



Houses of the  
Oireachtas  
Tithe an  
Oireachtais

**An Comchoiste um Thalmhaíocht, Bia agus Muir**

**Tuarascáil**

**ar**

**Athbhreithniú ar Thailte Cimineachta agus Pleananna  
Bainistithe Creata**

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**Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine**

**Report**

**on**

**Review of Commonage Lands and Framework  
Management Plans**





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## **Chairman's Foreword**



This report entitled *the Review of Commonage Lands and Framework Management Plans* intends to provide a timely review of the most recently published recommendations from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht on the management of the commonage lands. As a Committee, we felt it was an opportune time for the Joint Committee to look at the use and future use of commonage lands in Ireland.

These recommendations from the Department were the cause of concern to many stakeholders who felt they would struggle to achieve their stated ambition, which was to ensure that commonage lands are maintained in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC), to allow their continued usage as a sustainable agricultural, environmental and recreational resource.

The Joint Committee held seven hearings, taking submissions from numerous stakeholders, covering a wide range of issues. We heard that a number of concerns must be addressed in order to ensure that commonage lands remain or are returned to their optimum condition. Amongst these is the need to define what precisely the definition of a “commonage” is. As a term, it is used loosely to describe where lands are either owned or farmed, or even both by more than one farmer or stakeholder. Therefore, we believe it is necessary to give clarity to the meaning of the term “commonage.”

The main issues identified within the report are as follows:

- Optimum Stocking Rates, tailored for individual commonages.
- The effects on dormancy on preparing a management plan.
- Collective arrangements and co-ownership, and the possible impact of imposing collective responsibility, as opposed to a co-operative approach.
- Burning and the rules pertaining, to allow for responsible burning as part of a commonage/upland vegetation management plan.
- Output Driven Models as an approach to achieving the objectives of Commonage Framework Plans.

We recommend that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht would consider the findings and recommendations of the report. We believe the evidence and contributions from both the witnesses and the members offer a valuable insight to designing pragmatic proposals for a workable policy.

May I thank my fellow members of the Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine who engaged with all the stakeholders over many months and for their patience in the compilation of this Report. The Committee is indebted to the Committee Secretariat, the assistance of the Consultant Mr. Michael O’Sullivan and particularly the efforts of the sub-Group in finalising this Report.

I commend this Report to both Houses of the Oireachtas.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Andrew Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive style.

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Andrew Doyle TD  
Chairman



## **Membership of the Joint Committee**

**Deputies:** Tom Barry (FG)  
Pat Deering (FG) [Vice-Chairman]  
Andrew Doyle (FG) [Chairman]  
Martin Ferris (SF)  
Martin Heydon (FG)  
Colm Keaveney (LAB)  
Michael McNamara (LAB)  
Éamon Ó Cuív (FF)  
Thomas Pringle (IND)

**Senators:** Michael Comiskey (FG)  
Paschal Mooney (FF)  
Mary Ann O'Brien (IND)  
Brian Ó Domhnaill (FF)  
Susan O'Keeffe (LAB)  
Pat O'Neill (FG)



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## **Introduction**

This report outlines the principal facts and arguments presented to the Joint Committee (hereinafter the “Committee”) in its review of issues affecting commonages in Ireland as well as detailing a number of recommendations which the Committee believes, if implemented, would positively contribute to the improved management of our commonages.

The Committee held a total of seven days' hearings on this matter between December 2012 and June 2013 during which presentations were made by a wide range of witnesses including the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) farmers' representative bodies, Teagasc, conservation and interest groups, and individual farmers.

## **Background**

The term 'commonage' does not have a precise definition in the context of Irish agriculture but is generally understood to refer to grazing lands that are jointly owned, as well as to other lands (not necessarily jointly owned) over which two or more farmers have grazing rights. Historically, many commonages derived from unenclosed parts of large agricultural estates, other parts of which were divided up and sold off under land reform measures in the 19th and 20th centuries. Ireland has approximately 4,500 commonages comprising over 330,000 hectares divided into more than 6,700 plots.

Of the 15,000 farmers who applied for direct aid under agri-environmental schemes, approximately 1,650 (11%) applied in respect of commonages over a ten year period. The use of commonages is widespread across the country, particularly in upland areas and in the West. Commonages are also found in lowland areas and in the East, such as in the Cooley Peninsula in Co. Louth and the Curragh in Co. Kildare. Most commonages are used for grazing sheep, though cattle and ponies are also grazed on them, for example, Connemara and Co. Kerry.

