



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE SWOT ANALYSIS FOR THE CAP STRATEGIC PLAN – RESPONSE FORM

Consultation Questionnaire

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine seeks the views of the public on the SWOT analysis for the CAP Strategic Plan. This form should be used when submitted a response.

Terms and Conditions

All submissions, including the name of the person making the submission, will be published on the Department's website.

Freedom of Information

In the interest of transparency, DAFM intends to publish all submissions received in response to this consultation and the identity of the party making the submission, including their affiliation on the DAFM website. Any submission containing confidential, private or commercially sensitive information or material should therefore be clearly identified and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. All submissions received will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014 and may be released or published on foot of third party applications or otherwise.

By responding to the consultation, respondents consent to their name and affiliation being published online with the submission. The Department will redact all other personal data prior to publication.

Data Protection

Please note that if you make a submission you are agreeing for it to be published in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR EU 2016/679), the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and the DPER Consultation Principles and Guidance.

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RESPONSE FORM

1. Details:

Full Name: **Alison Graham and Eamonn Farrell**

Organisation where applicable: **Irish Cooperative Organisation Society (ICOS)**

Please tick one of the following options that best describes you;

Farmer (full-time) Farmer (part-time) Farm family member
Member of the public Other

2. Are you involved in:

Agriculture Forestry Farm Organisation
Rural Development Food Industry Environment
Community Sector Research Civil Society / NGO

Other: _____

3. Nine specific objectives of the Common Agriculture Policy post 2020

- (a) support viable farm income and resilience across the Union to enhance food security;
- (b) enhance market orientation and increase competitiveness, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation;
- (c) improve the farmers' position in the value chain;
- (d) contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as sustainable energy;
- (e) foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air;
- (f) contribute to the protection of biodiversity, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes;
- (g) attract young farmers and facilitate business development in rural areas;
- (h) promote employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including bio-economy and sustainable forestry;

- (i) improve the response of EU agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including safe, nutritious and sustainable food, food waste, as well as animal welfare.

Those objectives shall be complemented by the cross-cutting objective of modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas.

4. SWOT template

Objective 1: Support viable farm income and resilience across the Union to enhance food security

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESS
<p>S1: Agriculture – largest indigenous sector in the economy</p> <p>S2: Temperate climate conducive for our grass-based production systems</p> <p>S3: Low level of debt on Irish farms - <u>Debt repayments per kilo of milk solids reduced during dairy expansion</u></p> <p>S4: Viability of some sectors</p> <p>S5: Effective development and delivery of schemes supporting family farm income</p> <p><u>S: Cooperative structure in the dairy sector provides farmer ownership and control and therefore greater stability for farm income</u></p> <p><u>S: Private Risk Management Tools in the Dairy Sector, such as Fixed Milk Price Schemes</u></p> <p><u>S: Family farm model of production</u></p> <p><u>S: Good supports available under TAMS to ensure re-investment in new technology and equipment</u></p>	<p>W1: Low income in agri-sector compared to other sectors of the economy</p> <p>W2: Low profitability / viability in some sectors</p> <p>W3: Increase in input costs; <u>import of inputs such as feed which are subject to volatile pricing</u></p> <p>W4: Highly dependent on CAP payments <u>in certain sectors</u></p> <p>W5: <u>Low level of diversification to mitigate risk</u> <u>High level of specialization make it difficult to mitigate risk</u></p> <p>W6: Lack of risk management tools/knowledge</p> <p>W7: Reactive nature of ad hoc schemes to address weather and other crises in the sector.</p> <p><u>W: Seasonality of dairy and beef production and chains</u></p> <p><u>W: Lack of skilled labour</u></p> <p><u>W: Lack of an income deferral scheme or income stabilisation tool to manage volatility.</u></p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

