination of that extension as per Article 7(3) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 a further annual extension may be offered.

It is proposed to maintain and increase the area under organic agriculture in the transitional period by opening a new Organic Farming Scheme in line with the provisions set out in the Transitional Regulation (EU 2020/2220) with EURI funding. It will follow the general structure and implementation/administration of the Organic Farming Scheme 2014-2020. In order to achieve the targets of the new Green Deal and to increase uptake of the Organic Farming Scheme, contracts of a longer length are necessary to incentivise organic farming practices. It will provide for an annual area-based payment over a maximum contract period of 6 years and 9 months, at the same payment rates per hectare, along with some targeted incentives aimed at areas that are in deficit. In accordance, with the provisions of the Transitional Regulation, a maximum contract period of three years will be given where support is granted for maintenance only contracts. In addition, it is proposed to allow participants to bring additional land into payment up to the beginning of year 2 for maintenance only contracts and up to the beginning of year 4 in respect of contracts for conversion.

To encourage farmers to convert to organic production, mindful of the costs and investment required in changing farming systems, requires a scheme which offers support for a period of greater than three years. Conversion to organic production systems requires a two-year conversion period therefore it is only in year three that the producer can market his or her product as organic. Support during these early years is critical to ensure continuity of commitment to organic practices. The support of a scheme greater than three years duration is an essential prerequisite to encourage the farmer to enter organic production and is consistent with the European policy to increase the area under organic production.

From 1st Jan 2023, the scheme will offer increased payment per hectare which will target areas that are deemed to be in deficit. Organic farmers incur additional expenses on an annual basis, such as formal training and continuous upskilling on topics such as soil health and animal management. In recognition of these costs, the payments per hectare will incorporate a participation payment as part of the Organic Farming Scheme. This support is for the duration of the OFS contract and will help to increase the participation of smaller operators. A higher rate of participation payment will be paid in the first year to reflect the higher costs in the initial period of conversion to organic farming practices. This payment is seen as critical to help address one of the main barriers to entry for organic farmers, i.e., set-up and associated transaction costs for converting to organic farming.

A comprehensive review of organic production systems and of the calculated marginal differentials for organic in-conversion and maintenance production, compared to conventional production systems, took place during the CAP Strategic Plan process. The revised and increased rates have taken account of the marketplace and barriers to entry with the objective of providing further stimulation for organic production in the sectors where demand exists. From 1st Jan 2023, higher rates will be payable for horticultural
operations (including fruit), for tillage operations, and for dairy operations, all of which are strongly in
deficit. There are also increased rates for the dry stock sector. The increased rates are designed for further
development of sustainable organic production systems in Ireland and to contribute to increasing the
utilisable agricultural area under organic production.

8.2.6.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of
the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For
each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support
rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.6.3.1. Organic Farming Scheme

Sub-measure:

- 11.1 - payment to convert to organic farming practices and methods
- 11.2 - payment to maintain organic farming practices and methods

8.2.6.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

As outlined above, the scheme will retain the general structure and implementation/administration of the
existing Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) which entails an annual area-based payment over a maximum
initial 5 years and 11 months contract period. As per Article 29(3) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an
annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants. Following the
termination of that extension as per Article 7(3) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 a further annual extension
may be offered.

It is proposed that participants in the previous Organic Farming Scheme, introduced under the 2007-2013
Programme, whose contracts expire in 2016, 2017 and 2018, will be offered the opportunity to extend any
existing contracts by up to four years. The latest admissible expiry date for contract extensions is 2020. All
contract extensions automatically introduce the terms and conditions of the RDP 2014-2022 into the signed
agreement. Furthermore, it is proposed that the participants whose contracts expired in 2016, 2017 and 2018
as referred to in the paragraph above, should be offered the opportunity to extend their current contracts by
one year.

It will also be possible for an OFS participant to bring additional land into payment up to and including
Year 3 of an existing contract, with the increased area attracting payment under the scheme up until the
expiry of the original contract period. All additional area introduced in this manner will therefore remain
under contract for at least two years, consistent with the minimum period for conversion. Lands already
converted may also be added to an existing contract, where such application is made immediately following
earlier conversion, and again for a minimum contract period of two years.

The new Organic Farming Scheme under the Transitional Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 of the
European Parliament and of the Council), will operate in line with the existing 2014-2022 scheme. It will
provide for an annual area-based payment over a maximum contract period of 6 years and 9 months, at the
same payment rates per hectare, along with some targeted incentives aimed at areas that are in deficit. A
The maximum contract period of three years will be given where support is granted for maintenance only contracts. In addition, participants in maintenance only contracts may only bring additional land into payment, up to the beginning of year 2. To encourage farmers to convert to organic production, mindful of the costs and investment required in changing farming systems, requires a scheme which offers support for a period of greater than three years. Conversion to organic production systems requires a two-year conversion period therefore it is only in year three that the producer can market his or her product as organic. Support during these early years is critical to ensure continuity of commitment to organic practices. The support of a scheme greater than three years duration is an essential prerequisite to encourage the farmer to enter organic production and is consistent with the European policy to increase the area under organic production. The logic underlying the measure is to encourage and maintain the uptake of organic farming in order to progress towards European targets, with consequent benefits to the environment, as well as responding to the market demand for organically produced food. Based on the experience of running the measure to date and feedback received from stakeholders, the introduction of a more targeted incentivised payment structure aims to address this issue more effectively. This payment structure takes account of the need to incentivise new entrants as well as to support ongoing organic producers.

From 1st Jan 2023, the scheme will offer increased payment per hectare with targeted incentives aimed at areas that are deemed to be in deficit. From 1 January 2023 increased rates of payments, incorporating a participation payment will be available to beneficiaries to convert to and maintain organic farming practices.

As Article 29 of the new RDP places increased emphasis on maintenance of organic farming practices, there is increased focus within the new Organic Farming Scheme on ensuring continuity of commitment to organic production. This new focus is reflected also in the payment structure.

The measure design process has also taken into account the need to target supports to areas that are in deficit. Specifically, cultivation of red clover is now incentivised both for its value as a source of high-protein, high dry-matter organic fodder, as well as for its environmental benefits as a natural nitrogen-fixer.

All first time Organic Farming Scheme applicants must have completed an approved training course. The Approved Training Course shall include the National Framework of Qualifications Level 5 Introduction to Organic Farming Course, or any equivalent course that will be determined by DAFM. This course does not form part of the Organic Farming Scheme, nor is it funded via the RDP.

8.2.6.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

The principal support will be an annual area-based payment per hectare of UAA over a maximum initial 5 years and 11 months contract period. The minimum basic contract length is 5 years, but as set out above participants will have the possibility of adding additional lands to the contract up to Year 3, thereby ensuring that the lands so brought in remain under contract for at least two years. As per Article 29(3) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, an annual extension after the termination of the initial period may be offered to participants. Following the termination of that extension as per Article 7(3) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 a further annual extension may be offered.

Exceptionally, for contracts entered into during the post 2020 transition period the timeframes will be adjusted in line with the Transitional Regulation (EU) 2020/2220. The maximum contract will be for 6
years and 9 months. The maximum contract period of three years will apply where support is granted for maintenance only contracts. In addition, participants in maintenance only contracts may only bring additional land into payment, up to the beginning of year 2. Contracts of this specified longer length are necessary to incentivise organic farming practices in order to achieve the targets of the new Green Deal and increase uptake of the Organic Farming Scheme.

This rate is comprised of a higher payment for farmers converting land to organic farming for the first time payable for the initial maximum two-year conversion period, with a maintenance payment thereafter. Higher rates are payable for horticultural operations (including fruit), for tillage operations and dairy operations, all of which are strongly in deficit. There are also increased rates for the dry stock sector. A top-up payment of €30/ha is provided to incentivise the growing of red clover.

A second element of the support incorporated in the higher rates will be a participation payment which would be paid to every organic farmer each year to cover administrative costs. This support for the duration of the farmers contract will help to increase the participation of smaller operators where the financial burden of setting up has been flagged as a barrier to entry. A higher level will be included in the first year to reflect the higher costs in the initial period of conversion to organic farming practices. The participation payment element will be reduced from year two onwards. This additional element is seen as critical to help address one of the main barriers to entry for organic farmers – set-up and associated costs for converting to organic farming.

8.2.6.3.1.3. Links to other legislation

- GAEC and cross compliance requirements: Organic farmers are subject, where applicable, to the full suite of GAEC and Cross Compliance Requirements (SMRs).
- Greening requirement: Organic farmers may meet the Greening requirement by virtue of a high proportion of permanent grassland or by any other of the various options available, including their organic status.
- Relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and relevant mandatory requirements established by national law.

8.2.6.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries under the scheme will be active organic farmers, registered with DAFM and licensed by one of the Organic Control Bodies.

8.2.6.3.1.5. Eligible costs

The support is based on the additional costs incurred, income foregone resulting from farming to the organic standards and a transaction cost when compared to a conventional farmer of similar land area, intensity of production and efficiency. The organic licence cost is incorporated within eligible costs, under costs incurred.
8.2.6.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

As in the previous Organic Farming Scheme a series of core requirements defines basic eligibility. Key conditions include:

- Requirement of minimum farm area of 3 hectares, except for horticultural (including fruit) producers where the minimum farm area is 1 hectare.
- Registration with one of the Organic Control Bodies, possession of a valid organic licence and registration with DAFM.

8.2.6.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

With regard to selection, the key selection tools are designed to incentivise whole farm conversions, a mixed farming approach and sectoral balance. Applicants will be selected according to criteria which will include:

- Prioritisation of total conversion over partial conversion
- Prioritisation of mixed farms
- Achieving sectoral balance across grassland, horticulture (including fruit) and tillage

The selection criteria, including the marking scheme, will be detailed in the Terms and Conditions for this measure. There will be a minimum points requirement for selection and the process will be fully transparent.

8.2.6.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

The premium will be area based as a payment per hectare of UAA. Organic Farming scheme payment rates are calculated on the basis of conversion for a maximum period of two years with a maintenance payment thereafter. The drop in production levels and consequent loss of income is not confined solely to the initial conversion period and therefore justifies the level of maintenance payment from year two onwards.

The standard rate of payment is €220/ha for conversion with a maintenance rate of €170/ha, with higher rates of €300 and €200 applying for horticulture (including fruit) operations, and €260 and €170 for tillage operations. In addition, a top-up of €30/ha for red clover is included. The higher horticultural (including fruit) rates will apply to the first six hectares only; thereafter the standard rate applies. For tillage farmers, the higher rate ceiling is 20 ha.

Financial data and statistics from the Teagasc National Farm Survey and Management Data for Farm Planning were used in the calculation of premia. DAFM calculated the premia on the basis of established Agronomic Assumptions and methodology which are set out in further detail below.

From 1st Jan 2023, increased rates of payment incorporating an additional participation payment will be
There are two elements to the increased rates per hectare. The first element concerns the sectoral issues, and the second element concerns the broader costs of undertaking organic farming.

The revised and increased rates have taken account of the marketplace and barriers to entry with the objective of providing further stimulation for organic production in the sectors where demand exists. From 1st January 2023, the increased rates are designed to further develop sustainable organic production systems in Ireland and to contribute to increasing the utilisable agricultural area under organic production.

The higher rates proposed for organic horticulture reflect the particular challenges in this sector. It is a labour-intensive industry as weed control must be carried out manually. This is because herbicides are not permitted in organic systems and organic horticulture cannot avail of crop rotation to manage weed control. This is particularly the case in the period of converting to organic principles where there is no premium for the product. Currently in Ireland, there are approximately 500 organic horticulture producers with many of these operating on holdings of under two hectares. Considering the particular challenges faced by the Irish organic horticulture sector, which is primarily comprised of small producers, the cost and labour requirements involved and the ambitious targets set for increased areas under organics nationally, it is considered that increased grant rates for this sector are duly justified.

A second element in the per hectare rates is the cost of undertaking organic farming including certification with a recognised body, completion of an approved training course and capital investment. A participation payment will be paid to every organic farmer each year to cover administrative costs, but it is only payable on the first hectare of land in the scheme for horticulture and for the first three hectares for all other farming enterprises. This support for the duration of the farmers contract, will help to increase/maintain the participation of smaller operators where the financial burden of setting up has been flagged as a barrier to entry.
Considering the challenges faced by the Irish organic sector and in particular the financial burden of setting up as an organic producer and the ambitious targets set for increased areas under organics nationally, it is considered that the introduction of participation payment rates is duly justified.

8.2.6.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.6.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

- Organic farming commitments are subject to the principle of no double funding. According to Art. 29(4) of the regulation on direct payments, organic farmers are entitled to the greening payments ipso facto.
- There is a risk also of double funding where organic farmers also participate in other agri environment actions (GLAS etc)
- The licensing of organic operators is devolved to Certifying Bodies (currently 5) approved by the Minister. There is a risk that the control bodies’ inspections are not effective, thus permitting non-compliant operators access to the Organic Farming Scheme.
- An additional premium is payable to encourage the cultivation of red clover as a source of high-protein organic fodder, and for its nitrogen-fixing characteristics; the risk here is that a claim may be submitted for area in excess of what is actually under cultivation, or that the crop is not cultivated at all.

8.2.6.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

- In order to respect the principle of non-double funding, the calculation of the organic payment will address the Greening issue and the certification of the correctness of the premia calculations will include a specific reference confirming that the proposed premia avoids double funding, following EU guidelines and methodologies.
- Organic Farming Scheme and GLAS programmes will be constructed and presented to deliver complementarity, but the specific undertakings will not overlap, thus avoiding double-funding.
- The Organic Certifying Bodies must be independently accredited to ISO standards. The Department as the Competent Authority is also obliged to have in place a control system that confirms the effectiveness of the licensing system.
- In relation to red clover, details of areas under cultivation will be captured as part of the annual BPS application and use to ground the claim for the OFS premium; in addition to the usual Pillar 1 checks and procedures, the Organic inspectorate will also be carrying out farm-inspections of at least 5% of claimants, including a proportion of claimants for red clover.

8.2.6.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. In particular, issue in relation to possible double funding have been addressed in line with the
relevant Commission guidance and appropriate systems for control are in place.

8.2.6.3.1.10. Information specific to the operation

Identification and definition of the relevant baseline elements; this shall include the relevant mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1) (c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and other relevant mandatory requirements established by national law

Baseline elements:

- GAEC and cross compliance requirements. Organic farmers are subject, where applicable, to the full suite of GAEC and Cross Compliance Requirements (SMRs).
- Greening requirement. Organic farmers may meet the Greening requirement by virtue of a high proportion of permanent grassland or by any other of the various options available, including their organic status.
- Relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and relevant mandatory requirements are established by national law. These requirements will be same as GLAS. See the Thematic Tables of GLAS commitments (formerly ‘Annex 2’), attached as an Annex to this RDP, for further information.

The commitments under the Organic Farming measure are such that they go beyond the requirements of the baseline.

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic assumptions and parameters including the description of the baseline requirements as referred to in Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, which are relevant for each particular type of commitment used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs, income foregone resulting from the commitment made and level of the transaction costs; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account aid granted under Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, including payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, in order to exclude double funding; where appropriate, the conversion method used for other units in accordance with Article 9 of this Regulation

Double funding will be avoided.

Calculation of the additional costs associated with conversion to organic farming and continuation within the organic system of production in compliance with the rules of organic production as laid down in:

Organic Food and Farming Standards in Ireland.

The premium is based on the additional costs incurred and income foregone resulting from farming to the organic standards when compared to a conventional farmer of similar land area, intensity of production and efficiency. (Transaction costs have not been included in DAFM methodology.)

Organic farmers incur substantial additional costs when complying with the rules of organic production. The associated costs of production are greater.

The costs are based on a gross margin comparison of typical Irish farm holdings and enterprises: comparing the income differential between conventional production and organic production. As stipulated in Article 29.4 of Regulation 1305/2013, DAFM has computed a payment per hectare with the cost associated with conversion to or maintaining organic farming based on the additional costs and income forgone resulting from the commitment made. DAFM computed the income forgone by identifying and applying relevant monetary values (based, inter alia, on independent published agronomic financial data via National Farm Surveys and Farm Management data). DAFM allocated an area-based cost for conversion to organic farming and maintenance thereafter for the duration of the contract. The conversion rate is calculated primarily on compensating the farmer for the fact that the products produced during conversion do not command the organic premium. Thus, the conversion rate is the maintenance rate which DAFM calculated plus the premium (based on the price of the organic crop or product in comparison to the conventional version.). The different rates are justified on the basis of a detailed analysis of the different organic sectors (cattle farmers, arable farmers, and horticultural produces) and the agri-economic independent data on which we based the individual premia determination.

The specific detailed Agronomic Assumptions on which the costings methodology is based are set out below:

- The output on Irish organic farms is between 20% and 30% lower than on conventional farms.
- The premium for organic product is between 10% and 20% depending on the specific product being produced.
- However, this premium is not always realised. Due to the wide dispersal of organic operators, the organic product is often sold into conventional markets without a premium.
- Transport costs are higher due to the dispersed nature of organic farms and the long distances to market.
- For premium calculation the conversion period has been fixed as being 2 years.
- There is no premium for the market for in-conversion products during the conversion period. The conversion premium is calculated based on this fact i.e., on average, the established maintenance rate plus the premium.
- Labour input on organic farms is higher than conventional neighbours.
- Organic inputs, such as animals, seed and plant propagation material are more expensive. In particular protein animal feeds (which must be imported) are almost double the conventional feed prices e.g., €800+/tonne for ruminant feed and €900+/tonne for pig and poultry rations.

The premia compensate partially for the additional costs and income forgone. However, the premia are part of a full suite of incentives that have been put in place for organic farmers including developing a specific organic training course, providing specialised extension services providing technical and financial advice and access to organic capital investment grants under Measure 4. The cumulative effect and the synergy between the various incentives and services is designed to achieve the stated objective of supporting the...
8.2.6.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.6.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.6.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.

8.2.6.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As referenced above.

8.2.6.5. Information specific to the measure

Identification and definition of the relevant baseline elements; this shall include the relevant mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1) (c)(ii) and (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the relevant minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products use, and other relevant mandatory requirements established by national law

As referenced above.

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic assumptions and parameters including the description of the baseline requirements as referred to in Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, which are relevant for each particular type of commitment used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs, income foregone resulting from the commitment made and level of the transaction costs; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account aid granted under Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, including payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment, in order to exclude double funding; where appropriate, the conversion method used for other units in accordance with Article 9 of this Regulation

As referenced above.
8.2.6.6. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

n/a
8.2.7. M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)

8.2.7.1. Legal basis


8.2.7.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

This measure does not form part of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme, as Natura areas will be targeted through Measure 10.

This measure is programmed exclusively to provide for ongoing commitments from the 2007-2013 programming period.

8.2.7.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.7.3.1. Provision for ongoing Natura commitments from the 2007-2013 programming period.

Sub-measure:

- 12.1 - compensation payment for Natura 2000 agricultural areas

8.2.7.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

This measure does not form part of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme, as Natura areas will be targeted through Measure 10.

This measure is programmed exclusively to provide for ongoing commitments from the 2007-2013 programming period.

8.2.7.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

This measure does not form part of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme, as Natura areas will be targeted through Measure 10.

This measure is programmed exclusively to provide for ongoing commitments from the 2007-2013
8.2.7.3.1.3. Links to other legislation
n/a

8.2.7.3.1.4. Beneficiaries
n/a

8.2.7.3.1.5. Eligible costs
n/a

8.2.7.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions
n/a

8.2.7.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria
n/a

8.2.7.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates
n/a

8.2.7.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.7.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures
n/a

8.2.7.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions
n/a
8.2.7.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

n/a

8.2.7.3.1.10. Information specific to the operation

Identification and definition of the baseline elements; for Natura 2000 payments this should include the good agricultural and environmental condition provided for in Article 94 and Annex II to regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 and the relevant criteria and minimum activities referred to in Article 4(1)(c) (ii) and (c) (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013; for WFD payments this shall include mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 and the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1)(c) (ii) and (c) (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013

n/a

Identification of the restrictions/disadvantages based on which payments can be granted and indication of compulsory practices

n/a

For WFD payments: definition of major changes in type of land use and description of the links with the programmes of measures of the river basin management plan referred to in Article 13 of Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (“WFD”);

n/a


n/a

The description of the methodology and the agronomic assumptions including the description of the baseline requirements referred to in Article 30(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 for Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC and in Article 30(4) of that Regulation for the WFD used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs and income foregone resulting from the disadvantages in the areas concerned related to the implementation of Directives 92/43/EEC, 2009/147/EC and the WFD; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment granted in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, in order to exclude double funding
In case other delimited nature protection areas with environmental restrictions are chosen to be supported within this measure, specification of the sites and contribution to the implementation of Article 10 of Directive 92/43/EEC

Indication of the link between the implementation of the measure and the Prioritized Action Framework (Art 8(4) of Directive 92/43/EEC)

8.2.7.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.7.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

8.2.7.4.2. Mitigating actions

8.2.7.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

8.2.7.5. Information specific to the measure

Identification and definition of the baseline elements; for Natura 2000 payments this should include the good agricultural and environmental condition provided for in Article 94 and Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 and the relevant criteria and minimum activities referred to in Article 4(1)(c) (ii) and (c) (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013; for WFD payments this shall include mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 and the relevant criteria and minimum activities established pursuant to Article 4(1)(c) (ii) and (c) (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013
Identification of the restrictions/disadvantages based on which payments can be granted and indication of compulsory practices

n/a

For WFD payments: definition of major changes in type of land use and description of the links with the programmes of measures of the river basin management plan referred to in Article 13 of Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council ("WFD");

n/a


n/a

The description of the methodology and the agronomic assumptions including the description of the baseline requirements referred to in Article 30(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 for Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC and in Article 30(4) of that Regulation for the WFD used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs and income foregone resulting from the disadvantages in the areas concerned related to the implementation of Directives 92/43/EEC, 2009/147/EC and the WFD; where relevant, that methodology shall take into account payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment granted in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, in order to exclude double funding

n/a

In case other delimited nature protection areas with environmental restrictions are chosen to be supported within this measure, specification of the sites and contribution to the implementation of Article 10 of Directive 92/43/EEC

n/a

Indication of the link between the implementation of the measure and the Prioritized Action Framework (Art 8(4) of Directive 92/43/EEC)

n/a
### 8.2.7.6. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

| n/a |
8.2.8. M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)

8.2.8.1. Legal basis


8.2.8.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

This measure will contribute to Focus Area 4A – Biodiversity, HNV farming and landscapes.

The measure consists of the following two sub-measures:

- Sub-measure 13.2 - compensation payment for other areas facing significant natural constraints
- Sub-measure 13.3 – compensation payment to other areas affected by specific constraints (referring to offshore island farming and other areas of specific constraint)

Compensation payment for other areas facing significant natural constraints

In order to identify areas eligible for support under this Measure, a comprehensive exercise has been undertaken to identify areas where at least 60% of the agricultural area meets at least one of the biophysical criteria at the thresholds listed in Annex III of Regulation 1305/2013. In an Irish context, the following biophysical criteria were relevant:

- Low temperature
- Excess Soil Moisture
- Limited Soil Drainage
- Unfavourable Texture and Stoniness
- Steep slope

Areas identified under this process have been at Local Administrative Unit 2 level. A fine tuning exercise as required by Article 32(3) of Regulation 1305/2013 has also been carried out on the areas identified in the above process. This process is required to identify areas where significant natural constraints were identified with reference to the above listed biophysical criteria, but where objective criteria have indicated that these constraints have been overcome by investments, economic activity, or evidence of normal land productivity, or in which production methods or farming systems have offset the income loss or added costs referred to in Article 31(1) of Regulation 1305/2013. In Ireland, this fine tuning was carried out with reference to stocking density and levels of arable land cover.

The combination of these two processes has identified areas facing significant natural constraints to be
supported under Sub-measure 13.2.

Compensation payment to other areas affected by specific constraints (referring to offshore island farming and other areas of specific constraint)

Building on the logic underlying submeasure 13.2 above, support will be made available under this submeasure in recognition of the specific constraints pertaining to island farmers. The preparatory analysis for the RDP highlighted that island farmers face specific constraints in relation to issues such as higher production costs.

In tandem with the new delimitation process, Ireland has also identified three further categories of land that are affected by specific constraints. These are as follows:

- Areas of environmental importance - District Electoral Divisions (DED) where 50% or more of the area is covered by the Natura 2000 Directives lands and the National Heritage Areas. There is no risk of double funding since M12 Natura was only programmed under Ireland’s RDP for transitional funding for REPS and AEOS, which ended in 2016 and 2018 respectively.

- Areas where there is a structural constraint relating to farm fragmentation and farm size. Under this heading a DED is deemed to have a specific constraint where it meets the following two criteria
  - Where the land holding is in multiple blocks, i.e. fragmented.
  - Where the average farm size in a DED is less than 80% of the national average, i.e. less than 25.6 hectares.

- Areas where there is a structural constraint relating to the prevalence of grassland and field size. Under this heading, townlands were identified where more than 50% was in permanent grassland and there was an average field size of less than 4 hectares. In order to fully focus the support here on those specific areas within this category facing the most acute need for support, the identification of eligible areas was further refined by reference to a threshold of Family Farm income of less than 65% of farmers who were not classified as facing constraints in the original iteration of this measure.

Support under these two submeasures will be delivered nationally via a single Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme.

Ireland is not implementing ANC support under Pillar 1.

8.2.8.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.8.3.1. Areas of Natural Constraints (ANCs)

Sub-measure:
8.2.8.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

Payments will only be made in respect of agricultural land, with different rates of aid applicable, based on the following land categorisations:

- Category 1 land
- Category 2 land
- Category 3 land

These categories are based on the considerations set out in Article 31(1) of Regulation 1305/2013. The system of farming prevalent in Category 1 is characterised by extensive farming practices focused on livestock management on higher ground. By contrast, Category 2 is characterised by extensive livestock grazing practices on lower ground, while Category 3 is less extensive in nature and characterised by grazing livestock enterprises. The categorisations are based on a range of data sources, including stocking rate information and previous reviews of designated lands. Payment rates are designed to reflect the differences between these three categories.

The measure will:

- Ensure continued agricultural land use, thereby contributing to the maintenance of a viable rural society
- Maintain the countryside and
- Maintain and promote sustainable farming systems, which in particular take account of environmental protection requirements.

8.2.8.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Payment to be made annually.

8.2.8.3.1.3. Links to other legislation

n/a

8.2.8.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

In the order of 90,000 eligible farmers are expected to benefit under the measure.
8.2.8.3.1.5. Eligible costs

Eligible costs are determined on the basis of the additional costs and income foregone linked to the area of constraint.

8.2.8.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

Beneficiaries must:

- Comply with the description of ‘active farmer’ in Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013;
- Occupy and farm at own risk a minimum of three hectares of forage and arable land, situated in a recognised ANC area. (DAFM can confirm that this requirement will not result in any trade distortion);
- Undertake to actively farm and manage the land situated in an ANC area and applied on in the given year of application;
- Comply with Cross Compliance requirements under Article 92 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013.
- Have a holding that meets the minimum stocking levels (grazing requirement).

Applicants who are partners in a partnership, registered under Irish National Regulations, can continue to benefit individually under the Scheme, based on the area of ANC land they contribute to the partnership. (Individual threshold limits will apply at measure level for partnership members).

Regarding the minimum stocking density requirement, it is 0.15 livestock units per hectare or a lower level where it is justified on environmental grounds. The minimum stocking level will be set systematically at individual farmer level using the 0.15 lu/ha normally and an established lower stocking figure for commonages and other marginal land. The calculation of the actual stocking density on a scheme-year basis will be carried out using the database on the identification and registration of animals, the sheep census data, flock registers and animal passports. The compliance with the minimum stocking density requirements will be checked administratively in the case of all applications and verified on the ground in the case of the 5% eligibility inspection cases.

Given the nature of farming in designated areas, it is not foreseen that this requirement will exclude any farmers from this measure on the basis of the category of land / sector (e.g. arable) they are farming.

8.2.8.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

No selection criteria apply to this measure.

8.2.8.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Payments are made annually per hectare, and shall include a degressive structure. Payment levels are differentiated across the three categories of land taking into account the severity of constraints identified in each category and the linked calculations of the additional costs and income foregone attached to farming the land in each of the three categories. The payment rates are as follows:
• Category 1 Land: €148 on the first 12 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €112 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 34 hectares.

• Category 2 Land: €111 on the first 10 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €104 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.

• Category 3 Land: €93 on the first 8 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €88.25 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.

In addition, for 2019 until 2022 payments will be made to beneficiaries in areas that are no longer eligible under the new delimitation. From 2019 until 2022, these payments will be in line with the rates permitted under Article 31 (5) of Regulation 1305/2013. These payments will be made to beneficiaries who have land that is now ineligible under the new delimitation, and payments will only be made up to the relevant maximum hectare levels set out above.

8.2.8.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.8.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risks relate to ensuring farmers in receipt of support meet all the conditions in terms of farming in a designated area, compliance with environmental standards and stocking rates. However, this is a long standing area based measure with a rigorous system of administrative and field checks which are integrated with the Land Parcel Identification System and the Basic Payment Scheme systems.

8.2.8.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

In order to address these risks, a dual system of administrative checks and on farm inspections is in place.

All applicants under the ANC Scheme will be subjected to robust and comprehensive administrative checks. As the ANC Scheme is an area based Scheme, the claimed area will be subjected to a cross-check against the LPIS database. The LPIS database, which is updated on a continuous basis, will verify that the land claimed is situated in a designated area and also the accuracy of the area claimed will be confirmed. In relation to the stocking density requirement, the administrative checks include verification by way of the database on the identification and registration of animals, sheep census data, flock registers and animal passports. These administrative checks are enhanced by on-the-spot eligibility checks on more than 5% of all applicants, which include a physical verification of the herds or flocks. It also involves the systematic use of a commonage land database to calculate a lower stocking level where that is justified on environmental grounds.

8.2.8.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure.
design. A structured control process is in place which builds on the experience of implementing the LFA scheme in previous programming periods.

8.2.8.3.1.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Payment rates are based on an examination of standard output data from the Central Statistics Office Census of Agriculture and data from DAFM databases. This facilitated a comparison at district electoral division (DED) level of DEDs containing designated land with DEDs containing no designated land.

CSO Standard output figures show for Category 1 areas only an average SO/ha of €236.76, for Category 2 areas only an average SO/ha of €742.81, for Category 3 areas only an average SO/ha of €1020.38, and for non designated areas an average SO/ha of €1206.86.

Based on these figures, these rates are in line with the provision of Article 31 (1) of Regulation 1305/2013 in that the support granted annually per hectare will compensate beneficiaries for “part of the additional costs and income foregone related to the constraints for agricultural production in the area concerned.” The rates only compensate for part of the additional costs and income foregone, and therefore stay below 100% of the calculation – thus there is no overcompensation.

In addition to the differing levels in standard output between the categories, the different payment levels between categories are also based on the considerations set out in Article 31(1) of Regulation 1305/2013. The system of farming prevalent in Category 1 is characterised by extensive farming practices focused on livestock management on higher ground. By contrast, Category 2 is characterised by extensive livestock grazing practices in on lower ground, while Category 3 is less extensive in nature and characterised by grazing livestock enterprises.

8.2.8.3.1.11. Information specific to the operation

Definition of the threshold level of area per holding on the basis of which the Member State calculates degressivity of payments

This sub-measure applies to all areas designated by reference to the thresholds and criteria set out in Annex III of Regulation 1305/2013 and the fine tuning exercise carried out. In each of the three categories of land within this, a degressive payment structure is in place with higher rates payable on the first 12, 10, or 8 hectares (or part thereof) and a lower rate for the remaining hectares up to a maximum number of hectares as set out in Section 8.2.8.3.1.8.

This degressive structure is justified on the basis of economies of scale in place, and the lower level of productivity on smaller scale holdings which can exacerbate the impact of the constraint on such holdings.

In respect of beneficiaries no longer eligible under the new delimitation, a degressive phase out payment will be put in place. In 2019 and 2020, these payments will be in line with the rates permitted under Article 31 (5) of Regulation 1305/2013. These payments will be made to beneficiaries who have land that is now ineligible under the new delimitation, and payments will only be made up to the relevant maximum hectare levels set in Section 8.2.8.3.1.8.
[Designation of areas facing natural and other specific constraints] Description of the local unit-level applied for the designation of the areas.

n/a

[Designation of areas facing natural and other specific constraints] Description of the application of the method including the criteria referred to in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 for the delimitation of the three categories of areas referred to in that Article including the description and results of the fine-tuning exercise for areas facing natural and other specific constraints other than mountain areas.

See description in Section 8.2.8.6
8.2.8.3.2. Specific support to other areas affected by specific constraints (referring to offshore island farming and other areas of specific constraint)

Sub-measure:

- 13.3 - compensation payment to other areas affected by specific constraints

8.2.8.3.2.1. Description of the type of operation

Specific support will be made available under this submeasure in recognition of the constraints facing offshore island farming and three other identified categories. The support will be integrated nationally with sub-measure 13.2 to form one Areas of Natural Constraints Scheme.

Island holdings are generally small and fragmented where the potential for intensification is limited and farming is economically marginal, at best. Farming on the off-shore islands off Ireland is in continuous decline. Holdings tend to provide for minimum yields from grazing in additional to very limited facilities to harvest fodder; this in turn leads to restricted stocking levels on many holdings. Island farming is labour-intensive with a huge dependence on external supports, which are situated on the mainland.

If this trend of decline is not arrested, it could have a significant negative impact on both the environment and the maintenance of the countryside. It is necessary for appropriate land management to continue in order to conserve, and improve the environment, to maintain the countryside (which has a link to tourism on the islands via landscape preservation etc), and to protect the coastline.

The maintenance of farming on Ireland’s offshore islands, including the maintenance of traditional extensive farming methods, is vital in terms of the delivery of environmental benefits via the avoidance of land abandonment and the preservation of habitats. This has been recognised, for example, in the Heritage Council’s report on High Nature Value Farming in Ireland which refers to the traditional agricultural landscape in the Aran Islands as presenting a “mosaic of habitats, characterised by the network of dry stone walls and rocky, wildflower-rich fields.” This report also highlighted a decline in traditional farm practices and potential detrimental effects arising from scrub encroachment or abandonment.

The National Spatial Strategy for Ireland, 2002-2020 recognises that the offshore islands face particular challenges, and the need for special consideration to be given to islands was an issue which was highlighted in the associated consultation process. This report also points to the development of natural resources as a policy response to the issues facing remote areas such as the islands.

The Heritage Council also emphasised the important role that tourism can play in supporting island farmers. The maintenance of the natural landscapes and scenic beauty of Ireland’s offshore islands is key to ensuring
that island communities can benefit from Ireland’s tourism industry. Comhar na nOileán Teoranta’s submission in respect of the LEADER element of the 2007-2013 RDP also highlights the challenges facing farmers on the islands and identifies the need to develop rural tourism on islands in a manner which takes account of the close links with agricultural activity. Comhar na nOileán Teoranta is the representative organisation for the off-shore islands.

The continuation of active farming on the islands also results in the need to regularly maintain field boundaries, particularly, stone walls, which form part of the defensive structure of the coastline.

In addition to support for offshore island farming, Ireland has also identified the following three categories of specific constraint as part of the process of establishing the new delimitation of the overall measure.