Problems in the management of commonages, particularly concerning overgrazing, developed in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of agricultural policies and practices following Ireland's accession to the European Communities in 1973. These problems ultimately led to the introduction between 1998 and 2002 of Commonage Framework Plans (CFPs) by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the NPWS to redress environmental damage to commonages by controlling the numbers of animals grazed on them. Following assessment of the conditions of individual commonages, each CFP proposed a "destocking" percentage - that is, a proportion of the animals on it (usually sheep) to be removed so as to permit the land to

recover from overgrazing. Farmers were paid to winter animals off hillsides or to switch to lowland grazing.

Between 2003 and 2011, destocking under CFPs, together with factors such as ageing farmer demographics, decoupling, the introduction of single farm payments and changes in farm practices and market conditions, led to a large reduction in the numbers of sheep being grazed on commonages. In many cases, this resulted in undergrazing and the growth of invasive species. In some cases, commonages suffered from overgrazing, causing physical damage to lands as well as harming bio-diversity.

The Committee was informed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine at the meeting on 19 February 2013 that four types of payment are made in respect of commonages. Two of which (the Single Farm Payment and the Disadvantaged Area Payment) (SFP) are direct payments funded under Pillar 1. The other two (the Grassland Sheet Scheme Payment and the Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS) or the Agri-Environment Options Scheme (AEOS) payments) are funded under Pillar 2 as rural development schemes by both the EU and Ireland. All these are conditional on land being maintained in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC). The deterioration of commonages creates a risk of commonage lands being classified as non-agricultural and so ineligible for further farm payments.

## **Review of the Commonage Framework Plans (CFPs)**

In view of the increasing difficulties facing commonages and those who work them, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine undertook a review of Commonage Framework Plans (CFPs) in 2011 and 2012. The Department is currently considering how best to implement that review consistently with the EU requirement to maintain land in GAEC. It is hoped that the Committee's Report will assist the Department in determining the policy action plan to be followed in relation to addressing issues and problems identified.

Among the proposals being considered by the Department are:

- increased stocking of sheep on commonage lands as a means of addressing undergrazing;
- the prescribing of minimum and maximum overall stocking levels for individual commonages;
- focusing payments on "active farmers"; and
- the use of collective agreements between shareholders in commonages as a means of organising and managing individual commonages and payments for them.

At the meeting on 19 February 2013, the NPWS described the current review process as an opportunity to achieve goals for stocking levels for managing land under Pillar 1 supports, and

hopefully also under Pillar 2, and to deliver biodiversity to upland areas.

## **Issues Affecting Commonages**

The Committee heard evidence of a number of issues that must be addressed in order to ensure the return to optimum condition of commonage lands and to promote their use as sustainable agricultural, environmental and recreational resources.

## **Stocking Commonages**

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine informed the Committee that the current review of CFPs by the Department and the NPWS had established grazing plans for over 4,500 commonages with more to be completed. These plans could not be tailored to individual commonages without the input of the shareholders. While undergrazing is a serious issue in many cases, there were numerous cases of overstocking. Shareholders must therefore have flexibility as to stocking levels. The intention was not to simply prescribe minimum and maximum stocking levels without regard to local conditions or the context of the shareholding of the commonage. However, the Irish Farmers' Association expressed disquiet about stocking rates for commonages quoted in the Irish Farmers Journal which, it was said would, in some cases, provide insufficient numbers to prevent undergrazing.

A number of contributors pointed to the lead time that would be required to restock commonages – particularly in upland areas – where sheep were not familiar with an area and how to sustain themselves in it. The United Farmers' Association informed the Committee on 26 February 2013 of the importance of "hefting", that is, the development of instinctive home range tendencies whereby sheep graze only particular areas without the need for fencing or herding. These are passed from ewe to lamb and can take several generations to develop. Similarly, certain breeds are better suited to upland grazing and are better adapted to local parasites and mineral conditions. It was stated that farmers who restock commonages would require financial assistance to buy appropriate breeds and to cover the additional costs of looking after animals while they adapted to upland grazing. Teagasc indicated that the numbers of animals must be sufficient to justify the difficulty and expense of grazing them on uplands.

## **Dormancy**

Contributors stressed the importance of dealing with dormant shareholders in commonages. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine said that most dormant shareholders have ceased to farm but that a number still claimed payments despite their inactivity. This had led to situations where commonages were undergrazed and where payments were going to persons who had no strong motivation to work on and improve the conditions in commonages. For that

reason, the Department was anxious to focus payments under the CFP on "active farmers" and so help to revitalise rural life in areas where there had been a significant falling off in the farming population. The United Farmers Association expressed concern that the term "active farmer" was not clearly defined. Difficulties arising from co-ownership rights over commonages or inability to afford the costs of restocking to levels prescribed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine could result in smaller farmers being excluded from the definition of "active farmer" and so from payments.

