

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: [REDACTED]
To: CAP Strategic Plan
Subject: SP SWOT analysis

[REDACTED]
Full Time Farmer

Phone: [REDACTED]

To Whom it may concern,

Here is my feedback to the Draft CAP Strategic Plan post 2020. First of all, it is imperative that any payments that are made through the new CAP will be made on a current year basis rather than a historical basis. It makes no sense whatsoever for someone to be getting payments now for something they did 20 years ago. This is a ludicrous scenario. It is unfair for new entrants, it is unfair for young farmers and it is unfair for farmers who wish to expand their farming enterprise. In addition to this, there is no incentive for farmers receiving a cheque in the post on a historical basis to innovate, diversify or contribute to the economy, all they have to do is sit back and do as little as possible and still receive a cheque in the post. For the sake of the Irish economy, we have to find more ways of leveraging the land that we have to increase our exports and reduce imports.

Solar energy is not mentioned in any of the objectives as a way to improve farm incomes, contribute towards renewable energy generation, reduce our carbon footprint and mitigate climate change. There is a huge potential for Irish farmers to install solar farms. Token gestures offering grants to put a few solar panels on top of a roof is not good enough. In addition to support for solar farms, the government needs to create a feed in tariff and provide grants to farmers to make it possible. The ESB monopoly needs to be dismantled. They are charging €4.5million to connect a solar farm to the grid. This is a multiple of what it costs in the UK where there are 6 energy providers competing for the business instead of one. There also needs to be a way to prevent unjustified objections and delays to such installations.

Replacing energy importation is a major opportunity but has been missed in all of the Objectives. Solar energy production which is produced on farm and exported to the grid was not mentioned throughout the entire document and it should be mentioned in every objective. For example, in Objective 1, there is the opportunity to support viable farm income through the establishment of small scale farmer owned solar farms connected to the grid. In Objective 2, there is an opportunity to focus on research and education to look at the encouragement on farm solar energy generation and the establishment of producer groups for solar generation. In Objective 3, there is an opportunity to improve the farmers' position in the value chain in the solar energy market by targeting legislation and financial supports for small and medium scale solar energy and production. Encourage individual or groups of farmers to become the primary producers of renewable energy. In the past we had the ridiculous situation where a farmer could get a grant to put up a wind turbine but he couldn't get a grant to put up a second or third wind turbine. In a similar way, it is important with these supports not to restrict grants to a very small installation which seems like a token gesture rather than a genuine attempt to encourage a real renewable energy production system in this country. In Objective 4 Opportunities, (Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as

well as sustainable energy) it bizarrely misses the opportunity to mitigate climate change using solar energy production or any other renewable energy for that matter. I could go on but I don't have time.

Forestry is another alternative, however, farmers don't like the fact that forestry land can never revert back once the crop has been harvested. More thought needs to be put into this to make it more attractive for farmers.

Has nobody noticed that Ivy is killing hedges and trees all over the country? Immediate action needs to be taken to prevent hedges and trees from being wiped out before it is too late.

Lack of flexibility for grants for to purchase or develop applications which may increase efficiencies, reduce costs, improve the environment, increase animal welfare, promote health and safety and food security. For example, cow mats, CCTV to monitor calving, animal welfare and security, milk pasteurisers, fencing to keep out badgers and foxes for bio security to mention a few.

Producer groups should not only be encouraged to help farmers improve their individual farms, producer groups should also encourage groups of farmers to develop new food products or technologies and innovations to increase efficiencies, reduce costs, improve the environment, increase animal welfare, promote health and safety and food security.

In general the CAP2020 Draft Proposal is way too narrow in it's approach. It's important to create a plan for the traditional land uses and ensure that they are environmentally friendly etc. However, it doesn't think outside the box, it doesn't encourage innovation or alternative land uses in addition to securing the traditional land uses.

Kind Regards
Oliver Dempsey