**Areas of Environmental Importance**

Lands designated under the Natura 2000 Directives are clearly very important from an environmental point of view. It is also evident that in order to maintain the state of sensitive areas that it is vital that a farming activity continues to take place to protect the areas. Hence the designation of these areas as areas of specific constraint. This matter is referenced explicitly in “Farming for Natura 2000[1]”

*Many Natura 2000 farming systems are under threat. Farmers, who deliver the essential management of key habitats and species often farm under difficult circumstances using labour-intensive systems on marginal land. They are extremely vulnerable to economic pressures to abandon their traditional farming systems and in some cases to cease production altogether. It is therefore important to build an integrated package of support for Natura 2000 farmers that first ensures the economic viability of the extensive farming system on which the beneficial management depends, and secondly addresses the specific management practices needed for the conservation of the key habitats and species.*

A similar logic underpins the inclusion of National Heritage Areas as areas of specific constraint. These lands are defined under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000) and are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation. They are areas of significance for wildlife and habitats and the areas concerned can be present on the agricultural area of holdings. These areas would encompass what is known as High Nature Value (HNV) farmland. The continuation of agriculture in such areas is critical[2] and without farming “these culturally significant landscapes will change irrevocably”.

DEDs where 50% or more of the DED is covered by the Natura 2000 Directives lands and the National Heritage Areas have been designated in this category.
The logic for supporting these areas of environmental importance is well supported within Ireland’s RDP. At the most general level, the RDP includes a heavy emphasis on addressing environmental challenges and opportunities in the agricultural sector and on building on progress in this regard. The priority areas in question are also more specifically highlighted within the RDP – for example the SWOT analysis highlights Natura 2000 areas as a “weakness in the programming area”, while supporting farmers in such areas via the mechanism of the Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme is identified as an “opportunity identified in the programming area” to address this key issue.

This approach is also in keeping the stated objectives of the Measure, which include the continuation of agricultural land use, the maintenance of the countryside, and the promotion of sustainable farming systems which take account of environmental protection requirements. Based on these considerations, this designation meets the objectives of Article 32 (4) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 in that it provides for the continuation of land management to conserve and enhance the environment and to preserve the tourist potential of these very sensitive environmental areas.

Areas facing a structural constraints relating to fragmentation and farm size

Fragmented smaller farms face a structural constraint on their farming enterprise, and there is a greater risk of land abandonment with such farms. The challenges facing fragmented small farms are set out in reports such “The Sustainability of Small Farming in Ireland[3]” carried out by Teagasc drawing on National Farm Survey data.

The case set out in this Teagasc research for supporting small farms includes references to;

- The multifunctional nature of agriculture and the important role that small farms play in the delivery of public goods
- The role that small farms play in the context of viable rural communities, and
- The role that small farms play in the protection of the landscape and the maintenance of biodiversity.

Under this category a DED is deemed to be facing a specific constraint where it meets the following two criteria

- Where the land holding is in multiple blocks, ie fragmented.
- Where the average farm size in a DED is less than 80% of the national average, i.e. less than 25.6 hectares.
Based on these considerations, the inclusion of this category of specific constraint is in line with the objectives of Article 32 (4) of Regulation 1305/2013. It will assist in maintaining land management to protect the environment and to maintain the countryside.

**Areas facing a structural constraints relating to the prevalence of grassland cover and field size**

The landscape of Ireland is relatively unique in a European context. Land holdings are divided up into multiple fields, typically bordered by hedgerows and in the vast majority of cases permanent grassland is the dominant crop. These hedgerows and small field sizes help distinguish the landscape of Ireland. The maintenance of this unique landscape from the view of the environment, tourism and animal husbandry for livestock enterprises comes at a cost, as efficiencies that could be garnered with larger field sizes are not possible without restructuring the landscape e.g. hedgerow removal. In order to maintain the countryside and specifically the landscape these areas need support to prevent land abandonment and restructuring.

Irish agriculture is dominated by grassland enterprises. The DG AGRI guidance on fine-tuning identifies that grassland is generally concentrated in areas with less fertile soils;

*Statistics[4] show that grassland used for agricultural purposes is mainly concentrated in regions with less fertile soils and where forests have been either cut during the past centuries to fuel economic growth or disappeared due to climate factors.*

Based on these considerations, regions with 50% or above of permanent grassland and with smaller field sizes (less than 4 hectares) experience a specific constraint relative to other agricultural areas. In order to fully target the support on those specific areas within this category facing the most acute need for support a further refinement has identified the cohort of farmers where the average Family Farm Income (FFI) is less than 65% of the FFI of farmers who were not classified as disadvantaged / facing constraints in the previous iteration of the Measure. This is a cohort of farmers where the specific constraint is most likely to lead to land abandonment and/or restructuring. In order to address this risk, expenditure is targeted here in order to maximise the role of the measure in avoiding land abandonment and the consequent knock on effects in terms of maintaining the traditional patchwork landscape and preserving the environment.

Across these three categories (i.e. excluding support for the offshore islands) payments will only be made in respect of agricultural land, with different rates of aid applicable, based on the following land categorisations

- Category 1 land
• Category 2 land
• Category 3 land

These categories are based on the considerations set out in Article 31(1) of Regulation 1305/2013. The system of farming prevalent in Category 1 is characterised by extensive farming practices focused on livestock management on higher ground. By contrast, Category 2 is characterised by extensive livestock grazing practices on lower ground, while Category 3 is less extensive in nature and characterised by grazing livestock enterprises. The categorisations are based on a range of data sources, including stocking rate information and previous reviews of designated lands. Payment rates are designed to reflect the differences between these three categories.

The total area of the lands supported under this submeasure does not exceed 10% of the area of Ireland.


8.2.8.3.2.2. Type of support
Type of support: Grants
Payment to be made annually.

8.2.8.3.2.3. Links to other legislation
n/a

8.2.8.3.2.4. Beneficiaries
In the order of 10,000 eligible farmers are expected to benefit under the measure.
8.2.8.3.2.5. Eligible costs

In the case of support for offshore farming, eligible costs are determined on the basis of the costs and income foregone linked to the specific constraints experienced by off shore island farmers. Island farmers already incur the additional costs and lower productivity that other mainland farmers situated on Areas of Natural Constraints also incur. However, there are additional costs borne by island farmers, which cover all of the main farming activities. These include higher input costs (fertiliser and machinery), animal feed, and other services such as veterinary, consultancy, and maintenance charges.

In the case of support for the other areas affected by specific constraints (areas of environmental importance, areas facing a structural constraint relating to farm size and fragmentation, and areas facing a structural constraint relating to the prevalence of grassland cover and field size), eligible costs are determined on the basis of the additional costs and income foregone linked to the area.

8.2.8.3.2.6. Eligibility conditions

In order to be eligible, applicants must fulfil all the eligibility conditions applying to submeasure 13.2. The only departures from this are in respect of support for offshore island farming where the 3 hectare minimum requirement will not apply and where beneficiaries must be farming land on an offshore island.

8.2.8.3.2.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

No selection criteria apply to this measure.

8.2.8.3.2.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

In respect of support for offshore farming, payments are made annually per hectare.

The payment rates are as follows:

- The first 20 hectares of island land farmed - €250
- 20 to 34 hectares - €170
- 34 to 40 hectares - €70
- Over 40 hectares – no further payment will apply

The digressive nature of the payment is based on relevant economies of scale. The average payment for island land will exceed €25 per hectare.

In respect of the 3 further categories of specific constraint (areas of environmental importance, areas facing a structural constraint relating to farm size and fragmentation, and areas facing a structural constraint
relating to the prevalence of grassland cover and field size), the payment rates that apply across these categories are as follows:

- **Category 1 land:** €148 on the first 12 eligible hectares or part thereof, and €112 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 34 hectares.
- **Category 2 land:** €111 on the first 10 eligible hectares or part thereof and €104 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.
- **Category 3 land:** €93 on the first 8 eligible hectares or part thereof and €88.25 per hectare on remaining hectares up to a maximum of 30 hectares.

**8.2.8.3.2.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations**

**8.2.8.3.2.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures**

Risks as set out for submeasure 13.2 will also apply to this submeasure. A further specific risk relates to ensuring that those claiming support are actually farming on an offshore island.

**8.2.8.3.2.9.2. Mitigating actions**

As set out in relation to submeasure 13.2, applicants in this submeasure will be subject to a range of checks. In addition to the longstanding system of checks for the ANC scheme, a specific check will be put in place to ensure compliance with the requirement for applicants to be farming on an offshore island.

**8.2.8.3.2.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure**

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. A structured control process is in place which builds on the experience of implementing the LFA scheme in previous programming periods. Specific checks in relation to off shore island farming have been added to this process.

**8.2.8.3.2.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant**

The island lands were already designated as Less Favoured Areas and, therefore, were already subjected to constraints and entitled to the exiting rates of aid under the Less Favoured Areas Scheme. In addition, the farmers farming the island land are subject to more significant constraints which can be categorised in the table below with the additional costs also included;

Further to the additional costs for island farmers, there is also a negative impact on production. For example, the production of hay and silage where they can be harvested is restricted because of soil productivity and climatic conditions, which results in a lower yield. The preparation of cattle and sheep for the market is also
Payment rates in respect of the 3 further categories of specific constraint (areas of environmental importance, areas facing a structural constraint relating to farm size and fragmentation, and areas facing a structural constraint relating to the prevalence of grassland cover and field size) are based on an examination of standard output data from the Central Statistics Office Census of Agriculture and data from DAFM databases. This facilitated a comparison at DED level of DEDs containing designated land with DEDs containing no designated land. CSO Standard output figures show for Category 1 areas only an average SO/ha of €236.76, for Category 2 areas only an average SO/ha of €742.81, for Category 3 areas only an average SO/ha of €1,020.38, and for non designated areas an average SO/ha of €1,206.86.

Based on these figures, these rates are in line with the provision of Article 31 (1) of Regulation 1305/2013 in that the support granted annually per hectare will compensate beneficiaries for “part of the additional costs and income foregone related to the constraints for agricultural production in the area concerned.” The rates only compensate for part of the additional costs and income foregone, and therefore stay below 100% of the calculation – thus there is no overcompensation.

In addition to the differing levels in standard output between the categories, the different payment levels between categories are also based on the considerations set out in Article 31(1) of Regulation 1305/2013. The system of farming prevalent in Category 1 is characterised by extensive farming practices focused on livestock management on higher ground. By contrast, Category 2 is characterised by extensive livestock grazing practices on lower ground, while Category 3 is less extensive in nature and characterised by grazing livestock enterprises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of costs</th>
<th>% Additional costs*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Input costs (such as fertiliser)</td>
<td>150%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animal feed (e.g. compound feed, hay and silage)</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services (e.g. veterinary animal health)</td>
<td>130%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other services (sheep shearing, agricultural consultancy)</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional island production costs</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>

* Compared to costs on ANC areas situated on mainland.
8.2.8.3.2.11. Information specific to the operation

Definition of the threshold level of area per holding on the basis of which the Member State calculates degressivity of payments

The highest rate of aid in respect of the support for island farming is payable on the first 20 hectares. The second aid level is payable on areas between 20 and 34 hectares.

The degressive rate of aid in respect of the support for island farming is based on the lower level of productivity on smaller-scale holdings and the impact of the additional costs such as service costs, which do not vary significantly irrespective of the size of the island holding. This degressive structure is designed to encourage island farmers to continue farming in an environmentally sustainable manner on the off shore islands. The vast majority of island holdings are small-scale farms with over 80% of all holdings less than 20 hectares. A further 12.5% have farms between 20 hectares and 34 hectares. The number of holdings greater than 40 hectares form a small part of the island farming population at 5%.

In the case of support for the other areas affected by specific constraints, the 3 further categories of specific constraint (areas of environmental importance, areas facing a structural constraint relating to farm size and fragmentation, and areas facing a structural constraint relating to the prevalence of grassland cover and field size) a degressive payment structure is in place with higher rates payable on the first 12, 10 or 8 hectares (or part thereof) and a lower rate for the remaining hectares up to a maximum number of hectares as set out in Section 8.2.8.3.1.8.

This degressive structure is justified on the basis of economies of scale in place, and the lower level of productivity on smaller scale holdings which can exacerbate the impact of the constraint on such holdings.

[Designation of areas facing natural and other specific constraints] Description of the local unit-level applied for the designation of the areas.

The areas facing specific constraints can be designated at townland level.

[Designation of areas facing natural and other specific constraints] Description of the application of the method including the criteria referred to in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 for the delimitation of the three categories of areas referred to in that Article including the description and results of the fine-tuning exercise for areas facing natural and other specific constraints other than mountain areas.

In keeping with Article 32 of Regulation 1305/2013 a comprehensive exercise has been undertaken in order to identify areas deemed as eligible under this measure. This approach involved undertaking the following three processes in tandem with each other – the identification of areas meeting the thresholds for each of the biophysical thresholds set out in Annex III of Regulation 1305/2013, a fine tuning exercise as required by the same Regulation, and the identification of areas facing specific constraints.

In relation to the biophysical criteria, townlands have been identified where at least 60% of the agricultural area meets at least one of the biophysical criteria at the thresholds listed in Annex III of Regulation 1305/2013. In an Irish context, the following biophysical criteria were relevant:
- Low temperature
- Excess Soil Moisture
- Limited Soil Drainage
- Unfavourable Texture and Stoniness
- Steep slope

This process was carried out in line with the guidelines provided by the Joint Research Centre in the EU Commission. In summation, a number of the listed biophysical criteria do not have an impact on the designation of land in Ireland. Due to its Atlantic-influenced, temperate maritime climate with high rainfall, agricultural production in Ireland is both predominantly and significantly impacted by the drainage status of soils and by soil moisture excess. The full detail of this process is set out in the report “Data and Methodology for Assessment of Biophysical Criteria in Delineation of Updated Areas of Natural Constraint” which is included in full as an appendix to the RDP.

In parallel to the identification of those areas identified in the biophysical process, Regulation 1305/2013 also requires Member States to carry out a fine tuning exercise. This process is required to identify areas where significant natural constraints were identified with reference to the above listed biophysical criteria, but where objective criteria have indicated that these constraints have been overcome by investments, economic activity, or evidence of normal land productivity, or in which production methods or farming systems have offset the income loss or added costs referred to in Article 31(1) of Regulation 1305/2013.

The approach taken to the fine tuning process is a tiered one and has been carried out at District Electoral Division level. Essentially, the process identified the following 3 categories:

- DEDs that displayed a stocking density over a 3 year average at level above 1.8 LU per hectare have been fine tuned out.
- DEDs that displayed an average level of above 15% of the agricultural area taken up by arable crops have been fine tuned out.
- DEDs that displayed a combination of greater than 8% arable coverage and between 14. – 1.8 LU per Hectare have been fine tuned out.

As part of the original iteration of the RDP, Ireland had identified offshore islands as an area of specific constraint. In completing the new delineation of eligible areas for introduction in 2019, Ireland has also identified the following three categories of specific constraint as part of the process of establishing the new delimitation of the overall measure.

Areas of Environmental Importance

Areas facing a structural constraints relating to fragmentation and farm size

Areas facing a structural constraints relating to the prevalence of grassland cover and field size

Further detail in relation to the fine tuning and areas of specific constraints process is outlined in the technical paper “Delineation of the Areas of Natural Constraints in Ireland - Application of Fine Tuning & Specific Constraints” which is attached in full as an appendix to the RDP and under 8.2.8.3.2.1 (Description
of the type of operation) above.

The outcome of these linked processes provides the basis for identifying areas eligible under both

- Sub-measure 13.2 - compensation payment for other areas facing significant natural constraints
- Sub-measure 13.3 – compensation payment to other areas affected by specific constraints (referring to offshore island farming and other areas of specific constraint)

The full list of these eligible townlands is attached as an appendix to the RDP.

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<tr>
<th>8.2.8.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations</th>
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<th>8.2.8.7. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure</th>
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8.2.9. M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)

8.2.9.1. Legal basis


8.2.9.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

This measure is expected to contribute towards the following Focus Area:

3A) Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations

The SWOT and Identification of needs in Ireland’s Rural Development Programme has identified that Ireland has high animal welfare standards overall. However, the sheep sector has been identified as a sector with a historically low level of technology uptake, with a consequential impact on animal welfare. This scheme therefore targets animal welfare specifically in the sheep sector.

Structure

The Animal Welfare Scheme will continue the development in animal and health welfare in the sheep sector. The proposed Animal Welfare Scheme will compliment some of the elements provided for in Knowledge Transfer Groups, thereby further enhancing the standards of animal welfare in the Irish Sheep flock.

The Animal Welfare Scheme will contribute to improved welfare by introducing targeted intervention in the areas of lameness control, parasite control, flystrike control and appropriate supplementation. The Animal Welfare Scheme will be a 1 year contract with automatic renewal unless opt-out is triggered by the beneficiary or by the Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The maximum duration will be 4 years.

Complementarities with sub-measure 1.1: Knowledge Transfer Groups, 2.1 Animal Health & Welfare – on farm advice, 2.3 CPD for Agricultural Advisors & 4.1 TAMS

- Measure 1 - Knowledge Transfer Groups: Participants in KT groups and farmers who avail of advisory services will receive general advice on standard husbandry practises, including the need for appropriate treatment of lambs, parasite control and the preparation of Farm Plans and Health Plans. However, participation in the Animal Welfare Scheme provides support to farmers for specific actions which go beyond standard husbandry practices in the areas of animal welfare identified in this scheme.

- Measure 2 – Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (Animal Health & Welfare): There is no support provided under the Knowledge Transfer Programme for any of the Animal Welfare Scheme actions in this scheme.
• Measure 4 – Targeted Agricultural Modernisations Scheme II: TAMS provides support for capital investment in certain physical infrastructure under the Animal Welfare, Safety and Nutrient Storage Scheme. However, the Animal Welfare Scheme does not provide any support for capital investments in physical infrastructure.

Stakeholder consultation.

Stakeholder consultation has taken place with farm organisations, advisory services and technical experts on animal welfare in the sheep sector. This consultation identified the need for a targeted Animal Welfare Scheme for sheep in accordance with the proposed actions outlined in the scheme.

This scheme builds on previous interactions with the sheep sector in relation to farm level actions associated with animal welfare.

8.2.9.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.9.3.1. Animal Welfare Scheme

Sub-measure:

• 14.1 - payment for animal welfare

8.2.9.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

The scheme will have a number of options. Applicants must chose two options i.e. one option from Category A and one option from Category B below.

Applicants must carry out those actions for the full term of the contract.

Farmers will be categorised as lowland or hill flock as follows

• Applicants with greater than 50% lowland ewes must choose from the lowland options
• Applicants with greater than 50% hill type ewes must chose from the options for Hill flocks.

See Table below

Lameness Control

Baseline: Current practise is to treat sick/injured lame sheep.

Under this action participants shall carry out a minimum of 5 lameness examinations per year, at prescribed times, recording the incidences of lameness in the flock in a workbook. This will require the assembly of the flock, and will constitute the scoring assessment of lameness in the flock. Farmers should identify the extent and cause(s) of lameness and then treat and manage the flock to prevent sickness and injury as a
result of lameness.

After examining the sheep flock and carrying out the lameness assessment, a farmer must footbathe his flock to prevent future lameness and treat any affected individual sheep with treatments appropriate to the cause of lameness. Such action will prevent the spread of further infection through the flock to sheep not currently lame and prevent any further injury or pain to lame sheep. All such actions and treatments must be recorded in the scheme workbook.

Mineral Supplementation (Ewes)

Baseline: Current baseline practise includes feeding supplementary minerals either through meal or the use of specific mineral supplements prior to lambing.

Under this action participants shall supplement minerals to ewes post mating to help combat deficiencies in ewes that can result in increased stillbirths and mortalities.

Flystrike Control

Baseline: Current practise is to treat outbreak of flystrike with appropriate medicines (chemical control).

Under this action participants shall incorporate a flystrike programme for the prevention of flies during the months of flystrike risk. In addition to chemical control, this programme will incorporate mechanical means for the prevention of flies and recording the times of intervention and number of sheep with dags removed. The examination and prevention of flystrike by mechanical means shall be at prescribed times of the season based on the seasonal occurrence of flystrike.

Mineral Supplementation (Meal feeding lambs post weaning)

Baseline: Current practise among hill flocks is to either sell lambs directly after weaning or finish lambs for slaughter. Baseline nutritional needs prior to weaning are met by suckling and grazing.

Under this action participants shall feed lambs with a suitable ration (containing a mineral supplement) to lambs for a minimum of 4 weeks post weaning to ensure mineral deficiencies resulting from standard husbandry practises prior to weaning are corrected.

Mineral Supplementation (Lambs pre weaning)

Baseline: Lambs’ baseline nutritional needs prior to weaning are met by suckling and grazing.

Under this action participants shall supplement lambs with minerals pre weaning, to address mineral deficiencies in hill flocks, where such deficiencies exist even when the lambs’ baseline nutritional needs are being met.

Parasite Control

Baseline: Current practise among flock owners to control worms is through routine dosing and appropriate grassland management practises.

Under this action participants with lowland flocks will carry out a minimum of 2 Faecal Egg Counts per annum to establish the worm burden. Farmers will then adjust their dosing regime in accordance with the FEC tests to ensure treatment of internal parasites is carried out on a targeted basis. Farmers should only
dose in accordance with the FEC tests. If the FEC does not show a worm burden which requires treatment with an anthelmintic, no treatment should be administered. If the FEC shows that treatment with an anthelmintic is necessary then a farmer should administer an anthelmintic accordingly. All such FEC results and treatments must be recorded in the scheme workbook.

Under this action participants with hill flocks will carry out 1 Faecal Egg Count on lambs for the presence of worms between 3 and 4 weeks post weaning.

Management of pregnant ewes (Scanning)

Baseline: There is no requirement to scan pregnant ewes in Ireland resulting in ewes being fed and managed as a uniform group, instead of in accordance with litter size.

Intervention in the management of pregnant ewes will result in reduced welfare issues such as insufficient colostrum or oversized lambs at birth. It is not possible to establish the number of lambs/litter size of a ewe in the absence of scanning to allow for the identification and management of pregnant ewes according to litter size.

Under this action participants will scan ewes 80 days after ram turnout. Ewes will be marked or divided in accordance with litter size. Ewes will be fed in the period prior to lambing in accordance with litter size to ensure optimum management of the pregnant ewe. Optimum feeding conditions will improve welfare for both ewe and lambs at lambing by ensuring ewes produce sufficient colostrums and by reducing the number of oversized lambs. This action will result in the management of increased groups of ewes.

Further detail on the individual actions and the baseline requirements is contained in the Animal Welfare Annex.
8.2.9.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

An annual payment will be made to each farmer who meets the requirements of the scheme. The payment per eligible ewe will be €10 per year. The maximum number of eligible ewes will be based on an historic reference period (2014-2015 based on their Sheep Census return) therefore ensuring no risk to the overall budget ceiling allocated to the scheme. To take account of the extension of the scheme in the transition period this reference period may be amended from Year 5 of the scheme. Any such amendment will maintain the historical element to ensure no risk to the overall budget ceiling.

The maximum number of eligible ewes may be increased for individual farmers who participate in GLAS and are required, as a condition of a Commonage Management Plan or Farm Plan, to increase the number of ewes to reach their individual minimum stocking level. The scheme may also be opened to new sheep farmers.
8.2.9.3.1.3. Links to other legislation

N/A

8.2.9.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

The scheme will target active sheep farmers with breeding ewes. An active farmer is defined in Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013.

8.2.9.3.1.5. Eligible costs

The costs have been calculated based on the time and cost involved in undertaking the eligible actions underlying the scheme. Costs are measured in units of time required to complete the actions (plus the cost of minerals, scanning, testing etc.) minus the net economic benefit of the actions which include any associated increased performance or production. Costs have been verified by Teagasc.

The costs include a transaction cost to cover information collection and recording necessary for the efficient implementation of the scheme. The transaction cost has been calculated at 20% of the total cost per ewe.

8.2.9.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

All applicants must have a flock number, have breeding ewes on their holding for the duration of the scheme and have declared breeding ewes on their 2016 Sheep Census return.

The maximum number of ewes eligible for payment will be the average of the number of ewes in the historic reference period 2014 – 2015.

8.2.9.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The scheme will be open to all registered sheep farmers with breeding ewes who commit to complete in full the actions chosen by them under the scheme.

No selection criteria will be applied.

8.2.9.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Payment will be calculated on costs incurred and transaction costs basis.

The payment per ewe is based on the costs associated with carrying out the required actions(one option from category A and one option from category B). Payment will be issued when the full set of actions have been
carried out.

The scheme will pay beneficiaries €10 per eligible ewe or €66.66 per Livestock Unit per year. This includes transaction costs at 20% of the total cost per ewe.

The Animal Welfare Scheme will be a 1 year contract with automatic renewal unless opt-out is triggered by the beneficiary or by the Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The maximum duration will be 4 years. As per Article 33(2) of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013, a renewable period of one year may be offered to participants. Following the termination of that extension as per Article 7(5) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 a further renewable period of one year may be offered.

In the event of extreme budgetary pressure the option to decrease the payment pro rata per ewe may be considered.

8.2.9.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.9.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

The risks related to the scheme include:

- Risk 1: inadequate record keeping to account for actions taken
- Risk 2: applicant does not maintain breeding ewes for the duration of the scheme
- Risk 3: double funding with Sheep KT Group

8.2.9.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

In order to mitigate the risks under the scheme:

- Risk 1: Applicants will be issued with an actions workbook to record actions taken under the scheme
- Risk 2: Monitoring of Sheep Census Return forms to ensure continued participation in sheep farming and maintaining ewe numbers. Applicants must submit a Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) application each year
- Risk 3: Sheep KT group participants do not receive payments for carrying out actions eligible under this scheme.

8.2.9.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.
8.2.9.3.1.10. Information specific to the operation

Definition and identification of the national and the Union requirements corresponding to the mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EC) No 1306/2013

**Article 33 additional baseline information required:**

Baseline elements:

- Cross compliance requirements: sheep farmers are subject to the full suite of Cross Compliance requirements (SMRs) including but not limited to:
  
  
  

- Applicants are also subject to compliance with the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013.

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic/zoo-technical assumptions and parameters, including the description of the baseline requirements referred to in Article 33(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 which are relevant for each particular type of commitment, used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs and income foregone resulting from the commitment made

The calculations for the Animal Welfare Scheme are based on the actions undertaken by the farmer based on costs incurred minus the net economic benefit associated with the actions. A transaction cost of 20% of the total cost per ewe is included in the calculations.

The costs detailed above represent the cost of a set of actions for one animal. A distinct set of actions will be carried out for each animal to form the basis of a total payment.

8.2.9.4. **Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations**

8.2.9.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures
8.2.9.4.2. Mitigating actions

8.2.9.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

8.2.9.5. Information specific to the measure

Definition and identification of the national and the Union requirements corresponding to the mandatory standards established pursuant to Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EC) No 1306/2013

Description of the methodology and of the agronomic/zoo-technical assumptions and parameters, including the description of the baseline requirements referred to in Article 33(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 which are relevant for each particular type of commitment, used as reference for the calculations justifying additional costs and income foregone resulting from the commitment made

8.2.9.6. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure


8.2.10. M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

8.2.10.1. Legal basis


8.2.10.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

Support under Measure 16 will be limited to a maximum period of 7 years in accordance with the regulatory requirements.

This measure will comprise of the following four elements

A. M16.1, European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – General EIPs


C. M16.1, European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects

D. M16.3, Collaborative Farming

General EIPs sub-measure is expected to contribute towards the following Focus Areas:

- 2A – Economic performance, modernisation & restructuring,
- 2B – Entry into the agricultural sector and generational renewal
- 3A – Improving competitiveness of primary producers through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations
- 3B – Supporting farm risk prevention and management

Locally Led Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel and Water Quality Projects and Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects sub-measures are expected to contribute towards the following Focus Areas:
• 4A – Biodiversity, HNV farming and landscapes
• 4B – Water, fertiliser and pesticide management
• 4C – Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management
• 5A – Increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture
• 5B – Increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing
• 5C – Facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by products, wastes, residues and other non food raw material for the purposes of the bio-economy
• 5D – Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture
• 5E – Fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry

Collaborative Farming sub-measure is expected to contribute towards the following Focus Areas:

• 2A – Economic performance, modernisation & restructuring,
• 2B – Entry into the agricultural sector and generational renewal

**European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups**

Current and future research, and the adaptation of it, can play an important part in underpinning increased efficiency and competitiveness by nurturing best practice in a wide range of areas such as maximising nutrient efficiencies, reducing emissions, informing adaptation to and mitigating impacts of climate change, and the introduction of cutting edge production methods. It can also address environmental challenges in the area of agri-environment by introducing new approaches and methods for the protection of biodiversity and the improvement of water quality.

The RDP SWOT analysis highlighted the fact that Ireland has a well established and high quality agri-food and rural development public research and development system. It also indicated that there are well developed inter and intra institutional collaboration fora e.g. Science Foundation Ireland and Teagasc collaboration. These strengths, together with Ireland’s small size, provide the basis for the creation of effective European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups.

Greater linkages between research and on farm implementation need to be established, and this theme emerged both during the public consultation process and the SWOT analysis. Support under the EIP has been highlighted as a vehicle to address this. A further element of such linkage will be the need to disseminate best practice widely. The structure of EIP Operational Groups will incorporate such dissemination, for example through the National Rural Network and the European EIP network. In this regard the EIP-AGRI Service Point will play an important role in the dissemination of results and findings as it will collect and share information on innovation-related policy measures, relevant research activities, funding opportunities, and lessons learned from practice-oriented projects. It will interact with the various stakeholders using multiple communication channels such as seminars, conferences, publications, website and social media. In this way the outputs from Operational Groups will be communicated to all actors ensuring that all lessons learned will be communicated beyond local level, and the benefits derived from the support for the groups can be realised internationally.
It is also possible that, as the priority areas for EIP Operational Groups emerge, climate change or emissions issues may be one area where support is focused. This would assist in the overall task of reducing greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture. However given that the nature of the process is that projects emerge from the bottom up it is not possible to guarantee at this stage the exact content of such projects.

EIP Operational Groups are clearly linked to supporting innovation and best practice. Specifically they will be intended to address all or some of the following:

• promoting a resource efficient, productive and low emission agricultural sector, working in harmony with the essential natural resources on which farming depends,
• improving processes to preserve the environment and agricultural landscapes, address biodiversity challenges, enhance water quality, adapt to climate change and mitigate it, and
• creating added value by better linking research and farming practice and encouraging the wider use of available innovative practices.

Summary of innovative characteristics common to all sub-measures include:

• regional/localised co-ordination and new approaches to project delivery
• bottom-up approach to design of interventions, with collaborative inputs from an array of stakeholders including farmers, advisors, administrators, researchers, ecologists, NGOs, businesses, government departments and agencies
• be-spoke locally-tailored solutions to problems
• strong focus on networking and collaboration to achieve objectives
• dissemination and cross-learning of sustainable best practices
• harnessing community involvement, ownership, and goodwill to achieve mutual benefits and RDP objectives

The approach to EIPs will incorporate three sub-measures: one sub-measure for general EIPs, one sub-measure for Locally Led Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel and Water Quality EIPs and one sub-measure for Locally Led Environmental and Climate EIPs.

Support for European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – General EIPs

The General EIP sub-measure aims to encourage innovative processes, products or practices that will contribute to the rural knowledge base, encourage competitiveness and support risk management in agriculture. The specific issues which may be addressed under this measure include lifelong learning and vocational training in agriculture and forestry, economic performance, modernisation and restructuring, entry into the agricultural sector and generational renewal, improving competitiveness of primary producers through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotions in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations and supporting farm risk prevention and management. It will support Operational Groups in forging links between agriculture, food production and research and innovation.

The recruitment of Operational Groups under this sub-measure will be by means of an open call competitive
tender and will focus on the identified themes. It is expected that groups will represent a cross-section of interested actors. Once appointed these groups will work on developing, adapting or testing the concept put forward with a view to disseminating the findings or outcomes through the NRN and the EIP Network at completion.

Additional recruitment of Operational Groups specifically General EIPs will be made available in the RDP transitional period supported by EURI funds. The EURI funding will support additional groups including those to explore innovative solutions for on farm health and safety and wellbeing and other areas falling under this measure. EURI programme projects and expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

Support for European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – Water Quality Project and Locally Led Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel Projects

This sub-measure is aimed at two locally-led projects addressing national priorities for targeting the conservation of (i) the Hen Harrier and (ii) the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, both in specified core (spatially confined) target areas only (see EIP Annex). Both of these species have been identified in Ireland’s Prioritised Action Framework for Natura as critically important and requiring urgent interventions to sustain their national populations. The focus of these EIP measures is on a subset of critical core areas, identified in consultation with NPWS. These contain the most important populations, which are crucial to sustaining and enhancing national population levels. In the case of Hen Harrier, the Scheme will be targeted at 6 core SPAs (out of a total of 14 nationally important areas for the species), and containing approximately 45% of the national hen Harrier population. For FPM the Scheme will be confined initially to just 8 of the 27 Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments, which hold approximately 80% of the national population of FPM. A ninth FPM catchment (Nore) is currently under review and thus will not form part of the initial EIP focus.

This sub-measure is also aimed at targeting water quality. There is a need to improve water quality in Ireland and a national Water Quality EIP under this sub-measure would address the implementation of intervention measures that will lead to a reduction in the diffuse loss of nutrients and other contaminants to waters with co-benefits for biodiversity, climate and environment.

These EIPs will employ a bottom-up approach to agri-environment scheme development and testing of actions, with a network of stakeholders including farmers, government departments, non-government agencies and other local interest groups collaborating to achieve common local agri-environmental objectives. A network of stakeholders acting at local level will be central to the design and implementation of activities under this measure. This approach will incorporate the lessons learned under various LIFE projects but will also foster new ideas and approaches to addressing particular environmental challenges at local levels. This will include provision to develop result/output-based actions to address specific threats as an alternative to generic prescription-based actions which are featured in more broad-based agri-environment measures. Moreover the measure will provide a mechanism to build on the research outputs of LIFE and other similar projects, but in a manner which will allow the results to be translated and applicable at a wider landscape scale by encouraging clusters of farmers and other stakeholders to act in a collaborative manner i.e. at wider catchment/regional scale.
The intervention logic for these measures is justified as follows:

- the conservation status of both the Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel species which are critically endangered. The Freshwater Pearl Mussel is in “bad” and declining conservation status while the Hen Harrier is classified as “unfavourable” and declining conservation status in Ireland. As such, both species have been identified as particular priorities under Ireland’s Prioritised Action Framework for Natura lands (PAF).
- the concern about water quality with the EPA Water Quality in Ireland 2013-2018 report showing that a significant proportion of waterbodies are not reaching the WFD target of “good status” requirement.
- the need to engage, certain “hard to reach” farm holdings, (as noted in the GLAS evaluation report), and other key stakeholders to address water quality
- the inability of a generic top-down scheme to adequately respond to the challenge
- the need to develop tailored innovative solutions at holding level, in order to better optimise the particular habitat sensitivities for both these species and, to address water quality
- the need to foster community involvement, ownership and goodwill towards the conservation of both the Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel species and, to address water quality.

The approach also seeks to determine whether the locally-led approaches, applied elsewhere in similar measures across Europe, can be scaled-up significantly to address environmental challenges common to a number of distinct areas and habitats and involving disparate groups of farmers. In the case of both the Hen Harrier and the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, the approach will be piloted on a subset of the geographical ranges of both species, with a view to informing the design of new schemes under the next Rural Development Programme. In the case of the Water Quality EIP, the approach will be piloted on a subset of the affected waters with the purpose of restoring water quality in a waterbody to WFD targets; protecting water quality in a waterbody from losing its current status and ensuring that public health is not impacted by water quality issues in a waterbody.

