



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

Third Cycle RBMP Forestry Measures

Presentation to WPAC

29 Sept. 2022

Measure	Action (Incl. since completion of 2018 – 2021 RBMP)	Status
<p>1. Continue to seek improvements to the licence applications process for key forestry activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New ecological assessment procedure in place, to examine applications in relation to Appropriate Assessment & non-AA ecological issues, with strong overlap into hydrological issues. ➤ Significant increase in Forest Inspectorate personnel, including 26 FTE Ecologists (increase from 1) & a new dedicated Felling Unit operating (<i>inter alia</i>) field inspections of live felling sites. ➤ In addition to initial public consultation, a 2nd window for public consultation now established, to cater for new AA-related information received. ➤ New mandatory <i>Standards for Felling & Reforestation</i> & requirements regarding the information supplied with felling licence applications, i.e. dedicated operational Harvest Plan with Harvest Map & Reforestation Map (if relevant). ➤ New grant to Applicants, to address the cost of various ecological & environmental reports sought by DAFM to facilitate the assessment of the application. ➤ DAFM piloting a new provision allowing ‘pre-application discussion’, which will further enhance project suitability regarding water. ➤ Significant updates to iFORIS to incorporate more water-related layers for the Inspector & Registered Forester. Rebuild of iFORIS currently underway in preparation for the new Forestry Programme. ➤ New map-based Forestry Licence Viewer in place, enabling 3rd parties & the general public to investigate the details of forestry applications submitted to DAFM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete (always under review) • Ongoing, significant increases but additional staff being recruited currently • Complete • Complete • Complete • Pilot phase • Complete (under review for next Programme) • Complete (examining updates)

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<p>2. Increase the area of forests with appropriate water setbacks through the ongoing restructuring of existing forest stands at clearfell / reforestation stage to incorporate appropriate water setbacks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Appropriate conditions stipulated in tree felling licences, regarding reforestation design. ➤ Adherence to Standards for Felling & Reforestation. ➤ Deployment of Reforestation Objectives ‘CCF’ & ‘BIO’ from Felling & Reforestation Policy. ➤ Reforestation inspections to ensure compliance. ➤ Selected forest removal, in line with Felling & Reforestation Policy. ➤ Introduction & use of grant schemes to encourage restructuring & to alleviate cost, such as the Forestry Environmental Enhancement Scheme, NWS Cons. & Forests for Water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing, revised SOP in draft • Ongoing • Proposed for Forestry Programme 2023 – 2027

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<p>3. Ensure the application of water setbacks and other water-based protection during the creation of new forests, principally under the Afforestation Grant and Premium Scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Appropriate conditions stipulated in affor. licences, regarding setbacks for water features (incl. aquatic zones, relevant watercourses, hotspots & water abstraction points). ➤ Adherence to the Environmental Requirements for Afforestation, regarding setback implementation & operational safeguards. ➤ Post-planting inspections to ensure compliance. ➤ Introduction & use of grant schemes & other supports to encourage proactive design for water protection above & beyond requirements, e.g. Forests for Water, NWS Establishment, Agro-Forestry, funding for environmental reports at pre-application stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing 100% inspection rate • Proposed for Forestry Programme 2023 – 2027

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<p>4. Manage the application of support measures that have a clear application in relation to the protection of water, including: the Continuous Cover Forestry Scheme; the native woodland and agro-forestry options under the Afforestation Scheme, and the Native Woodland Conservation Scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New grant & premium schemes & associated supports (for, e.g. environmental reports) proposed under Forestry Programme 2023 - 2027 ➤ New layers in IFORIS to identify target locations for deployment. ➤ Training of various groups to support deployment: ➤ DAFM Forestry Inspectors & Ecologists (ref. assessment of applications) ➤ Owners, Registered Foresters & advising Ecologists (ref. submitted applications); ➤ Personnel within other stakeholder bodies (e.g. NPWS, IFI) (ref. their role in responding to referrals). ➤ Dedicated expert support for Inspectors regarding water-related issues, complimenting support already in place for ecology & archaeology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft proposals complete. • Ongoing. Additional layers added as they become available, (e.g. layers anticipated from OPW). • Planned Q2 2023 (some training and information sharing with Inspectors already undertaken) • Complete

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<p>5. Encourage uptake of the recently-revised Woodland Creation on Public Lands Scheme to deliver woodland-based solutions for the protection of drinking water sources and water in general.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review initial start-up period of scheme, including discussions with early applicants (especially Irish Water) & revise scheme further, as needed. ➤ Continue to work with the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) in their promotion of the scheme amongst local authorities ➤ Strengthen links with Irish Water in the application of the scheme, to facilitate greater targeting for source protection. ➤ Dedicated Forestry Inspector to coordinate the assessment of applications under the scheme, including those relating to drinking water source protection & other water-related objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Q1 2023

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<p>6. Roll-out the Woodland for Water Scheme which is focused on strategically realising native woodland in areas where such features would have a marked impact in relation the protection of water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop scheme refinement through further engagement with relevant Agencies. • Roll-out of proposed Native Woodland Scenario 6: Alluvial Woodland, which will underpin a large proportion of applications under the scheme. • Coordinate roll-out under the new Forestry Programme, including training of relevant parties (incl. Registered Foresters & Inspectors) & coordination regarding the assessment of initial applications. • New specific <1ha scheme proposed – includes specific type for water protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete • Scenario Development Complete • SEA & legislation in progress • SEA & legislation in progress

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<p>7. Continue to address all forestry-related water incidents, as identified by DAFM Inspectors or reported to DAFM by foresters, water agencies, NGOs and members of the public.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated personnel within the Forestry Inspectorate to attend to such incidents. • Rapid respond to reports received, to ensure positive outcomes. • Engage with relevant Agencies during the process, & follow-up support where prosecution is being purposed. • Provide training for sector, including Registered Foresters & machine operators, regarding avoidance of incident & immediate actions to take, if they occur. • Increase co-operation & information sharing with relevant Agencies. • Review outcomes to identify follow-up actions, including increased inspection regimes, refinements to requirements & standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Q2 2023 (discussions commenced with IFI) • Ongoing. Quarterly bilateral with IFI commenced Q1 2022. Recent workshop with four SW LAs Q3 2022 • Ongoing

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<p>8. Further engagement between DAFM and other parties on forestry-related issues, both within the existing WFD structures and forums, and bilaterally (e.g. with Inland Fisheries Ireland).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop bilateral groups with relevant Agencies, to facilitate shared understandings, information exchange, & increased coordination. ➤ Develop new or revised referral procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. Formalised bilateral between DAFM and IFI Q1 2022. Increased engagement with OPW, (proposed use of spatial data for Forests for Water Scheme), and GSI for example. • Ongoing. Examining referral procedures with IFI. New data added to IFORIS regarding IFI management structure. Contacts developed within GSI

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<p>Deliver further training of Registered Foresters and Consultant Ecologists and of Department Forestry Inspectors and Ecologists, in relation to the design, assessment and implementation of forestry projects from the perspective of the protection environment, including water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop and deliver training course for relevant personnel within various agencies, including IFI, LAWPRO, NPWS and Local Authorities. ➤ Develop and deliver training course for Registered Foresters and machine operators, specifically on operational safeguards and immediate actions to take if a water-related incident is imminent or has occurred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q2 2023 • Q2 2023