<p>O1: Use of new technologies to reduce input costs and increase efficiency (e.g. precision farming)</p> <p>O2: Growth of bio-economy</p> <p>O3: Increasing demand for safe, sustainable, nutritious, authentic, organic food produced to high standards of environmental protection and animal welfare</p> <p>O4: Increasing global consumer demand for protein sources</p> <p>O5: Increase value added at farm level</p> <p>O6: Development of risk management tools</p> <p>O7: Increase knowledge base of farmers on risk management tools</p> <p><u>O: Development of the European Futures Market</u></p> <p><u>O: Wide recognition of and trust in Irish quality assurance schemes which provide added value on exports</u></p>	<p>T1: Ongoing price volatility in global markets</p> <p>T2: BREXIT</p> <p>T3: Reduced CAP budget</p> <p><u>T: Instability in the international trading environment (Russian Import Ban, US Tariffs, etc..)</u></p> <p>T4: Costs of compliance with EU's higher environmental and sanitary production standards</p> <p>T5: Effects of Climate change <u>on primary production</u></p> <p>T6: Demographics and the need for generational renewal to increase up-take of new technology</p> <p>T7: Increase National/ EU regulation <u>adding costs and placing greater administrative burden and time restraints on farmers</u></p>
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Objective 2: Enhance market orientation and increase competitiveness, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <p>S1: Increased exports and value-added targets at the heart of the sectors ten-year strategy FW 2025</p> <p>S2: Growing trade surplus with EU and non-EU</p> <p>S3: Temperate climate provides competitive advantage for grass-based production systems</p> <p>S4: Investment levels are increasing</p> <p>S5: Farm productivity levels are increasing</p> <p>S6: Reputation of sustainable Quality Assurance Schemes</p> <p>S7: Strong animal health and disease controls standards</p> <p>S8: Wide range of State support for research, innovation and competitiveness</p> <p><u>S: Dairy industry are global players, with major food brands</u></p> <p><u>S: Private investment in the development of the bioeconomy</u></p> <p><u>S: High level of investment in new processing capacity in the dairy sector</u></p>	<p>WEAKNESS</p> <p>W1: Difficult to avail of / achieve economies of scale</p> <p>W2: Wide variation in levels of innovation and adoption of new technologies</p> <p>W3: Variation in investment across sectors</p> <p>W4: Lack of access to high speed broadband in rural areas</p> <p>W5: Lack of innovation infrastructure</p> <p>W6: Lack of Producer Organisations <u>in certain sectors</u></p> <p>W7: Overreliance on individual markets eg UK</p> <p>W8: Costs of compliance with EU's higher environmental and sanitary production standards</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>O1: Increasing demand for safe, sustainable, nutritious, authentic, organic food produced to high standards of environmental protection and animal welfare</p> <p>O2: Improve access to <u>low-cost and flexible</u> credit</p> <p>O3: Import substitution e.g. protein crops, feedstuffs</p> <p>O4: Use of new technologies to reduce input costs, increase efficiency and add value</p> <p>O5: Further develop Circular economy and bio-economy</p> <p>O6: Open new markets and expand existing markets</p>	<p>THREATS</p> <p>T1: Market volatility, price variations</p> <p>T2: Volatility affecting the cost of inputs</p> <p>T3: Effects of climate change on primary production</p> <p>T4: Capability and capacity of sector to adjust to new demands/ challenges</p> <p>T5: Labour shortages at both primary and secondary stages of production</p> <p>T6: Costs of compliance with EU's higher environmental and sanitary production standards</p>

<p>O7: Encourage greater producer participation in <u>Producer Organisations and Cooperatives</u></p> <p>O8: Co-operation with Research Institutions in technological innovations and digitalisation</p>	<p>T: <u>Cut to CAP funding and therefore the level of funding available for market support measures</u></p>
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Objective 3: Improve the farmers' position in the value chain