In the transitional period, EURI funding (alongside EAFRD funding) may be utilised for expenditure related to Water Quality Project, Locally Led Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel Projects. The EURI expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

Support for European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects

The Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects submeasure is targeted at environmental priorities for
biodiversity, climate and water quality, and envisages testing out an innovative locally-led approach.

The locally-led approach will employ a bottom-up approach to environmental and climate project development and implementation, with a network of suitable stakeholders including farmers, government departments, non-government agencies and other local interest groups collaborating to achieve common local environmental and climate objectives. A network of stakeholders acting at local level will be central to the design and implementation of activities under this measure. This will allow for, among other things, the development of result/output-based actions to address specific threats as an alternative to generic prescription-based actions. Moreover the measure will provide a mechanism to build on the research outputs of LIFE and other similar projects, but in a manner which will allow the results to be translated and applicable at a wider landscape scale. This will be achieved by encouraging clusters of farmers and other stakeholders to act in a collaborative manner i.e. at wider catchment/regional scale. It will also provide for projects which introduce innovative solutions targeted at energy and water efficiency and climate change issues.

The intervention logic for these measures is justified as follows:

- on-going biodiversity, climate and water quality issues related to agriculture that cannot be readily addressed through national agri-environment measures. A wide range of habitats and species are in “unfavourable conservation status.
- the inability of a generic top-down scheme to adequately respond to local challenges
- the need to develop tailored innovative solutions at holding level, which have greater local buy-in and are more result orientated
- the need to foster community involvement, ownership, goodwill and better networking to promote sustainable agri-ecosystems

The approach also seeks to determine whether the locally-led approaches, applied elsewhere in similar measures across Europe, can be better addressed by fostering community-led solutions to local environmental challenges across a range of different habitats and situations through small scale pilot projects. Applications will be invited to interested networks through theme-based calls, one of which will specifically address upland peatland conservation. The outputs will be monitored and disseminated with a view to informing the design of new schemes under the next Rural Development Programme.

Additional recruitment of Operational Groups specifically Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects will be made available in the RDP transitional period supported by EURI funds. The EURI funding will support additional groups including those to explore innovative solutions for farmer and community biodiversity initiatives and rewetting of peatlands. EURI programme projects and expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.
Support for Collaborative Farming

Internationally, and within Ireland, there are a number of farming arrangements which can be collectively described as ‘collaborative farming arrangements’ including share farming, contract rearing and farm partnerships. ‘Farm partnerships’ is the arrangement that commands the greatest interest in Ireland and is viewed by experts in the field as being a model that can assist in addressing a range of infrastructural issues identified in the RDP preparatory analysis such as poor land availability and farm size, work/life balance issues, the development of skills sets and the knowledge base, and intergenerational transfer.

**Farm partnership:** A Farm Partnership is where two or more persons in the agriculture sector, who hold their own separate herd numbers or who are individually registered for tax purposes and who possess the appropriate agriculture qualification or experience, join resources and efforts in order to bring added value to their enterprises and in turn share the profits accruing. The added value to the enterprise comes in the form of enhanced economic and social benefits, as well as occupational health, well-being and safety benefits. The partnership works on the basis of a mutually agreed and binding Farm Partnership Agreement.

In the early 2000s DAFM, in recognising the negative effect a proliferation of one-person farms (often without any family input or involvement) could have on the long-term sustainability of the dairy sector, introduced the Milk Production Partnerships Scheme under the Milk Quota Regulations. The Scheme, which was introduced in conjunction with Teagasc, was, *inter alia*, aimed at addressing a shortage of quality land for milking platforms; improving work/life balance issues for dairy farmers; and most importantly, where appropriate, putting in place a mechanism to encourage the next generation into farming.

This Scheme will cease to exist on 31 March 2015 with the ending of the Milk Quota Regulations. Currently there are 720 registered Milk Production Partnerships in place. In the absence of the milk quota incentive, which was a significant ‘driver’ in encouraging farmers to consider such a collaboration, a new **Support for Collaborative Farming Grant Scheme** is now being established.

This Scheme will be backed by the introduction of a new Register of Farm Partnerships. This Register will be maintained by the Department and will come into effect in March, 2015 as the Milk Production partnership Register comes to an end. In order to be allowed entry to the Register a farm partnership must meet the following criteria

A Farm Partnership shall consist of at least two people who can be considered as actors in agriculture, one person from category (i) below and one or more person(s) from categories (i) or (ii):

1. A farmer who has been farming in his or her own right for two years preceding the date on which the partnership is established; and
2. A person who is in possession of an independent herd number or who is registered for tax purposes and who, having the appropriate agriculture qualifications, is contributing to the strengthening of the agricultural structures of the partnership by holding at least 20% in the profit sharing agreement; and who, if over 41 years of age, has an off farm income of less than €40k per annum.

In order to qualify for support under this Scheme, a farm partnership must meet these criteria. Support will be available for partnerships which are formed between actors not from the same family as well as those formed within families (e.g. parent and child). In either case, the key requirement is that they are newly formed partnerships which meet the above requirements. This will ensure that support under this submeasure is clearly linked at the delivery of additional benefits. These requirements ensure that only
partnerships between ‘separate actors’ are approved and that all parties have a clear role and interest in developing the new joint enterprise.

A number of studies have been carried out by researchers in Ireland as to the extent the formation of a farm partnership brings added value to the new enterprise. As highlighted by Macken-Walsh and Roche (2012) the benefits accruing from supporting the establishment of farm partnerships include:

- Farm Partnerships are used as a strategy to develop and increase scale by managing two, or more, previously independent enterprises together;
- Farm Partnerships are formed to increase efficiency by consolidating land and facilities and by developing new management strategies and business plans;
- Farm Partnerships assist farmers to share their work-loads in order to cope with the extra work involved in up-scaling and applying new technologies on the farm;
- Farm Partnerships introduce new skills, specialisations and occupational preferences to enhance the operation of the farm;
- Farm Partnerships foster new diversification activities on the farm by bringing in new expertise and business interests;
- Farm Partnerships facilitate off farm work;
- Farm Partnerships are used to share decision-making power between members of farm families (spouses, heirs, for example);
- Farm Partnerships reduce isolation in farmers’ working lives and improve farm safety;
- Farm Partnerships facilitate a range of social and lifestyle benefits.

Many of these benefits can be seen to link back to the themes emerging from the RDP preparatory analyses.

Other forms of collaborative farming also exist in Ireland, namely share farming and contract rearing. It would be expected that these forms of collaboration would also lead to a range of similar benefits. However, detailed rules governing these arrangements are not yet in place. Once these rules are in place, the possibility of bringing these arrangements into this Scheme will be considered. This consideration will also take into account the ongoing monitoring of the take up in respect of Farm Partnerships in the early stages of the Scheme.

8.2.10.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.10.3.1. A. European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – General EIPs

Sub-measure:

- 16.1 - support for the establishment and operation of operational groups of the EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability
Support for EIP Operational Groups will be channelled towards the setting up of new Operational Groups structured around a competitive fund which will support proposals that contribute to the rural knowledge base, encourage competitiveness and support risk management in agriculture.

The establishment of Operational Groups will involve a two stage process.

An initial call for the submission of ideas for potential Operational Groups will be made with an outline of the scope and function of the prospective Operational Group being evaluated for relevance to the EIP programme and its compatibility with Rural Development Priorities.

Successful first stage applicants will then be requested to compile and submit a complete Operational Group plan. This plan will detail the scope, costs and schedule for the Operational Group, and it will list the participants and detail their roles. Preparation costs for this submission will be covered.

A final approval process will take place with assessment based on the Operational Group’s plans’ projected costs and timeframes based on established principles. This process will also involve assessment by a committee of relevant experts based on experience and existing research.

The goal of the measure is to close the innovation gap between research and practice using an interactive innovation model linking actors via an EIP Network fostering communication, partnering and dissemination of knowledge and ideas. Utilising existing Rural Development and knowledge transfer networks to raise awareness among potential Operational Group actors, the measure will foster the submission of innovative concepts and ideas from among farmers, advisors, researchers, NGOs and Agri-businesses.

Once selected, an Operational Group will be established to examine, evaluate, develop or trial the selected concept with the goal of developing, adapting or testing an innovative practice, process or product. An Operational Group will be required to establish internal procedures and draw up a project plan and also to disseminate the results of their project in accordance with Articles 56 and 57 of EU Regulation 1305/2013.

Support will be provided to cover feasibility studies, animation costs, installation costs, running costs, and promotion activities. Installation costs refer to costs incurred in setting up the Operational Group - administrative or infrastructural e.g. fencing to segregate sample animals. Although stand-alone research is not covered under this measure it is anticipated that certain Operational Groups may incur research related costs as part of the day to day running of the group - the costs to be covered here will relate to the cost of the researcher cooperating with the Operational Group.

Once completed the findings or outcome of the Operational Group will be disseminated via the EIP Network and the National Rural Network. The dissemination of the research findings through the EIP Network will ensure that the lessons learned are communicated beyond local level and thereby contribute to the overall objectives of sustainable agriculture production across the EU.

8.2.10.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Support in the form of grants will be provided in two separate stages
a) support for the development of Operational Group Plans in phase 2 of the selection process

b) support for the costs of implementing the Operational Group Plans for successful applicants. This will be based on the price set out in the successful applications.

8.2.10.3.1.3. Links to other legislation

Not applicable.

8.2.10.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

Operational groups will be clearly targeted to ensure the involvement of a wide range of actors including farmers, advisors, researchers, NGOs, forest owners and agri-businesses, in order to encourage the cross fertilisation of approaches, ideas and experience. It is envisaged that Operational Groups can and should contain a wide range of individual actors and the Operational Group will be the single beneficiary. An Operational Group Plan will identify a lead-entity within the Operational Group who will have responsibility for the administration of payments.

The Operational Group Plan will detail responsibility among the Operational Group’s constituent actors for the funds being received and identify ownership of any investment or assets that may exist once the project is finalised.

8.2.10.3.1.5. Eligible costs

As per Article 35 of the Rural Development Regulation, the eligible costs will include:

- the cost of studies of the area concerned and of drawing up a detailed business plan
- the costs of an innovation broker used to facilitate the creation of an Operational Group
- the cost related to a researcher cooperating with an Operational Group
- the cost of animation of the area concerned in order to make feasible a collective territorial project or a project to be carried out by an Operational Group
- the running costs of the co-operation
- the direct costs of specific projects linked to the implementation of a business plan or an environmental plan, and
- the cost of promotion activities.

While it is difficult to pre-empt what will emerge from the competitive process, successful projects may include investment costs. These will be eligible for payment under this Measure, subject to Article 45 of Regulation 1305/2013 and Chapter II articles 65-71 of the Common Provisions Regulation.
8.2.10.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

Following on from the consultation process, support will be channelled towards the setting up of new Operational Groups structured around a competitive fund. The call for proposals will be on the basis of the identified themes as described in 8.2.9.2. Such a call for proposals, and the subsequent evaluation of proposals received will necessarily draw on the relevant expertise and existing research. Any proposed Operational Group must develop or examine an approach, process, practice or product that contributes to Rural Development priorities as identified and which seeks to target an innovative approach in doing so.

8.2.10.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

Selection of the project proposals by way of the competitive process will be based on the following well-established principles including:

- The quality of the proposal – demonstrable high quality scientific, technical and managerial attributes
- Relevance and impact – demonstrable links to Rural Development Priorities incorporating a targeting of innovative approaches
- Cost – the cost as set out in the proposal.
- Relevance of partnership

These criteria will be detailed in the initial call for proposals and each submission will be scored and ranked accordingly. A minimum score will be required to progress to further evaluation by an expert panel convened to oversee the process.

8.2.10.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support will be provided for feasibility studies, animation costs, running costs and promotion activities in accordance with Article 35. Amounts and rates will be based on the costs set out in successful proposals and will be reimbursed on the basis of returns/receipts received from Operational Groups. It is envisaged that a global amount will be paid without recourse to other measures, but in any case all support will be subject to Article 45 of Regulation 1305/2013 and Chapter II articles 65-71 of the Common Provisions Regulation

Support will be paid on the basis of tenders. However, as part of the control process DAFM may require receipts to verify completion of certain actions within the project. It is foreseen that the support amount will be the lower of the tender and receipted amounts. In no case will support be above the tender amount.

A support rate of 100% is envisaged except in instances where a productive benefit results, or one which is in part unrelated to the specific objectives of the scheme, or where economies of scale apply. In such cases a reduced rate of aid may apply.

Given the nature of EIPs it is possible that projects might arise which fall outside the agricultural field. In such instances, state aid clearance will be reviewed on a case by case basis (as set out in Chapter 13). In these circumstances, the 100% support rate would also be reviewed.

For this sub-measure, an indicative financial allocation of some €4m is envisaged under EAFRD, with
indicative EUR funding of €2.5m.

8.2.10.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.10.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risks associated with this measure centre around the failure of the Operational Group to deliver on the commitments set out in the successful tender and issues associated with the group’s governance arrangements including financial management.

8.2.10.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

DAFM will undertake an open, transparent and rigorous selection and application process and will also ensure that the Operational Groups have in place adequate governance arrangements.

Initial proposals will be evaluated against existing practices, products and processes or previous evaluations of similar proposals. The merit, scientific or otherwise, of the proposal will be evaluated against the overall cost of the proposal and its potential contribution to Rural Development Priorities and established Departmental objectives.

The operational division responsible for managing and delivering the Knowledge Transfer suite of measures will ensure appropriate oversight on all aspects of the activities of EIP Operational Groups.

This will comprise of ongoing administrative checks on the financial management of the Operational Group. For example, receipts submitted can be checked against the tender documentation to ensure controls on expenditure.

8.2.10.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.10.3.1.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

The call for proposals will specifically indicate the basis on which support will be provided and financial oversight will be provided by the division operating the suite of Knowledge Transfer measures. Costs eligible for support include feasibility studies, animation costs, installation costs, researcher cooperation costs, running costs, and promotion activities. The call for proposals will include cost as one of the selection criteria.

Support will be paid on the basis of tenders. However, as part of the DAFM control process, receipts may be required to verify completion of certain actions within the project. It is foreseen that the support amount
will be the lower of the tender and receipted amounts. In no case will support be above the tender amount.

8.2.10.3.1.11. Information specific to the operation

Specification of the characteristics of pilot projects, clusters, networks, short supply chains and local markets

Not applicable.
8.2.10.3.2. B. European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – Locally Led Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel Projects and Water Quality Projects

Sub-measure:

- 16.1 - support for the establishment and operation of operational groups of the EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability

8.2.10.3.2.1. Description of the type of operation

Two locally-led schemes will be developed under this sub-measure targeting the conservation of (i) the Hen Harrier and (ii) the Freshwater Pearl Mussel. Both are targeted in pre-determined core target areas only. These are schemes where the high level environmental challenges are already very well-defined, with the priorities and rationale for intervention set down at national level as explained in 8.2.9.2 above. In both these cases, a project team (essentially the Operational Group) will be recruited directly by the Irish authorities, through competitive tender, to develop appropriate interventions to address these priorities.

In addition, a scheme will also be developed under this sub-measure targeting improvement of water quality. The rationale for this intervention is as explained in 8.2.9.2 above. A Project Team – the Operational Group - will be selected following a streamlined selection process. This will involve a Call for Proposals which will require a detailed Project Plan to be submitted. An initial assessment of the applications by DAFM, to ensure adequate information has been provided, will be followed by assessment by a Selection Committee.

They - Project Teams/ Operational Groups -- will be responsible for developing and designing specific actions, costings and methodologies to be delivered under these local and regionally-based Schemes, in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including local farming representatives. The actions developed will be co-ordinated and implemented via agri-environmental plans and water quality intervention measures for individual farmers to follow.

The agri-environmental plans and water quality intervention measures will be designed by the Project Team in consultation with a steering group including government departments and other relevant experts, drawing upon the best professional advice available, as well as with relevant local stakeholders. These plans will contain non-productive investments where appropriate. When the framework of what is required has been laid down, the projects will be rolled out for implementation at local level, with participant farmers drawing upon the range of actions costed and developed by the project team, and the actions will be brought together in an individual farm-plan drawn up by trained advisers and in consultation with the Project Teams.

The project team will provide specialist training to farmers and farm advisors, co-ordinate the input of relevant stakeholders, oversee implementation, and evaluate outputs of the Schemes. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the schemes will be published and disseminated via the National Rural Network, the European EIP network, other channels such as agricultural print media and through DAFM’s website. The dissemination of the project results in this fashion will ensure that the lessons learned are communicated beyond local level and thereby contribute to the overall objectives of sustainable agriculture production across the EU, as well as informing the design of future agri-environment schemes under the next RDP.

Both the Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel schemes are of significant scale, but necessary to address the aforementioned national priorities in a sufficient and comprehensive manner (to address the
urgent need to mitigate on-going national declines). The Hen Harrier Scheme will target up to 2,000 participants and the Freshwater Pearl Mussel Scheme will target up to 1,000 participants. However, as these will be piloted to six different target-areas in the case of the Hen Harrier and eight separate catchments in the case of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, each locally-led component is quite small. Both present challenges at a national level, however, and for that reason each scheme will be co-ordinated and networked centrally by single, highly-qualified project teams, capable of testing and assessing the results in a consistent fashion over all local components. The output of actions and methodology employed will inform the structure of new agri-environment schemes under the next Rural Development Programme.

The Water Quality EIP will be of significant scale but necessary to address the aforementioned national priorities in a sufficient and comprehensive manner. The overarching principle will be to determine the most appropriate measure for the location - “the right measure in the right place”.

8.2.10.3.2.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Support will be by way of annual grant to the project team and supported projects may run over multiple years, up to a maximum of seven years. Support will be provided as follows:

(i) the cost of operation/administration and promotion by the project teams

(ii) towards the costs borne by the participants for implementing pilot conservation or water quality activities

8.2.10.3.2.3. Links to other legislation

All actions must go beyond the GAEC, SMR and Greening baselines for the Basic Payment Scheme under Pillar 1, and must not duplicate actions funded under other Pillar II AEC measures i.e. GLAS. Broader links include the EU Climate Change and Renewable Energy Package, the Kyoto Protocol, the Water Framework Directive, the Groundwater Directive, the Nitrates Directive, the Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive, and the European target of halting biodiversity loss by 2020.

8.2.10.3.2.4. Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries will be the Project Teams. Under the schemes the eligible costs for the Project Teams and for the participants on the ground (mainly farmers) will be broken down and identified separately.

8.2.10.3.2.5. Eligible costs

Beneficiary (Project Team)

Eligible costs are those associated with the running of the schemes, including any promotion activities.
Participants on the Ground

Each participating farmer is compensated for the direct costs of specific activities linked to the implementation of environmental plans or activities as per examples below. These will include costs for income forgone or other associated incurred costs of participating farmers as well as compensation for the time element for a farmer’s involvement in the scheme. Other participants, e.g. those involved in predator control, will be paid on the basis of their time inputs.

For the three schemes addressed by this measure, examples of possible actions include:

Hen Harrier

- Nest protection measures
- Honeypot measures (i.e. creating linear features for foraging Hen Harriers through measures designed to attract prey species)
- Removal of alien invasive vegetation (including rhododendron and pioneering conifers)
- Management of river corridors
- Management of rank heather and scrub
- Creation of conservation headlands in improved pastures
- Retention of spring tillage/stubble for extended periods
- Capital expenditure related to environmental plan implementation (including non-productive investments)

Freshwater Pearl Mussel

- Drain management
- Reduction/elimination of critical sediment sources, particularly along riparian corridors
- Creation of tailored, functioning buffer-zones along drains and watercourses
- Establishment of new field boundaries, including hedgerows
- Grazing and livestock management
- Detailed nutrient management planning and reduction in inputs
- Targeted control of access to watercourses by livestock
- Provision of alternative drinking water facilities for livestock
- Decommissioning of sheep-dipping stations
- Capital expenditure related to environmental plan implementation (including non-productive investments)

Water Quality EIP

- Drain management
- Reduction/elimination of critical sediment sources, particularly along riparian corridors
- Creation of tailored, functioning high quality buffer-zones along drains and waterbodies
- Establishment of new field boundaries, including hedgerows
- Grazing and livestock management
- Detailed nutrient management planning and reduction in inputs
- Targeted control of access to watercourses by livestock
- Provision of alternative drinking water facilities for livestock
- Decommissioning of sheep-dipping stations
- Capital expenditure related to environmental plan implementation (including non-productive investments)

It is important to note that these are indicative actions only. The framework approach in this Locally Led Schemes will ensure that there is flexibility to respond to individual challenges on the ground and to test a variety of actions across different conditions and different geographical space. The opportunity for innovative measures to be proposed by or developed with farmer input is another key feature of this measure.

8.2.10.3.2.6. Eligibility conditions

DAFM will identify the specific requirements for the Project Teams selected to co-ordinate both Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel schemes. DAFM will set out the specific requirements for the Project Team for the Water EIP in the relevant Call for Proposals. The Project Teams must include relevant administrative and technical experts/professionals required to deliver the Scheme, and in turn have the capacity to plan and implement relevant interventions carried out through a wider network of participants on the ground, mainly farmers, but may also involve other third parties with specialist expertise i.e. predator control officers.

8.2.10.3.2.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

The Project Teams will be selected on the basis of educational qualifications, quality and experience of the team, proposed methodological approach to deliver the service, quality of the arrangements for management, including flexibility and contingency arrangements, and costs.

Participating farmers will be selected on the basis of criteria agreed with the steering group based on potential for maximum environmental contribution. For example, this may involve priority selection of farmers with certain types of habitat, or with recorded nesting sites, or the most vulnerable/sensitive areas within the identified core areas.

8.2.10.3.2.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support will be based on the eligible costs as set out above.
Eligible costs are those associated with the running of the schemes, including any promotion activities. These costs will be agreed in advance on foot of competitive tender for the Hen Harrier and Pearl Mussel schemes. The costs for the Project Team/Operational Group for the Water EIP will be agreed in advance on foot of the Call for Proposals.

Participants on the ground: Each individual project activity (i.e. environmental pilot action carried out on a farm) will be costed and supported individually to farmers or other relevant partners (i.e. predator control officers). Costs will be based on the inputs required/income forgone, time element incurred and transaction costs. The use of standard costings may also be used in certain situations i.e. where the Project Team has developed standard costings for certain commonly occurring expenditure. DAFM will have an oversight role to ensure that individually costed actions are appropriate and in line with similar RDP measures. All support will be subject to Article 45 of Regulation 1305/2013 and Chapter II articles 65-71 of the Common Provisions Regulation.

A support rate of 100% is envisaged except in instances where a productive benefit results, or one which is in part unrelated to the specific objectives of the scheme, or where economies of scale apply. In such cases a reduced rate of aid may apply.

For this sub-measure an indicative financial allocation of some €35m is envisaged over the course of the programme in respect of the Hen Harrier and the Pearl Mussel projects. An indicative financial allocation has been assigned to the Water EIP with additional allocations subject to review over the course of the programme.

In the transitional period, EURI funding (alongside EAFRD funding) may be utilised for expenditure related to Water Quality Project, Locally Led Hen Harrier and Freshwater Pearl Mussel Projects. The EURI expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

8.2.10.3.2.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.10.3.2.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risks associated with this measure include:

- the failure of the Operational Group to deliver on the commitments set out in the successful tender or Call for proposals and issues associated with the group’s governance arrangements including financial management.

- Double funding with any other AECM e.g. GLAS or LIFE projects

- Failure to deliver agreed outputs
8.2.10.3.2.9.2. Mitigating actions

DAFM will undertake an open, transparent and rigorous selection and application process and will also ensure that the project teams have in place an adequately, qualified and experienced team and governance arrangements to deliver on the Schemes objectives.

The operational division responsible for managing and delivering the locally-led measures, aided by a steering group of relevant experts from a range of stakeholders, will ensure appropriate oversight on all aspects of the activities of Project Team/Operational Groups.

This will comprise of ongoing administrative checks on the financial management of the Operational Group. For example, receipts submitted can be checked against the tender documentation to ensure controls on expenditure.

The Department will seek to identify and cost specific actions that are of themselves measurable and verifiable, and where relevant ensure that any costings are in line with similar RDP measures.

As regards potential double-funding, the intention is that as far as possible AECMs under Article 28 and AEC Schemes under Article 35 will be mutually exclusive, or where overlap occurs (due for example to the commencement of a relevant EIP mid-cycle of AECM) cross-checks will be required to ensure no risks of double funding. For the purposes of implementation a computerised cross check will be developed across AECMs and related EIPs to protect against double payment for the same commitment. Cross-checks will also be carried out to ensure no double funding with any relevant LIFE projects which operate in the same target areas.

Project teams for the Freshwater Pearl Mussel and Hen Harrier and Water Quality EIP schemes will be required to draw-up appropriate performance indicators at local levels and monitor these during the scheme period.

8.2.10.3.2.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.10.3.2.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

As noted already, the project teams will be recruited and supported on the basis of a competitive tender for Hen Harrier and Pearl Mussel. The Project Team for the Water Quality EIP will be selected following a Call for Proposals. Each action will be costed individually, based on the inputs required to achieve the outputs targeted. The methods for calculating support will depend on the exact projects and nature of the actions being funded, but will include costs incurred by the farmer or other participant, income forgone as well as the associated time element for participation in the Scheme.
8.2.10.3.2.11. Information specific to the operation

Specification of the characteristics of pilot projects, clusters, networks, short supply chains and local markets

Please see EIP Annex for general baseline information and identification of target areas for each Scheme.
8.2.10.3.3. C. European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups – Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects

Sub-measure:

- 16.1 - support for the establishment and operation of operational groups of the EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability

8.2.10.3.3.1. Description of the type of operation

Support for EIP Operational Groups will be channelled towards the setting up of new Operational Groups structured around a competitive fund focussing on the following themes:

- Biodiversity, HNV farming and landscapes, including restoration and sustainable management in agro-ecosystems
- Water, fertiliser and pesticide management
- Climate change mitigation/adaptation and resource efficiency

The establishment of Operation Groups will involve a two stage process.

Stage 1: An initial call for the submission of ideas/proposals from potential Operational Groups will be made. At this initial stage the Operational Group will be required to submit an outline of the objectives, scope and function of their proposed activities, including administrative aspects. Prospective Operation Groups will be evaluated by an expert evaluation committee for relevance to the EIP programme and its compatibility with Rural Development Priorities (4 and 5).

Stage 2: Successful first stage applicants will then be requested to compile and submit a complete detailed Operational Group plan. This plan will detail the scope, administrative arrangements, all associated costs and schedule for the Operational Group, and it will list the participants and detail their respective roles. Preparation costs for this detailed stage 2 submission will be covered.

A final approval process will take place with assessment based on the Operational Group’s plans, projected costs and timeframes based on established principles. This process will also involve assessment by a committee of relevant experts based on experience and existing research.

The goal of the measure is to facilitate joint approaches to environmental projects and practices focusing particularly on activities related to the preservation of agricultural landscapes for biodiversity, water quality, resource efficiency and climate mitigation/adaptation. To succeed these operation groups will rely on fostering communication through stakeholder networking, developing partnerships and dissemination of knowledge and ideas across a wide range of stakeholders.

The existing Rural Development and Knowledge Transfer networks will be utilised to raise awareness among potential Operational Group actors, and this sub-measure will support innovative concepts and ideas from among farmers, advisors, researchers, NGOs and Agri-businesses.

Once selected, an Operational Group will be established to examine, evaluate, develop or trial the selected concept with the goal of developing, adapting or testing an innovative practice, process or product. An Operational Group will be required to establish internal procedures, an administrative framework and draw up and implement a project/environmental plan. Furthermore the Operational Group must disseminate the
results of their project in accordance with Articles 56 and 57 of EU Regulation 1305/2013.

Support will be provided to cover feasibility studies, animation costs, installation costs, running costs (including administration), promotion, conservation, monitoring and evaluation activities. Installation costs refer to costs incurred in setting up the Operational Group - administrative or infrastructural e.g. fencing environmentally sensitive areas to give improved management control. Although stand-alone research is not covered under this measure it is anticipated that certain Operational Groups may incur research related costs as part of the day to day running of the group - the costs to be covered here will relate to the cost of the researcher cooperating with the Operational Group.

Once completed, the findings or outcome of the Operational Group will be disseminated via the EIP Network and the National Rural Network. The dissemination of the research findings through the EIP Network will ensure that the lessons learned are communicated beyond local level and thereby contribute to the overall objectives of sustainable agriculture production across the EU, and aid the design of future agri-environment measures.

Within this framework, the conservation of upland peats will be highlighted as a key priority within the sub-measure. Thus, while the process will be primarily driven by innovative ideas from the bottom-up, proposals for locally-led schemes addressing this particular priority will be explicitly sought within the call for proposals.

Exceptionally, a more streamlined approach to selecting Operational Groups may be used in the later stages of the programming period, from 2020 onwards. This will facilitate support for further joint approaches under the current themes. This streamlined process will cover types of support and Selection Criteria. The previous selection process involved two stages – Stage 1 was a Call for Proposals with a simple application form, which were reviewed and shortlisted; Stage 2 involved the shortlisted proposals being funded to produce detailed Project Plans which were then evaluated by the Selection Committee and successful EIP projects selected. By contrast the proposed streamlined selection process will involve a Call for Proposals which will require a detailed Project Plan to be submitted. An initial assessment of the applications by DAFM, to ensure adequate information has been provided, will be followed by assessment by a Selection Committee.

EURI funding will support additional groups including those to explore innovative solutions for farmer linking into communities with biodiversity initiatives and rewetting of peatlands. EURI programme projects and expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

8.2.10.3.3.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Support in the form of grants will be provided in two separate stages

a) support for the development of Operational Group Plans in phase 2 of the selection process

b) support for the costs of implementing the Operational Group Plans for successful applicants. This will be based on the price set out in the successful applications.
8.2.10.3.3.3. Links to other legislation

In relation to proposals linked to Priorities 4 and 5, all actions must go beyond the GAEC, SMR and Greening baselines for the Basic Payment Scheme under Pillar 1, and must not duplicate actions for which a beneficiary is receiving support under other Pillar II AEC measures e.g. GLAS. Broader links include the EU Climate Change and Renewable Energy Package, the Kyoto Protocol, the Water Framework Directive, the Groundwater Directive, the Nitrates Directive, the Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive, and the European target of halting biodiversity loss by 2020.

8.2.10.3.3.4. Beneficiaries

Operational groups will be clearly targeted to ensure the involvement of a wide range of actors. These will include farmers, advisors, researchers, NGOs, forest owners and agri-businesses, in order to encourage the cross-fertilisation of approaches, ideas and experience. It is envisaged that Operational Groups can and should contain a wide range of individual actors. The Operational Group will be the beneficiary and an Operational Group Plan will identify a lead-entity within the Operational Group who will have responsibility for the administration of payments.

The Operational Group Plan will detail responsibility among the Operational Group’s constituent actors for the funds being received and identify ownership of any investment or assets that may exist once the project is finalised.

8.2.10.3.3.5. Eligible costs

As per Article 35 of the Rural Development Regulation, the eligible costs will include:

- the cost of studies of the area concerned and of drawing up a detailed business/environmental plan
- the costs of an innovation broker used to facilitate the creation of an Operational Group
- the cost related to a researcher cooperating with an Operational Group
- the cost of animation of the area concerned in order to make feasible a collective territorial project or a project to be carried out by an Operational Group
- the running costs of the co-operation
- the direct costs of specific projects linked to the implementation of a business plan or an environmental plan, and
- the cost of promotion activities.

While it is difficult to pre-empt what will emerge from the competitive process, successful projects may include investment costs. These will be eligible for payment under this Measure, subject to Article 45 of Regulation 1305/2013 and Chapter II articles 65-71 of the Common Provisions Regulation.
8.2.10.3.3.6. Eligibility conditions

Following on from the consultation process, support will be channelled towards the setting up of new Operational Groups structured around a competitive fund. This will involve a call for proposals on the basis of the identified themes as described in 8.2.9.2. Such a call for proposals, and the subsequent evaluation of proposals received will necessarily draw on the relevant expertise and existing research. Any proposed Operational Group must develop or examine an approach, process, practice or product that contributes to Rural Development priorities and which seeks to target an innovative approach in doing so.

8.2.10.3.3.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

Selection of the project proposals by way of the competitive process will be based on the following well-established principles including:

- The quality of the proposal – demonstrable high quality scientific, technical and managerial attributes
- Relevance and impact – demonstrable links to Rural Development Priorities incorporating a targeting of innovative approaches
- Cost – the cost as set out in the proposal.
- Relevance of partnership, quality and experience of the various actors responsible for the project delivery

These criteria will be detailed in the initial call for proposals and each submission will be scored and ranked accordingly. A minimum score required to progress to further evaluation by an expert panel convened to oversee the process.

8.2.10.3.3.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support will be provided for feasibility studies, animation costs, running costs and promotion activities in accordance with Article 35. Amounts and rates will be based on the costs set out in successful proposals and will be reimbursed on the basis of returns/receipts received from Operational Groups. It is envisaged that a global amount will be paid without recourse to other measures, but in any case all support will be subject to Article 45 of Regulation 1305/2013 and Chapter II articles 65-71 of the Common Provisions Regulation.

Support will be paid on the basis of tenders. However, as part of the control process DAFM may require receipts to verify completion of certain actions within the project. It is foreseen that the support amount will be the lower of the tender and receipted amounts. In no case will support be above the tender amount.

A support rate of 100% is envisaged, except in instances where a productive benefit results, or one which is in part unrelated to the specific objectives of the scheme, or where economies of scale apply. In such cases a reduced rate of aid may apply. Given the nature of EIPs it is possible that projects might arise which fall outside the agricultural field. In such instances, state aid clearance will be reviewed on a case by case basis (as set out in Chapter 13). In these circumstances, the 100% support rate would also be reviewed.

For this sub-measure, an indicative financial allocation of some €20m is envisaged under EAFRD, with an
additional indicative amount of €6m of EURI funding.

8.2.10.3.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.10.3.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risks associated with this measure include:

- the failure of the Operational Group to deliver on the commitments set out in the successful tender and issues associated with the group’s governance arrangements including financial management.
- Double funding with any other AECM e.g. GLAS or LIFE projects
- Failure to deliver agreed outputs

8.2.10.3.9.2. Mitigating actions

DAFM will undertake an open, transparent and rigorous selection and application process and will also insure that the Operational Groups have in place adequate governance arrangements.

Initial proposals will be evaluated against existing practices, products and processes or previous evaluations of similar proposals. The merit, scientific or otherwise, of the proposal will be evaluated against the overall cost of the proposal and its potential contribution to rural development priorities and established Departmental objectives.

The operational division responsible for managing and delivering the Knowledge Transfer suite of measures will ensure appropriate oversight on all aspects of the activities of EIP Operational Groups.

This will comprise of ongoing administrative checks on the financial management of the Operational Group. For example, receipts submitted can be checked against the tender documentation to ensure controls on expenditure.

The Department will seek to identify and cost specific actions that are of themselves measurable and verifiable, and where relevant ensure that any costings provided are in line with similar RDP measures.

As regards potential double-funding, the intention is that as far as possible AECM and EIPs will be mutually exclusive, or where overlap occurs (due for example to the commencement of a relevant EIP mid-cycle of AECM) the AECM participants may transfer relevant commitments wholly into EIP. For the purposes of implementation a computerised cross check will be developed across AECMs and related EIPs to protect against double payment for the same commitment. Cross-checks will also be carried out to ensure no double funding with any relevant LIFE projects which operate in the same target areas.

