



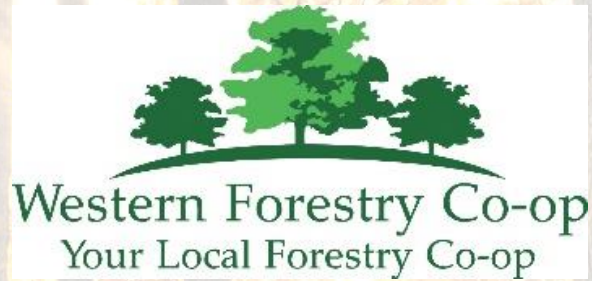
Future of Farm Forestry  
Marina Conway, CEO  
Western Forestry Co-operative

# Western Forestry Co-op

- Est 1985 by Farming Co-operatives in Western Counties
- Response to a need for support services for landowners considering forestry
- Co-op shareholders



- Longest established and largest forestry co-operative in Ireland providing professional forestry services



## Co-op Services

- Forest Establishment (afforestation & reforestation)
- Forest Management (tending, maintenance)
- NeighbourWood, Field & Open Days, Woodland Festival
- Forest Roading and Felling License
- Harvesting
- Forest Insurance, Forest Valuation



# Future of Farm Forestry

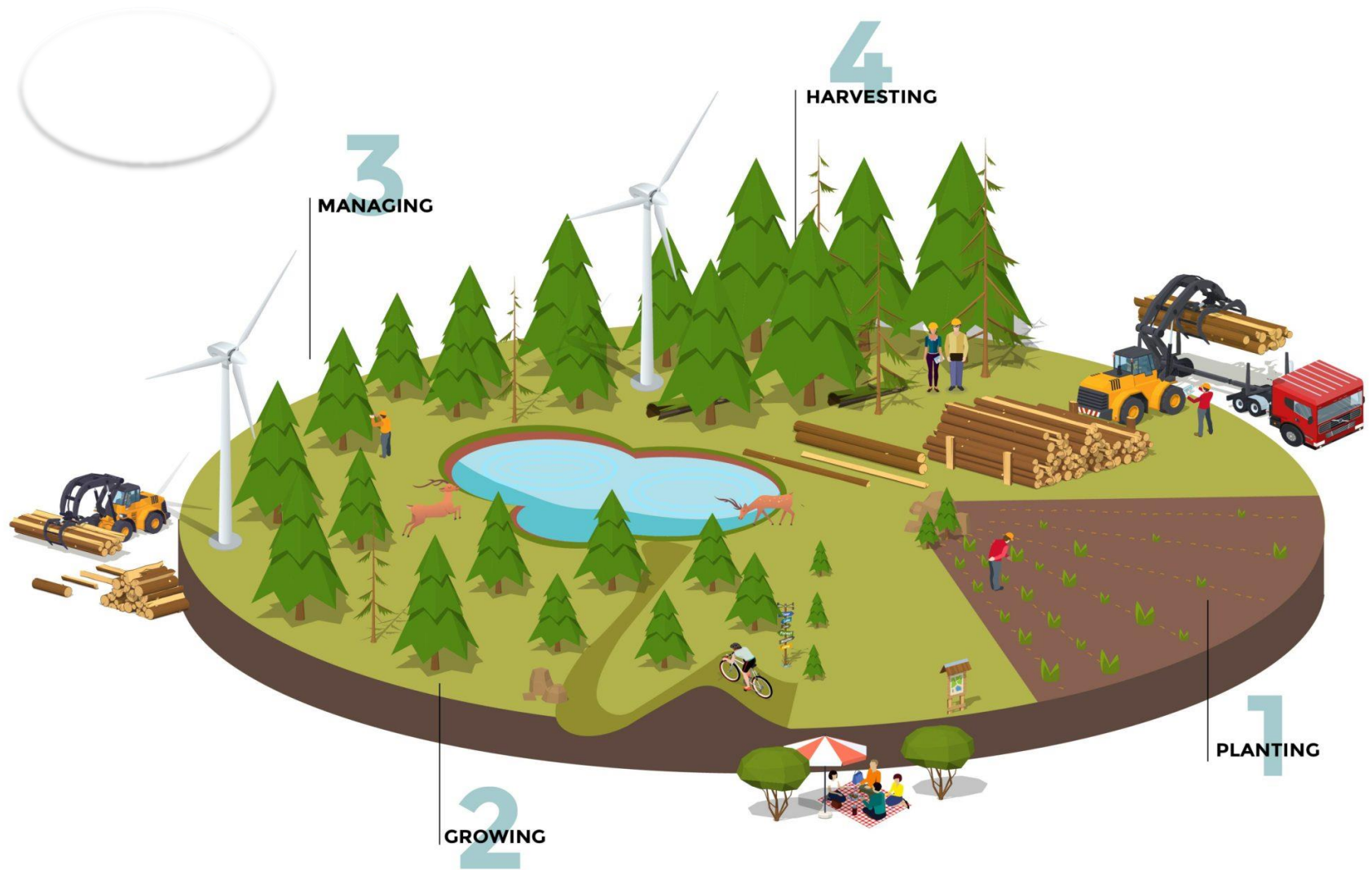
- Farmers are the Future of Forestry in Ireland
- Our land and forests are best placed with our farm families and local communities
- Suite of options, choice, reward
- Timelines a must for decisions
- Long Term Value (pension)
- Inheritance (family)
- Enhance Farm Sustainability
- Biodiversity, carbon, water