## **Burning**

A number of contributors pointed out that grazing alone is not sufficient to control growth on many upland commonages. In many cases, it is necessary to carry out controlled burning to remove overgrown heathers and other plants. However, severe overgrowth or vandalism can lead to fires running out of control and burning down to plants' roots. Apart from the danger this posed to human life and property, this was severely destructive of the natural habitat for fauna such as red grouse as well as interfering with normal re-growth of plant life. The problem is exacerbated by limitations on the times during which farmers could carry out controlled burns. The Wicklow Uplands Council pointed out that under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, farmers in Ireland were permitted to burn only between the month of September and February, while farmers in the United Kingdom had an additional six weeks until the middle of April. The additional time would be helpful to facilitate controlled burning within this period as ground and weather conditions are generally not dry enough to do so before the end of February. This would also allow a clearer assessment of the needs of commonage land as would a distinction between upland burning and lowlands. Derogations for burnings in exceptional cases outside of the generally permitted times would also assist.

## **Collective Arrangements and Co-ownership**

Contributors generally agreed on the need for CFPs to deal with the problems that can be caused where one or more shareholder in a commonage block agreement on some aspect of its management. In such cases, the failure of one party to fulfil an obligation can result in the other parties having to go to the trouble or expense of remedying the outstanding matter themselves. Where a condition for payment – such as maintaining a commonage in GAEC – is prejudiced by the actions of a minority of shareholders, the entire group can face a collective sanction.

It was generally accepted by contributors that it was important to avoid such collective responsibilities wherever possible, and instead to seek to adopt co-operative arrangements. However, a number of contributors noted the difficulty and expense that can be required to achieve such agreements. Teagasc noted that commonage plans in the United Kingdom had

been reformed along co-operative lines in recent years but pointed out that doing so had required a considerable investment of time and money to negotiate and settle agreements between commonage shareholders. If a similar approach was to be adopted here, it was suggested that it would be essential to provide the human and financial resources needed to anticipate difficulties in the management and operation of commonages and agree means of resolving them.

## **Output-Driven Models**

A number of contributors noted that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine had proposed minimum and maximum stocking levels for a number of commonages across the country. Almost all contributors agreed that management of uplands and other environmentally sensitive areas where commonages are found would be more likely to succeed if detailed prescriptive approaches to management issues such as stocking levels, grazing dates or breeds of animals are avoided.

It was suggested that instead, an output-driven approach should be adopted where the relevant State bodies could agree with shareholders the agricultural and environmental results to be achieved in particular commonages and the time-scales for so doing. However, the detailed means by which those results are achieved should be left to those who own and manage the commonage and who have the local knowledge and personal interests in attaining them. While the relevant State bodies have an interest and responsibility to ensure that appropriate standards and best practices are met, it was suggested that their primary role should be to facilitate rather than direct the management of commonages.

The Committee received presentations on a number of output driven schemes and initiatives relevant to the management of commonages. On 15 January 2013, the Committee received a presentation on the Burren Farming for Conservation Programme. This is a programme to improve habitats, water quality and heritage in the Burren by means of improvement measures worked out by a project team and by planners who are paid for by the farmers themselves. Successful completion of improvement projects can lead to payments to the farmers which are funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine under Pillar 2 by virtue of Art. 68(1) of Regulation 73/2009 using unspent Single Farm Payment funds. Payments are supplemental to REPS/AEOS payments. Among the measures promoted under the Programme are species-rich grasslands, improvement in site conditions and protection of habitats.

The programme has been availed of by 160 farmers since its inception in 2010 and has disbursed payments of €2.85m with an average annual payment of €7,500 to each participating farmer. The kernel of the Programme is the giving of incentives for improvements. Failure to complete improvements will result in no payments. The Programme employs local workers

contributing further to local development. It has been successful in bringing about significant improvements in areas in which it operates and is popular with farmers. It was suggested that it could be used as a model for agricultural and environmental improvement schemes in other conservation areas.