The Operational Groups will be required to set out project-specific measurable indicators at the outset, and
review progress periodically over the period of the plan.

### 8.2.10.3.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

### 8.2.10.3.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

The call for proposals will specifically indicate the basis on which support will be provided and financial oversight will be provided by the division operating the suite of locally-led measures. Costs eligible for support include feasibility studies, animation costs, installation costs/direct costs of specific projects linked to the implementation of a business plan or environmental plan, researcher co-operation costs, running costs, and promotion activities. The call for proposals will include cost as one of the selection criteria.

Support will be paid on the basis of tenders. However, as part of the DAFM control process, receipts may be required to verify completion of certain actions within the project. It is foreseen that the support amount will be the lower of the tender and receipted amounts. In no case will support be above the tender amount.

### 8.2.10.3.11. Information specific to the operation

Specification of the characteristics of pilot projects, clusters, networks, short supply chains and local markets

Not applicable.
8.2.10.3.4. D. Collaborative Farming

Sub-measure:

- 16.3 - (other) co-operation among smalls operators in organising joint work processes and sharing facilities and resources, and for developing/marketing tourism

8.2.10.3.4.1. Description of the type of operation

From mid 2015, when the new Register of Farm Partnerships is in place, all new farm partnerships meeting the requirements for entry on to the Register will be eligible to receive a contribution of 50% towards the vouched costs of legal, accounting and advisory costs involved in the setting up the partnership, up to a maximum of €2,500 (i.e. actual costs of €5,000 per partnership). This submeasure is specifically aimed at encouraging the formation of new farm partnerships.

The tangible outcome of support under this submeasure will be the establishment of legally binding partnership agreements.

In order to derive the maximum benefit from support, the submeasure will be targeted by way of selection criteria at factors addressing specific structural issues in Irish agriculture. These include issues related to the age structure of Irish agriculture, educational levels and knowledge base issues, and scale and efficiency of operation considerations.

8.2.10.3.4.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Support will be by way of a grant to the value of 50% of the administrative costs involved in establishing a new Farm partnership arrangement – i.e. vouched expenses for legal, accounting and advisory costs up to a maximum of €2,500.

8.2.10.3.4.3. Links to other legislation

Proposed Statutory Instrument on the Register of Farm Partnerships (due early 2015)

8.2.10.3.4.4. Beneficiaries

Farmers establishing new approved forms of collaborative farming (farm partnerships in this instance).

8.2.10.3.4.5. Eligible costs

Eligible costs here will include the legal, financial and business planning cost involved in setting up a new
farm partnership arrangement.

8.2.10.3.4.6. Eligibility conditions

All farm partnership arrangements must be newly formed arrangements being entered on the Register for the first time. Existing Milk Production Partnerships, who wish to continue in partnership after 31 March 2015 and who apply for entry on to the new Register will not qualify for support under this Measure.

8.2.10.3.4.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

Selection criteria will be linked to Partnership arrangements that:

- Bring added value to the new enterprise, with priority being given to those that bring stronger economic potential to the new enterprise (e.g. dairying over sheep in an Irish context)
- Address issues of scale and efficiency by consolidating blocks of land previously held and operated by separate actors not within the same family
- Through the educational qualifications of the participants, are most likely to employ new skills and specialisation in the new enterprise
- Help to address the age structure of Irish agriculture by
  a) including at least one actor who qualifies as a young farmer as defined in Regulation 1305/2013 as well as one actor over 60 years of age, or
  b) including at least one actor who qualifies as a young farmer as defined in Regulation 1305/2013

The above selection criteria will be assigned marks in descending order in relation to how they are listed above. Thus, the ‘bringing added value to the new enterprise’ criteria will be given the highest rating and so on.

Selection criteria will be transparent and ensure impartiality of treatment. The submeasure will be operated in clearly defined tranches, with applicants in each tranche ranked and selected accordingly.

8.2.10.3.4.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

The maximum allowable cost for consideration in respect of administrative set up costs (legal, accounting and advisory) is €5,000. The measure will pay 50% of the allowable cost incurred up to a maximum of €2,500.
8.2.10.3.4.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.10.3.4.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

Risks involved in the operation of this measure include the farm partnership dissolving early and verifying the veracity of the documentation supporting applications.

8.2.10.3.4.9.2. Mitigating actions

In order to address the above, farm partnerships must commit in the Farm Partnership Agreement to maintain the arrangement for a minimum of 5 years. The processing of claims will include standard checks in relation to supporting documentation. Partnerships on the Register will also be incorporated into the inspection programme.

8.2.10.3.4.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design. The risks are deemed to be low.

8.2.10.3.4.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Farm Partnerships are, for the most part, organised through agricultural consultants who provide the necessary legal and financial advice and draw up a Farm Partnership Agreement. The following are the activities and associated maximum costs involved in establishing a farm partnership.

The costs detailed below are the maximum amount payable under the Farm Partnerships scheme.
8.2.10.3.4.11. Information specific to the operation

Specification of the characteristics of pilot projects, clusters, networks, short supply chains and local markets

This measure will not apply to existing Milk Production Partnerships who move across to the new Register.

8.2.10.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.10.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.10.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.
8.2.10.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As referenced above.

8.2.10.5. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

As referenced above.

8.2.10.6. Information specific to the measure

Specification of the characteristics of pilot projects, clusters, networks, short supply chains and local markets

As referenced above.

8.2.10.7. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

As referenced above.
8.2.11. M19 - Support for LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

8.2.11.1. Legal basis


8.2.11.2. General description of the measure including its intervention logic and contribution to focus areas and cross-cutting objectives

A community led local development (CLLD) approach to rural development; LEADER has formed part of the policy framework for rural development in Ireland since its inception in the 1990s. In the 2007-2013 programming period, LEADER was the main method of delivering interventions aimed at improving the quality of life in rural areas and supporting the diversification of the rural economy. It has proven to be an effective tool for supporting the economic and social development of rural communities by providing the resources necessary for communities to support their own development.

The continuation of the LEADER approach in rural areas is critical for the future development of rural Ireland. However, the implementation of LEADER in the 2007-2013 period has presented a number of challenges and the Certifying Body has indicated a series of on-going issues that need to be addressed for the 2014-2020 programming period. These include, in particular, challenges relating to regulatory/audit compliance at Local Action Group (LAG) level and financial solvency/capacity of the legal entities implementing LEADER.

In the belief that rural communities are best placed to identify and address the issues and challenges they face, Ireland is currently moving towards a more integrated approach to the delivery of local development interventions and the participation of communities is central to the implementation of this approach. The LEADER approach is an essential tool to facilitate this in rural Ireland. Putting People First, the Irish Government action plan for better local government, specifically details actions to ensure a more coordinated and inclusive approach to the delivery of local development interventions including those funded under the RDP.

The SWOT and needs analysis have identified a number of challenges in rural Ireland for which a
community-led local development methodology such as LEADER is an appropriate delivery mechanism. These include, but are not limited to, the need to support local business, the need to involve all members of the community including young people in the development process and the need to ensure that rural development interventions are an integral part of all plans and policies designed to address local development thereby ensuring a more integrated approach to the development of Ireland as a whole.

In order to promote a more coordinated and effective approach to local development and ensure a more locally-led, integrated approach to the implementation of LEADER as well as addressing the issues identified during the 2007-2013 period there are a number of changes to the delivery mechanisms in respect of the LEADER approach for the 2014-2020 programming period compared to the previous RDP.

**LEADER Implementation 2014-2020**

**Sub-Regional Areas**

As previously outlined, for the purposes of the RDP 2014-2020, rural areas in Ireland are defined as those areas outside the cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford.

Ireland is reconfiguring the way in which local and rural development interventions are implemented in sub-regional areas. This is in line with Government policy that local government supports the effective and efficient delivery of local services, including rural development interventions, as part of the overall vision for local government to be the main vehicle of governance and public service at local level – leading economic, social and community development, delivering efficient and good value services, and representing citizens and local communities effectively and accountably. This will also facilitate more effective methods of oversight, coordination and support for the MA to ensure that the impact of all funding available to the sub-regional area is maximised. Accordingly, sub-regional areas will correspond with the County Council administrative areas in the first instance.

There are significant urban populations in the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Council areas. Rural communities can be found in each of these administrative areas. As these areas are statistically small and contained within one geographical county boundary they will be considered as one sub-regional area.

In view of the size of the Cork County Council area there will be three sub-regional areas for that County. This will mean 28 sub-regional areas in Ireland for LEADER purposes. In order to ensure sufficient budgetary resources to LAGs to facilitate full and effective implementation of LDSs, Ireland will apportion the overall programme complement on the basis of these 28 sub-regional administrative areas using open and transparent criteria.

While the selection process will allow for the emergence of a number of proposals for LDSs in any given sub-regional area, in the interest of supporting a coherent and integrated approach to local and rural development, the aim will be to facilitate in as far as is possible one LDS for each sub-regional area. If more than one qualifying LDS emerges for a sub-regional area, the available funding for that area will be shared to support the implementation of all LDSs selected in that area. These allocations will also be based on open and transparent criteria, including the needs identified in the selected LDSs and the requirements for complementarity and demarcation between LDSs. The minimum indicative budget for each LDS selected
will be in the range €2m to €2.5m.

In line with Article 33(6) of the CPR regulation[1] which prescribes that the population of LAG areas must be not less than 10,000 and not more than 150,000 inhabitants, LAGs will be required to outline in their LDS the populations to be covered by the strategy. The regulatory framework also provides for LDSs with populations outside of these parameters to take account of sparsely or densely populated areas, the functions of certain towns as facilitators of rural development or to ensure territorial coherence. This potential was identified in Ireland’s partnership agreement and the LDS selection process will require LDSs to provide a robust rationale for any LDS that covers a population outside the prescribed range.

Partnership Approach

Ireland will support the implementation of rural development interventions through the LEADER element of the RDP 2014-2020 at the sub-regional levels outlined above using a partnership approach. This will draw on the skills and expertise of local public and private socio-economic interests, including local development expertise, local authorities, community and voluntary organisations, etc., in consultation with the wider population. These strategic priorities will then provide the basis for programme-specific priorities in each sub-regional area. This will lead to a more integrated and coherent approach to local development that involves community and local government organisations in leadership roles, guiding a more integrated and coordinated approach to the delivery of all funding (both European and National) at a sub-regional level.

New six year Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) are being developed for each of local authority area as part of the local government reform process. The LECP is to be an integrated plan for the economic development and community development of the functional area of the local authority, with the economic elements of the LECP being developed by the local authority and the community elements being developed by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) - the committee of the local authority charged with developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. Public, stakeholder and community participation in preparing each of the elements of the LECPs is a crucial requirement, with specific provision for community participation in the preparation of the community element of the LECPs. Integrated LECPs will be adopted by each local authority during 2015, with a requirement that they be consistent with the local authority Development Plan and the new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (also being introduced as part of the local government reform process). LECPs will thus establish a framework for a more integrated approach to the delivery of a wide range of public-funded economic, local and community development supports at local authority level, including those funded under the RDP. Accordingly, as part of a more co-ordinated and joined-up planning approach, each LDS must be consistent with the LECPs as well as relevant EU, national and regional policies.

In the context of the RDP, this approach envisages community representatives and local development agencies working in partnership with local authorities through the LCDCs to ensure that all approved LDSs at sub-regional level are complementary and address the strategic priorities identified in the planning processes. These strategic and programme-specific priorities will form part of an overall planning process at
local level that is integrated with planning processes at regional, national and European levels thereby addressing the need for a more integrated approach to support for rural development at sub regional level. The need for co-ordination with economic and community development processes will be a requirement for each LDS selected.

**Sub-Regional Co-ordination**

In order to support the development of vibrant communities where people want to live and work and to ensure that rural areas do not fall behind urban areas with regard to economic development, unemployment and social inclusion, integrated plans and actions to support the development of small enterprise and job creation will be developed. This will require the effective and co-ordinated use of all available resources to support local development in rural areas.

Funding provided under the LEADER measure will support members of rural communities to participate fully in their communities from an economic, social and cultural perspective. With the integrated approach to local development proposed by Ireland for the 2014-2020 period, the development of the LDS for the LEADER element of the RDP in close alignment with the broader economic and social development planning processes at local level will help ensure complementarity and demarcation when it comes to support for social inclusion and other initiatives funded by the EAFRD.

An integrated planning process at local level will ensure coherence and complementarity with other available supports. The LCDC is charged with the co-ordination of the social and community aspects of the overall county planning process and will have representation from the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) on the decision-making element of the LCDC to ensure coherence with the economic aspects of the LECP. Relevant protocols will be put in place to ensure that there is full co-ordination between enterprise support available under the LEADER element of the RDP and other enterprise supports available at a local level.

**The Local Development Strategy Selection Process**

The LDS selection process will be open and transparent and will consist of two separate stages providing the opportunity for all interested LAGs to participate. This incremental approach will also support the development of a more robust partnership approach at local level and facilitate full and comprehensive consultation to maintain the integrity of the CLLD approach.

A pre-qualification/expression of interest (EOI) stage will involve an open call, appropriate for LCDCs, current LDCs and any other groupings that wish to be considered for delivery of LEADER. This stage will be open to any entity that can show broad local and community participation and that has a coherent vision for the development of their area. Interested groups will also be asked to outline the preparatory resources they may require in order to support the design and development of their LDS. While 28 sub-regional areas will be outlined as the MA’s preferred outcome, there will be no limit on the number of LAGs that can express an interest from within a sub-regional area.

The EOI s will be evaluated and entities selected to develop prospective LDSs by an independent Evaluation Committee, comprising an independent chair, the PA, the MA and external rural and local development
expertise, serviced by Pobal (the not-for-profit organisation established to manage various funding programmes on behalf of the Government and the EU and to support communities and local agencies toward achieving social inclusion, reconciliation and equality – see https://www.pobal.ie/Pages/Home.aspx).

It is preferable that one LDS emerge from each area where possible in order to support Irish Government policy for a coherent and integrated approach to local and rural development. At all stages prior to final selection of the LDSs, the MA will work with entities that express an interest to cooperate and develop a partnership to design and implement one LDS per sub-regional area. Throughout the LDS design process, all interested entities will be requested to maintain local dialogue to encourage the formation of a single LAG. DECLG will continue to encourage the one LDS approach in order to support coherent rural development in sub-regional areas and facilitate co-ordination between local authorities and entities supporting local development to ensure better outcomes for the areas concerned. The ultimate aim is to facilitate the development of robust, implementable strategies that address the needs of the sub-regional area and that are complementary to other development processes at sub-regional, regional, national and European level.

The funding available will be distributed across the 28 sub-regional areas based on open and transparent criteria. If more than one qualifying LDS emerges from an individual sub-regional area, the available funding for that area will be shared to support the implementation of all selected LDSs in that area, again based on open and transparent criteria and taking into account the requirements for complementarity and demarcation between LDSs.

The EOI stage will also assess the entities for individual preparatory support and provide capacity-building support through collective actions to build the capacity of interested entities to become LAGs for LEADER purposes. This preparatory support will be provided to support potential LAGs to develop an LDS for their area.

The second stage of the process will be the LDS development phase and will involve all LAGs that have achieved LAG designation in stage one. The criteria provided for this stage of the selection process will be in the form of a template for the structure of the LDS as well as criteria around governance within the LAG and management systems to support the delivery of the LDS. The criteria for this stage will not involve assessing financial capacity in respect of the delivery of LEADER as a State guarantee will be provided to ensure that all LAGs have the necessary financial framework in place to access the advances envisaged in the regulations. However, LAGs may need to demonstrate sufficient independent financial capacity if its constituents are engaged in the delivery of other programmes. Entities will be given a minimum of 6 months to design their LDS and once submitted LDSs will be evaluated and selections made by the independent Evaluation Committee. This evaluation and selection may take place prior to the expiration of the 6 months where it is clear that no more than one LDS will emerge in a sub-regional area.

Each LAG will be required to work within the partnership frameworks at local level in order to ensure that wider development priorities are complemented by the LDSs for the RDP. The aim of this process is to ensure that the all development planning processes are working together to maximise the impact of all
funding, national and European, allocated to any particular sub-regional area to support local and rural development.

**LEADER Themes**

The objectives of the LEADER measure is to fund initiatives emerging from a community-led local development approach at local level that aim to address the needs of individual sub-regional areas. These local objectives will be specific to each individual area but will contribute to both the aims and objectives of each individual LDS as well as addressing social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development of rural areas as outlined in the programme priorities.

The guidance documentation to accompany the LDS development process will outline a series of indicative “LEADER Themes” that have been developed from the evidence gathered during the SWOT and needs analysis processes. This also includes information contained in the 2014 report of the Commission on the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) that examined the challenges for and potential of rural Ireland. A number of themes emerged strongly from all of these processes and have a strong evidence base for use in LDSs. These themes will be offered as indicative themes for LDS development and each LDS will be required to examine the potential of these sectors within the LDS process and in the context of an integrated regional and local planning approach. However, in line with the ‘bottom-up’ nature of the LEADER methodology, LAGs will be permitted to outline their strategies based on the specific needs identified in their particular areas and in the context of the priorities indicated for support under LEADER in the Partnership Agreement and the RDP.

As LEADER will be programmed under priority 6 of the RDP, it will aim to promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and the economic development of rural areas. As LEADER interventions are supported through the framework of a LDS that is specific to the sub-regional area it is addressing, the specific objectives to be addressed by each strategy will be different. The primary measure of eligibility for projects funded through the LEADER approach will be to contribute to the aims and objectives of the LDS. However, each LDS will be required to outline and demonstrate the linkages between the aims and objectives of the strategy and the overall objective of priority 6 which is the promotion of social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

**Indicative Themes**

1 Rural Economic Development / Enterprise Development and Job Creation
The need to support the development of the rural economy has been identified as a critical challenge in both the needs analysis and other research regarding rural development in Ireland. A number of potential thematic areas have been identified where intervention under the LEADER elements of the RDP could support the economic development of rural areas. All of these thematic areas should be facilitated through on-going support for the building of community capacity to actively contribute to the economic development of rural areas. These areas are offered as indicative themes with an established evidence base for the development of LDS. This list is not exhaustive and the priorities ultimately identified through the LDS design process will emerge from the needs analysis at sub-regional level.

1a Rural Tourism

Tourism plays a very significant role in the rural economy and continued support for a varied and innovative rural tourism sector is critical to the future development of rural communities in Ireland. Areas such as rural recreation, adventure tourism, food tourism, cultural and heritage initiatives, festivals, other events and destination management have all been identified as areas of significant potential that require investment in order to contribute to the continued development of the rural economy.

1b Enterprise Development

In the context of enterprise development, and in line with the overall aims of the RDP, specific focus should also be placed on diversification opportunities for farm families. A number of specific areas of enterprise potential have been identified through the needs analysis process and are offered as indicative areas for consideration in the LDS development process.

- Support for food producers, may include:
  - Support for artisan, micro and small food producers, including those with a focus on collaborative proposals aimed at production quality and market issues;
  - Support for regional product development, including a focus on marketing distinctive local foodstuffs; and
  - Marketing and processing support for strategically identified sectors, including honey and apple processors.

  - €15 million of the overall budget has been allocated specifically to support food producers in the three areas outlined above. This funding will be delivered using the LEADER methodology. The Scheme aims to support new and existing food producers to address emerging challenges through investment in areas such as market development, competitiveness and innovation.
  - The Scheme also aims to improve marketing, product quality and business skills through support for innovative collaborative processes and so address the challenges to co-operation identified in studies on facilitating short supply chains – e.g. entry barriers, the need for shared understanding, skills/training, and marketing and business skills deficits. See Section 8.2.11.3.1.6 below.
1c Broadband

The support provided for rural communities in the context of increased access to and use of modern communications infrastructure will be complementary to the other initiatives already in place to support more comprehensive rural broadband infrastructure. It is envisaged that this will focus mainly on training and capacity building. In line with the bottom-up approach, individual sub-regional area needs will be outlined in the LDS.

1d Rural Towns

There is a body of evidence suggesting that Irish rural towns and their hinterlands have felt the negative impacts of the economic downturn in the recent past more than other areas. As rural towns are often the centre of the local rural economy, measures must be taken to address this as Ireland emerges from the current economic crisis or there is a danger that they will be unable to avail of emerging opportunities. Rural towns generally are at the heart of rural communities and the LEADER methodology is particularly suited to addressing the challenges that the reinvigoration of such towns will present. Initiatives to support the development of these towns and their hinterlands should be integrated and area-based and will require innovative and cooperative solutions; all characteristics of the LEADER approach to rural development.

In light of the findings the Report of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas and the needs identified throughout the RDP consultation process Ireland may allocate a portion of the LEADER element of the RDP to focus on supporting the development of Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ)/Rural Towns specifically.

Initiatives would be implemented using the LEADER approach and delivered through a call for proposals to LEADER Local Action Groups in line with the needs and challenges identified in their LDS and would be based largely on the potential of such zones and/or rural towns to contribute to their own economic development and the economic development of their rural hinterlands. In order to maintain the integrity of the bottom-up approach it will reserve decisions regarding this possibility until Local Development Strategies are more developed.

2. Social inclusion through building community capacity, training and animation

A central focus will be the need to ensure the social cohesion of a sub-regional area i.e. not just to support economic development but also to support social inclusion and address issues of social exclusion and marginalisation. In order to facilitate this, there is a need to ensure that communities are empowered and supported to develop their own capacity to engage at a local level with the processes that influence their development. This could include initiatives such as leadership and skills training, training that relates to governance, policies and procedures required to support proactive community participation and capacity
building around socio-economic planning and implementation at a local level.

Addressing social inclusion in particular is very area specific however there are also some challenges that have been identified at a national level and through implementation of the 2007-2013 RDP that will need to be addressed in the LDS development processes including, but not limited, to;

1. Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
2. Rural Youth

3. Rural Environment

While recognising that the environment is a cross-cutting issue and in this context will be considered in the context of all LEADER interventions there were a number of specific areas that also emerged from the needs analysis process. Those included the need to promote the targeted achievement of multiple environmental objectives including the protection and sustainable use of water resources, the protection and improvement of local biodiversity and the development of renewable energy.

LEADER and Cross-Cutting Issues

The LEADER approach through its positioning at the heart of rural communities is uniquely placed to address all of these needs in the context of supporting social inclusion and poverty reduction in rural Ireland. The 2014-2020 programme period will see a concerted effort by Ireland to ensure a more integrated and targeted approach to supporting local development which is anchored in a strong evidence base and supported by co-ordinated delivery mechanisms, with the aim of ensuring a more effective and efficient delivery of LEADER interventions.

The LDS design process will contain criteria to ensure that all local development strategies address each of the three main cross-cutting issues of innovation, climate change and environment. Capacity-building initiatives through the preparatory support element of the LEADER measure will also support rural communities to develop ideas that encourage and support all of the cross-cutting issues both as potential areas for stand-alone projects as well as ensuring that these issues form part of the assessment process for all relevant supported operations.

Innovation is one of the cornerstones of the LEADER approach and has always been a high priority at sub-regional level in Ireland. Experience in the 2007-2013 programming period would also indicate a high level of participation in projects that support environmental protection and awareness in rural communities, and evidence from the needs analysis, strongly indicates a desire at local level to engage with environmental initiatives in the 2014-2020 programming period also.

EURI funding will be allocated to LEADER projects under sub-measure 19.2 (€15m) for additional projects to support the green and economic recovery, in line with the local development strategies, with sub-measure
19.4 allocated (€5m) to support animation and running costs.


[DK1] Text clarifying €15 million allocation for food added here. Further text added in under sub-measure 19.2

8.2.11.3. Scope, level of support, eligible beneficiaries, and where relevant, methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate broken down by sub-measure and/or type of operation where necessary. For each type of operation specification of eligible costs, eligibility conditions, applicable amounts and support rates and principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria

8.2.11.3.1. LEADER Implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy

Sub-measure:

- 19.2 - Support for implementation of operations under the community-led local development strategy

8.2.11.3.1.1. Description of the type of operation

LEADER is a community-led local development approach to the delivery of Rural Development Interventions. Such interventions will be delivered based on the design and implementation of tailored sub-regional development strategies that are based on identified needs at a sub-regional level. LDSs will be developed on the basis of comprehensive analysis of the development needs and potential of sub-regional areas and will contain a detailed outline of how the needs are to be addressed using RDP funding.

EURI funds of €15m will be allocated to permit locally led rural development respond to the challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ireland has a strong CLLD model and the LEADER LAGs are uniquely placed to respond to the challenges faced by the COVID-19 pandemic and respond in an innovative manner building a resilient, sustainable and digital economic recovery within the LAG areas.

It is proposed that this funding would be utilised by the 29 LAGs in the 28 sub-regional areas in line with the Local Development Strategies, empowering the local communities, to adapt and provide innovative solutions to the challenges at local level.

EURI funding will be allocated to LEADER projects to support the green and economic recovery, in line with the local development strategies including for example Smart Villages.

EURI programme projects and expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.
8.2.11.3.1.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

The support provided to achieve the aims and objectives of the LDS will be in the form of grant aid.

8.2.11.3.1.3. Links to other legislation


8.2.11.3.1.4. Beneficiaries

LAGs and other local actors including private investors and State agencies. Detailed systems of demarcation will be in place to avoid overlap and double funding.

8.2.11.3.1.5. Eligible costs

The LEADER approach differentiates itself from other more top-down approaches to development through the characteristics that ensure its on-going and consistent linkages to the communities in which the funded interventions are situated. Accordingly, the interventions tend to be small scale, using complex and integrated approaches to solving locally-based specific challenges. Often the approaches taken are innovative and are designed to address challenges in a particular area and its environs, thereby fostering community co-operation both within and between adjacent areas to maximise impact. While maximum flexibility to deliver the aims and objectives of a LDS will be supported, to maintain the integrity of the community-based nature of the approach, these characteristics should be promoted and where possible projects funded through the LEADER approach should display as many of these characteristics as possible.

However, in line with the bottom up nature of LEADER and with regulatory requirements, individual operations shall be eligible if they contribute to achieving the objectives of the LDS and correspond to the objectives and priorities indicated for support under LEADER in the Partnership Agreement and the RDP. Operational guidance will be issued to Local Action Groups explaining the activities that are not eligible so as to ensure that no double funding occurs, to ensure the activities are in compliance with the requirements of the legislation underpinning the RDP and to ensure value for money in the manner in which Leader funding is spent. Activities explicitly designated as being ineligible include conventional retail operations (excluding community based shops and farm shops selling locally produced produce), primary agricultural activities, fisheries, horticulture (including bee-keeping), loans and working capital. Investment support will be provided for:

- The construction, acquisition or improvement of immovable property;
- The purchase or lease purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset; and
• General costs linked to the project such as architect, engineer and consultation fees, and fees relating to advice on environmental and economic sustainability, including feasibility studies
• Intangible investments such as the acquisition or development of computer software and the acquisition of patents, copyrights, trademarks or licences.

The purchase of second-hand equipment may also be regarded as eligible expenditure provided the following conditions are met:

• The seller of the second-hand equipment provides a written declaration stating its origin and confirms in writing that at no point during the previous 7 years has it been purchased with the aid of national or European Community grants;
• The price of the equipment does not exceed its normal market value and is less than the cost of similar new equipment; and
• The equipment has the technical characteristics necessary for the operation and complies with applicable norms and standards.

Contributions in kind in the form of provision of works, goods, services, land and real estate for which no cash payment supported by invoices, or documents of equivalent probative value, has been made, is also eligible provided that all of the following criteria are fulfilled:

• the public support paid to the operation which includes contributions in kind does not exceed the total eligible expenditure, excluding contributions in kind, at the end of the operation;
• the value attributed to contributions in kind does not exceed the costs generally accepted on the market in question;
• the value and the delivery of the contribution can be independently assessed and verified;
• in the case of provision of land or real estate, a cash payment, for the purposes of a lease agreement of a nominal amount per annum not exceeding a single unit of the currency of the Member State, may be made;
• in the case of contributions in kind in the form of unpaid work, the value of that work is determined by taking into account the verified time spent and the rate of remuneration for equivalent work.

8.2.11.3.1.6. Eligibility conditions

Individual operations shall be eligible if they contribute to achieving the aims and objectives of the LDS and correspond to the objectives and priorities indicated for support in the RDP. For the 2014-2020 programming period, and in line with a more concerted effort to promote a more integrated approach to rural development at a local level, it is proposed to support integrated LEADER projects by facilitating systems that allow for co-funding with other public bodies as well as private and community co-funding. It is also proposed to support more co-ordinated interventions at a local level through the use of umbrella projects particularly in the context of the rural youth and hard to reach communities themes outlined. The systems implemented will be outlined in detail in the LEADER operating rules and both integrated projects and umbrella projects will be fully monitored to ensure compliance with relevant regulatory requirements.
including double funding.

In relation to the delivery of the €15 million allocation to the Agri-Food measure described in Section 8.2.11.2, this funding will not be assigned to individual LDS budgets but will be allocated using an open call for proposals to LEADER LAGs. In order to make a submission to the proposed scheme, potential projects must be in line with the approach identified in Section 8.2.11.2 and the objectives of the LDS framework for the sub-regional area. While implemented by LEADER LAGs, this funding must be; (i) delivered to the benefit of food producers; (ii) for investment in areas such as market development, competitiveness and innovation. Registration as a food producer will be a condition of funding where food producers are the direct beneficiaries of the support. Selection criteria of the call for proposals will reflect these requirements.

With regards to a possible allocation of programme funding to support a rural economic development zones/rural towns initiative (if implemented), this funding will not be assigned to individual LDS budgets but would be allocated using an open call for proposals to LEADER LAGS. In order to make a submission to the proposed scheme rural towns would have to be identified in the LDS as a priority area and this will form part of the criteria for any call for proposals for this scheme. While implemented by LEADER LAGs, it is envisaged that, in line with the evidence presented in the CEDRA report, any proposal would involve a collaborative effort at a local level actively involving community representatives and local authorities and would include the use of LEADER funding in conjunction with funding from other sources to maximise the impact of all available funding. It is intended to conduct a pilot REDZ initiative in the coming months using national funding which will be used as a learning tool for moving forward with a more comprehensive scheme under the LEADER elements of the RDP.

8.2.11.3.1.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

As outlined in the regulatory framework (Article 34 (b) 1303/2013) the principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria are to be defined in the LDS by the LAG.

Ireland will continue to use an on-going applications system for the selection of projects for funding where applications can be accepted by the LAG for a project that supports the aims and objectives of its LDS at any time during the programme period subject to budgetary considerations. This system will be complemented by a system of calls for proposals in order to encourage a more qualitative approach to evaluation for more significant projects. In particular, the funding available to the Agri Food measures described above will be delivered using the call for proposals method.

However, while the MA will support and encourage this type of system, it will ultimately be the responsibility of the LAG to determine which systems are best suited to the implementation of the LEADER approach in their sub-regional area.

In the case of projects where the LAG or a LAG member is a beneficiary, robust systems to address conflict of interest will be required as part of the development of management systems at LAG level. Administrative checks required under Article 28 EU Reg 809/2014 on projects such as these will be performed by an external agency in order to ensure such projects are eligible and compliant.

LAG selection of projects should be based on a documented assessment that considers the aims and objectives of the LDS as well as the priorities indicated for support in the RDP. Assessment of requests for support should be fair, fully documented and transparent and be based on consistent and relevant criteria.
8.2.11.3.1.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

LAGs will be afforded some opportunity to fix the aid intensity for operations funded under the LDS based on the strategic role these operations can play in the context of their LDS and in line with the aid intensity rates provided for in the legal framework and relevant State Aid limitations. The possibility of aid intensity rates of up to 100% (EU and national co-financing) will be available for all interventions funded under the LEADER elements of the RDP. However, in line with Commission guidance, Ireland will require an element of co-financing of individual operations by public and/or private investors for most approved operations, in order to promote community ownership of the funded projects. Ireland envisages 100% aid intensity for capacity building and training interventions funded through LEADER. Further detail on specific aid intensity rates available for particular types of projects will be clarified in the detailed operating rules that accompany the LEADER elements of the RDP.

Ireland may allow for the payment of an advance of up to 50% of the public aid related to the investment from the competent paying agencies as allowed for in the regulatory framework.

8.2.11.3.1.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.11.3.1.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

The bottom-up nature of the LEADER methodology requires robust and manageable systems for financial control and regulatory compliance. Implementation of the LEADER operations during the 2007-2013 programming period has identified a number of areas of risk and afforded a substantial learning process with regard to the types of systems required in order to mitigate this risk. The main risks identified relate to issues such as

- the financial capacity of LAGs which were standalone legal entities and the need to ensure the sustainability of operations funded through the RDP by ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework particularly as it pertains to sound financial management.
- Audit findings in areas such as administrative procedures, financial controls and reporting, and public procurement issues.

8.2.11.3.1.9.2. Mitigating actions

All expenditure will be subject to standard control procedures for correct financial management and audit compliance. This will be fully clarified to all LAGs interested in developing an LDS and they will be fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to sound financial management before they embark on the LDS implementation process.

Ireland is proposing some changes to the delivery mechanisms for LEADER in the 2014-2020 period in order to mitigate issues identified relating to the financial capacity of LAGs and improve the capacity of the system as a whole to address issues of regulatory and financial compliance. This will include the management of Article 28 Administrative Checks by a public authority either inside or outside of the LAG.
or other State appointed body as appropriate.

As also referenced in Section 18, a number of initiatives are in place to address issues highlighted in audits in the 2007-2013 programming period. These include the provision of targeted training and capacity building support, and the provision of detailed operating guidelines which will specifically addresses the issues identified.

8.2.11.3.1.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.11.3.1.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Not applicable.

8.2.11.3.1.11. Information specific to the operation

Description of the obligatory community-led local development (hereafter "CLLD") elements of which the LEADER measure is composed: preparatory support, implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy, preparation and implementation of co-operation activities of the local action group (hereafter "LAG"), running costs and animation, referred to in Article 35(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Support for operations funded through LDSs is at the centre of the LEADER approach to Rural Development. LEADER funding in the 2007-2013 period was implemented largely through a system of continuous and on-going open calls for project proposals at local level. While this method for project selection will remain, the 2014-2020 system will also support a more targeted call for proposals system. This system will facilitate the consideration of proposed interventions within the context of comparable/competitive interventions thereby ensuring that only the most suitable interventions are ultimately awarded funding.

While LEADER operations will generally be paid in arrears, consideration may be given to providing advance funding for certain LEADER operations where this is deemed appropriate.