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>S1: Sustainable Quality Assurance Schemes</p> <p>S2: Producer Organisations in Horticulture sector</p> <p>S3: Cooperative structure in the dairy sector <u>and high level of sector co-operation</u></p> <p>S: <u>Fixed milk price schemes in dairy sector</u></p> <p>S5: EU initiatives focusing on greater transparency in the food chain</p> <p>S: <u>International, premium brands owned by farmers in the dairy sector e.g. Kerrygold</u></p>	<p>W1: Share of value added reducing for primary producer</p> <p>W2: Share of value added below EU average</p> <p>W3: Fragmented nature of sector</p> <p>W4: Costs of compliance with EU's higher environmental and sanitary production standards</p> <p>W5: Low number of Irish PDOs/PGIs & TSGs</p> <p>W6: Lack of accurate data for value chain, <u>particularly with regard to retailer price margins and lack of comparable data from across the EU/ disproportionate availability of supply chain information</u></p> <p>W7: Low number of Producer Organisations <u>in the beef and arable sectors</u></p> <p><u>W: Growth of private label brands over farmer-owned brands</u></p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>O1: Growing demand for 'natural' based food production systems provides opportunities for premiumisation by primary producers</p> <p>O2: Consumer demand for local produce</p> <p>O3: Potential expansion of organic farming sector</p> <p>O4: Increase the number of Producer Organisations/<u>Cooperatives</u></p> <p>O5: Introduction of legislation to protect primary producers</p> <p>O6: Advances in animal and crop breeding technologies</p> <p>O7: Development of contractual relationships between farmers and processors</p> <p><u>O: Development of European Futures Market in the dairy sector, to help combat volatility for farmers and ensure more stable prices</u></p>	<p>T1: Market volatility, price variations and input costs</p> <p>T2: Costs of compliance with EU's higher environmental and sanitary production standards</p> <p>T3: Changing consumer tastes</p> <p><u>T: Growing presence of retailer alliances disadvantaging upstream actors</u></p>

Objective 4: Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption, as well as sustainable energy

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<p>S1: National aim of an approach to carbon neutral in agriculture and land use sector</p> <p>S2: Grass based production system with low carbon footprint</p> <p>S3: High % Utilised Agricultural Area in Ireland is permanent grassland</p> <p>S4: Significant national cover of hedgerows, individual trees & non-forest woodland</p> <p>S5: Highest mean organic carbon of arable land in Europe</p> <p>S6: High % of land under agri-environment-climate commitments</p> <p>S7: Low % of sealed soils (built environment)</p> <p>S8: Leading innovation and research on climate related support tools</p> <p>S9: Established beef and dairy breeding programmes</p> <p>S10: High level of carbon auditing on beef and dairy farms</p> <p>S11: Robust ensemble of climate model projections for Ireland in place</p> <p>S12: Carbon efficient protected crop sector</p> <p>S13: Low levels of direct use of energy in primary agriculture and forestry sector</p> <p>S14: Ireland has a large availability of feedstock and agricultural residues for biobased product and bioenergy production</p> <p>S15: Well established co-operatives capable of enabling farmer engagement in climate actions and energy</p> <p>S16: Farm Advisory System which can quickly disseminate new innovations and knowledge transfer</p> <p><u>S: National mitigation plan developed by Teagasc (Teagasc MACC curve)</u></p>	<p>W1: Highest share of GHG emissions comes from agriculture <u>due to lack of heavy industry in the Irish economy</u></p> <p>W2: Agricultural GHG emissions are increasing</p> <p>W3: <u>Dairy herd expansion occurring after a period of restricted opportunities due to milk quotas but can continue within sustainable limits and the adoption of the Teagasc MACC curve</u></p> <p>W4: Ireland has one of the lowest levels of forest cover in Europe</p> <p>W5: Declining afforestation rates in recent years</p> <p>W6: Ongoing drainage of organic soils (grasslands and wetlands)</p> <p>W7: High % of non-CO2 emissions in Ireland due to agriculture</p> <p>W8: Nitrates derogation farms are a very significant intensive farming cohort over recent years. <u>(Derogation farms only a small proportion of ag sector. Derogation farmers are in some ways more carbon efficient - splash plate bans etc).</u></p> <p>W9: Sub-optimal soil fertility</p> <p>W10: Limited investment in the sectoral research (horticulture)</p> <p>W11: Reliance on peat in horticultural sector</p> <p>W12: Increasing annual supply gap for forestry biomass in Ireland</p> <p>W13: Some forests are not managed to their productive potential</p> <p>W14: Economics of anaerobic digestion (AD) plants are challenging <u>and AD gas will not will not achieve any scale without government support.</u></p> <p>W15: Capital costs for many renewable energy projects are significant</p> <p>W16: Difficulties in accessing the national grid</p> <p>W17: Production of renewable energy at farm level is quite low</p> <p>W18: Irish farms have become less diverse which makes them more vulnerable to climate events (many are single enterprise systems)</p>