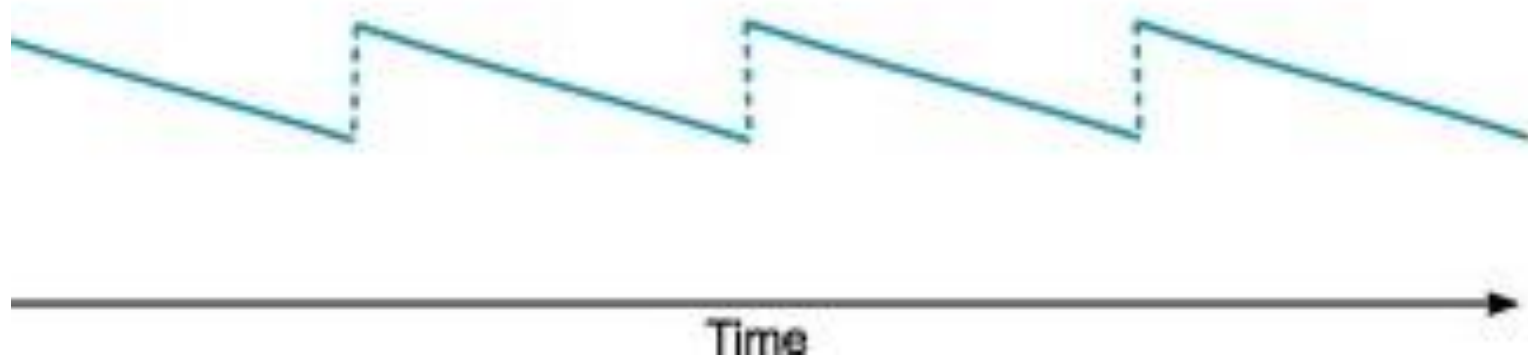
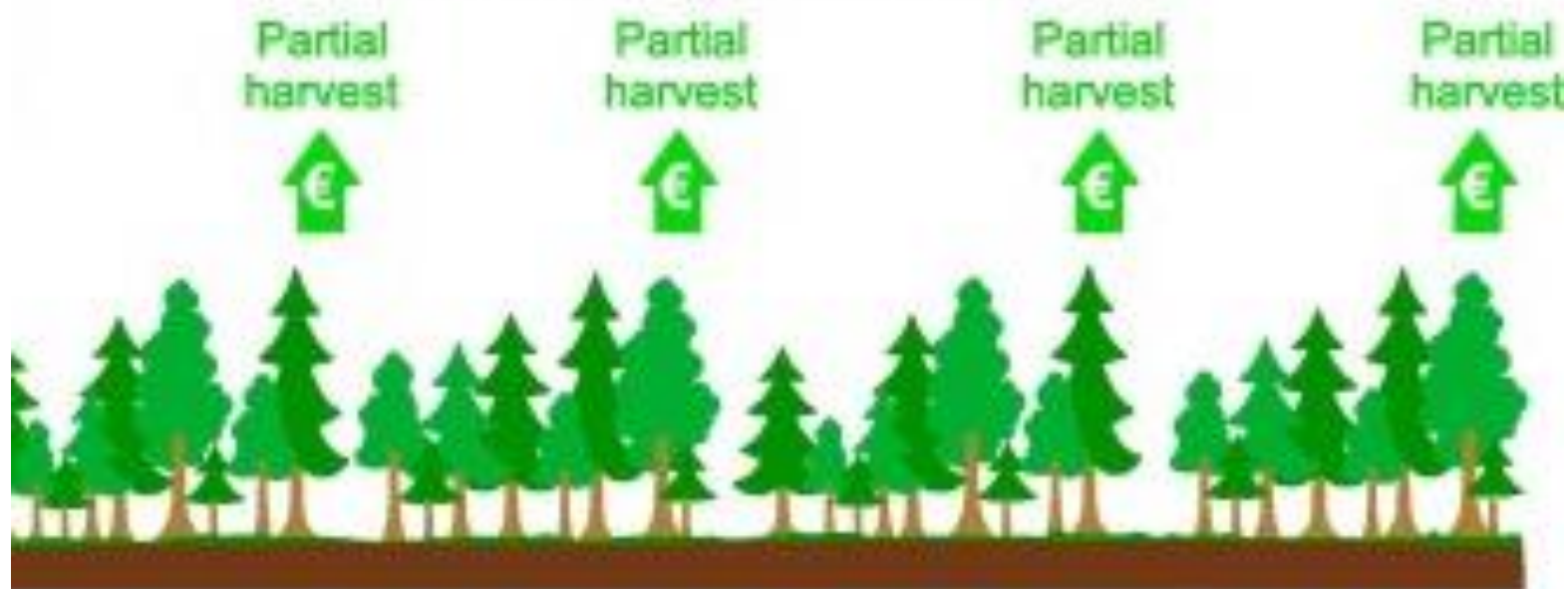
# Managing Forestry Operations