While the essence of the LEADER approach is to support the engagement of rural communities in their own development, it is also critical that the support delivered through these operations is sustainable and compliant with relevant regulations. Ireland is committed to ensuring that the implementation systems for LEADER in the 2014-2020 period promote the integrity of the LEADER approach while simultaneously facilitating efficient and effective systems that support regulatory compliance with minimum administrative burden on beneficiaries.
| Description of the use of the LEADER start-up-kit referred to in Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as specific type of preparatory support if relevant |
| Description of the system for ongoing application for LEADER co-operation projects referred to in Article 44(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 |
| The procedure and timetable to select the local development strategies |
| Justification for selection of geographical areas for local development strategy implementation whose population falls outside the limits laid down in Article 33(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 |
| Co-ordination with the other European Structural and Investment (hereafter "ESI") Funds as regards CLLD, including possible solution applied with regard to the use of the lead fund option, and any global complementarities between the ESI Funds in financing the preparatory support |
| Possibility or not of paying advances |
| While LEADER operations will generally be paid in arrears, consideration may be given to providing advance funding for certain LEADER operations where this is deemed appropriate. |
| Definition of the tasks of the Managing Authority, the paying agency and the LAGs under LEADER, in particular with regard to a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations referred to in Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 |
| Description of co-ordination mechanisms foreseen and complementarities ensured with operations supported under other rural development measures especially as regards: investments in non-agricultural activities and business start-up aid under Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; investments under Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; and co-operation under Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, in particular implementation of local development strategies by public-private partnerships |
8.2.11.3.2. LEADER Preparation and Implementation of cooperation activities of the local action groups

Sub-measure:

- 19.3 - Preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action

8.2.11.3.2.1. Description of the type of operation

This element of the LEADER measure will support the preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the LAG. Transnational and inter-territorial co-operation will be supported under this measure. Co-operation is allowable between Leader groups and other non-Leader groups provided the project involved is led and co-ordinated by a Leader group. Support will be available for innovative and experimental approaches to promoting joint ventures addressing common issues.

The types of operations envisaged under this sub-measure should contribute to the aims and objectives outlined in the LDS of all cooperating partners and the value of the cooperation itself should be in addition to the project itself. Ireland will avail of the possibility contained in Article 34(5) 1303/2013 and the MA will select operations and fix the amount of support for cooperation activities.

Co-operation may not consist purely of an exchange of information but must consist of a joint project between the groups involved. Exchange of information will be supported in the context of preparation for the design and implementation of a proposed project. Special emphasis is placed on co-ordination of activities at the regional level, with particular emphasis on tourism and environmental co-operation initiatives. Co-operation must demonstrate genuine added value for the territories concerned.

8.2.11.3.2.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

The support provided for cooperation activities will be in the form of grant aid.

Preparation

In this context, preparatory activity, co-ordination and animation are eligible for funding. Some elements of preparatory funding may be supported at 100% (training and capacity building).

Implementation

Support provided for the implementation of co-operation projects will be in the form of grant aid. It is envisaged that implementation of cooperation projects will involve some financial input from the territories concerned.

8.2.11.3.2.3. Links to other legislation

(CPR) and EU Regulation (EU) 2020/2220.

8.2.11.3.2.4. Beneficiaries
LAGs and other local actors.

8.2.11.3.2.5. Eligible costs

Preparatory Support
Costs of technical preparation for inter-territorial or transnational co-operation project.

Project Implementation Support
Costs of co-operation projects within a Member State (inter-territorial co-operation) or co-operation projects between territories in several Member States or with territories in third countries (transnational co-operation).

8.2.11.3.2.6. Eligibility conditions

A concrete project must be envisaged in order to avail of support under the co-operation element of the LEADER measure. The criteria for selection of cooperation projects to be funded both in the context of preparing and implementing a co-operation project will be detailed in the operating rules for the programme and the need to support this kind of intervention must be identified in the LDS.

The MA will facilitate a system of on-going applications for both inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects. The MAs in both Northern and Southern Ireland will provide particular support for those projects that relate to North-South co-operation with a view to improving the outcomes for those projects going forward. In this context, a system of calls for proposals to LAGs may be used for particular areas of interventions for example Rural Tourism.

8.2.11.3.2.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

General principles with regard to the setting of selection criteria for co-operation projects will be set out in the overall programme operating rules and further elaborated in individual calls for proposals as outlined above facilitating the inclusion of additional criteria depending on the project type envisaged, e.g. Rural Tourism. The Managing Authority will publish guidance for the development of co-operation projects. The guidance will look at inter-territorials and transnationals and will have a particular focus on North-South Ireland projects where MAs will work together to support the LAGS to develop co-operation projects at a local level.
8.2.11.3.2.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

While the MA will select cooperation projects, the selections will be made on the basis of recommendations from LAGS taking consideration of the LDS budget, the strategic role these operations can play in the context of individual LDS and in line with the aid intensities rate provided for in the legal framework and relevant State Aid limitations. As outlined above, some measure of co-financing by a public or private investor will be required for approved operations with the exception of capacity building and training.

8.2.11.3.2.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.11.3.2.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

The bottom-up nature of the LEADER methodology requires robust and manageable systems for financial control and regulatory compliance. Implementation of the LEADER operations during the 2007-2013 programming period has identified a number of areas of risk and afforded a substantial learning process with regard to the types of systems required in order to mitigate this risk. The main risks centre on the financial capacity of LAGs and the need to ensure the sustainability of operations funded through the RDP by ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework particularly as it pertains to sound financial management.

8.2.11.3.2.9.2. Mitigating actions

All expenditure will be subject to standard control procedures for correct financial management and audit compliance. This will be fully clarified to all LAGs selected to implement an LDS and they will be fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to sound financial management before they embark on the LDS implementation process.

As outlined, Ireland is proposing some changes to the delivery mechanisms for LEADER in the 2014-2020 period in order to mitigate issues identified relating to the financial capacity of LAGs and improve the capacity of the system as a whole to address issues of regulatory and financial compliance.

8.2.11.3.2.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.11.3.2.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Methodologies for the assessment of amount of support will be contained within the operating rules for the programme and will be further elaborated as part of the calls for proposals for co-operation activities at sub-regional level if appropriate.
8.2.11.3.2.11. Information specific to the operation

Description of the obligatory community-led local development (hereafter "CLLD") elements of which the LEADER measure is composed: preparatory support, implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy, preparation and implementation of co-operation activities of the local action group (hereafter "LAG"), running costs and animation, referred to in Article 35(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

As per Article 34 (5) of Regulation (EU)1303/2013, Ireland intends to retain the allocation for this measure at a national level and allow LAGs to apply for this funding on a project-by-project basis. This funding will be additional to their LDS allocation. This is to encourage activity under the measure and to ensure that projects are in line with the spirit of the LEADER ethos.

Description of the use of the LEADER start-up-kit referred to in Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as specific type of preparatory support if relevant

Description of the system for ongoing application for LEADER co-operation projects referred to in Article 44(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

The procedure and timetable to select the local development strategies

Justification for selection of geographical areas for local development strategy implementation whose population falls outside the limits laid down in Article 33(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Co-ordination with the other European Structural and Investment (hereafter "ESI") Funds as regards CLLD, including possible solution applied with regard to the use of the lead fund option, and any global complementarities between the ESI Funds in financing the preparatory support

Possibility or not of paying advances

Definition of the tasks of the Managing Authority, the paying agency and the LAGs under LEADER, in particular with regard to a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations referred to in Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013
Description of co-ordination mechanisms foreseen and complementarities ensured with operations supported under other rural development measures especially as regards: investments in non-agricultural activities and business start-up aid under Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; investments under Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; and co-operation under Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, in particular implementation of local development strategies by public-private partnerships.
8.2.11.3.3. LEADER Preparatory Support

Sub-measure:

- 19.1 - Preparatory support

8.2.11.3.3.1. Description of the type of operation

LEADER is a community-led local development approach to the delivery of Rural Development Interventions. Such interventions will be delivered based on the design and implementation of tailored sub-regional development strategies that are based on identified needs at a sub-regional level. The regulatory framework provides for preparatory support which will be used to build the capacity of entities that express an interest in designing and implementing local development strategies for the 2014-2020 programme period as extended and also for capacity building and preparatory actions for future community-led local development strategies as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2020/2220.

8.2.11.3.3.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

Grant aid to support the development of LDSs at sub-regional level.

8.2.11.3.3.3. Links to other legislation


8.2.11.3.3.4. Beneficiaries

Qualifying LAGs that have expressed an interest in the design and development of a LDS for a defined sub-regional area.

8.2.11.3.3.5. Eligible costs

(i) setting up of public-private partnerships; training actions for local actors; studies of the territory concerned; actions related to public relations regarding the local development activities.

(ii) training actions for local stakeholders; studies of the area concerned (including feasibility studies for some of the projects to be foreseen in the LDS); costs related to the design of the LDS, including
consultancy costs and costs for actions related to consultations of stakeholders for the purposes of preparing the strategy; administrative costs (operating and personnel costs) of an organisation that applies for preparatory support during the preparation phase (future LAGs; existing LAGs, if any double funding is excluded).

8.2.11.3.3.6. Eligibility conditions

As outlined above, Ireland will conduct a two-stage process for LDS selection. The MA will facilitate a number of collective capacity-building actions open to all interested parties which will be eligible under the preparatory support element of the programme. In addition to this, the initial expression of interest process will ask potential LAGs to detail the preparatory resources they feel may be necessary to support the design and development of their LDS with a view to awarding a grant to successful LAGs to carry out this work. This process will be conducted in line with the regulatory requirements by a committee established as outlined in Article 33 (3) 1303/2013. The LAGs selected from Stage 1 will be awarded preparatory support to develop their LDS.

8.2.11.3.3.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

Selection criteria for the initial step in the LDS selection process, which will identify those groups that are eligible for preparatory support, will focus on the coherence of the proposed LDS from a geographical and thematic perspective, the participative and representative nature of potential LAGs and the reasonableness of their vision for the development of their sub-regional area.

8.2.11.3.3.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

All preparatory support will be at a rate of 100% and provided to potential Local Action Groups selected following an expression of interest process.

An Independent Selection Committee will select the “potential LAGS” to design an LDS for each area following the submission of Expressions of Interest. Ireland will reimburse the eligible costs incurred by the potential LAGs in developing the Local Development Strategies in accordance with Article 67 (1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013. The potential LAGS that are successful at the Expression of Interest stage will receive an initial advance payment of up to €15,000 from National funds to assist in the development of the LDS. Further preparatory support payments will be made as required. The preparatory support may reimburse eligible costs including:

- training actions for local stakeholders;
- studies of the area concerned;
- costs related to the design of the LDS, including consultancy costs and costs for actions related to consultations of stakeholders for the purposes of preparing the strategy; and
- administrative costs;
8.2.11.3.3.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.11.3.3.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

This sub-measure of the LEADER measure does not contain any particularly high risk. The independent evaluation committee established to oversee the LDS selection process will monitor the process throughout. Grant aid will only be awarded on the basis of criteria outlined in the selection process and on the basis of vouched expenditure.

8.2.11.3.3.9.2. Mitigating actions

All expenditure will be subject to standard control procedures for correct financial management and audit compliance. This will be fully clarified with all LAGs interested in developing an LDS and they will be fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to sound financial management before they embark on the LDS development process.

8.2.11.3.3.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.11.3.3.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Support will be calculated based on expenditure incurred and on the basis of the rules outlined in the regulatory framework (Article 65-71 1303/2013 (CPR).

8.2.11.3.3.11. Information specific to the operation

Description of the obligatory community-led local development (hereafter "CLLD") elements of which the LEADER measure is composed: preparatory support, implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy, preparation and implementation of co-operation activities of the local action group (hereafter "LAG"), running costs and animation, referred to in Article 35(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

As noted in Section 8.2.10.3.3.8, advance funding is being provided for preparatory support from national resources.
Description of the use of the LEADER start-up-kit referred to in Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as specific type of preparatory support if relevant

Description of the system for ongoing application for LEADER co-operation projects referred to in Article 44(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

The procedure and timetable to select the local development strategies

Justification for selection of geographical areas for local development strategy implementation whose population falls outside the limits laid down in Article 33(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Co-ordination with the other European Structural and Investment (hereafter "ESI") Funds as regards CLLD, including possible solution applied with regard to the use of the lead fund option, and any global complementarities between the ESI Funds in financing the preparatory support

Possibility or not of paying advances

As noted in Section 8.2.10.3.3.8, advance funding is being provided for preparatory support.

Definition of the tasks of the Managing Authority, the paying agency and the LAGs under LEADER, in particular with regard to a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations referred to in Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Description of co-ordination mechanisms foreseen and complementarities ensured with operations supported under other rural development measures especially as regards: investments in non-agricultural activities and business start-up aid under Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; investments under Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; and co-operation under Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, in particular implementation of local development strategies by public-private partnerships
8.2.11.3.4. LEADER Running Costs and Animation

Sub-measure:

- 19.4 - Support for running costs and animation

8.2.11.3.4.1. Description of the type of operation

LEADER is a community-led local development approach to the delivery of Rural Development interventions. Such interventions will be delivered based on the design and implementation of tailored sub-regional LDS that are based on identified needs at a sub-regional level. This element of the LEADER measure relates to the operating costs of the LAGs charged with the design and implementation of the LDS.

EURI funding will be allocated to permit locally led rural development respond to the challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to support animation and running costs of the 29 LAGs in line with the Local Development Strategies, empowering the local communities, to adapt and provide innovative solutions to the challenges at local level.

EURI programme expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

8.2.11.3.4.2. Type of support

Type of support: Grants

The support provided for running costs and animation will be in the form of grant aid.

8.2.11.3.4.3. Links to other legislation


8.2.11.3.4.4. Beneficiaries

Local Action Groups.

8.2.11.3.4.5. Eligible costs

Running costs: Costs linked to the management of the implementation of the strategy consisting of operating costs, personnel costs, training costs, costs linked to communication, financial costs as well as the costs linked to monitoring and evaluation of the strategy as referred to in point (g) of Art. 34(3) CPR.
8.2.11.3.4.6. Eligibility conditions

Not applicable.

8.2.11.3.4.7. Principles with regards to the setting of selection criteria

Not applicable.

8.2.11.3.4.8. (Applicable) amounts and support rates

Support for running costs and animation shall not exceed 25% of the total public expenditure incurred within the LDS and will be supported at a rate of 100%. Ireland will reimburse the running and animation costs on the basis of costs actually incurred and paid as outlined in Article 67 of Regulation 1303/2013 up to a maximum of 25%.

In addition, Ireland may introduce a simplified cost option for payment of at least part of the administration and animation costs of the LAGs following consultation with both the European Commission and the LAGs delivering the programme. The primary aim is to use flat rate financing to cover some of the administration/animation costs of the LAGs. The preference is to use one of the “off-the-shelf” SCO’s provided in Regulation 1303/2013. The focus will be on the provision for indirect costs in Article 68 (b) (flat rate of up to 15% of eligible direct staff costs and the provision for all costs other than staff costs in Article 68 (b) (1) (flat rate of up to 40 % of eligible direct staff costs).

An advance of not more than 50% of the public support related to the running and animation costs may be made available to the LAGs. State guarantees will be provided in order to facilitate the availability of advances – this will be in the form of local government guarantees where the local authority is the Lead Financial Partner in the LAG or by central Government where the local authority is not the Lead Financial Partner.

8.2.11.3.4.9. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.11.3.4.9.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

The bottom-up nature of the LEADER methodology requires robust and manageable systems for financial control and regulatory compliance. Implementation of the LEADER operations during the 2007-2013 programming period has identified a number of areas of risk and afforded a substantial learning process with regard to the types of systems required in order to mitigate this risk. The main risks centre on the financial
capacity of LAGs and the need to ensure the sustainability of operations funded through the RDP by ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework particularly as it pertains to sound financial management.

As outlined Ireland is proposing some changes to the delivery mechanisms for LEADER in the 2014-2020 period that will address directly the financial capacity of LAGs and improve the capacity of the system as a whole to address issues of regulatory and financial compliance. This will include the management of Article 28 Administrative Checks by a public authority either inside or outside the LAG or other State appointed body as appropriate.

8.2.11.3.4.9.2. Mitigating actions

All expenditure will be subject to standard control procedures for correct financial management and audit compliance. This will be fully clarified to all LAGs selected to deliver an LDS and they will be fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to sound financial management before they embark on the LDS implementation process.

8.2.11.3.4.9.3. Overall assessment of the measure

The relevant risks associated with this measure have been identified and addressed as part of the measure design.

8.2.11.3.4.10. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

Support for running costs and animation shall not exceed 25% of the total public expenditure incurred within the LDS.

8.2.11.3.4.11. Information specific to the operation

Description of the obligatory community-led local development (hereafter "CLLD") elements of which the LEADER measure is composed: preparatory support, implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy, preparation and implementation of co-operation activities of the local action group (hereafter "LAG"), running costs and animation, referred to in Article 35(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Not applicable.

Description of the use of the LEADER start-up-kit referred to in Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as specific type of preparatory support if relevant

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Description of the system for ongoing application for LEADER co-operation projects referred to in Article 44(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

The procedure and timetable to select the local development strategies

Justification for selection of geographical areas for local development strategy implementation whose population falls outside the limits laid down in Article 33(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Co-ordination with the other European Structural and Investment (hereafter "ESI") Funds as regards CLLD, including possible solution applied with regard to the use of the lead fund option, and any global complementarities between the ESI Funds in financing the preparatory support

Possibility or not of paying advances

As noted in section 8.2.10.3.4.8, advance funding for running costs and animation may be provided under the Programme.

Definition of the tasks of the Managing Authority, the paying agency and the LAGs under LEADER, in particular with regard to a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations referred to in Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Description of co-ordination mechanisms foreseen and complementarities ensured with operations supported under other rural development measures especially as regards: investments in non-agricultural activities and business start-up aid under Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; investments under Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; and co-operation under Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, in particular implementation of local development strategies by public-private partnerships
8.2.11.4. Verifiability and controllability of the measures and/or types of operations

8.2.11.4.1. Risk(s) in the implementation of the measures

As referenced above.

8.2.11.4.2. Mitigating actions

As referenced above.

8.2.11.4.3. Overall assessment of the measure

As referenced above.

8.2.11.5. Methodology for calculation of the amount or support rate, where relevant

As referenced above.

8.2.11.6. Information specific to the measure

Description of the obligatory community-led local development (hereafter "CLLD") elements of which the LEADER measure is composed: preparatory support, implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy, preparation and implementation of co-operation activities of the local action group (hereafter "LAG"), running costs and animation, referred to in Article 35(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

As referenced above.

Description of the use of the LEADER start-up-kit referred to in Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as specific type of preparatory support if relevant

As referenced above.

Description of the system for ongoing application for LEADER co-operation projects referred to in Article 44(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

As referenced above.
The procedure and timetable to select the local development strategies

As referenced above.

Justification for selection of geographical areas for local development strategy implementation whose population falls outside the limits laid down in Article 33(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

As outlined in Section 8.2.10.2, the allocation of LEADER funding mirrors the new local government administrative areas defined as part of the general restructuring of local government and the reconfiguration of the approach to local community and rural development interventions. Alignment with these administrative areas secures a more integrated approach to the delivery of a range of public supports including LEADER, as the delivery of these supports must be consistent with the Local Economic and Community Plans developed for each area. This also facilitates better oversight and coordination by both local government and the managing authority, and contributes to a more effective and efficient delivery of LEADER interventions in tandem with other public funding. The approach results in 28 separate sub-regional areas for LEADER delivery, among which the following areas fall outside the default population limits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LDS areas with population falling outside the standard limits</th>
<th>New population limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cork South</td>
<td>220,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kildare</td>
<td>220,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipperary</td>
<td>165,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meath</td>
<td>190,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Co-ordination with the other European Structural and Investment (hereafter "ESI") Funds as regards CLLD, including possible solution applied with regard to the use of the lead fund option, and any global complementarities between the ESI Funds in financing the preparatory support

As referenced above.

Possibility or not of paying advances
As referenced above.

Definition of the tasks of the Managing Authority, the paying agency and the LAGs under LEADER, in particular with regard to a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations referred to in Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

As referenced above.

Description of co-ordination mechanisms foreseen and complementarities ensured with operations supported under other rural development measures especially as regards: investments in non-agricultural activities and business start-up aid under Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; investments under Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013; and co-operation under Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, in particular implementation of local development strategies by public-private partnerships

As referenced above.

8.2.11.7. Other important remarks relevant to understand and implement the measure

n/a
9. Evaluation Plan

9.1. Objectives and purpose

A statement of the objectives and purpose of the evaluation plan, based on ensuring that sufficient and appropriate evaluation activities are undertaken, in particular to provide information needed for programme steering, for the annual implementation reports in 2017 and 2019 and the ex-post evaluation, and to ensure that data needed for RDP evaluation are available.

In overall terms, the purpose of this Evaluation Plan is to help to ensure the effective expenditure of EU and national exchequer funding on Ireland’s Rural Development Programme (RDP) over the period 2014-2020, and in doing so, to ensure that the RDP contributes to the achievement of CAP objectives, the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and national policy aims.

The achievement of maximum value for money is particularly important at a time of scarce financial resources. The formulation of an Evaluation Plan is an integral part of programme development and will help to identify, in advance, the key information and resources required to ensure effective implementation and, in turn, help to ensure the achievement of EU and national objectives in the most cost effective way possible.

In more detail, the objectives of this Evaluation Plan are to:

- clearly set out the arrangements necessary to carry out effective monitoring and evaluation of Ireland’s RDP activities, in accordance with the detailed requirements set out by the European Commission,
- outline how sufficient and appropriate evaluation activities will be undertaken,
- outline how the commensurate resources will be assigned to these activities, and
- demonstrate how the evaluation activities undertaken will ensure the availability of the information at the time and in the format required to effectively manage and monitor the progress of the programme.

It is expected that the formulation of this Evaluation Plan will also give rise to beneficial effects in areas such as:

- the supporting of a more rigorous monitoring and evaluation process,
- the generation of added value in a policy-making context through the incorporation of evaluation into RDP implementation from the outset, which will help to provide ongoing, valuable information on the performance of the programme and facilitate more meaningful review.

Finally, it is intended that the rigorous and systematic approach to be taken to evaluation under the RDP over the 2014-2020 period, and particularly the planning of evaluation activities at the early stages of policy design and implementation, will generate legacy benefits for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
9.2. Governance and coordination

Brief description of the monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the RDP, identifying the main bodies involved and their responsibilities. Explanation of how evaluation activities are linked with RDP implementation in terms of content and timing.

DAFM is Ireland’s RDP Managing Authority and Paying Agency, and will have primary responsibility for the implementation of Ireland’s RDP monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), as the delegated Paying Agency for LEADER, will have primary responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the LEADER elements of the RDP, and will consult with DAFM on progress in relation to same on an ongoing basis. The monitoring and evaluation of LEADER will, however, be integrated with the overall monitoring and evaluation for the RDP.

As set out in the Rural Development and Common Provisions Regulations, the Monitoring Committee will have a role in relation to the monitoring of the performance of the RDP. The Committee’s functions in this regard are set out in the Regulation, and include the consideration and approval of annual implementation reports and the reviewing the implementation of the RDP and progress made towards achieving its objectives.

Within DAFM, in general terms, a number of line divisions will be responsible for different aspects of the RDP monitoring and evaluation arrangements. These are:

- Rural Development Division:
  - will be the central coordinating division for the monitoring and evaluation of the RDP,
  - will coordinate the measure design input from line divisions,
  - will coordinate the process of the identification, capture, and management of the appropriate amount of data required for efficient monitoring and evaluation at the earliest possible juncture by line divisions, i.e. during application processing,
  - will identify, with the assistance of line divisions, the data requirements that are likely to be satisfied using external sources of information,
  - will engage external technical assistance to assist with evaluations as required, including through the compilation of the more qualitative data associated with the enhanced Annual Implementation Reports
  - will coordinate the RDP input into the overall CAP evaluation to be undertaken in conjunction with Pillar 1 schemes.

- Line divisions (for example, Agri-Environment and Structures, Nitrates Bio-diversity and Engineering Division, Climate Change and Bio-Energy Division etc):
  - will ensure that the requirements in relation to statistical information and monitoring and evaluation data are addressed to the maximum possible extent during the design of individual measures, including where this involves consultation with/implementation by external bodies,
  - will implement systems of collection and reporting of monitoring and evaluation data over
the RDP period.

- **IMT (Information Management and Technology) Division:**
  - will be responsible for the development of the IMT systems necessary to support the implementation of the RDP,
  - will ensure the capture and interrogation of statistical information and monitoring and evaluation data from both internal (DAFM) and external sources, including data that may be obtained by alternative means such as surveys.

- **Economics and Planning Division (EPD):**
  - as DAFM’s central evaluation unit, this division will contribute to the optimum design and targeting of measures under the new RDP,
  - will continue to incorporate RDP measures into DAFM’s Value For Money Review process, as has been done under the 2007-2013 RDP,
  - will incorporate RDP measures into plans to undertake Focused Policy Assessments in line with the Public Spending Code published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform,
  - as a member of the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service, will provide ongoing expert advice and input into evaluation issues that arise over the lifetime of the RDP.
  - As a member of the Public Service Evaluation Network, EPD will feed back learning from the wider public sector evaluation context into the RDP monitoring and evaluation processes.

In addition, a new DAFM Business Co-ordinator, who will plan and monitor the implementation of CAP reform across Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, will help to coordinate the activities of these divisions in the implementation of the RDP monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

**RDP Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group**

The critical need for effective evaluation of the expenditure of Rural Development funds, and the comprehensive nature of the evaluation requirements set out by the Rural Development Regulation, requires a specific focus on the part of DAFM. For example, in addition to the challenge of ensuring that data is captured as part of measure design, there is also the considerable challenge of ensuring that IMT systems are able to manage and interrogate this data efficiently, regardless of whether it comes from internal or external sources.

As part of the process of designing the RDP, a Coordinating Committee has been put in place to ensure a common approach among all divisions inputting in the process. This Committee will remain in place following the formal agreement of the RDP and will then focus on ensuring a coordinated approach to the implementation of the RDP. Given the central importance of monitoring and evaluation in the RDP, a sub group of this Coordinating Committee will be focused on monitoring and evaluation requirements. This sub group will be comprised of:

- Rural Development Division
- Finance Division
- IMT Division (Direct Payments Section)
• Economics and Planning Division
• The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
• Agri-Environment and Structures & Nitrates Bio-diversity and Engineering Division (given the focus in the RDP on environmental issues)
• It is expected that the input of other actors may be required in relation to specific issues as they arise. For example, the monitoring and evaluation of the Locally Led Agri-Environment Schemes may require input from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

This sub group will feed back into the main coordinating Committee and ensure that monitoring and evaluation issues remain at the centre of the implementation process and are dealt with in a systematic manner.

The Department’s evaluation activities will be augmented by the engagement of external evaluation assistance on tasks such as the measurement of progress against result indicators and the preparation of the enhanced Annual Implementation Reports in 2017 and 2019, and will be reviewed by the Monitoring Committee as required under the Rural Development Regulation. In all cases, the work of such evaluators will be overseen by steering committees comprised of representatives from relevant line divisions.

9.3. Evaluation topics and activities

Indicative description of evaluation topics and activities anticipated, including, but not limited to, fulfilment of evaluation requirements provided for in Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. It shall cover: (a) activities needed to evaluate the contribution of each RDP Union priority as referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 to the rural development objectives laid down in Article 4 of that Regulation, assessment of result and impact indicator values, analysis of net effects, thematic issues, including sub-programmes, cross-cutting issues, national rural network, contribution of CLLD strategies; (b) planned support for evaluation at LAG level; (c) programme specific elements such as work needed to develop methodologies or to address specific policy areas.

The evaluation topics to be covered by DAFM’s monitoring and evaluation arrangements reflect the need for the RDP to address both EU and national requirements. From an EU perspective, this means ensuring that the three objectives for rural development are pursued through an effective targeting of RDP measures at the Union priorities set out in the Rural Development Regulation. From a national perspective, the evaluation topics will focus on the way in which RDP implementation is consistent with the programme’s intervention logic, is coherent with the overarching policy context and delivers best value for money. The set of measures contained in this RDP have been designed as an integrated response to this range of policy prerogatives.

Evaluation activities will be planned across what is essentially a two-step process. The first step is the preparation phase, during which DAFM has set the basis for the evaluation that will take place over the RDP programming period. Work undertaken here includes linkage of common evaluation questions and
indicators to focus areas and measures, identification of data needs and sources, and the areas in which external evaluators or other technical assistance will be required. This step has been integrated into the RDP design process.

The second step is the programme implementation phase, during which substantive evaluation will be carried out. Work to be undertaken here will include ongoing assessment of progress towards the achievement of stated objectives, via the submission of Annual and Enhanced Annual Implementation Reports and other evaluative activities.

**Evaluation Topics**

The following evaluation topics have been undertaken as part of the RDP design and associated ex ante evaluation:

- an assessment of whether the range of RDP measures are adequately addressing the Rural Development Priorities and their associated focus areas
- an assessment of the contribution of RDP measures to the cross-cutting objectives of innovation, environment, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, and
- an assessment of the extent to which effective complementarity with Pillar I of the CAP and with other ESI funds is being achieved.

Further evaluation topics will also focus on the extent to which the RDP is contributing to the achievement of EU and national objectives. The focus here will be on addressing the key issue of whether the expenditure undertaken as part of the RDP is achieving value for money. This work will be ongoing over the course of the RDP, and will involve the monitoring and evaluation requirements set out in the Rural Development Regulation as well as DAFMs own evaluative work via Value for Money Reviews, Focused Policy Assessments etc.

A number of specific initiatives are of relevance here, including

- A programme of Value for Money and Policy Reviews is in place across Government Departments. The objectives of this programme of reviews are to analyse spending in a systematic manner and to provide a basis on which more informed decisions can be made within and between programmes. It is one of a wide range of modernisation initiatives aimed at moving public sector management away from the traditional focus on inputs to concentrate on the achievement of results. The Value for Money and Policy Review Initiative was introduced in 2006 as the successor to the 1997 Expenditure Review Initiative. The Programme is organised in cycles with the most recent cycle being agreed by Government for the period 2012-2014. Previous cycles have included reviews of RDP schemes, including the Less Favoured Areas Scheme, the Organic Farming Scheme, the Young Farmers Installation Scheme, and the Early Retirement Scheme. The structure for the next cycle of reviews is currently being finalised. However, it is intended that it will incorporate a focus on the RDP. In particular, it is intended that any reviews of RDP supports will include a focus both on the
‘national scheme perspective’ and the contribution to Rural Development Priorities, Objectives etc as set out in the Rural Development Regulation.

- The Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group is examining possible approaches to undertaking a baseline evaluation of Agri-Environment and Climate Change Measures in the RDP. Specifically, this will be aimed at providing clear data to underlie an evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of GLAS, and will incorporate data requirements linked evaluation requirements set out in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 808/2014.

- The Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group has also been involved in ensuring that a coherent system is in place for the identification of performance indicators and evaluative data. The Managing Authority has been in ongoing contact with implementing division during measure design to ensure that data required to fulfil monitoring and evaluation requirements are in place. In addition, implementing divisions are developing additional indicators outside of those required by relevant regulations. These additional indicators will be assessed by the Steering Group to ensure that they provide a coherent basis to monitor and evaluate measures in relation to Rural Development Priorities and Objectives as set out in the Rural Development Regulation. A specific example of this approach is the Beef Data and Genomics Programme in Measure 10. Monitoring and evaluation data requirements have been integrated into scheme design and as a result there will be ongoing monitoring of the Green House Gas reduction benefits from the scheme, on an annual basis, using the detailed database to be developed from the information collected as part of the Programme. This will incorporate the recording and reporting of a range of indicators related to the various actions under the Programme such as the numbers of animals recording each of the data elements (e.g. calf size, calf vigour, calf health, bull/cow culling reasons), number of animals genotyped, number of carbon navigators completed, number of reports issued to farmers and level of replacement 4/5 star animals on herds. In addition, the result/impact of the scheme in delivering lower GHG emissions through the delivery of a more carbon efficient national beef herd will be considered via measurement of indicators in areas such as calving interval, the change in the percentage of cows/heifers calving in 3 months, change in the percentage of replacements calved at 22-26 months, change in the length of grazing season etc. These metrics will be supplemented with an evaluation of the genetic gain at herd and animal level, which can be used to further validate the quantification of the improved carbon efficiency of the national herd. It is intended that the BDGP will also be the subject of an independent focused mid-term evaluation (year 3 of the intervention) as part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the scheme. This will incorporate an examination of the effects of the scheme with a particular focus on evaluating whether the scheme has led to unintended environmental side–effects or unsustainable intensification. The evaluation will also incorporate an examination of any animal husbandry effects related to the scheme and examine the possibility of recalculating premia via a programme modification should this prove necessary. DAFM’s Economics and Planning Division will provide expert input into this study drawing on their experience in scheme evaluation in DAFM. This evaluation will build on the ongoing data collection and analysis which has been integrated into scheme design.

- Arrangements are being put in place to develop a programme of substantive case studies to underpin the evaluation of LEADER interventions.

Evaluation Activities

The first tranche of evaluation activities has been undertaken during the preparation phase. DAFM has
engaged with its ex-ante evaluators in order to establish a robust evaluation plan and an efficient structure to support the plan’s implementation. Activities here include:

- early identification of the data requirements for the assessment of progress against output, result and other indicators,
- early identification of the anticipated sources of data and the means by which data gaps will be addressed,
- an early assessment of the linkages between common evaluation questions and common indicators (given the particular requirements of the enhanced AIRs in 2017 and 2019),
- identifying possible areas which may require the engagement of external evaluators and the use of technical assistance at key stages of RDP implementation.

The second tranche of evaluation activities will be those associated with programme implementation. It is in this phase that the contribution of the various measures towards stated objectives will be evaluated. Key activities during this phase will include:

- the adoption of suitable evaluation methodologies and the application of these to the assessment of the achievement of value for money in RDP spending,
- planning and execution of AIRs, and enhanced AIRs, in accordance with Commission requirements.

9.4. Data and information

Brief description of the system to record, maintain, manage and report statistical information on RDP implementation and provision of monitoring data for evaluation. Identification of data sources to be used, data gaps, potential institutional issues related to data provision, and proposed solutions. This section should demonstrate that appropriate data management systems will be operational in due time.

The provision of efficient data management systems to record, maintain, manage and report statistical information on the RDP, and to provide monitoring data for evaluation purposes, requires action at four levels:

- identification and capture of the appropriate statistical and monitoring data at the earliest opportunity, i.e. during measure design and implementation (application processing, control and payment processing),
- enhancement/re-design of existing internal IT systems to enable processing of measure-based statistical and monitoring data - including through compatibility and/or efficient communication with external sources of information in the case of some measures and indicators,
- identification of other potential methods to collect statistical and monitoring data in accordance with evaluation requirements and
- the efficient incorporation of these additional methods/sources into DAFM’s data management systems.

Each of these activities will also be informed by the range of requirements in relation to:
• the recording of context indicators,
• the measurement of outputs and results in accordance with the range of other indicators detailed in the Implementing Act (output, result and target indicators),
• the linkage of indicators to focus areas and measures as set out in the Indicator Plan,
• Annual Implementation Reports (AIRs), including in relation to outputs, progress towards targets and achievement of the Performance Framework indicators,
• the focus area-related common evaluation questions that will be addressed in the enhanced AIRs in 2017 and 2019.

At this stage, it is envisaged that DAFM’s overall data management system for statistical information and monitoring data is likely to be comprised of three elements:

• capture and processing of application/measure data, including monitoring data (in respect of output indicators, and some result and Performance Framework indicators, as required in particular for the completion of AIRs) through existing, internal IT systems and data sources, primarily:
  o the Generic Claims Processing System (GCPS) and the Ranking and Selection System (RASS), which will process application data,
  o the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) and the (Agriculture Field Inspection and Testing (AFIT) system, which will facilitate control and inspection, and
  o the SAP financial system

• capture and processing of application/measure data, including monitoring and evaluation data from external sources, including:
  o Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
  o Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
  o Teagasc
  o The Environmental Protection Agency
  o Bord Bia
  o agricultural planners and advisors,
  o EIP Operational Groups
  o ICBF
  o Central Statistics Office,
  o National Biodiversity Centre

  and

• capture of other, more qualitative, monitoring data (primarily in respect of the common evaluation questions to be addressed in the enhanced AIRs in 2017 and 2019) through alternative means or from other external sources, such as may be provided via the use of external expertise.