On 12 February 2013, the Golden Eagle Trust described to the Committee the importance of the relationship between the Golden Eagle Trust and farmers in Co. Donegal in successfully reintroducing eagles in that county and the essential role farmers have in what was described as "the ownership of nature". The importance of promoting nature and wildlife as part of rural development was stressed. At the same meeting, the National Associations of Red Grouse Conservation Councils stressed the importance of output-driven schemes in promoting red grouse habitats with farmers having unique knowledge of and insights into local conditions. It was suggested that sustainable habitats cannot be imposed from outside and that farmers must have a central role. Measures such as controlled burning, grazing and heather management were central to maintaining wildlife habitats as much as to commonage farming.

On 18 June 2013, the Wicklow Uplands Council informed the Committee that the Council was a voluntary organisation that worked to support sustainable development in the local environment. In 2011, it established a working group to deal with the management of upland vegetation. Members include upland farmers, representatives of Teagasc and the NPWS, and others. The Group has provided a forum for developing an agreed approach to issues in the Wicklow Uplands including fire control, heather burning, recreational access to uplands and deer control. It has contributed to the Wicklow Uplands Council's recommendations for a targeted Uplands Agri-Environmental Scheme schemes, including proposals that payments under the Scheme be linked to outcomes such as production of bio-diversity and habitat diversity, while supporting sustainable farming, co-operation on commonages, recreation and cultural heritage. The group estimate that more than 350 upland farmers would receive payments under the proposed Scheme at an average of €8,000 per annum. Similarly to the approach adopted in the Burren, the Council proposed that Pillar II funds be used to incentivise projects that promote these purposes.

## **Recommendations**

Having considered all of the stakeholders views expressed in detailed discussions at seven separate Committee meetings, the Committee has agreed the following recommendations which it believes could, if implemented, positively contribute to addressing the concerns around the issues and problems regarding commonage lands identified by the stakeholders.

The Committee

1. Recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine treat the improvement of commonages as a priority in order to remedy environmental damage sustained due to earlier policies, as a means to counter falling farm incomes in deprived areas, and as a measure to promote rural economic and social development.
2. Recommends that studies be undertaken to:
  - identify and assess the effects of dormancy on the management of commonages and on their agricultural and environmental conditions;
  - assess the effect of changing farming methods, particularly the supplementary feeding of ewes and hoggetts, on patterns of under and overgrazing.
3. Calls on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to give clarity to the meaning of the term "commonage" for the purpose of grants and payments, to take steps to examine the legal status (or statuses) of commonages and their owners to clarify the effects of dormancy on the ownership and management of commonages.
4. Notes that the compulsory de-stocking requirements of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht are not requirements of GAEC for the purposes of Single Farm Payments, and that compensation above this amount must be paid to farmers if the Departments wish to impose those de-stocking requirements on them.
5. Recommends that the management of commonages be promoted through output-driven schemes that take careful account of the insights and requirements of those who own and/or manage commonages.
6. Urges the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to avoid unnecessarily prescriptive approaches and, in particular, that maximum and minimum stocking rates proposed by State agencies be treated as guidance rather than requirements. The Department should avoid one-size-fits-all solutions: each management scheme must be based on and address the unique characteristics of individual commonages.

7. Commends to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine the approaches adopted by the Burren Life Project. This is an output-driven scheme that has provided considerable environmental, agricultural, social and economic benefits in a way that appears to be efficient and effective. Such schemes will encourage the management of commonages along co-operative lines so as to reduce the problems caused by dormancy or disagreement among shareholders, and promote the involvement of younger farmers and other young unemployed people.
8. Urges the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to make use of all available funding mechanisms to incentivise farmer-led improvements to the agricultural and environmental conditions of commonages. Such schemes should be based on the Burren Life Project in conjunction with or in addition to existing REPS/AEOS schemes. Schemes should be open to all commonages where at least 80% of active farmers (that is, those receiving Single Farm Payments or making DAS claims in respect of the commonage area) participate in the scheme.
9. Recommends that provision be made to extend dates for controlled burning and to return them to the dates which operated in Ireland prior to the Wildlife Act 2000, particularly in upland areas, as a means to improve the management of commonages.
10. Notes that commonages represent only part of the country's uplands; the State itself owns or controls significant lands and forests adjacent to commonages and therefore urges all relevant Departments to adopt uniform policies towards uplands management and to promote consistent approaches towards them among the various relevant State agencies.