- Establishment (affor, refor, natural regeneration)
- Maintenance
- Tending/Woodland Improvement
- Licence Applications
  - Access – Road licence
  - Felling licence
- Forest Management Options (Thin, no thin, CCF)
- Recreation / Tourism / Wild Foods / Eco Services
- Harvesting Operations
- Replanting / Natural Regen

# Managing Forestry Operations



# CONTINUOUS COVER FORESTRY



# Changes in Regulatory System For those who want to plant forests

Afforestation, roads and tree felling are all licensable activities under Forestry Act 2014

Afforestation Licence most difficult due to land use change

- Land & Silvicultural Assessment
- Habitat Assessment
- Ecological Assessment (WFD, Curlew, Hen Harrier etc)
- Appropriate Assessment (Natura sites) & Determination
- Licence and Conditions (NB)



# **Changes in Regulatory System For those who want to plant forest**

Potential for additional costs due to survey requirements (e.g. bird survey, otter survey, rare plants, archaeology walkover, drainage report, Invasive species Man Plan etc)

Environmental Report Grant – offset some but maybe not all of the costs above.

Water & Habitats are most sensitive concerns

Land Classification Assessment

# Changes in Regulatory System - Forests

Felling Licence required to fell or uproot a tree, same environmental sensitivities must be considered (water)