	<p><u>W: Inability to quantify, measure, verify and account the carbon sequestration levels of Ireland's grass based production model</u></p> <p><u>W: Majority of potential carbon mitigation credits gained from on farm renewable energy do not go to agri sector, but to the energy sector, removing a key incentive for agri sector.</u></p> <p><u>W: Current renewable energy policy in Ireland geared towards large developers, not communities.</u></p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>O1: Introduction of measures in the GHG (and ammonia) Marginal Abatement Cost Curve (MACC)</p> <p>O2: Reducing nitrogen emissions</p> <p>O3: Improve livestock management including through extended grazing</p> <p>O4: Improved animal production efficiency</p> <p>O5: Improve on-farm slurry management</p> <p>O6: Better Management of Peatlands</p> <p>O7: Improved soil management and fertility</p> <p>O8: Increasing relatively low level of forest cover and favourable growing conditions</p> <p>O9: Support diversification to lower carbon intensity farming and to meet bioenergy demands</p> <p>O10: Further efficiency gains through the roll-out of agri-digitalisation, smart farming and precision farming technology</p> <p>O11: Up-skill advisory service and engagement with stakeholders/industry</p> <p>O12: Changing climate allows diversification of crop type</p> <p>O13: Advances in crop breeding and plant genetics</p> <p>O14: Increase productivity and resilience of the national forest estate</p> <p>O15: Reduce energy consumption on farms through energy efficiency and deployment of renewables</p> <p>O16: Use renewable biological resources to create value added bio-based products</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>T1: Continued increase in agriculture emissions</p> <p>T2: Livestock production and emissions of GHG's remain strongly coupled</p> <p>T3: Ammonia emissions in breach of targets set</p> <p>T4: Inappropriate land-use/soil management</p> <p>T5: Low profitability and low average farm size of beef and sheep sectors could reduce the adoption of climate appropriate practices</p> <p>T6: Slowdown in generational renewal could affect uptake of climate appropriate practices</p> <p>T7: Increased frequency and intensity of some extreme climatic events</p> <p>T8: Increased disease and pest pressures</p> <p>T9: Risk of "carbon leakage" if production in Ireland declines</p> <p>T10: Difficulty in ensuring security of supply for biomass feedstocks</p> <p>T11: Capital investment costs and lack of support for Anaerobic Digestors could be prohibitive to uptake.</p> <p><u>T: Lack of available financing due to cut to CAP budget</u></p> <p><u>T: High demand for biomass energy could lead to unfeasible demand for land/feedstocks, pushing out other viable forms of agriculture.</u></p> <p><u>T: Risk of too much mitigation measures being expected from the agriculture sector, harming food security and letting other sectors "off the hook"</u></p>

O17: Network of Agricultural Colleges makes educating the next generation of farmers in environmentally efficient farming methods easier

O: Development of an attractive agro-forestry scheme for livestock farmers

O: Significant on-farm renewable energy potential to be unlocked.