While much of the statistical and monitoring data will be generated internally in DAFM via the systems established to support the implementation of individual measures, there will also be a need to link to a number of external sources of data. In addition, a range of additional indicator and monitoring data will have to be generated, stored and reported upon given the requirements in relation to the drafting of an Indicator Plan, and the compilation of the AIRs and enhanced AIRs. Further needs in this area are likely to
arise depending on whether evaluation topics and activities anticipated by DAFM change over time.

The satisfaction of all of these requirements - in addition to requiring a particular focus from Line Divisions during measure design - has led to the establishment of a separate evaluation project within DAFM’s IMT Division in relation to the RDP. At the time of writing, the project is at the early stages of requirements gathering in conjunction with the Managing Authority. The project envisages that, rather than building a generic warehouse using a C.O.T.S. (Commercial off the shelf) data warehouse tool, the best approach is to extract and store the identified data from the all the operational systems in a central integrated data repository where the RDP Evaluation and Monitoring Business Unit will be able to run the relevant reports using a combination of IMT Division developed reports and user generated reports using an end-user reporting tool.

In addressing issues relating to monitoring and evaluation, and data requirements in particular, the Department has been particularly cognisant of the need to take into account the experience gained in monitoring and evaluation in previous programming period. Thus, a number of issues have been specifically addressed in the RDP design process and in the formulation of this evaluation plan, including

- the clear identification of responsibilities in divisions across the department and the identification of the required resources to support monitoring and evaluation
- the need to put in place an efficient and coordinated approach to the collation of data for reporting requirements across the department, and
- the benefits to be derived from designing at an early stage of RDP design a common electronic system for identification and recording required data.

9.5. Timeline

Major milestones of the programming period, and indicative outline of the timing needed to ensure that results are available at the appropriate time.

The table below outlines the major evaluation milestones over the programming period. It is intended that as many as possible of the data requirements and indicators will be satisfied/agreed, and the development of the IMT data management systems will be complete, in advance of programme commencement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Commencement of RDP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft RDP submitted Q2 2014 - Schemes coming on line following negotiation with Commission.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>2. First Annual Implementation Report</th>
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<tr>
<th>3. First Enhanced Annual Implementation Report</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submission 30 June 2017 - Work on collation etc commencing March 2017. Information as set out in Annex VII, paragraphs 1-10, of Commission Working Document of 19.02.2014, including:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• an assessment of the achievement of the performance framework indicators,

• actions taken to fulfil ex-ante conditionalities, and

• additional ‘Enhanced AIR’ reporting requirements, especially assessment of complementary result indicators and common evaluation questions.

4. Third Annual Implementation Report

Submission 30 June 2018 - Work on collation etc commencing March 2018 - Information as set out in Annex VII, paragraphs 1-5, and paragraph 10, of Commission Working Document of 19.02.2014, including:

• an assessment of the achievement of the performance framework indicators, and

• actions taken to fulfil ex-ante conditionalities.

5. Second Enhanced Annual Implementation Report


• an assessment of the achievement of the performance framework indicators, and

• additional ‘Enhanced AIR’ reporting requirements, especially assessment of complementary result indicators and common evaluation questions, and

• an assessment of the progress made in ensuring an integrated approach to the use of EAFRD and other EU funds.

6. Fifth Annual Implementation Report

Submission 30 June 2020 - Work on collation etc commencing March 2020 - Information as set out in Annex VII, paragraphs 1-5, and paragraph 10, of Commission Working Document of 19.02.2014, including:

• an assessment of the achievement of the performance framework indicators.

7. Sixth Annual Implementation Report

Submission 30 June 2021 - Work on collation etc commencing March 2021 - Information as set out in Annex VII, paragraphs 1-5, and paragraph 10, of Commission Working Document of 19.02.2014, including:

• assessment of achievement of the performance framework indicators.

8. Seventh Annual Implementation Report

Submission 30 June 2022 - Work on collation etc commencing March 2022 - Information as set out in
Annex VII, paragraphs 1-5, and paragraph 10, of Commission Working Document of 19.02.2014, including:

- assessment of achievement of the performance framework indicators.


Submission 30 June 2023 - Work on collation etc commencing March 2023 - Information as set out in Annex VII, paragraphs 1-5, and paragraph 10, of Commission Working Document of 19.02.2014, including:

- assessment of achievement of the performance framework indicators.

10. Ex-post Evaluation Report

Submission 31 December 2027 - Information demonstrating the impact and effectiveness of RDP measures over the period from 2014, and their contribution to EU common policy and programme-specific objectives.

9.6. Communication

Description of how evaluation findings will be disseminated to target recipients, including a description of the mechanisms established to follow-up on the use of evaluation results.

Evaluation findings will be disseminated to a range of recipients on an ongoing basis. The subgroup of the RDP Coordination Committee will oversee this process.

From an outward-looking perspective, it is intended that communication and follow-up activities will mainly revolve around the submission of the Annual Implementation Reports (including enhanced reports) to the European Commission and the Monitoring Committee.

From an internal perspective, the subgroup of the RDP Coordination Committee will facilitate discussion and application of monitoring and evaluation results across the range of measures in the RDP. Again, this is likely to revolve around the production, submission and follow-up of the AIRs, but may also take place as a result of other evaluations carried out.

More generally, it is intended that the Annual Implementation Reports, and any other evaluations conducted by, for example, DAFM’s Economics and Planning Division, will be published as they become available. In addition, it is intended to make use of other fora such as the National Rural Network and the Public Sector Evaluation Network as possible further channels of communication.

The Department’s Annual Report is a further communication channel which can be used to report on progress across RDP schemes to a wide audience.
9.7. Resources

Description of the resources needed and foreseen to implement the plan, including an indication of administrative capacity, data, financial resources, IT needs. Description of capacity building activities foreseen to ensure that the evaluation plan can be fully implemented.

The successful implementation of this Evaluation Plan depends upon the allocation of sufficient administrative, financial and technological resources to the various activities outlined, and at the appropriate times. For example, the availability of sufficient resources is likely to be a more critical issue for DAFM’s Line Divisions and IMT Division in the early stages of RDP development, which focus on measure design and the establishment of data management systems, than when the programme is in operational mode. Similarly, and although adequate resources are required to coordinate the early evaluation planning activities, it is likely that significant, adequately trained resources will be required by DAFM’s Rural Development Division during programme implementation, given that this Division will have overall responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of the RDP on an ongoing basis.

The following is an initial description of the resources needed and foreseen in this regard:

Measure Design

Line Divisions - at least one staff member with clearly assigned responsibility for evaluation/indicator setting under each proposed measure. The relevant line divisions are those identified by the Department’s senior management as the lead divisions in relation to the design of individual measures. Thus, this is a clear assignment of responsibility for each measure.

Rural Development Division - at least one staff member assigned to coordinate input from Line Divisions in relation to evaluation data identification and capture, and to ensure the establishment of the appropriate linkages between measures and focus areas and the range of common output, result and target indicators.

IMT Division – at least one additional staff member and one or more external contractors will be required to support the provision of a data analytics system specifically for the RDP (and Pillar 1 Schemes).

The design and construction of a RDP Data Analytics service to support evaluation reporting is envisaged. This service will also address cross cutting operational reporting as required,

Economics and Planning Division - at least one staff member with responsibility for assisting Rural Development Division in the establishment of the RDP evaluation and monitoring arrangements, and in the coordination of RDP evaluation activities with other evaluation activities likely to be undertaken by EPD over the period of the programme. These evaluative activities will be in addition to those required under the relevant EU Regulations.

Programme Implementation

Line Divisions – one staff member responsible for coordinating the response to issues arising from, for example, Annual Implementation Reports.

Rural Development Division – at least on staff member with responsibility for monitoring progress, managing the production of Annual Implementation Reports and coordinating any necessary follow-up.
IMT Division - technical and administrative resources will be available as necessary to ensure efficient processing of RDP measure data and generation of the information required to fulfil evaluation requirements.

Economics and Planning Division - ongoing availability of advice and assistance in the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation arrangements, and to ensure complementarity with the existing RDP evaluation activities of EPD.

**Financial Resources**

The implementation of the RDP Data Analytics system for evaluation reporting will entail financial burden over and above the systems to support the operation of the schemes. There will be costs involved in the provision of the necessary hardware (possibly), software (data collection/storage and data analytics reporting) and development/support. This expense may be partially recoverable from the technical assistance budget.
10. **FINANCING PLAN**

10.1. Annual EAFRD contributions in (€)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>469,542,442.00</td>
<td>312,874,411.00</td>
<td>312,779,690.00</td>
<td>312,669,355.00</td>
<td>312,482,814.00</td>
<td>380,590,206.00</td>
<td>311,640,628.00</td>
<td>2,792,213,487.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total EAFRD (without EURI)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>469,724,442.00</td>
<td>313,007,411.00</td>
<td>312,891,690.00</td>
<td>312,764,355.00</td>
<td>312,567,814.00</td>
<td>380,591,206.00</td>
<td>311,640,628.00</td>
<td>2,882,821,487.00</td>
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<td>28,172,546.52</td>
<td>18,772,464.66</td>
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<td>18,760,161.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</td>
<td>469,633,941.00</td>
<td>469,724,442.00</td>
<td>313,007,411.00</td>
<td>312,891,690.00</td>
<td>312,764,355.00</td>
<td>312,567,814.00</td>
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<th>Total indicative amount for EAFRD and EURI of support envisaged for climate change objectives</th>
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<td>2,662,046,180.40</td>
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<th>Total indicative amount, for EAFRD, of support envisaged for climate change objectives</th>
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<td>151,523,547.00</td>
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10.2. Single EAFRD contribution rate for all measures broken down by type of region as referred to in Article 59(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article establishing the maximum contribution rate.</th>
<th>Applicable EAFRD Contribution Rate</th>
<th>Min applicable EAFRD cont. rate 2014-2022 (%)</th>
<th>Max applicable EAFRD cont. rate 2014-2022 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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</table>
10.3. Breakdown by measure or type of operation with a specific EAFRD contribution rate (in € total period 2014-2022)

10.3.1. M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Measures referred to in Articles 14, 27 and 35, for the LEADER local development referred to in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and for operations under Article 19(1)(a)(i)</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (2A) 0.00 (3B) 0.00 (P4) 0.00 (5D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (2A) 0.00 (3B) 0.00 (P4) 0.00 (5D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(f) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Additional allocation for Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0.00 (2A)</td>
<td>0.00 (3B)</td>
<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
<td>0.00 (5D)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Article 59(4)(ca) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (EURI)NGEU - EURI(NGEU) / Other regions</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0.00 (2A)</td>
<td>0.00 (3B)</td>
<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
<td>0.00 (5D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (EAFRD only)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47,499,015.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (EURI only)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47,499,015.00</td>
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10.3.2. M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(f) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Additional allocation for Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<p>|  | 66,250.00 (2A) | 10,600.00 (3A) | 2,573,000.00 (3B) | 132,500.00 (P4) | 66,250.00 (5D) | 66,250.00 (2A) | 10,600.00 (3A) | 2,573,000.00 (3B) | 132,500.00 (P4) | 66,250.00 (5D) | 66,250.00 (2A) | 10,600.00 (3A) | 2,573,000.00 (3B) | 132,500.00 (P4) | 66,250.00 (5D) | 66,250.00 (2A) | 10,600.00 (3A) | 2,573,000.00 (3B) | 132,500.00 (P4) | 66,250.00 (5D) | 66,250.00 (2A) | 10,600.00 (3A) | 2,573,000.00 (3B) | 132,500.00 (P4) | 66,250.00 (5D) | 66,250.00 (2A) | 10,600.00 (3A) | 2,573,000.00 (3B) | 132,500.00 (P4) | 66,250.00 (5D) |</p>
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<td></td>
<td>0.00 (3B)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (5D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (EAFRD only)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (EURI only)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,455,600.00</td>
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### 10.3.3. M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70,987,050.00 (2A)</td>
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<td>Article 59(4)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations contributing to the objectives of environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation under Article 17, points (a) and (b) of Article 21(1), Articles 28, 29, 30, 31 and 34</td>
<td></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (2A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the</td>
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<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (2A)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Description</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Amount</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013</td>
<td>0.00 (5B)</td>
<td>0.00 (5D)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(f) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Additional allocation for Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus</td>
<td>1,700,000.00 (P4)</td>
<td>0.00 (2A)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (2B)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (3B)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (5B)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (5D)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Article 59(4)(ea) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (EURI)NGEU - EURI(NGEU) / Other regions</td>
<td>4,000,000.00 (3B)</td>
<td>0.00 (2A)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (2B)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47,200,000.00 (P4)</td>
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<td>19,600,000.00 (5B)</td>
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<td>25,200,000.00 (5D)</td>
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<td>247,575,090.00 (EURI)</td>
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<td>out of which EAFRD (€)</td>
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10.3.4. M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)

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<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>53%</td>
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<td>5,627,001.00 (P4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013</td>
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<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (EAFRD only)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total (EURI only)</strong></td>
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<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</strong></td>
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<td>5,627,001.00</td>
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424
### 10.3.5. M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)

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<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
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<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (P4) 0.00 (5D) 0.00 (5E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations contributing to the objectives of environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation under Article 17, points (a) and (b) of Article 21(1), Articles 28, 29, 30, 31 and 34</td>
<td></td>
<td>75%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>891,567,013.00 (P4) 203,313,902.00 (5D) 47,485,433.00 (5E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00 (P4) 0.00 (5D) 0.00 (5E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>72,500,000.00 (P4)</td>
<td>0.00 (5D)</td>
<td>0.00 (5E)</td>
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<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>20,000,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</strong></td>
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### 10.3.6. M11 - Organic farming (art 29)

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<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
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<td>53%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32,119,955.00 (P4)</td>
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<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>1305/2013 - Additional allocation for Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus</td>
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### 10.3.7. M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)

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<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
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<td>0.00 (P4)</td>
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<td>53%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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**Total Union contribution reserved for operations falling within the scope of (EU) No 1305/2013 Article 59(6) (€)**

31,131,241.00

**out of which EAFRD (€)**

31,131,241.00

**out of which EURI (€)**
## 10.3.8. M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)

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### 10.3.9. M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)

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<td>Total (EURI only)</td>
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<td>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</td>
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## 10.3.10. M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

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<td>0.00 (5C)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.00 (5D)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.00 (5A)</td>
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<td>0.00 (5C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Operations receiving funding from funds transferred to the EAFRD in application of Article 7(2) and Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013</td>
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<td>0.00 (2A) 0.00 (2B) 0.00 (3A) 0.00 (3B) 0.00 (5A) 0.00 (5B) 0.00 (5C) 0.00 (5D) 0.00 (5E)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article 59(4)(f) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Additional allocation for Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0.00 (2A) 0.00 (2B) 0.00 (3A) 0.00 (3B) 0.00 (5A) 0.00 (5B) 0.00 (5C) 0.00 (5D) 0.00 (5E)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Article 59(4)(ea) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (EURI)NGEU - EURI(NGEU) / Other regions</td>
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### 10.3.11. M19 - Support for LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

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<td>Article 59(4)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Measures referred to in Articles 14, 27 and 35, for the LEADER local development referred to in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and for operations under Article 19(1)(a)(i)</td>
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<td>0.00 (6B)</td>
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<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Article 59(4)(ea) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (EURI/NGEU - EURI/NGEU) / Other regions</td>
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<td>EAFRD + EURI</td>
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### 10.3.13. M113 - Early retirement

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<td><strong>Total (EURI only)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</strong></td>
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### 10.3.14. M131 - Meeting standards based on Community legislation

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<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 10.3.15. M341 - Skills acquisition, animation and implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 59(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Other regions</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinued measures - Discontinued Measure</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (EAFRD only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (EURI only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (EAFRD + EURI)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 10.4. Indicative breakdown by measure for each sub-programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic sub-programme name</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Total Union Contribution planned 2014-2022 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


11. **Indicator Plan**

11.1. Indicator Plan

11.1.1. P1: Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

**11.1.1.1. 1A) Fostering innovation, cooperation, and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas**

**Target indicator(s) 2014-2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1: percentage of expenditure under Articles 14, 15 and 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 in relation to the total expenditure for the RDP (focus area 1A)</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total RDP planned public expenditures</td>
<td>4,856,972,963.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public expenditures (focus area 1A)</td>
<td>185,386,734.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (trainings, farm exchanges, demonstration) (1.1 to 1.3)</td>
<td>89,620,782.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (2.1 to 2.3)</td>
<td>6,520,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>101,255,622.00</td>
<td>8,976,453.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.1.2. 1B) Strengthening the links between agriculture, food production and forestry and research and innovation, including for the purpose of improved environmental management and performance

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2: Total number of cooperation operations supported under the cooperation measure (Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013) (groups, networks/clusters, pilot projects…) (focus area 1B)</td>
<td>1,760.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Nr of EIP operational groups to be supported (establishment and operation) (16.1)</td>
<td>39.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Nr of other cooperation operations (groups, networks/clusters, pilot projects…) (16.2 to 16.9)</td>
<td>1,760.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 11.1.1.3. 1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors

#### Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T3: Total number of participants trained under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (focus area 1C)</td>
<td>211,600.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Nbr of participants in trainings</td>
<td>211,600.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.2. P2: Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests

11.1.2.1. 2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T4: percentage of agricultural holdings with RDP support for investments in restructuring or modernisation (focus area 2A)</td>
<td>10.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of agricultural holdings with RDP support for investments in restructuring or modernisation (focus area 2A)</td>
<td>14,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 Agricultural holdings (farms) - total</td>
<td>139,890.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Nbr of participants in trainings</td>
<td>6,650.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Total public for training/skills</td>
<td>15,056,952.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (trainings, farm exchanges, demonstration) (1.1 to 1.3)</td>
<td>15,056,952.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)</td>
<td>1,175.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (2.1 to 2.3)</td>
<td>125,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Nr of holdings supported for investment in agricultural holdings (4.1)</td>
<td>14,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure for investments in infrastructure (4.3)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total investment € (public + private)</td>
<td>350,000,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (4.1)</td>
<td>140,000,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>140,000,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>737,697.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.2.2. 2B) Facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T5: percentage of agricultural holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investments for young farmers (focus area 2B)</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of agriculture holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investments for young farmers (focus area 2B)</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 Agricultural holdings (farms) - total</td>
<td>139,890.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Nr of holdings supported for investment in agricultural holdings (support to the business plan of young farmers) (4.1)</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total investment € (public + private)</td>
<td>658,225,222.50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>263,290,089.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>2,213,090.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.3. P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture

11.1.3.1. 3A) Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T6: percentage of agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets and short supply circuits, and producer groups/organisations (focus area 3A)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets and short supply circuits, and producer groups/organisations (focus area 3A)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 Agricultural holdings (farms) - total</td>
<td>139,890.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (2.1 to 2.3)</td>
<td>20,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)</td>
<td>Nr of beneficiaries</td>
<td>34,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>107,599,015.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Nr of agricultural holdings participating in cooperation/local promotion among supply chain actors (16.4)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>188,679.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 11.1.3.2. 3B) Supporting farm risk prevention and management

**Target indicator(s) 2014-2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T7: percentage of farms participating in risk management schemes (focus area 3B)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of agricultural holdings participating in risk management scheme (focus area 3B)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Context Indicator used as denominator for the target**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 Agricultural holdings (farms) - total</td>
<td>139,890.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Nbr of participants in trainings</td>
<td>6,650.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Total public for training/skills</td>
<td>15,056,952.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (training, farm exchanges, demonstration) (1.1 to 1.3)</td>
<td>15,056,952.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Nbr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (2.1 to 2.3)</td>
<td>6,000,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total investment € (public + private)</td>
<td>40,000,000.00</td>
<td>10,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>16,000,000.00</td>
<td>4,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>2,813,481.00</td>
<td>2,813,481.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.4. P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

*Agriculture*

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Nbr of participants in trainings</td>
<td>156,650.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Total public for training/skills</td>
<td>33,821,137.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (trainings, farm exchanges, demonstration) (1.1 to 1.3)</td>
<td>33,821,137.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)</td>
<td>2,350.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (2.1 to 2.3)</td>
<td>250,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Nr of operations of support for non productive investment (4.4)</td>
<td>12,100.00</td>
<td>2,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total investment € (public + private)</td>
<td>309,750,000.00</td>
<td>118,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>123,900,000.00</td>
<td>47,200,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)</td>
<td>Nr of operations supported for drawing up of village development and N2000/HNV area management plans (7.1)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>10,616,983.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>Area (ha) under agri-environment-climate (10.1)</td>
<td>1,165,579.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>Public expenditure for genetic resources conservation (10.2)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>1,589,506,952.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11 - Organic farming (art 29)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - conversion to organic farming (11.1)</td>
<td>46,000.00</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11 - Organic farming (art 29)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - maintainance of organic farming (11.2)</td>
<td>74,880.00</td>
<td>28,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11 - Organic farming (art 29)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>100,127,235.00</td>
<td>39,523,547.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - NATURA 2000 AG land (12.1)</td>
<td>141,560.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - WFD (12.3)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>44,726,870.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - mountain areas (13.1)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - other areas with significant NC (13.2)</td>
<td>3,301,559.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - areas with specific constraints (13.3)</td>
<td>404,648.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>2,043,117,476.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>91,882,537.00</td>
<td>2,742,834.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Forest*

No measures have been selected in the strategy for this focus area.
11.1.4.1. 4A) Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes

**Agriculture**

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T9: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts supporting biodiversity and/or landscapes (focus area 4A)</td>
<td>21.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural land under management contracts supporting biodiversity and/or landscapes (ha) (focus area 4A)</td>
<td>1,097,689.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Agricultural Area - total UAA</td>
<td>4,991,350.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Forest**

No measures have been selected in the strategy for this focus area.

11.1.4.2. 4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management

**Agriculture**

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T10: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management (focus area 4B)</td>
<td>22.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management (ha) (focus area 4B)</td>
<td>1,101,790.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Agricultural Area - total UAA</td>
<td>4,991,350.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Forest**

No measures have been selected in the strategy for this focus area.

11.1.4.3. 4C) Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management

**Agriculture**

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T12: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts to improve soil management and/or prevent soil erosion (focus area 4C)</td>
<td>19.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agricultural land under management contracts to improve soil management and/or prevent soil erosion (ha) (focus area 4C) 960,188.00

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Agricultural Area - total UAA</td>
<td>4,991,350.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Forest**

No measures have been selected in the strategy for this focus area.

11.1.5. P5: Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors

11.1.5.1. 5A) Increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T14: percentage of irrigated land switching to more efficient irrigation system (focus area 5A)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigated land switching to more efficient irrigation system (ha) (focus area 5A)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 Irrigated Land - total</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.5.2. 5B) Increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T15: Total investment for energy efficiency (€) (focus area 5B)</td>
<td>104,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Nr of operations supported for investment (in agricultural holdings, in processing and marketing of ag. products) (4.1, 4.2 and 4.3)</td>
<td>900.00</td>
<td>400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total investment € (public + private)</td>
<td>104,000,000.00</td>
<td>49,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>41,600,000.00</td>
<td>19,600,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.5.3. 5C) Facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by products, wastes, residues and other non food raw material for the purposes of the bio-economy

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T16: Total investment in renewable energy production (€) (focus area 5C)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 11.1.5.4. 5D) Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture

**Target indicator(s) 2014-2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LU concerned by investments in live-stock management in view of reducing GHG and/or ammonia emissions (focus area 5D)</td>
<td>221,720.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T17: percentage of LU concerned by investments in live-stock management in view of reducing GHG and/or ammonia emissions (focus area 5D)</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T18: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts targeting reduction of GHG and/or ammonia emissions (focus area 5D)</td>
<td>11.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural land under management contracts targeting reduction of GHG and/or ammonia emissions (ha) (focus area 5D)</td>
<td>558,490.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Context Indicator used as denominator for the target**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 Livestock units - total</td>
<td>5,787,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Agricultural Area - total UAA</td>
<td>4,991,350.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Nbr of participants in trainings</td>
<td>41,650.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Total public for training/skills</td>
<td>25,685,741.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (trainings, farm exchanges, demonstration) (1.1 to 1.3)</td>
<td>25,685,741.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)</td>
<td>1,175.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (2.1 to 2.3)</td>
<td>125,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Nr of operations supported for investment (e.g. manure storage, manure treatment) (4.1, 4.4 and 4.3)</td>
<td>4,820.00</td>
<td>4,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>LU concerned by investment in livestock management in view of reducing GHG and ammonia emissions</td>
<td>221,720.00</td>
<td>207,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total investment € (public + private)</td>
<td>185,500,000.00</td>
<td>63,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>74,200,000.00</td>
<td>25,200,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>Area (ha) (e.g. green cover, catch crop, reduced fertilisation, extensification…)</td>
<td>558,490.00</td>
<td>20,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td>357,539,385.00</td>
<td>10,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>3,420,138.00</td>
<td>3,420,138.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.5.5. 5E) Fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T19: percentage of agricultural and forest land under management contracts contributing to carbon sequestration and conservation (focus area 5E)</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural and forest land under management to foster carbon sequestration/conservation (ha) (focus area 5E)</td>
<td>38,385.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Agricultural Area - total UAA</td>
<td>4,991,350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Forest and other wooded land (FOWL) (000) - total</td>
<td>787.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>Area (ha) under agri-environment-climate for carbon sequestration</td>
<td>38,385.00</td>
<td>20,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td>88,120,120.00</td>
<td>10,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.6. P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas

11.1.6.1. 6A) Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation

No measures have been selected in the strategy for this focus area.
11.1.6.2. 6B) Fostering local development in rural areas

Target indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T21: percentage of rural population covered by local development strategies (focus area 6B)</td>
<td>82.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population covered by local development strategies (focus area 6B)</td>
<td>3,082,317.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T22: percentage of rural population benefiting from improved services/infrastructures (focus area 6B)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T23: Jobs created in supported projects (Leader) (focus area 6B)</td>
<td>3,100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net population benefiting from improved services</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Context Indicator used as denominator for the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Indicator name</th>
<th>Base year value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Population - rural</td>
<td>82.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Population - intermediate</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Population - total</td>
<td>4,582,769.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned output indicator(s) 2014-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure name</th>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Out of which financed by EURI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development</td>
<td>Number of LAGs selected</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development</td>
<td>Population covered by LAG</td>
<td>3,082,317.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - preparatory support</td>
<td>2,700,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td>(19.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - support for</td>
<td>243,100,000.00</td>
<td>15,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td>implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy (19.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - preparation and</td>
<td>13,000,000.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td>implementation of cooperation activities of the local action group (19.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - support for running</td>
<td>61,200,000.00</td>
<td>5,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td>costs and animation (19.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.6.3. 6C) Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas

No measures have been selected in the strategy for this focus area.
### 11.2. Overview of the planned output and planned expenditure by measure and by focus area (generated automatically)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P5</th>
<th>P6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2A</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>3A</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>4A</td>
<td>4B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01</td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Nbr of participants in trainings</td>
<td>6,650</td>
<td>6,650</td>
<td>156,650</td>
<td>41,650</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training/skills acquisition (1.1) - Total public for training/skills</td>
<td>15,056,952</td>
<td>15,056,952</td>
<td>33,821,137</td>
<td>25,685,741</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (trainings, farm exchanges, demonstration) (1.1 to 1.3)</td>
<td>15,056,952</td>
<td>15,056,952</td>
<td>33,821,137</td>
<td>25,685,741</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02</td>
<td>Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>2,350</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure € (2.1 to 2.3)</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04</td>
<td>Total investment € (public + private)</td>
<td>350,000,000</td>
<td>658,225,222.5</td>
<td>40,000,000</td>
<td>309,730,000</td>
<td>184,000,000</td>
<td>185,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure €</td>
<td>140,000,000</td>
<td>263,290,089</td>
<td>16,000,000</td>
<td>123,900,000</td>
<td>41,600,000</td>
<td>74,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M07</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10</td>
<td>Area (ha) under agri-environment-climate (10.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area (ha) (e.g. green cover, catch crop, reduced fertilisation, extensification...)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area (ha) under agri-environment-climate for carbon sequestration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11</td>
<td>Area (ha) - conversion to organic farming (11.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area (ha) - maintenance of organic farming (11.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M12</td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td>Area (ha) - NATURA 2000 AG land (12.1)</td>
<td>100,127,235</td>
<td>100,127,235</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td>44,726,870</td>
<td>44,726,870</td>
<td>44,726,870</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area (ha) - other areas with significant NC (13.2)</td>
<td>3,301,559</td>
<td>3,301,559</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area (ha) - areas with specific constraints (13.3)</td>
<td>404,648</td>
<td>404,648</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td>2,043,117,476</td>
<td>2,043,117,476</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13</td>
<td>Nr of beneficiaries</td>
<td>34,000</td>
<td>34,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€)</td>
<td>107,599,015</td>
<td>107,599,015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16</td>
<td>Nr of agricultural holdings participating in cooperation/local promotion among supply chain actors (16.4)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) (16.1 to 16.9)</td>
<td>737,697</td>
<td>2,213,090</td>
<td>188,679</td>
<td>2,813,481</td>
<td>91,882,537</td>
<td>3,420,138</td>
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<tr>
<td>M19</td>
<td>Number of LAGs selected</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population covered by LAG</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,082,317</td>
<td>3,082,317</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - preparatory support (19.1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,700,000</td>
<td>2,700,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - support for implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy (19.2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>243,100,000</td>
<td>243,100,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action group (19.3)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13,000,000</td>
<td>13,000,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public expenditure (€) - support for running costs and</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>61,200,000</td>
<td>61,200,000</td>
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</table>
11.3. Secondary effects: identification of potential contributions of Rural Development measures/sub-measures programmed under a given focus area to other focus areas / targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FA from IP</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P5</th>
<th>P6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B</td>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>P</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B</td>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A</td>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C</td>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5D</td>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01</td>
<td>Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02</td>
<td>Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04</td>
<td>Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M07</td>
<td>Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10</td>
<td>Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M11</td>
<td>Organic farming (art 29)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13</td>
<td>Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16</td>
<td>Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.4. Support table to show how environmental measure/schemes are programmed to achieve one (or more) environment/climate targets

11.4.1. Agricultural Land

11.4.1.1. **M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of operation or group of type of operation</th>
<th>AECM typology</th>
<th>Total expenditure (EUR)</th>
<th>Total area (ha) by measure or type of operations</th>
<th>Biodiversity FA 4A</th>
<th>Water management FA 4B</th>
<th>Soil management FA 4C</th>
<th>Reducing GHG and ammonia emissions FA 5D</th>
<th>Carbon sequestration/conservation FA 5E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonages</td>
<td>Better management, reduction of mineral fertilizers and pesticides (inclus. Integrated production)</td>
<td>161,878,451.22</td>
<td>240,000.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Emission Slurry Spreading</td>
<td>Better management, reduction of mineral fertilizers and pesticides (inclus. Integrated production)</td>
<td>5,716,973.15</td>
<td>160,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Management of Fallow Land</td>
<td>Soil cover, ploughing techniques, low tillage, Conservation agriculture</td>
<td>13,396,082.18</td>
<td>3,490.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Bird Cover</td>
<td>Soil cover, ploughing techniques, low tillage, Conservation agriculture</td>
<td>38,589,568.77</td>
<td>8,400.00</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum Tillage</td>
<td>Soil cover, ploughing techniques, low tillage, Conservation agriculture</td>
<td>5,716,973.15</td>
<td>28,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppicing</td>
<td>Creation, upkeep of ecological features</td>
<td>31,443,352.33</td>
<td>6,975.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Cost (GBP)</td>
<td>Value (GBP)</td>
<td>columns 1</td>
<td>columns 2</td>
<td>columns 3</td>
<td>columns 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hedgerows</td>
<td>75,273,479.82</td>
<td>186,000.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmland Habitat (Private Natura)</td>
<td>270,364.68</td>
<td>225.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional Orichards</td>
<td>16,674,505.02</td>
<td>11,600.00</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional Stone Wall Maintenance</td>
<td>2,644,100.08</td>
<td>350.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planting a Grove of Native Trees</td>
<td>9,004,232.71</td>
<td>4,335.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planting New Hedgerows</td>
<td>33,349,010.05</td>
<td>6,500.00</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arable Grass</td>
<td>2,479,404.13</td>
<td>2,420.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Budget (€)</td>
<td>Grant (€)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margins</td>
<td>Maintenance of HNV arable and grassland systems (e.g. mowing techniques, hand labour, leaving of winter stubbles in arable areas), introduction of extensive grazing practices, conversion of arable land to grassland.</td>
<td>239,350,609.25</td>
<td>149,000.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Input Permanent Pasture</td>
<td>Maintenance of HNV arable and grassland systems (e.g. mowing techniques, hand labour, leaving of winter stubbles in arable areas), introduction of extensive grazing practices, conversion of arable land to grassland.</td>
<td>180,084,654.25</td>
<td>111,600.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional Hay Meadows</td>
<td>Maintenance of HNV arable and grassland systems (e.g. mowing techniques, hand labour, leaving of winter stubbles in arable areas), introduction of extensive grazing practices, conversion of arable land to grassland.</td>
<td>66,459,812.88</td>
<td>84,000.00</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catch Crops</td>
<td>Crop diversification, crop rotation</td>
<td>1,524,526.17</td>
<td>2,976.00</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird and Bat Boxes and Conservation of Solitary Bees</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6,312,491.19</td>
<td>463.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection of Archaeological Sites</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>351,165,075.79</td>
<td>195,300.00</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submeasure</td>
<td>Total expenditure (EUR)</td>
<td>Total area (ha) by measure or type of operations</td>
<td>Biodiversity FA 4A</td>
<td>Water management FA 4B</td>
<td>Soil management FA 4C</td>
<td>Reducing GHG and ammonia emissions FA 5D</td>
<td>Carbon sequestration/conservation FA 5E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.1 - payment to convert to organic farming practices and methods</td>
<td>27,713,788.26</td>
<td>46,000.00</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.2 - payment to maintain organic farming practices and methods</td>
<td>72,413,446.74</td>
<td>74,880.00</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**11.4.1.3. M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submeasure</th>
<th>Total expenditure (EUR)</th>
<th>Total area (ha) by measure or type of operations</th>
<th>Biodiversity FA 4A</th>
<th>Water management FA 4B</th>
<th>Soil management FA 4C</th>
<th>Reducing GHG and ammonia emissions FA 5D</th>
<th>Carbon sequestration/conservation FA 5E</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.1 - compensation payment for Natura 2000 agricultural</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12.3 - compensation payment for agricultural areas included in river basin management plans

### 11.4.1.4. M08 - Investments in forest area development and improvement of the viability of forests (art 21-26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submeasure</th>
<th>Total expenditure (EUR)</th>
<th>Total area (ha) by measure or type of operations</th>
<th>Biodiversity FA 4A</th>
<th>Water management FA 4B</th>
<th>Soil management FA 4C</th>
<th>Reducing GHG and ammonia emissions FA 5D</th>
<th>Carbon sequestration/conservation FA 5E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1 - support for afforestation/creation of woodland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2 - support for establishment and maintenance of agro-forestry systems</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
11.4.2. Forest areas

11.4.2.1. M15 - Forest environmental and climate services and forest conservation (art 34)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of operation or group of type of operation</th>
<th>Total expenditure (EUR)</th>
<th>Total area (ha) by measure or type of operations</th>
<th>Biodiversity FA 4A</th>
<th>Water management FA 4B</th>
<th>Soil management FA 4C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11.4.2.2. M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submeasure</th>
<th>Total expenditure (EUR)</th>
<th>Total area (ha) by measure or type of operations</th>
<th>Biodiversity FA 4A</th>
<th>Water management FA 4B</th>
<th>Soil management FA 4C</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.2 - compensation payment for Natura 2000 forest areas</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

11.4.2.3. M08 - Investments in forest area development and improvement of the viability of forests (art 21-26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submeasure</th>
<th>Total expenditure (EUR)</th>
<th>Total area (ha) by measure or type of operations</th>
<th>Biodiversity FA 4A</th>
<th>Water management FA 4B</th>
<th>Soil management FA 4C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.5 - support for investments improving the resilience and environmental value of forest ecosystems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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### 11.5. Programme-Specific Target and Output

#### Specific Target indicator(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Target indicator name</th>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Target value 2025</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSTI FA3A</td>
<td>Percentage of agricultural holdings supported under the animal welfare measure</td>
<td>3A</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>Farms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSTI FA3B</td>
<td>Number of Participants in Knowledge Transfer Groups (focus area 3B)</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>26,600.00</td>
<td>Persons</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Comment: *PSTIFA3B - Programme Specific Target Indicator Focus Area 3B*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Output indicator name</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Planned output</th>
<th>out of which EURI</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSTI FA5C</td>
<td>Number of Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects Operational Groups</td>
<td>M10</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td>40,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSTI FA5A</td>
<td>Number of Locally Led Environmental and Climate Projects Operational Groups</td>
<td>M07</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td>590.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Traditional Buildings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Specific Output indicator(s)
12. ADDITIONAL NATIONAL FINANCING

For measures and operations falling within the scope of Article 42 of the Treaty, a table on additional national financing per measure in accordance with Article 82 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, including the amounts per measure and indication of compliance with the criteria under RD regulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Additional National Financing during the period 2014-2022 (€)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
<td>97,374,825.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
<td>419,511,326.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11 - Organic farming (art 29)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)</td>
<td>171,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)</td>
<td>50,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>7,445,932.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M20 - Technical assistance Member States (art 51-54)</td>
<td>11,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M113 - Early retirement</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M131 - Meeting standards based on Community legislation</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M341 - Skills acquisition, animation and implementation</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>756,332,083.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.1. M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)

Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

n/a
12.2. M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)

Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

n/a

12.3. M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)

Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Additional national financing provided for Measure 04 in addition to the amount co-financed in the Programme. This money will be spent on the same actions and in accordance with EU rules.