## Felling Licence

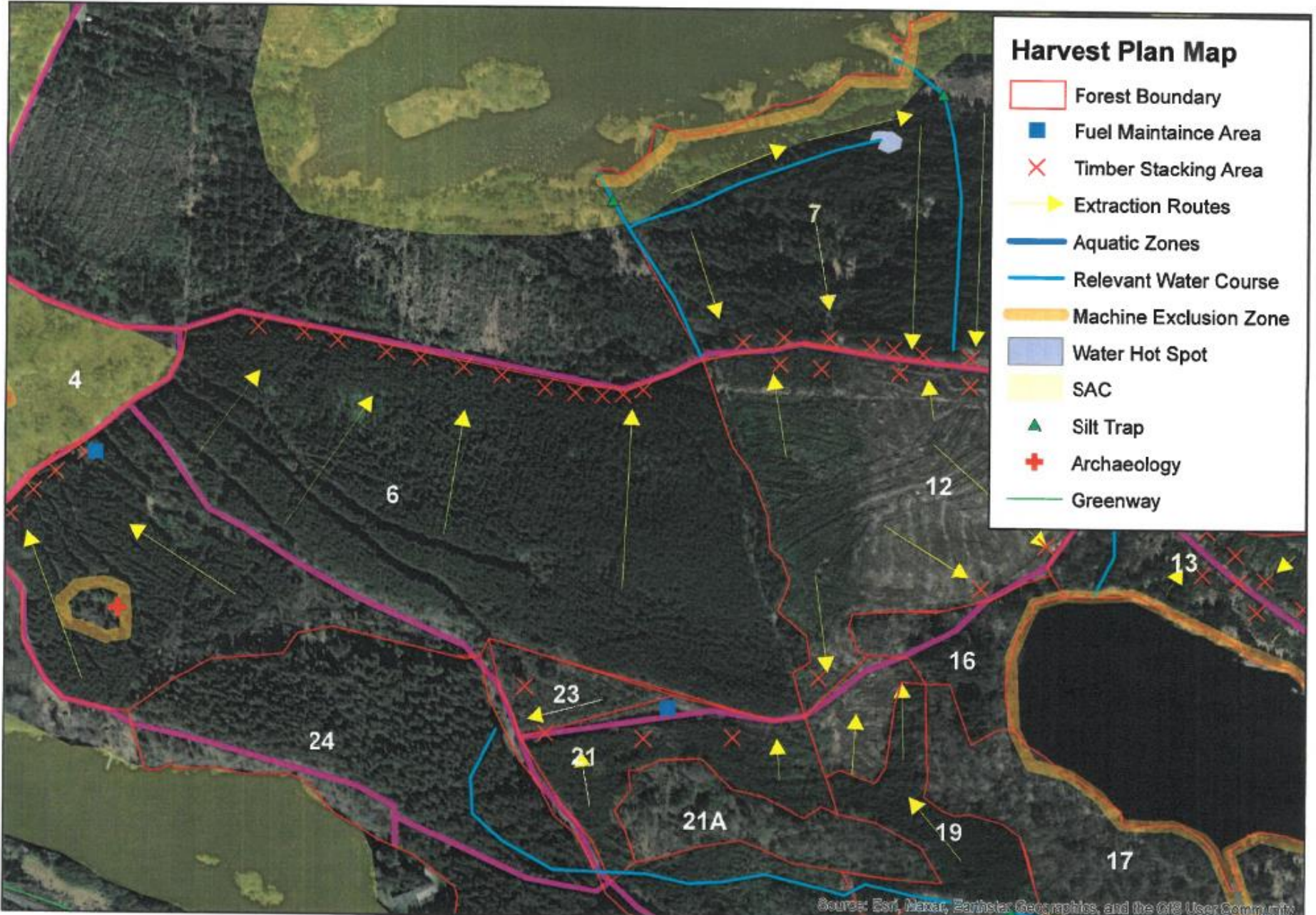
- Application
- Harvest plan
- Replanting plan
- Maps (species, harvest, reforestation)
- Can include multiple felling operations (up to 10 yrs)



Licence Conditions very important, can be appealed

# Harvest Plan Map

- Forest Boundary
- Fuel Maintainece Area
- Timber Stacking Area
- Extraction Routes
- Aquatic Zones
- Relevant Water Course
- Machine Exclusion Zone
- Water Hot Spot
- SAC
- Silt Trap
- Archaeology
- Greenway



Source: Esri, Navar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

## Felling Licence Exempted Trees

- Trees within 30m of a building
- Trees <5yrs that naturally regenerated
- Short rotation coppice, Hedgerow
- Trees outside a forest, within 10m road deemed to be dangerous
- Planning Permission
- Trees on a farm – outside a forest (<3 m<sup>3</sup>/tree; <15 m<sup>3</sup> per annum)

# How do we Manage these Changes



- Planning, planning, planning
  - Affor licence – min 1 year
  - Felling licence – min 6 months, average 12+ months
  - Road licence – min 6 months, average 12+ months
  - All other schemes – 6 months to 2 years +
- Licence conditions may dictate other schemes e.g. felling licence conditions may favour scheme support for reforestation (such as NWS), they all need lead in time.