Objective 5: Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air

<p><u>Strengths:</u> S1: Highest mean organic carbon of arable land in Europe S2: Low levels of soil erosion by water S3: Low level of concentration of nitrates in freshwater in Ireland S4: High % farms with extensive stocking rate S5: Legislative framework and strong policy framework in place <u>including review of the Nitrates Derogation</u> S6: Strong engagement of industry and advisors to improve water quality <u>e.g.the Agricultural Sustainability Support & Advisory Programme</u> S7: High % of land under agri-environment-climate commitments S8: Low % of sealed soils (built environment) S9: Significant national cover of hedgerows, individual trees & non-forest woodland S10: Peatlands cover over 20% of Ireland’s area <u>S: Development of new technology to assist farm productivity and nutrient management e.g. PastureBase and NMP online</u> <u>S: Good supports available under TAMS for Low Emission Spreading Equipment</u></p>	<p><u>Weaknesses</u> W1: Increase in livestock numbers W2: Increase in chemical fertiliser sales W3: Impact of agricultural activity on water quality W4: Increasing area under Nitrates derogation W5: Sub-optimal soil fertility W6: Ongoing drainage of organic soils (grasslands and wetlands) W7: Ongoing drainage of peatlands W8: No legislation in place regarding the protection of soil W9: Low level of forest cover</p>
<p><u>Opportunities</u> O1: Improve water quality and implement catchment-based approach O2: Roll-out of the Agricultural Sustainability Support & Advisory Programme O3: Incentivise low input farming such as organic farming O4: Reduce fertiliser application O5: Reducing nitrogen and ammonia emissions O6: Improve on-farm slurry management O7: Better Management of Peatlands O8: Improved soil management and fertility</p>	<p><u>Threats</u> T1: Deterioration in water quality T2: Agricultural activities impact on the environment T3: Ammonia emissions in breach of targets set T4: Inappropriate land-use/soil management T5: Low profitability and low average farm size of beef and sheep sectors could reduce the adoption of environmentally friendly practices T6: Slowdown in generational renewal could affect uptake of climate appropriate practices T7: Changing climatic conditions</p>

<p>O9: Further efficiency gains through the roll-out of agri-digitalisation, smart farming and precision farming technology</p> <p>O10: Foster a greater understanding of environmental issues at farm level</p> <p>O11: Increased afforestation and agroforestry</p> <p><u>O: High levels of engagement by farmers in the ASSAP programme</u></p>	
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Objective 6 - Contribute to the protection of biodiversity, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes

<p>Strengths:</p> <p>S1: Majority of threatened species are in favourable and stable status S2: Ireland has a network of Natura 2000 sites corresponding to 13% of the area S3: High percentage of extensive grazing in West of Ireland S4: An estimated 2.1 million hectares has the potential to be managed as High Nature Value farmland S5: Significant national cover of hedgerows, individual trees & non-forest woodland S6: Peatlands, an important habitat, cover over 20% of Ireland’s area S7: Strong policy framework to protect and enhance biodiversity S8: Good knowledge and experience of delivery of results-based agri-environment schemes S9: High plant health status in Ireland</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>W1: Majority of habitats have an unfavourable status W2: Farmland bird species are in decline W3: Woodlands are deemed to be in bad but stable status W4: Grassland habitats have undergone significant losses over last 10-15 years W5: Ongoing drainage of peatlands W6: Lack of policy coherence e.g. removal of scrub W7: More species mix needed in forestry planting W8: Lack of economic value attributed to public goods provided by non-productive land</p>
<p>Opportunities:</p> <p>O1: Incentivise the provision of ecosystem services including HNV farming O2: Enhance biodiversity and establish new habitats on more intensive farms O3: Appropriate management of forests and increase afforestation levels (particularly mixed forestry) O4: Incentivise low input farming such as organic farming O5: Combat invasive species O6: Foster a greater understanding of environmental issues at farm level O7: Engage industry and the wider community on biodiversity related initiatives O8: Maximise use of available resources on environmental farm profiling <u>O: Introduction of Habitat Management Plans under the next CAP to incentivise farmers to maintain biodiversity rich areas on their farms</u> <u>O: Support community-led initiatives to promote biodiversity on unproductive/vacant ground.</u></p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>T1: Habitat loss due to changes in land uses T2: Overgrazing of habitats T3: Agriculture intensification T4: Under grazing or land abandonment T5: Agricultural activities impact on the environment T6: Increase in invasive species T7: Climate change, <u>need for adaptation and mitigation</u> T8: Slowdown in generational renewal could affect uptake of environmentally friendly practises T9: Pollinators species are in decline and there is a risk of loss of species <u>T: Lack of necessary financing due to cut in CAP budget</u></p>

Objective 7: Attract young farmers and facilitate business development in rural areas