12.4. M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)

Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

n/a

12.5. M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)

Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

1) Additional national financing of €3,170,000 provided for Measure 10 in addition to the amount co-financed in the Programme. This money will be spent on the same actions and in accordance with EU rules.

2) Due to the co-financing rate increase from 56% to 75% and the SFC system restrictions, the previous co-financed national spend is reflected here at €419,511,326.00. This money will be spent on the same actions and in accordance with EU rules.

12.6. M11 - Organic farming (art 29)

Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

n/a
### 12.7. M113 - Early retirement

**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

This measure does not form part of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme. This measure is programmed exclusively to provide for ongoing commitments from the 2007-2013 programming period.


**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

This measure does not form part of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme, as Natura areas will be targeted through Measure 10. This measure is programmed exclusively to provide for ongoing commitments from the 2007-2013 programming period.

### 12.9. M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)

**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

Additional national financing provided for Measure 13 in addition to the amount co-financed in the Programme. This money will be spent in accordance with EU rules.

### 12.10. M131 - Meeting standards based on Community legislation

**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

This measure does not form part of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme.

### 12.11. M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)

**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

Additional national financing provided for Measure 14 in addition to the amount co-financed in the Programme. This money will be spent in accordance with EU rules.
12.12. M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

Additional national financing provided for Measure 16 in addition to the amount co-financed in the Programme. This money will be spent in accordance with EU rules.


**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

n/a

12.14. M20 - Technical assistance Member States (art 51-54)

**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

Additional national financing provided for Measure 20 in addition to the amount co-financed in the Programme. This money will be spent on the same actions and in accordance with EU rules.

12.15. M341 - Skills acquisition, animation and implementation

**Indication of compliance of the operations with the criteria under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013**

This measure does not form part of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme.
13. ELEMENTS NEEDED FOR STATE AID ASSESSMENT

For the measures and operations which fall outside the scope of Article 42 of the Treaty, the table of aid schemes falling under Article 81(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 to be used for the implementation of the programmes, including the title of the aid scheme, as well as the EAFRD contribution, national cofinancing and additional national funding. Compatibility with Union State aid rules must be ensured over the entire duration of the programme.

The table shall be accompanied by a commitment from the Member State that, where required under State aid rules or under specific conditions in a State aid approval decision, such measures will be notified individually pursuant to Article 108(3) of the Treaty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Title of the aid scheme</th>
<th>EAFRD (€)</th>
<th>National Cofinancing (€)</th>
<th>Additional National Funding (€)</th>
<th>Total (€)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
<td>European Innovation Partnerships (EIP) &amp; Collaborative Farming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td>LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
<td>157,000,000.00</td>
<td>93,000,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>250,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (€)</td>
<td></td>
<td>157,000,000.00</td>
<td>93,000,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>250,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13.1. M16 - Co-operation (art 35)

Title of the aid scheme: European Innovation Partnerships (EIP) & Collaborative Farming

EAFRD (€):
National Cofinancing (€):
Additional National Funding (€):
Total (€):

13.1.1.1. Indication*:

As this measure is related to agriculture activity and falls within the scope of Article 42 of the Treaty it is therefore exempt from State aid rules under Article 81(2) of the Rural Development regulation 1305/2013.

In relation to EIPs, the structure of support entails a competitive process to identify projects. Given this it is difficult to pre-empt whether emerging projects would fall within the scope of Article 42 of the Treaty. It would be expected, however, that projects selected under the EIP for Agriculture and Sustainable Productivity would relate to agricultural activity. The possible State Aid implications of EIP projects will be assessed again at selection, and any necessary notifications will be made.


Title of the aid scheme: LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

EAFRD (€): 157,000,000.00
National Cofinancing (€): 93,000,000.00
Additional National Funding (€):
Total (€): 250,000,000.00

13.2.1.1. Indication*:

For LEADER operations under Articles 42-44 of Regulation 1305/2013 and Articles 32-35 of Regulation 1303/2013, these operations will be compliant with Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18th December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid. In this context, financial support up to €200,000 will be granted in accordance with the de minimis regulation.

Any LEADER operation that contains economic activity will not be given aid over and above the de-minimis limits. In the 2007-2013 programme period Ireland received a State Aid exemption for projects of a
non-economic nature in order to facilitate a maximum grant of €500,000. Ireland is examining the possibility of supporting such projects in the 2014-2020 programming period, is aware of the state aid implications and is looking specifically at the way in which such projects can be state aid compliant. This will involve examining the potential of a block exemption or a system of notification as potential projects emerge from the LDS process. Any required State Aid notifications will be made at that stage.
14. INFORMATION ON COMPLEMENTARITY

14.1. Description of means for the complementarity and coherence with:

14.1.1. Other Union instruments and, in particular with ESI Funds and Pillar 1, including greening, and other instruments of the common agricultural policy

Complementarity/coherence with other ESI funds

The basis for the complementarity/coherence of the EAFRD with other ESI funds (namely the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) lies in the contribution of the EAFRD across a range of the eleven thematic objectives set out in Annex I of the Common Provisions Regulation, including:

- strengthening research, technological development and innovation;
- improving the competitiveness of the agriculture sector;
- supporting the shift to a low-carbon economy, promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management, preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency; and
- promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination

Ireland’s Partnership Agreement sets out the various ways in which RDP measures will contribute to these thematic objectives. It is also clear from the Partnership Agreement that other ESI Funds in Ireland will also make contributions to the thematic objectives which the RDP contributes to.

Thus, the clear challenge is to ensure that, in each of these areas, the interventions supported through the EAFRD will be implemented in a coordinated manner so as to avoid duplication of funding and create synergies with the other ESI funds and to ensure an integrated use of the funds. This challenge is being addressed in a number of ways.

The National Coordination Committee for the Funds (NCCF) - at national level, the NCCF was established in order to ensure coordination of and complementarity between the ESI funds. DAFM participates in this Committee with representatives from:

- the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform;
- the Department of Education and Skills;
- the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government;
- the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation;
- the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources;
- the Border Midlands and West Regional Assembly;
- the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly; and
- the Special EU Programme Body.

A sub-group of the NCCF, involving relevant Government Departments and representatives of the regional assemblies (the Managing Authorities for all the ESI Operational Programmes), meets on a regular basis in order to coordinate input from the various agencies to the development of Ireland’s national Partnership Agreement. This mechanism allowed DAFM’s work on the consultation/design phase of Ireland’s Rural Development Programme for the period 2014-2020 to be embedded in an overarching process designed to
ensure an integrated use of the ESI funds.

The NCCF will continue this work during the finalisation of Operational Programmes, and will also work to ensure the necessary cooperation between all of the relevant bodies in addressing issues that arise in the course of programme implementation and in exploiting ongoing opportunities for greater synergies across the ESI funds. Examples of how this structure has and can facilitate increased complementarity include:

- The investment priorities in the ERDF OPs will complement the Rural Development Priorities addressed via the RDP. For example, the ERDF will contribute to the competitiveness, innovation capacity and sustainability of the regions, which cover extensive rural areas (from peri-urban to rural heartland to remote and coastal areas). These themes are also central to the intervention logic underlying the RDP.
- ERDF investment for energy efficient investment in housing is clearly complementary to support for more energy efficient farming practices and possible interventions via LEADER. Thus, the national challenge of increased energy efficiency and supporting a low-carbon economy is addressed in a multi-faceted way across different funding structures.
- Investment via the ERDF OPs and the RDP will dovetail in an integrated approach to overall national development goals - the requirement that a minimum 5% of ERDF resources be allocated to integrated urban development will complement the focus on integrated rural development in the RDP.
- ERDF co-financed investment in next generation broadband in rural areas that have not been provided with such services by commercial operators will help to achieve the RDP objectives of improving agricultural competitiveness, and achieving balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities. It will also help to achieve a further thematic objective, namely, the achievement of more efficient public administration, through the wider availability of online services and the encouragement of farmers to use web-based application/payment facilities. The issue of broadband in rural areas is also a theme which emerged from the RDP consultation process, and in particular the LEADER consultation process. As a complement to ERDF investment in this area, the issue of broadband has been identified within the emerging LEADER themes and it is intended that support here will be focused on training and capacity building issues.
- Investments in research, technological development and innovation under the ERDF will focus on the areas identified in the recent national research prioritisation exercise, which include several that are of relevance to the agri-food sector (DAFM will play a lead role in respect of two of the fourteen priority areas, namely, Sustainable Food Production and Processing, and Food for Health). The NCCF will help to ensure that these investments complement EAFRD co-financed investments in innovation at farm level. In particular, there is the possibility for complementarity here with support for EIPs in the RDP. EIP Operational Groups have the potential to link to existing research and innovation projects and to establish greater linkages to on-the-ground practices. Therefore, the NCCF will provide a link between the OPs to ensure that any potential synergies are taken into account as measures are rolled out.
- Similarly in relation to the ESF, there are clear complementarities with the investments set out in the RDP. For example, support for upskilling of the labour force via ESF funding will complement various knowledge transfer measures within the RDP and provide a coordinated approach to developing the knowledge base at the national level. In addition, the ESF investment in social inclusion measures will offer an opportunity for complementary support which will emerge via Local Development Strategies in LEADER.
- In certain cases, beneficiaries under the RDP will be in coastal communities which will also be the focus of EMFF support. Possible synergies here include the coordination of activities between
LEADER Local Action Groups and Fisheries Local Action Groups. Complementarity will be ensured via the Coordination Committee in place to manage the mono fund approach set out in Ireland’s Partnership Agreement. Support for Natura 2000 via the EMFF and RDP will also ensure that a comprehensive and coordinated approach across funds is in place in addressing priorities relating both to marine and agricultural areas.

- ‘Cross-Membership’ of Monitoring Committees - although the precise membership of the Monitoring Committee for Ireland’s Rural Development Programme for the period 2014-2020 is still to be finalised, as the Monitoring Committee is established it is intended that complementarity with the other ESI funds will be facilitated through DAFM being represented on the Monitoring Committees of the other Operational Programmes. Similarly, representatives of the other Operational Programme’s Managing Authorities will participate in the RDP Monitoring Committee. This cross membership will further ensure that issues of complementarity and coherence of funding will continue to be addressed as Operational Programmes are finalised and implemented. The NCCF has also provided the forum to ensure that there is no double funding in place, and will continue to perform this function through the programming period. In addition, all the Managing Authorities will be members of the Partnership Agreement Monitoring Committee, providing a further channel to facilitate complementarity and coordination.

- The NCCF has also established linkages to the network of Cabinet Sub Committees and Senior Officials Groups chaired by the Department of An Taoiseach. Thus, issues relating to ESI Funds have been considered by this high level central coordination structure, adding a further level of integration and complementarity.

Complementarity/coherence with Pillar 1 and other instruments of the CAP

The 2014-2020 RDP, by focusing on the sustainable development of a competitive agriculture sector and the maintenance of economically viable rural areas, will actively complement the role of direct payments and the market support measures available to farmers under Pillar 1 of the CAP. In order to maximise potential synergies and the added value of Union support across both pillars, Ireland has adopted a two-pronged approach.

The first element has been the selection of complementary policy options and measures. For example, the consultation processes under Pillars 1 and 2 highlighted the importance of generational renewal in agriculture. Ireland has therefore chosen to combine implementation of a young farmers scheme under Pillar 1 with targeted supports for young farmers and new entrants under Pillar 2. The former will assist young farmers in the initial stages of establishing a farming enterprise in their own names by providing a top-up to their direct payment, while the latter, through measures such as increased capital investment aid rates and support for collaborative farming arrangements, will provide young people with alternative pathways into agriculture as well as the means to adopt the most up-to-date technology from start-up stage. Similar approaches have or will be adopted, for example, in the selection and specification of environment measures under Pillar 2 that go beyond the baseline established by the greening measures to be implemented under Pillar 1. It should also be noted, that certain issues which emerged from the preparatory analysis underlying this RDP will not be supported under the RDP but are addressed under Pillar 1. For example, support for protein crops under Pillar 1 will help to mitigate issues related to dependence on imported feed and fertilisers which emerged in the RDP design process.
The approach taken in Pillars 1 and 2 to equivalence in respect of greening is set out in Section 8.1.

The second element is the administration of all measures in a coherent and consistent manner across both pillars. DAFM will achieve this through an integrated governance structure that will:

- coordinate more effectively the business and IT dimensions of measure design and implementation under each of Pillars 1 and 2, and
- ensure complementarity between the two pillars through the participation of key personnel, including a new high-level business coordinator for the implementation of CAP reform, in the activities under each pillar.

This will ensure that activities such as the implementation of the common monitoring and evaluation framework under both pillars will be undertaken as effectively as possible. It will also help to identify potential synergies or efficiencies that might be exploited in the delivery of new measures under the reformed CAP.

Procedures are also in place to ensure there is no double funding across various funding streams administered by DAFM. For example, national and EU supports are in place for Producer Organisations in the Fruit and Vegetable sector. All beneficiaries for this support are required to declare if they are in receipt of any other funding from DAFM and specific checks are in place for all beneficiaries to ensure there is no cross over in funding. These procedures will continue to be in place in respect of RDP funding. Similarly potential double funding between the greening payment (crop rotation) and the Organic Farming Scheme is avoided as the premium is based on both additional costs and income foregone when compared to conventional farming practice. There is no specific payment for crop-rotation and in any case, the premium only partially compensates for the calculated loss.

14.1.2. Where a Member State has opted to submit a national programme and a set of regional programmes as referred to in Article 6(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, information on complementarity between them

Not Applicable

14.2. Where relevant, information on the complementarity with other Union instruments, including LIFE

Other Union financial instruments of particular relevance from an EAFRD perspective are the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE+) fund and the Research and Innovation (Horizon 2020) fund.

Ireland’s Rural Development Programme for the period 2014-2020 places particular emphasis on the sustainable development of the agriculture sector. In doing so it aims to contribute to the EU cross-cutting objectives of environment, innovation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. DAFM will therefore seek to ensure that investments made under the RDP will complement, and build on, activities supported
In relation to the LIFE Programme, DAFM will maintain close contact with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in order to monitor environmental and climate action projects that will either complement similar initiatives, or provide the basis for future investments, under the RDP. The Burren LIFE project provided the basis for the Burren Farming for Conservation Programme, which is to be extended under the 2014-2020 RDP, and it is intended that similar opportunities arising from the LIFE programme will be exploited where possible and appropriate. LIFE 2014-2020 will incorporate a specific sub-programme for Climate Action and the creation of a new type of ‘integrated project.’ In the event that new ‘integrated projects’ of the type foreseen in the LIFE programme are considered in Ireland, and particularly where these relate to Natura 2000 network management or climate change mitigation and adaptation activities, DAFM will work closely with DECLG to ensure that they complement similar measures under the RDP.

The coupling of research and innovation under Horizon 2020 in order to tackle societal challenges and improve economic competitiveness mirrors efforts already undertaken by DAFM in recent years to link agricultural research more closely to on-farm practice. For example, support for technology adoption in the dairy, beef and sheep sectors, which has been available since 2010, will be built upon through output-focused investment in Knowledge Transfer Groups under the 2014-2020 RDP. In addition, support for EIP operational groups will help to establish closer links between farmers, private sector bodies and research institutions in order to ensure the outputs of research are clearly focused on end-user needs. In order to ensure that these activities complement the activities being financed under Horizon 2020’s ‘Societal Challenge’ pillar (under the heading ‘Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime research and inland water research and the bioeconomy’), communication within DAFM between its Research Divisions and the line division implementing the Knowledge Transfer and Innovation measures will continue on from the measure design phase into the implementation and roll-out phase.
15. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING ARRANGEMENTS

15.1. The designation by the Member State of all authorities referred to in Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 Article 65(2) and a summary description of the management and control structure of the programme requested under Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 Article 55(3)(i) and arrangements under Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 Article 74(3)

15.1.1. Authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Name of the authority</th>
<th>Name of the person responsible for the authority</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing authority</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Rural Development Division</td>
<td>Sharon Murphy, Head of EU/RDP Division</td>
<td>Rural Development Division, Dept. of Agriculture, Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2, Ireland</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sharon.murphy@agriculture.gov.ie">sharon.murphy@agriculture.gov.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification body</td>
<td>BDO</td>
<td>Teresa Morahan, Partner, Risk and Advisory Services</td>
<td>BDO, Beux Lane House, Mercer St Lower, Dublin 2, Ireland</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tmorahan@bdo.ie">tmorahan@bdo.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accredited paying agency</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Finance Division</td>
<td>Rebecca Chapman Head of Finance Division</td>
<td>Finance Division, Dept. of Agriculture, Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2, Ireland</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Rebecca.Chapman@agriculture.gov.ie">Rebecca.Chapman@agriculture.gov.ie</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15.1.2. Summary description of the management and control structure of the programme and arrangements for the independent examination of complaints

15.1.2.1. Management and control structure

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) is the lead Ministry for the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020. Rural Development Division within DAFM will act as the RDP’s Managing Authority. The functions of the Managing Authority encompass the efficient and effective management and implementation of the RDP, and include

- Ensuring that mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme and the collection of relevant data are in place
- Ensuring that beneficiaries under the RDP are informed of the obligations arising from support granted
- Ensuring that the relevant progress and evaluation reports in relation to RDP implementation are provided
- Ensuring publicity arrangements for the RDP are in place
- Putting in place implementation support structures for the RDP, including the establishment of a monitoring committee and National Rural Network.
The Paying Agency is made up of a number of elements, and its functions include putting in place an administrative organisation and a system of internal control which provide sufficient guarantees that payments are legal and regular, and properly accounted for. The Paying Agency incorporates

- Finance Division within DAFM, which manages the claims for expenditure under EAFRD.
- Implementing line divisions within DAFM. These divisions are responsible for the design, implementation and administration (including administrative checks) of RDP measures. These divisions also process payments for individual measures and report accordingly to Finance Division.
- Inspectorate and technical divisions. These divisions are responsible for many of the on-the-spot field inspections which underlie the control regime for RDP measures.

In addition, DECLG is a delegated body with certain delegated Paying Agency functions in relation to LEADER. DAFM will formally delegate a range of paying agency functions pertaining to the delivery of the LEADER elements of the Rural Development Programme to DECLG. Functions that relate to the payment of Community Aid and the submission to the Commission of the forecasts and declarations provided for in the regulatory framework will be retained by DAFM. DECLG will have oversight of the LEADER elements of the programme from strategy and LAG selection to financial management and monitoring and evaluation. Responsibilities outlined in the regulations with regard to reporting on the LEADER elements of the RDP will be coordinated by DECLG through DAFM as the Managing Authority.

In order to ensure a high level of coordination between DECLG and DAFM, a memorandum of understanding is signed by both DAFM and DECLG which formalises the the position of each department. This memorandum has been, and will continue to be, updated as circumstances require and sets out the role of DECLG in a range of areas such as operational arrangements, monitoring and controlling of expenditure, the communication of information to LAGs and the issuance of payments. In addition, the Departments will liaise on a continuous basis regarding ongoing issues and funding priorities and a coordination committee is in place to ensure regular structured communication. Finally, each Department is represented on the other's internal Accreditation Review Group to ensure that consistency of approach to financial management responsibilities is maintained.

Deloitte & Touche were appointed as the certifying body to DAFM for the year 2014. The current contract for audit services relating to the certification of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine annual accounts charged to the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), for the financial year ending 15 October 2015 has been awarded to BDO for a period of 22 months (necessitated by the introduction of the legality and regularity audit) and the term may be extended for a period or periods of up to 12 months with a maximum of two such extensions on the same terms and conditions. The certifying body is independent and is appointed in line with Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 1306/2013 and is in place as an overseer of the truthfulness, completeness and accuracy of the paying agency’s accounts and is appointed by open tender.
### 15.1.2.2. Arrangements for the examination of complaints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine – Appeals Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

While there has been a longstanding system of internal reviews within the Department, where requested by applicants under RDP schemes in this Department, the first independent examination is facilitated by the Agricultural Appeals Office.

The Agriculture Appeals Office is an independent agency established to provide an appeals service to farmers who are unhappy with the Department’s decisions regarding their entitlements under certain schemes. The Agriculture Appeals Act 2001 (as subsequently amended), along with the Agriculture Appeals Regulations 2002, sets down the functions of the Director and the Appeals Officers, the decisions that may be appealed and the procedures to be followed in respect of agriculture appeals. Under Section 14(1) of the Agriculture Appeals Regulations 2002, the decision of an Appeals Officer shall have regard to the principles of natural justice and comply with any relevant legislation and terms, conditions and guidelines of the Minister governing or relating to the scheme in question.

When a final decision issues from the Department (i.e. after internal Department review), the applicant will be notified of their option to appeal. The scheme applicant (appellant), dissatisfied with the decision, may appeal in writing or by completing a ‘Notice of Appeal’ form and submitting it to the Agriculture Appeals Office. The Appeals Office requests the relevant file from the Department and a statement regarding the appellant’s grounds of appeal. On receipt of the file and statement, the Director assigns the case to an Appeals Officer. Appellants are entitled to request an oral hearing as part of their appeal. The Agriculture Appeals Office contacts the appellant to arrange an oral hearing if required, or if deemed necessary by the Appeals Officer. It is the policy of the office to discuss each case with the appellant, where possible. The Appeals Officer considers all the evidence in full (including any evidence presented at an oral hearing if there was one). The Appeals Officer makes a determination on the appeal and notifies the appellant of the decision in writing, setting out the reasons for that decision. The Department will also be notified of the decision.

The decision of an Appeals Officer is final and conclusive. Further options available to an appellant include:

- An Appeals Officer may change a decision where there is new evidence, new facts or a relevant change in circumstances.
- On request, from either party, The Director of Agriculture Appeals may revise a decision where there has been a mistake made in relation to the law or the facts of the case.
- An appellant may wish to raise any issues arising with the Office of the Ombudsman, 18 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2 (01 6395600).
- A point of law may be raised with the High Court.
Further information is available on http://www.agriappeals.gov.ie/

**Department of Environment, Community and Local Government Appeals Procedure**

In the context of the LEADER elements of the RDP, similar appeals systems to those in place in DAFM will be implemented in order to ensure that all beneficiaries have access to a fully transparent and fair appeals mechanism. There will be separate appeals mechanisms required at LAG level and at Managing Authority/Paying Agency level that will follow a logical and fully outlined process. The appeals systems will be fully detailed in the operating rules for the LEADER elements of the RDP.

15.2. The envisaged composition of the Monitoring Committee

The Monitoring Committee will be set up within three months of EU approval of this programme. It will be chaired by DAFM and is likely to include representation from:

- The main representative bodies in the farming sector;
- Representative bodies reflective of a wide range of rural issues and interests;
- Organisations with a core focus on rural development issues;
- Representatives of local councils;
- Representatives of the Regional Assemblies;
- Bodies representing environmental, biodiversity and climate change interests;
- Bodies working in the area of the promotion of equality issues;
- A range of Government Departments reflecting relevant policy and administrative issues such as public expenditure, equality, environmental issues, local government, social protection, and the management of natural resources;
- Bodies representing issues of national heritage preservation;
- Bodies representing the horizontal principles as set out in EU regulation; and
- The Managing Authorities of the ESIF funds.

The EU Commission will participate in its work in an advisory capacity.

The Monitoring Committee will meet at least once a year and will review implementation of the programme and progress made towards achieving its objectives by means of financial, output/target indicators, ex-ante conditionalities and performance reviews.
The Monitoring Committee may make observations to the Managing Authority regarding implementation and evaluation of the programme and will examine all evaluations before they are sent to the Commission. The Committee will be consulted by Managing Authority, and shall issue an opinion within 4 months of the decision approving the RDP, on the selection criteria for financed operations, and will issue an opinion on any amendment of the Programme. The Monitoring Committee will also form part of the National Rural Network (NRN).

15.3. Provisions to ensure that the programme is publicised, including through the national rural network, making reference to the information and publicity strategy referred to in Article 13 of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 808/2014

Over the period of the programme the Managing Authority will disseminate comprehensive information on the RDP using all suitable media facilities. The role of and financial contributions from the EAFRD will be referenced in the appropriate information measures made available to interested applicants.

The communication plan will involve using a number of media channels to communicate to the primary and secondary audiences that will be both constant and in phases over the seven year period. These channels are:

1. Advertising campaign - Phases
2. Website - Constant
3. Print material - Constant
4. PR - Constant
5. Media relationship management - Constant
6. Seminars / Road shows/ Conferences - Phases
7. NRN/ENRD/EIP - Constant

The advertising campaign is planned to run over a number of concentrated phases to achieve maximum impact and awareness of the programme. The timing of each phase will be tailored to achieve and deliver on the aims. Media planning will be based on using all available market research tools.

The initial phases in 2014/2015 will involve extensive advertisement in the national newspapers, farming
press, development of website information and distribution to the target groups of print material on the Programme. This is the key launch phase for announcing the commencement of the programme and making both primary and secondary audiences aware of the Programme and the positive impact this will have.

To build on the momentum that the launch phase will deliver, the focus of the next phase, over the period of the Programme, is to further roll-out the Programme information by way of further public advertisement, seminars, information centres at major rural/agricultural shows and updates on the website. Progress reports will be made available to beneficiaries and the general public using the appropriate media tools during the programming period.

The timing of each phase is tailored to achieve and deliver on the aims set out above, more specifically as follows:

**Phase 1 On approval of the programme**

This is the key launch phase for announcing the commencement of the RDP and making both potential beneficiaries and the general public aware of the Programme and the positive impact this will have. The media selection of Department press releases and website, national press, farming press, national and regional radio will be relied upon to deliver this phase. There will also be “Roadshows” on some new schemes and the Department will promote the new RDP at the National Ploughing Championships and other large Agricultural shows.

**Phase 2 On the launch of the first schemes**

Building on the momentum that the launch phase will deliver, the focus of this phase is to further roll-out the programme information and updates. The media selection is as per phase 1.

**Phase 3 2016**

This phase is designed to act as both a reminder and an update of the progress of the RDP.

**Phase 4 2018**

This is the final planned phase and will be used to further update the beneficiaries on the RDP and to highlight the progress from 2014. Again, the media selection is based on phase 1.
The information measures will focus on the following objectives:

- Information for potential applicants and beneficiaries;
- Promoting greater general public understanding of the objectives and achievements of the programme in Ireland; and
- Ensuring recognition of the role of, and financial contribution from, the EAFRD.

To achieve these objectives, the Managing Authority will undertake the following communication functions:

- Co-ordinate the communication plan for the Programme;
- Assist the Monitoring Committee in the review, update and dissemination of the communication plan;
- Publish and circulate the approved Programme and a summary booklet for potential beneficiaries and other interested parties;
- Make the Programme and the summary booklet available throughout the implementing Departments’ national and local office networks;
- Develop and use information tools including leaflets/posters, advertisements, display stands, advertisements and the Department’s website to promote a greater understanding of the Programme;
- Ensure the role of, and contributions from, the EAFRD are referenced on the websites of the implementing Departments, information leaflets and in their periodic publications;
- Publish information leaflets/forms/guidance documents on each of the support measures in print and electronic form;
- Participate in seminar, conferences, information days, rural/agricultural shows to promote a greater understanding of the Programme and the implementation and monitoring arrangements in Ireland;
- Make reference in the information measures to the responsibility of beneficiaries to display an explanatory plaque if in receipt of programme support for an investment greater than €50,000 and a billboard if greater than €500,000; and
- Provide updates on Departments’ websites on the programme and specific support measures.

In addition, the Managing Authority will perform a support role for the implementing Divisions and the DECLG by the provision of advice on implementing the publicity and information regulation and assistance in the implementation of the communication plan.
Administrative Department/Bodies responsible for implementation of Communication Plan

Rural Development Division of the DAFM is the Managing Authority under the RDP and has responsibility for the preparation and implementation of the communication plan. This task is shared with DECLG. As DECLG has responsibility for the measures under the LEADER element of the programme, it will have a pivotal role in ensuring implementation of the communication plan in relation to this particular measure. As part of their role in the management and implementation of LEADER, DECLG will ensure that Local Action Groups contracted to deliver LEADER will be informed of their responsibilities in the context of information and publicity actions. Compliance in this regard will form part of the control checks carried out over the programming period.

The Managing Authority has the responsibility to lead the overall RDP communication process and to involve the NRN in ensuring publicity for the programme. The NRN is obliged to implement a communication plan, as a part of its action plan. Accordingly, the role of the NRN in relation to information and publicity actions will be clearly set out in the tender process and in subsequent annual action plans for the NRN once established.

The information and publicity strategy as defined by the Managing Authority should form the basis for the NRN's communication plan.

15.4. Description of mechanisms to ensure coherence with regard to local development strategies implemented under LEADER, activities envisaged under the co-operation measure referred to in Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, the basic services and village renewal in rural areas measure referred to in Article 20 of that Regulation, and other ESI Funds

The Irish RDP will implement measures as outlined in Article 20 (Basic Services and Village Renewal in rural areas) under Measure 7 via the Traditional Farm Building Scheme. It is also envisaged that projects funded under the LEADER measure will support basic services and village renewal in rural areas. The coordination structures put in place between DAFM and DECLG will ensure a coordinated approach here. With regards to any interventions funded under the LEADER element of the RDP including those activities outlined in Article 35 the implementation system will ensure that full consideration is given during the design process to funding from other EU and national funds. The more integrated approach proposed for the delivery of local development interventions at a local level will facilitate full consideration of all funding mechanisms when designing interventions within the context of a Local Development Strategy. This will ensure coherence with other funding mechanisms, including EU funds. In this context Ireland will also support capacity building initiatives in the preparatory phase of LDS development that will support LAGS to ensure coherence.
15.5. Description of actions to achieve a reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries referred to in Article 27(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

As part of the design process for RDP measures, the issue of administrative burden has been addressed. The development of a coherent approach to this issue across measures has been facilitated by the work of the RDP Coordinating Committee set up to oversee the RDP design and implementation process. This coordinated approach has facilitated the inclusion of a number of factors which will alleviate the administrative burden for applicants, including:

- The facilitation of a common approach to the development and issuing of measure application forms. Ensuring a consistent approach to application form lay-outs, language, and definitions will be of benefit to applicants applying to multiple measures.
- A common approach has been taken to the delivery of online electronic applications to measures where possible. The increased use of online applications on its own will lead to a significant reduction in the administrative burden for applicants, and ensuring that online application processes for separate measures are developed in a consistent manner will further simplify the process for beneficiaries. It will also lead to the more effective and efficient processing of applications by administrations resulting in the timely issuing of payments under the various measures.
- The shared experience of previous programming periods has facilitated the identification of best practices which can be utilised for other measures. For example, the approach taken to information dissemination in relation to the launch of measures and the requirements of beneficiaries in particular measures has led to the identification of best practices which can be used across measures in the current programming period. Such practices include the provision of road show / information seminars for applicants to outline the main provisions of measures, the publication of clear terms and conditions documents at Departmental locations and on the Departmental website, and the briefing of agricultural and other support agents in relation to the main provisions of measures.
- As part of the scheme design process, the potential to use simplified cost methods where appropriate has been examined. Simplified cost option will lead to efficiencies for the administration of measures, but will also simplify requirements for applicants. Simplified cost options will be introduced in keeping with the Commission Guidance on Simplified Cost Options where appropriate, for example under Measure 1 and Measure 19. As operations to be financed under Measure 19 emerge from the Local Development Strategy process, the possible uses of Simplified Cost Options will be further examined. Further details in relation to the use of Simplified Cost Options will be confirmed with the Commission in advance of the launch of the LDS selection process.
- In the context of the LEADER measure, streamlined processes will also be implemented that will ensure the administrative burden is minimised for beneficiaries. The new implementation system proposed to address issues around audit compliance will place the burden for ensuring such compliance on a competent body who will work constructively with the LAGS and beneficiaries to ensure the simplest application and payment processes possible.
15.6. Description of the use of technical assistance including actions related to the preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and control of the programme and its implementation, as well as the activities concerning previous or subsequent programming periods as referred to in Article 59(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

The Technical assistance under EAFRD will fund:

- Any external expertise which may be required in relation to the evaluation milestones set out in the Evaluation Plan;
- the national rural network (NRN);
- the Communication Plan on information and publicity;
- expenses incurred in the operation of the National Monitoring Committee;
- the administrative support service which is to be set up by competitive tender in order to support the delivery of the animal health and welfare advisory service as set out in Measure 2 and the delivery of the Burren Programme as set out in Measure 10.
- Preparatory support for the Burren programme (Measure 10) and European Innovation Partnership Operational Groups (Measure 16)
- Development of baseline data for the next programming period 2023-2027, including 1) a soil sampling and analysis programme to develop a national baseline of soil parameters and soil health indicators, 2) a Farm Environmental Study to gather and establish baseline environmental assets at individual farm level and 3) a pilot with farmers and advisors testing the scalability, from an administrative and controls perspective, of results-based agri-environment actions.