## How do we Manage these Changes

- Licence conditions can reduce forest area in the clearfell system
- Continuous cover forestry (Scheme) – Continuous thinnings manage your forest under close to nature forestry principles then you wont be losing forest area such as installing new buffers
- Not suitable for every forest



# How do we Manage these Changes

- Information & Knowledge is key:
  - Field & Open days
  - Seminars/conferences
  - Knowledge Transfer Groups (KTGs)
  - Webinars, podcasts, websites etc
- Regulatory Efficiency - DAFM
  - Standard forestry practice included at screening
  - Timelines





Largest ever investment by an Irish Government in tree-planting

Premiums for planting trees to be increased by between 46% and 66% and extended to 20 years for farmers

# Proposed Forestry Programme (FP) Interventions

1. **Forest Creation**
2. **Creation of Agroforestry Systems**
3. Infrastructure and Technology investments
4. Sustainable Forest Management
5. Developing skills and empowering people for sustainable forest management
6. Open Forest Measure: Social, cultural & heritage forests (existing forests)
7. **Climate Resilient Reforestation**
8. Reconstitution

# Future of Farmer Forestry

Farmers never had more options



Explore Your  
Options



Forests integrated into the Farm  
Commercial Forestry as an investment  
Or why not Both



# Native Tree Area Scheme

Small scale planting of native trees without an afforestation licence

## Two Types:

NTA 1 - Creation of small native forests

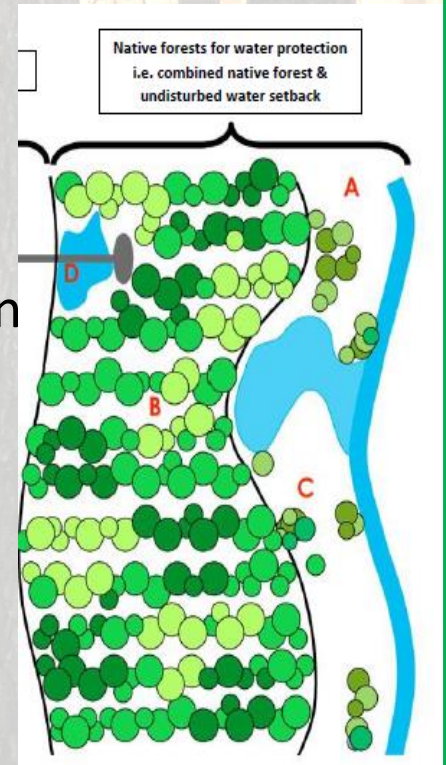
Establishment of new native forests on farmed land

NTA 2 - Creation of native forests for water protection

Native forests and undisturbed water setbacks to protect and enhance water quality

Native Tree Area Scheme Premiums over 10 years:

- €2,206 per ha annually for NTA1
- €2,284 per ha annually for NTA2



# Forests & CAP



Existing and new planted forests qualify for BISS

Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) & Agroforestry and Native Woodland all qualify for payments, incl BISS

OFS parcels can be converted to forestry without penalty

# Forests & CAP



## Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES)

- Native Woodland or Agroforestry - Tier 2 priority entry
- Split parcels for Afforestation & ACRES
- Move from ACRES to Affor without Penalty (2 years)



## Your Forest is Valuable

**There is a reason investors want it - e.g. existing Forest & Refor highly sought after - Know Why!**

**Many values - wood, ecosystem services (Carbon, water, biodiversity)**

**Sell land for €6 - 8k acre - Gone**

**1 acre SS - €6k; CCF - €7.4k; Oak €8.4k; NWS €8.9k**



**AND You Still OWN the land & Trees**



In conclusion, ...

Future is bright for Farm Forestry

Increased premium payments

Multiple Payments Schemes on same land

Your pension and/or valuable inheritance for next generation – Hold on to your land & Forest

Be prepared, plan ahead

Regulation is here to stay, be prepared

Thank you  
Questions welcome



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