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>S1: Training of young farmers is well above EU average</p> <p>S2: Access to knowledge</p> <p>S3: Effective design and implementation of support for Young Farmers</p> <p>S4: Taxation supports for young farmers</p> <p>S5: Land mobility service</p> <p>S6: Contribution of agri-food sector to rural economy</p> <p>S7 Off farm employment opportunities</p> <p>S8: Substantial agri-food industry with diverse geographic spread</p> <p>S9: Strong tourism sector</p> <p>S10: Downstream multiplier effect on employment in the forestry sector</p> <p><u>S: Co-operative sector prioritising the implementation of generational renewal programmes and initiatives.</u></p> <p><u>S: Significant and recent research conducted by the co-operative sector regarding the issue of generational renewal.</u></p>	<p>W1: Young farmers account for only 6.1% of the total population of farm managers.</p> <p>W2: Access to land for purchase</p> <p>W3: Access to <u>low cost and flexible</u> credit</p> <p>W4: Land mobility</p> <p>W5: Lack of diverse employment opportunities compared to large urban centres</p> <p>W6: Low income in agri-sector compared to other sectors of the economy</p> <p><u>W: Lack of early retirement scheme to encourage older farmers to retire over a phased period</u></p> <p><u>W: Little Agri-tourism development</u></p> <p><u>W: Agricultural education not fit for purpose in some respects.</u></p> <p><u>W: Certain cultural elements making rural areas difficult or less attractive places to live for some people.</u></p> <p><u>W: Poor broadband access and connectivity in rural areas, limits the use of technology and opportunities for rural economic growth</u></p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>O1: Continue to increase rates of full and basic training for young farmers.</p> <p>O2: Access to digital technologies <u>to support farm safety and greater work life balance</u></p> <p>O3: Build on range of supports available for Young Farmers</p> <p>O4: Develop career pathways in agriculture</p> <p>O5: Develop tourism industry in rural areas in a sustainable way</p> <p>O6: Increase employment rates, and expand employment options in rural areas</p> <p>O7: Increase opportunities for rural female entrepreneurs</p>	<p>T1: Income volatility in certain sectors</p> <p>T2: Reduction in existing young farmer supports</p> <p>T3: Decline in young farmer numbers</p> <p>T4: Lower levels of services and over reliance on traditional employment options</p> <p>T5: Changing nature of retail, service delivery and town centre living</p> <p>T6: Not maximising opportunities presented by digital economy</p> <p>T7: Brexit</p>

O8: Optimising digital connectivity for employment (eg remote working)	
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Objective 8: Promote employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including bio-economy and sustainable forestry;

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>S1: Dedicated Government Department for Rural Development</p> <p>S2: Whole of Government approach through Action Plan for Rural Development</p> <p>S3: Project Ireland 2040 has strategic objective of Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities</p> <p>S4: Strong Community involvement and commitment to engage and deliver locally</p> <p>S5: Coherent approach to local development with integrated structure for delivery</p> <p>S6: Substantial agri-food industry with diverse geographic spread</p> <p>S7: Strong tourism sector</p> <p>S8: Good quality of life combined with culture and heritage resources</p> <p>S9: Coherent Government Strategy for the bioeconomy</p> <p>S10: Dedicated national implementation activities for the bioeconomy</p> <p>S11: Successive publicly funded forestry programmes will result in strong projections for timber output from Irish forests to 2030</p> <p>S12: Downstream multiplier effect on employment in the forestry sector</p>	<p>W1: Number of social groups at risk of social exclusion, isolation and poverty deprivation</p> <p>W2: Low levels of women working in agriculture</p> <p>W3: Lower levels of, or limited access to services including transport infrastructure compared to large urban centres</p> <p>W4: Lack of diverse employment opportunities compared to large urban centres</p> <p>W5: Fragmented nature of forestry sector and absence of career path</p> <p>W6: High value markets are poorly developed for hardwood resource</p> <p>W7: Lack of awareness of the circular and the Bio economy</p> <p><u>W: Poor broadband access and connectivity in rural areas, limits the use of technology and opportunities for rural economic growth</u></p> <p><u>W: Aging rural population</u></p> <p><u>W: Little agri-tourism developments</u></p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