The Technical assistance under EURI will fund:

- Development of baseline data for soil parameters and soil health indicators, for the next programming period 2023-2027, through a national soil sampling and analysis programme. EURI funds will be spent up to the level of the Technical Assistance Budget for EURI and the remaining soil sampling programme will be funded under the EAFRD.

EURI programme projects and expenditure will be noted as separate from EAFRD expenditure and will be identified clearly as such in the monitoring and reporting system.

It is clear that the Technical Assistance measure will provide valuable support to underpin the effective implementation of the RDP and the preparations for the next programming period 2023-2027. In particular, funding can be made available to ensure rigorous evaluation of the Programme. In addition, the funding of the NRN provides a clear opportunity to ensure that the Action Plan for the NRN feeds into strategic policy issues in the sector.

This range of actions will incorporate a number of beneficiaries as follows:

- Some elements of the evaluative work supporting the RDP may be carried out by externally appointed evaluators,
- some of the Managing Authorities costs incurred in operating the Monitoring Committee and implementing publicity actions,
- and the National Rural Network will be a beneficiary to be appointed by competitive process.

For the National Rural Network, work on the intervention logic for the Network is ongoing and this will
underpin the competitive process. However, it is envisaged that eligible costs here will include administrative costs, the costs associated with carrying out particular evaluative projects, publicity costs, costs associated with organising and hosting RDP events, and costs associated with attending relevant EU meetings etc.

In relation to evaluation and the projects developing baseline data in preparation for the next programming period i.e. soils and farm environmental study, contracts are to be awarded via competitive process. Eligible costs will include the staffing costs involved in delivering projects as well as any associated research or field work costs (e.g. related to surveys, participation costs for farmers or advisors, activities to be carried out, etc.), data collection and analysis, and integration of the data on existing or new data systems. Participant costs will be limited to costs incurred and income forgone and transaction costs, as appropriate to the relevant projects.

The Managing Authority has experience of administering the Technical Assistance budget from previous RDP periods, and this experience will help to ensure appropriate control systems are in place. In addition, any procurement procedures undertaken will involve the advice of the Central Procurement Unit in DAFM or the Office of Government Procurement as appropriate.

Article 62 and 51 of Regulation 809/2014 set out that the Technical Assistance budget is subject to administrative and on-the-spot checks. Similar to other measures under the RDP, the DAFM Inspectorate is responsible for the on-the-spot checks for the Technical Assistance expenditure. The DAFM Inspectorate is functionally independent to the DAFM Line Division responsible for the authorisation of Technical Assistance payments.

The outputs of the Technical Assistance budget will also be monitored by reference to particular performance indicators, including

- the number of networking events supported by the National Rural Network.
- number of reports and evaluative studies produced by the National Rural Network
- Number of reports and evaluative studies presented for discussion to the Monitoring Committee
- Number of meetings of the Monitoring Committee held
- Number of stakeholder groups attending Monitoring Committee Meetings
- Number of stakeholder groups attached to the National Rural Network
- Number of stakeholder groups attending National Rural Network events
- The number of farmers matched up with trained advisors under Measure 2 by the administrative support service
- The number of soil samples carried out
- The number of farm environmental studies carried out
- The number of farmers and advisors participating in the pilot project to test results based actions and, the lessons learned.

Further specific indicators will form part of the intervention logic and annual work plans for the National Rural Network.
15.6.1 National Rural Network

The purpose of the National Rural Network is to assist the efficient and effective implementation of the Rural Development Programme and to promote synergies across measures.

Since there is a significant degree of experience at local level in delivery of rural programming both on and off-farm, a significant focus of the network will be to secure and co-ordinate the flow of information, including performance indicators, between local beneficiaries, intermediate bodies and the Managing Authority.

A tender document for the network will be prepared on foot of these recommendations in 2015 and will issue following consultation with the European Commission. It is envisaged that a NRN will be in place by the end of 2015.

The network infrastructure will be provided by an external body selected by a public competitive tendering process. Further details in relation to the work of the NRN are set out in Section 17.

Projects to prepare the next programming period

The Department will conduct a pilot project over the transitional period with farmers and advisors testing the scalability, from an administrative and controls perspective, of results-based agri-environment actions. It will trial a limited number of results based actions on farms that have not participated in GLAS and are not currently in another agri-environment scheme. The data captured in these studies will assist in the design and targeting of supports for the CAP post 2020 and could be linked to future measures. Experience gained under the pilot will inform the design of the next national AECM in the CAP Strategic Plan and will assist in developing the Department’s capability and capacity to deliver results based actions. Costs will be based on cost incurred and income forgone for participants and transactions costs as appropriate.
16. LIST OF ACTIONS TO INVOLVE PARTNERS

16.1. Action A - The Consultative Committee on the CAP towards 2020 was chaired by the Department between 2010 and 2013.

16.1.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

An initial consultation process was launched with stakeholders in July 2009 to obtain views on what EU agriculture policies would serve Ireland and the EU best in the years to come. Over 60 submissions were received under this process and these submissions related to general CAP issues. The responses received helped to inform Ireland’s position in the negotiations on the future of the CAP after 2013.

In 2010, a Consultative Committee on the CAP after 2013 was set up by the Department with a view to obtaining the views of all stakeholders on the CAP reform proposals. The Committee comprised all the major farming and agriculture related representative organisations involved in Social Partnership as well as a number of academics and environmental interests. The Committee met on several occasions throughout the CAP negotiations. It also participated in the Stakeholder events organised during the visits of Commissioner Ciolos in 2010 and again in January 2012.

16.1.2. Summary of the results

The responses received and the expert input to the Consultative Committee helped to inform Ireland’s position in the negotiations on the future of the CAP after 2013.

16.2. Action B - In April 2010, members of the Coordination Committee for the European Network for Rural Development were invited to launch a debate on CAP, specific to Pillar II.

16.2.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

In response to this ENRD debate, members of the Monitoring Committee of Ireland’s RDP, members of the Coordination Committee for Ireland’s National Rural Network and all those who had made submissions to Ireland’s earlier general consultation process, were invited to make submissions specific to the Rural Development aspects of CAP. Invitations for submissions were also extended to attendees at CAP consultative committees and other RD communication events.

In respect of the Pillar II specific consultation a total of 14 submissions were received from a variety of organisations including farming organisations, professional representative bodies, and research institutions amongst others.
This pre-dated the publication of the draft rural development regulation so this meant that submissions received were of a quite general nature.

16.2.2. Summary of the results

The main broad themes emerging from the consultation process were:

- A strong rural development policy into the future
- Eliminate rigidity in spending requirements
- Rural development policy should have a fixed budget and not depend on modulation
- Administration of Rural development policy/measures needs to be simplified
- There is across the board support for environmental measures
- Emphasis should be placed on investment, restructuring and innovation
- Employment in rural areas should be prioritised
- Bottom up localised delivery under LEADER measures should be enhanced
- Animal welfare measures should be promoted

16.3. Action C - In Autumn 2012, a comprehensive list of partners and stakeholders was compiled by the Managing Authority. In December 2012, written submissions were invited from these stakeholders and also from the general public.

16.3.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

The list of stakeholders was based on Article 5 of the draft Common Provisions regulation concerning Partnership at the time. Therefore the following partners were involved:

- competent regional, local, urban and other public authorities;
- economic and social partners; and
- bodies representing civil society, including environmental partners, nongovernmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting equality and non-discrimination.

16.3.2. Summary of the results

Some 90 written submissions were received from interested stakeholders and members of the public.[1] These submissions were from a broad mix of interested parties including farming organisations, environmental and social interest groups, business representatives, local and regional authorities and
LEADER groups and individuals.

These submissions were very important in terms of identifying areas where investment might be targeted and thus informing the development of the SWOT analysis and the Needs assessment that were being completed simultaneously. All submissions were carefully analysed by the Managing Authority and provided to the ex ante evaluators and the results fed into the RDP design process.

The areas suggested by stakeholders for investment under the RDP were:

Priority One

- Training – general and bespoke/niche training
- Knowledge Transfer Groups
- European Innovation Partnerships (EIP)

Priority Two

- On farm capital investments including non productive investments
- Young farmers/early retirement
- Farm Partnerships
- Investments in food projects

Priority Three

- Co-operation projects
- Importance of local food
- Producer organisations
- Quality Assurance Schemes

Priority Four

- Agri environment climate
- Natura 2000
- Areas of Natural Constraints
- Other including water quality/uplands/ organics
Priority Five

- Renewable energy/biomass
- Afforestation
- Agro-forestry

Priority Six

- Enterprise and jobs
- Rural tourism
- Broadband
- Food

All submissions were subsequently placed on the website of the Department.

[1] Although deadlines were set for the receipt of submissions, this was for the purposes of planning and it is important to note that late submissions were all accepted, considered and also fed into the process. This was the case for both stages of written consultation.

16.4. Action D - In mid July 2013, a one day stakeholder workshop was held in Portlaoise for some 90 participants including many of those that had provided submissions under the first phase.

16.4.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

The stakeholder workshop was hosted by the National Rural Network in close co-operation with the Managing Authority. The NRN, having agreed a potential representative attendance list with the Managing Authority, invited participants to take part and arranged for six different independent Chairmen, with expertise in the level of each priority.

To begin there was a plenary session in which partners were informed about the state of play in relation to the rural development regulation at the end of the Irish Presidency of the EU. There were also presentations setting out an overview of the initial results of the SWOT analysis and the needs assessment and the results of the initial phase of consultation.

At that point in time the SWOT had been developed taking into account internal expertise, a wide range of research reports and publications by the Department, Teagasc and others, the results of the initial
stakeholder consultation and feedback from the NRN and the ex ante evaluators.

In advance of the workshop, participants had been split into six different break-out groups to discuss both the SWOT analysis and the needs assessment at the level of each priority. These groups took place after the plenary session had ended. Each group had an independent chairman to convene the discussion and the groups were limited to a maximum number of 18 participants. These small groups enabled a productive level of engagement, and a rapporteur fed back the results from each of the individual groups to the plenary session at the end. There followed a short general questions and answers session and conclusions, chaired by the Managing Authority.

16.4.2. Summary of the results

As a result of the very practical and constructive feedback received from stakeholders on the draft overview of the SWOT analysis and the needs assessment, various amendments were made to these documents.

Some of the main changes to the SWOT included the addition of text relating to for example:

- Beef and sheep farmers in relation to non-economically viable farms.
- The ending of milk quotas in 2015
- Rising input costs as a threat to competitiveness
- Traceability – Ireland’s place in food production
- Distance from market and business transport costs; Seasonal cash flow problems
- Potential for Knowledge Transfer Groups to encompass higher overall numbers and also to expand to other areas
- Issues with addressing biodiversity loss and water quality in sensitive areas
- Specific reference to trailing shoe technology
- Rising fossil fuel and energy costs
- The use of networks and targeted training to make information available re LEADER

As can be seen these additions were across the range of priorities and these also covered strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

In relation to the needs assessment a range of additional needs were identified or the existing needs were further developed/elaborated, for example:

- Greater participation in knowledge transfer groups
- Supporting collaboration to improve competitiveness
- Monitoring the contribution of the measures in meeting Ireland’s objectives under environmental
policies/strategies
- Insulation techniques and improvements in efficiency of heating systems and techniques
- Importance of specifically targeted training

As can be seen, these needs covered the broad range of priorities and focus areas. Stakeholder feedback along these lines thus directly impacted on the development of the SWOT and needs analyses at the time.

16.5. Action E - In July 2013 the Minister initiated a process of consultation with all relevant stakeholders to ascertain their views on the most appropriate application of the Pillar 1 Regulation in light of Ireland’s unique agricultural profile & circumstances

16.5.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

Although this was not specifically related to the RDP, there are clear links given the integrated nature of Ireland’s approach to implementing CAP supports across Pillar 1 and Pillar 2. For example, various issues were raised, such as young farmers and collaborative farming arrangements that are appropriate to both pillars. This process also resulted in various additional submissions being received in relation to Pillar 2.

A total of 47 submissions were received from a wide range of interested parties prior to the closing date in September 2013. These submissions answered the set of 44 questions that had been asked in the consultation document.

16.5.2. Summary of the results

The submissions were divided into the following groups and the main themes emerging can be summarised as follows:

Farming Organisations - the main farming organisations generally wished to maintain the status quo and preferred the basic model of convergence. There were some different views as to whether coupled support should be implemented and, if so, what form it should take.

Specialist Representative Groups - groups representing the processing of agricultural products wished to target payments at active farmers/producers. They preferred the basic model of convergence and the application of mandatory schemes only. On the other hand, the environmental groups wished to use environmental and ecological criteria as the basis for distributing funds. These groups favoured less
intensive small farmers and looked for the implementation of significant convergence and of those schemes which would move funds to smaller farmers in disadvantaged areas

Groups for Specific Geographical Areas (primarily based in western and northern counties) - looked for a significant redistribution of funds through high convergence thresholds and capping of payments per hectare as well as the implementation of those schemes which would favour these counties including Areas of Natural Constraints and Small Farmers Schemes.

Private Individuals - related primarily to their individual circumstances. The issue of those who, for a variety of reasons, held very low value entitlements arising from the reference period but who subsequently increased production also featured.

16.6. Action F - In mid January 2014, another stage of consultation was launched in the form of the draft RDP 2014-2020 Consultation document.

16.6.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

By this stage a wide range of preparatory work had been completed by the Department on CAP as a whole taking into account the previous stages of consultation. In mid January 2014 the Taoiseach and the Minister for Agriculture made major announcements in relation to overall CAP funding concerning both Pillar 1 and Pillar 2.[1]

The announcements were accompanied by significant press coverage across various media.

In terms of the RDP, the overall expected level of funding was announced at some €4 billion. 7% of the EU allocation was confirmed for LEADER and matching National Exchequer funding to supplement the €2.037 billion Department of Agriculture EU allocation was confirmed.

The RDP 2014-2020 consultation document was simultaneously published on the website of DAFM. The consultation paper itself set out the primary areas envisaged for funding in the RDP and a broad outline of these proposed measures. The potential measures were grouped as follows:

1. Agri-environment climate measures
2. Areas of Natural Constraints
3. On Farm Capital Investments
4. Knowledge Transfer measures
5. Support for collaborative and quality focussed measures
6. Targeted support
7. LEADER

At the same time advertisements were placed in the national press, the main Farming newspaper and also on the website of the Department.

Written submissions were sought from interested stakeholders and the public on the draft consultation document at this stage. A period of 4 weeks was provided for the receipt of written submissions, although late submissions were also accepted.

[1]

16.6.2. Summary of the results

In the ten week period following the publication of the consultation document on the website it had been accessed approximately 1,000 times.

Over 130 written submissions were received from interested stakeholders and members of the public. All submissions were carefully analysed and summarised by the Managing Authority. They were also provided to the ex ante evaluators for their consideration.

The findings emerging from the process were circulated to relevant implementing divisions in the Department and a selection of relevant submissions were provided to other staff in the Department as appropriate and requested.

The results of this work fed into the RDP design process, with a particular focus on any technical suggestions such as rates of pay, structure of schemes and suggested focus for measures. In this regard the second phase of written submissions (during 2014) was quite different to the initial phase (during 2013). The second phase was more specific, particularly as stakeholders had a consultation document on which to focus, compared to the first phase, which was more general in nature. Both phases informed the overall process.
All submissions were subsequently placed on the website of the Department

16.7. Action G - Two weeks after the launch of the consultation document, a consultation event was held for stakeholders in the Department’s Backweston campus.

16.7.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

The RDP 2014-2020 consultation document referred to above was the main subject of this consultation event.

The Managing Authority gave a detailed presentation outlining the:

- The new Rural Development Regulation and the policy framework
- Steps taken to date in designing the new RDP
- Proposed measure outlines
- Next steps

A detailed Questions and Answers session followed, focused on the areas of proposed support

16.7.2. Summary of the results

This event came at a very practical time at the end of January 2014 between the launch of the consultation document and the deadline for the receipt of written submissions. Broadly speaking the RDP consultation document was well received by stakeholders.

Around 100 participants including, for example, representatives from farming organisations, environmental groups, Government bodies, local and regional authorities and LEADER groups were in attendance.

A wide range of participants from the Department, in particular staff responsible for measure design, were present. A range of suggestions for measure design emerged from this process and fed into the ongoing RDP preparation process.
16.8. Action H - In January 2014, a focussed one day stakeholder workshop on the LEADER element of the RDP 2014-2020 was held in the Custom House Dublin for 30 participants.

16.8.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

The stakeholder workshop was hosted by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

The aim of this consultation exercise was to receive feedback on the potential content of the LEADER element of the RDP 2014-20 from individuals and organisations that are actively involved in areas that have a direct impact on the development of rural Ireland.

There were presentations given and a series of questions posed to initiate the workshops. The themes of the workshops were “Enterprise Support and Job Creation” and “Local Development”.

16.8.2. Summary of the results

General ideas emerged around which the LDS development process can be focused. A number of strong themes emerged where participants felt LEADER interventions should focus including:

- Rural Economic Development/Enterprise Support and Job Creation including in areas such as Rural Tourism
- Social Inclusion through building community capacity, training and animation
- Rural Environment

These themes were used to feed into the design of the new Rural Development Programme.

16.9. Action I - In February 2014, a one day public consultation event on the LEADER element of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 was held in Tullamore.

16.9.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

The open consultation was hosted by DECLG. Notice of the event was published on the DECLG website.
and stakeholders were encouraged to publicise the consultation. There were approximately 200 attendees.

The aim of this consultation exercise was to receive feedback on the potential content of the LEADER element of the RDP 2014-2020 from individuals and organisations actively involved in areas that have a direct impact on the development of rural Ireland.

Presentations were given by DECLG, Teagasc and CORE (Community enterprise in the craft sector.)

There was an open discussion and also an invitation to send LEADER specific written submissions to DECLG for consideration.

16.9.2. Summary of the results

Approximately 20 written submissions were received from interested stakeholders and members of the public.

These submissions were from a broad mix of interested parties including representative farm associations, environmental and social interest groups, LEADER groups and community groups.

The themes in the submissions were used to feed into the design of the new programme and will be used to inform the Local Development Strategy development process. As a follow up to this, DECLG also intends to invite submissions on the LEADER element of the RDP in early July, 2014.

16.10. Action J - Over the course of 2013 and 2014 there were ongoing bilateral meetings with a wide range of stakeholder groups including farming bodies, environmental groups, professional representative bodies, government departments and public bodies.

16.10.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

To the greatest extent possible the Managing Authority has facilitated any requests for meetings in relation to the preparation of the RDP. Implementing divisions and those responsible for measure design also have had their own specific meetings with relevant organisations and partners, and these will continue into the RDP implementation phase.
Although all meetings tended to cover a wide range of issues and cross cutting themes, the main subject of these meetings was dependent on the organisation involved and the agenda for any specific meetings. A selection of topics addressed at meetings is highlighted below:

- Agri-environment climate measures
- Knowledge transfer issues
- Dairy, EIP and innovation
- Monitoring, indicators and Evaluation Plan
- Potential for Article 35 measure on co-operation
- On farm capital investments
- Investments and agri-environment issues
- Issues relating to island farming
- LEADER, co-operation and CLLD
- Young farmers
- Heritage issues within agri-environment schemes
- Agri-environment climate measures, biodiversity, habitats and species
- Potential for an uplands scheme

16.10.2. Summary of the results

This series of meetings has proved to be very productive. As noted already different groups had different levels of expertise in various areas. However, all stakeholders showed a high level of interest in the RDP and were keen to put forward their views and proposals on a range of topics. The meetings enabled partners and stakeholders to get updates in relation to the state of play in terms of RDP preparation, and provided the opportunity to engage with the Managing Authority and other staff from DAFM.

These meetings were most useful to the Managing Authority. Detailed and specific expertise from the various partners concerned was vital in terms of informing the development of specific measures. Although it is not possible to summarise all the input received some key examples are highlighted below.

- A number of bodies were able to assist in terms of identifying the main priorities for on-farm capital investments.
- Representative organisations were able to assist in the identification of practical issues with implementation of a range of measures including agri-environment and knowledge transfer measures
- Various environment groups (both governmental and non-governmental) provided technical expertise in relation to the agri-environment climate measures. This includes, but is not limited to, identification of species and habitats that should be targeted in specific parts of the GLAS scheme and specific details in relation to locally led agri-environment schemes.
16.11. Action K - Miscellaneous actions

16.11.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

Miscellaneous actions including: presentations at conferences, parliamentary engagement, updates to the farming press and direct dealings with members of the public.

16.11.2. Summary of the results

During 2013 and 2014 there has been a wide range of various actions to involve partners at different stages of the RDP preparation process.

- The Managing Authority and/or other DAFM staff have given presentations on the RDP preparations to various conferences and events.
- A large number of parliamentary questions have been answered in relation to the preparation of the RDP.
- The Department has updated the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture Food and the Marine on the state of play in relation to the RDP on various occasions.
- A large number of Ministerial representations have been answered in relation to the preparation of the RDP.

16.12. Action L - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Consultation

16.12.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

In line with the National legislation (S.I. No 453 of 2004) in relation to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), a four week period was provided for public consultation on the draft environmental report and a number of draft chapters of Ireland’s RDP. Following on from a press launch, there was significant press coverage across various media and the relevant documents were placed on the Department’s website and written submissions were invited.

16.12.2. Summary of the results

Some 40 submissions were received, focusing on the environmental assessment of the draft RDP. The findings from this process fed back into the SEA work undertaken by the independent consultants. In addition, where relevant, submissions were fed back into the measure design process. The feedback received included that from the general public and bodies active both in the realm of nature protection and of wider...
rural development. In order to ensure that this feedback fed directly into the SEA and RDP design process, an analysis of all submissions received was undertaken by the Managing Authority to identify the key issues emerging. This analysis, as well as full submissions where appropriate, was provided both to the consultants undertaking the SEA and line divisions designing and implementing particular measures. In particular, some of the key issues highlighted in this process which have been reflected in the SEA and measure design include the importance of addressing PAF issues via Measure 10, an expanded approach to the local, targeted agri-environment approach, the possibility of EIPs addressing environmental issues, and the identification of certain priority species.


16.13.1. Subject of the corresponding consultation

A meeting of the 2007-2013 RDP Monitoring Committee was convened in September 2014. While this meeting addressed matters relating to the ongoing management of the 2007-2013 RDP, the agenda also included an update in relation to the design of the 2014-2020 RDP and the implementation structures to be put in place.

16.13.2. Summary of the results

At the September 2014 meeting of the 2007-2013 RDP Monitoring Committee, an update was provided to members of the Committee in relation to the 2014-2020 RDP. The stakeholders raised a number of issues in relation to measure design and implementation which were fed back into the RDP design process. In addition, the Managing Authority also outlined the current position in relation to the establishment of a Monitoring Committee and a National Rural Network for the new RDP. Some suggestions in relation to the membership of the Monitoring Committee were offered by stakeholders, and these will be reflected in Committee’s membership.

16.14. (Optional) explanations or additional information to complement the list of actions

The above actions represent a comprehensive and integrated approach to the involvement of partners in the development of the RDP. The process put in place ensured that the involvement of partners included the issues foreseen in Article 8 of the European Code of Conduct on partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds.
17. National Rural Network

17.1. The procedure and the timetable for establishing the National Rural Network (hereinafter NRN)

The NRN has a very important role in improving the quality of rural development programmes by increasing the involvement of stakeholders in the governance of rural development as well as informing the broader public of its benefits. The Irish Managing Authority’s goal is to have a NRN operational as soon as possible after approval of the RDP, but at the latest before the end of 2015.

The Irish NRN will be supported by a Network Support Unit (NSU), which will be established outside of but will be managed by the Managing Authority (MA). The NRN will be selected by a competitive tendering process. Respecting both EU and national Public Procurement rules, a tender document will be prepared and issued. All selection procedures will be open and transparent.

The tender document will include reference to all requirements cited in the relevant regulations. In addition, the tender will outline particular tasks for the NRN which take cognisance of the key themes from the preparatory analysis for the RDP and which draw on the experience of the previous programming period.

17.2. The planned organisation of the network, namely the way organisations and administrations involved in rural development, including the partners, as referred to in Article 54(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 will be involved and how the networking activities will be facilitated

The NRN will have the following structure:

- The Managing Authority will have overall management responsibility for the NRN and NSU
- A steering Group will be set up to oversee the delivery of the Network Action Plan and will consist of the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government, and the NSU. It is envisaged that the Group will meet quarterly in the first year of operation and thereafter as necessary.
- The NSU is the permanent secretariat set up to manage the network and will be responsible for establishing the structures needed to run the network.
- Thematic Groups or subcommittees will be formed in order to address specific issues. It is intended that these issues will be reflective of the themes and challenges which emerged in the design of the RDP and also of issues which may arise over the course of the programming period.
- A LEADER sub-committee will be chaired by DECLG as the delegated Paying Agency for LEADER. This committee will be tasked with providing support in relation to LEADER-specific issues and the dissemination of best practice.
- It is also envisaged that the NRN will provide a networking outlet for EIP operational groups.
NRN Action Plan

The NRN Action Plan will be based on the aims of the NRN as set out in the relevant regulations. To ensure that the activities of the NRN are strategically focused, the drafting of the Action Plan will take cognisance of the preparatory analyses underlying the development of this RDP. It is also important that the NRN is sufficiently flexible to address and adapt to new issues and challenges which may emerge over the lifetime of the RDP. Accordingly, the Action Plan for the NRN will be based on one year cycles.

NRN Membership

Effective networking is based on inclusiveness, openness, active engagement by the NSU and continuity of actions. Membership of Ireland’s network will be based on partnership principles and will be member driven. It will be open to all organisations and administrations involved in rural development. There will not be a formal process to gain membership. However, in accordance with the regulations, some groups, such as those involved in the Partnership Agreement and the Monitoring Committee will be invited to join. A wide membership of the NRN will be encouraged through promotion and publicising of the network through various social and more traditional media.

NSU requirements

In order to efficiently facilitate the networking processes, particular skills, qualifications and other requirements will be elaborated in the tender document. Any organisation tendering will be required to demonstrate that they will be sufficiently resourced to provide the required standard of service. While these requirements will be developed more fully as part of the tendering process, some of the key requirements for the NSU will include:

- technical resources to deliver a fully functional and efficient network
- information technology expertise
- contacts with the European Network for Rural Development, other rural development networks, research institutes, resource centres and political spheres to enable a horizontal approach to the network
- a wide range of competencies in order to establish, maintain and promote the NRN.

17.3. A summary description of the main categories of activity to be undertaken by the NRN in accordance with the objectives of the programme

All regulatory obligations will be laid down in the Action Plan, which must ensure continuity of the activities and at the same time flexibility to respond to changing needs throughout the whole programming period. It is envisaged that the Action Plan will include the following activities:
- Collation and dissemination of examples of best practice projects covering all priorities of the RDP to help in identifying and analysing good transferable practices

- Facilitation of thematic and analytical exchanges between stakeholders to support the sharing and dissemination of findings

- Training and networking for LAGs and in particular technical assistance for inter-territorial and transnational co-operation, facilitating co-operation among LAGs.

- Networking for advisors and innovation support services.

- Sharing and disseminating of monitoring and evaluation findings.

- Drawing up a communication plan including publicity and information concerning the RDP in agreement with the Managing Authority.

- Cooperating with the ENRD and EIP by participating at meetings and exchanges at EU level.

- Engagement with possible cross-fertilisation with projects funded under LIFE, with a particular focus on collaborating with networks established under LIFE to disseminate best practice.

17.4. **Resources available for establishing and operating the NRN**

The setting up and operation of the NRN will be financed from the technical assistance budget. Appropriate budgetary resources will be available to the NRN, in line with the requirements in the regulations, split between running, administrative and capital costs; the exact amount will be formulated as part of the tender process.

Other resource requirements include a strong ICT capacity in order to ensure the development and operation of a suitable website and online project database. It is important for the NSU to have sufficient permanent staff complemented with non-permanent experts to be able to perform the tasks set for the network. They
must have capacity for international liaison and flexibility to adjust to arising needs and ongoing developments during the implementation of the RDP.
18. EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT OF VERIFIABILITY, CONTROLLABILITY AND ERROR RISK

18.1. Statement by the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency on the verifiability and controllability of the measures supported under the RDP

The need to ensure verifiability and controllability of measures has been integrated into the measure design process. At individual measure and scheme level, the appropriate administrative and technical expertise has been utilised to address this issue. A particular issue is that experience of previous programming rounds has been utilised to ensure that control and verification procedures have been central to the process. In addition, this is an issue that has been coordination via the Central Coordinating Group which oversaw the development of this RDP.

In addition, the MA and PA separately assessed the verifiability and controllability and control procedures in place for each scheme. The results of this assessment are outlined in the relevant table in each measure description in chapter 8. The result of this assessment is that the MA and PA are satisfied with the procedures in place.

As part of this process, a review was undertaken of previous RDP schemes and relevant audits to ensure that lessons from previous programming periods are taken into account in the new period. The results of this process are set out in the table attached as an annex which references the main findings and associated lessons of the new programming period.

Statement

The MA and PA have examined the costs associated with each Measure of the RDP as the design process has progressed. We are satisfied with the verification and control procedures in place and that the costings are appropriate and address any issue of double funding as appropriate

Fintan O’Brien
Head of Division,
EAFRD Managing Authority

Heber McMahon
Head of Division
EAFRD Paying Agency

18.2. Statement by the functionally independent body from the authorities responsible for the programme implementation confirming the adequacy and accuracy of the calculations of standard costs, additional costs and income foregone

Independent Verification of Costings
Independent Role and Expertise

Teagasc carried out the independent verification of costings for Measure 1, Measure 2, Measure 4, Measure 7, Measure 10, Measure 11, Measure 13, Measure 14 and Measure 16.

Teagasc is the semi-state body with responsibility for providing agricultural research, advice and training in Ireland. In these roles it carries out a significant research programme in the areas of Agriculture, Environment, Food, Rural Economy and Development to support the development of the agriculture and food industries and rural communities. It also supports the development needs of a high proportion of the farming community through its advisory and training services. Teagasc is functionally independent from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, which calculated the costings at issue here.

Teagasc has considerable expertise and experience in relation to assessing the financial impact of policy measures at farm level. From a research perspective two key long term research projects provide much of the basis for this expertise, namely:

- The National Farm Survey, completed annually to meet the needs of the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) and the national requirements of policy makers and those involved in the industry to have a comprehensive assessment of the financial and technical performance on Irish farms.
- FAPRI-Ireland – This project provides detailed independent assessment of the impact of policy interventions on Irish (and European) agriculture.

Teagasc also has in place a CAP RDP Working Group. This working group brings together expertise within Teagasc across all areas of policy and activity of relevance.

The Teagasc Advisory service has considerable experience in supporting farmers in their decisions through the provision of detailed financial assessment and advice. It also produces detailed financial guidelines on an annual basis for farmers and those working on their behalf.

Qualifications and Expertise of the Reviewer

The assessment of costs was carried out by the Head of the Rural Economy and Development Programme, who chairs the organisation’s CAP Rural Development Programme Working Group. He holds the following qualifications: BSc (Mathematics and Statistics, NUI), MSc (Applied Statistics, Oxford), MA (Economics, NUI), PhD (Economics of Public Policy, LSE), MBA.

He has over 20 years professional experience in the area of policy evaluation, including 9 years experience
of strategic oversight of a programme area within Teagasc.

**Examination of Calculations**

In carrying out this assessment, the reviewer, together with members of the CAP RDP Working Group examined the documentation provided and, where necessary, sought clarification from responsible officials in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine on the measures involved. He and colleagues also sought and received detailed background costings on the measures so as to have a better understanding of the specific actions specified under the measure and the economic justification of the proposed payments. They discussed and sought clarification on many of the issues with research and advisory colleagues with specific expertise in the enterprises/issues so as to arrive at a conclusion as to the accuracy and adequacy of the calculations involved.

**Statement**

The Teagasc CAP RDP Working Group has examined the costs associated with each relevant Measure of the RDP as the design process has progressed. We are satisfied that the costings are appropriate and address any issue of double funding as appropriate.

Prof Cathal O'Donoghue

Head of Teagasc Rural Economy and Development Programme

Teagasc Mellows Campus, Athenry, Co. Galway

For Knowledge Transfer Groups under Measure 1, all costings are based on the eligible knowledge transfer actions carried out by both facilitators (scheme beneficiaries) and participating farmers. They are based on the standard cost approach and have been independently verified by Dr James Kinsella BAgSc, MAgrSc, PhD of University College Dublin School of Agriculture & Food Science.
19. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

19.1. Description of the transitional conditions by measure

Ireland’s Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 featured three highly successful and popular measures, namely; M212 the Less Favoured Areas Scheme (LFAs), M214 the Rural Environment Protection scheme (REPS) and M213 Natura 2000 linked to the REPS scheme.

Following on from the Health Check of the CAP in 2009, two further schemes were launched in 2010 in order to address the so-called “new challenges” of renewable energy, biodiversity, water management, climate change mitigation, dairy restructuring and broadband. The schemes launched were a further Agri Environment scheme known as the Agri-Environment Options Scheme (AEOS) (incorporating M216 Investments linked to AEOS) and a second Natura 2000 scheme linked to AEOS.

Funding for the Measures 212, 213, 214 and 216 was exhausted by 1st January 2014 and the schemes are subsequently funded under Article 3(1)a of the Transitional Regulation 1310/2013 until the end of 2015. Funding under this Article is expected to amount to some €311m. Other than for LFAs, which is an annual scheme, no further new commitments were undertaken in 2014 for these measures; only ongoing commitments were paid.

Ongoing Agri-environment commitments from the previous programming period to which revisions pursuant to Article 46 of Regulation (EC) 1974/2006 apply will be revised accordingly in 2015. In addition, a number of schemes from the previous programme will have continuing commitments in the new programming period after 2015. As provided for under Article 3(1)b of the Transitional Regulation 1310/2013, these schemes can also be funded from the 2014-2020 allocation. The schemes include M113 the Early Retirement Scheme (ERS), M121 the Target Agricultural Modernisation Scheme, M213 AEOS Natura & M214 AEOS (incl. M216). Funding under this provision is expected to amount to some €67.15m. It is expected that this money will be fully utilised by 2019.

This brings the total transitional expenditure to €378.15m EU contribution. The total transitional expenditure is detailed in the table below. The new co-financing rates will be used for M212, 213, 214 & 216 from the beginning of 2014, and for all remaining transitional expenditure post 2015. These co-financing rates will be as laid down in the Financial Plan Chapter. The default rate of 53% will be used for M113 Early Retirement as no corresponding measure exists. All transitional operations ongoing from the previous programming period will be clearly identifiable from new measures in all aspects including budgetary, management and control systems.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Total Union Contribution planned 2014-2022 (€)</th>
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<tr>
<td>M01 - Knowledge transfer and information actions (art 14)</td>
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<td>M02 - Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (art 15)</td>
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<td>M04 - Investments in physical assets (art 17)</td>
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<td>M07 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas (art 20)</td>
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<td>M10 - Agri-environment-climate (art 28)</td>
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<td>M11 - Organic farming (art 29)</td>
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<td>M12 - Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (art 30)</td>
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<td>M13 - Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints (art 31)</td>
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<td>M14 - Animal welfare (art 33)</td>
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<td>M16 - Co-operation (art 35)</td>
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<td>M19 - Support for LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development) (art 35 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)</td>
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<td>M20 - Technical assistance Member States (art 51-54)</td>
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<td>M131 - Meeting standards based on Community legislation</td>
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<td>M341 - Skills acquisition, animation and implementation</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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20. THEMATIC SUB-PROGRAMMES

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