<p>O1: Building capacities of communities (enabling and supporting rural communities)</p> <p>O2: Develop tourism industry in rural areas in a sustainable way</p> <p>O3: Improve the availability of, and access to, necessary services in rural areas</p> <p>O4: Increase employment rates, and expand employment options in rural areas</p> <p>O5: Increase opportunities for rural female entrepreneurs</p> <p>O6: Optimising digital connectivity for employment (eg remote working)</p> <p>O7: Maximise the economic and social potential of the bio economy and circular economy</p> <p>O8: Provision of renewable energy sources, including through community-based schemes</p> <p>O9: Increase afforestation rates</p> <p>O10: Increase opportunities for diversification of farm enterprise</p> <p>O11: Increased market opportunities for wood <u>and biomass</u> particularly in the construction and energy sectors</p> <p><u>O: Develop rural community energy generation.</u></p> <p><u>O: Support and develop community owned retail (pub/shop/cafe entertainment spaces) in areas that have lost commercial retail.</u></p>	<p>T1: Demographic profile and the need for generational renewal</p> <p>T2: Lower levels of services and over reliance on traditional employment options</p> <p>T3: Changing nature of retail, service delivery and town centre living</p> <p>T4: Climate Change – economic, social and environmental impacts</p> <p>T5: Increased compliance and regulatory requirements for Community and Voluntary Sector</p> <p>T6: Rural isolation, with a particular recognition of its impact on mental health</p> <p>T7: Not maximising opportunities presented by digital economy</p> <p>T10: Forestry – emerging plant pests and diseases</p> <p><u>T: Brexit will have a significantly negative impact on rural areas, as Irish border economies rely on North-South cross-border trade and the agri-food industry will be one of the worst hit in terms of negative impact.</u></p> <p><u>T: Cut to CAP funding, meaning reduced income for farmers, which in turn will impact economic stimulation in rural areas</u></p>
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Objective 9: Improve the response of EU agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including safe, nutritious and sustainable food, food waste, as well as animal welfare

<p><u>Strength</u> S1: National Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance S2: Antibiotics usage in Ireland is below the EU average S3: National Plan on the Sustainable use of Pesticides S4: National Farmed Animal Health Strategy S5: Animal Welfare Strategy S6: The establishment of Animal Health Ireland S7: Agri-food industry supporting initiative in animal health and welfare S8: Food safety and Food Authenticity Strategy S9: Sustainable Healthy Agri-Food Research Plan S10: Strategy for the Development of the Organic Sector S11: Increasing percentage of UAA organically farmed S12: Quality Assurance Schemes S13: National Food Waste reduction schemes <u>S: Effective School Schemes for fruit, vegetables and dairy products. There schemes promote the consumption of nutritious local products and help children to develop healthy dietary habits</u></p>	<p><u>Weakness</u> W1: Increased sales of antibiotics W2: Low level of understanding of AMR development and its transmission W3: Lack of available systems to monitor usage of antibiotics <u>W: Low levels of milk recording in the dairy sector compared to other countries, an increase in milk recording is necessary to transition from Blanket Dry Cow Therapy to Selective Dry Cow Therapy</u> W4: Low level of organic farming in Ireland W5: Reliance on imports of certain animal feeds W6: Lack of robust system to measure farming effort in relation to the provision of safe food and high animal health and welfare standards. W7: Lack of coherent approach to bio security measures W8: Lack of accurate data on food waste</p>
<p><u>Opportunity</u> O1: Improvements and developments of vaccines O2: Development of database to monitor antibiotic usage O3: Increasing consumer demand for Organic produce / sustainably produced food O4: Increasing consumer demand / awareness for provenance of food vis a vis safety and health and welfare of animals O5: Increase targeted advisory service on animal health O6: Synergies between various strategies</p>	<p><u>Threat</u> T1: Increased levels of intensive farming T2: Any reduction in animal welfare standards T3: Climate change T4: Slowdown in generational renewal could affect uptake of appropriate practices T5: New and emerging diseases T6: Increased regulation and cost of compliance <u>T: Brexit and potential complications arising relating to North-South trade, supply chain transparency and biosecurity coordination</u></p>

O: New digital tools available to contribute to the aims of reducing food waste, improving animal health and reducing the environmental impact of agriculture.

T: Potential lack of availability of necessary pesticides and veterinary medicines as a result of the UK leaving the EU and therefore the common authorization system