## **Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference**

### **a. Functions of the Committee – derived from Standing Orders [DSO 82A; SSO 70A]**

- (1) The Select Committee shall consider and report to the Dáil on—
  - (a) such aspects of the expenditure, administration and policy of the relevant Government Department or Departments and associated public bodies as the Committee may select, and
  - (b) European Union matters within the remit of the relevant Department or Departments.
- (2) The Select Committee may be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann to form a Joint Committee for the purposes of the functions set out below, other than at paragraph (3), and to report thereon to both Houses of the Oireachtas.
- (3) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Select Committee shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments, such—
  - (a) Bills,
  - (b) proposals contained in any motion, including any motion within the meaning of Standing Order 164,
  - (c) Estimates for Public Services, and
  - (d) other matters as shall be referred to the Select Committee by the Dáil, and
  - (e) Annual Output Statements, and
  - (f) such Value for Money and Policy Reviews as the Select Committee may select.
- (4) The Joint Committee may consider the following matters in respect of the relevant Department or Departments and associated public bodies, and report thereon to both Houses of the Oireachtas:
  - (a) matters of policy for which the Minister is officially responsible,
  - (b) public affairs administered by the Department,
  - (c) policy issues arising from Value for Money and Policy Reviews conducted or commissioned by the Department,
  - (d) Government policy in respect of bodies under the aegis of the Department,
  - (e) policy issues concerning bodies which are partly or wholly funded by the State or which are established or appointed by a member of the Government or the Oireachtas,
  - (f) the general scheme or draft heads of any Bill published by the Minister,
  - (g) statutory instruments, including those laid or laid in draft before either House or both Houses and those made under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009,
  - (h) strategy statements laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas pursuant to the Public Service Management Act 1997,
  - (i) annual reports or annual reports and accounts, required by law, and laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas, of the Department or bodies referred to in paragraph (4)(d) and (e) and the overall operational results, statements of strategy and corporate plans of such bodies, and

- (j) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Dáil and/or Seanad from time to time.
  
- (5) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Joint Committee shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments—
  - (a) EU draft legislative acts standing referred to the Select Committee under Standing Order 105, including the compliance of such acts with the principle of subsidiarity,
  - (b) other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, including programmes and guidelines prepared by the European Commission as a basis of possible legislative action,
  - (c) non-legislative documents published by any EU institution in relation to EU policy matters, and
  - (d) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the relevant EU Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings.
  
- (6) A sub-Committee stands established in respect of each Department within the remit of the Select Committee to consider the matters outlined in paragraph (3), and the following arrangements apply to such sub-Committees:
  - (a) the matters outlined in paragraph (3) which require referral to the Select Committee by the Dáil may be referred directly to such sub-Committees, and
  - (b) each such sub-Committee has the powers defined in Standing Order 83(1) and (2) and may report directly to the Dáil, including by way of Message under Standing Order 87.
  
- (7) The Chairman of the Joint Committee, who shall be a member of Dáil Éireann, shall also be the Chairman of the Select Committee and of any sub-Committee or Committees standing established in respect of the Select Committee.
  
- (8) The following may attend meetings of the Select or Joint Committee, for the purposes of the functions set out in paragraph (5) and may take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments:
  - (a) Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland, including Northern Ireland,
  - (b) Members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and
  - (c) at the invitation of the Committee, other Members of the European Parliament.

**b. Scope and Context of Activities of Committees (as derived from Standing Orders [DSO 82; SSO 70])**

- (1) The Joint Committee may only consider such matters, engage in such activities, exercise such powers and discharge such functions as are specifically authorised under its orders of reference and under Standing Orders.
- (2) Such matters, activities, powers and functions shall be relevant to, and shall arise only in the context of, the preparation of a report to the Dáil and/or Seanad.
- (3) It shall be an instruction to all Select Committees to which Bills are referred that they shall ensure that not more than two Select Committees shall meet to consider a Bill on any given day, unless the Dáil, after due notice given by the Chairman of the Select Committee, waives this instruction on motion made by the Taoiseach pursuant to Dáil

Standing Order 26. The Chairmen of Select Committees shall have responsibility for compliance with this instruction.

- (4) The Joint Committee shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Committee of Public Accounts pursuant to Dáil Standing Order 163 and/or the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993.
- (5) The Joint Committee shall refrain from inquiring into in public session or publishing confidential information regarding any matter if so requested, for stated reasons given in writing, by—
  - (a) a member of the Government or a Minister of State, or
  - (b) the principal office-holder of a body under the aegis of a Department or which is partly or wholly funded by the State or established or appointed by a member of the Government or by the Oireachtas:

Provided that the Chairman may appeal any such request made to the Ceann Comhairle / Cathaoirleach whose decision shall be final.



## **Appendix 2 - Links to Transcripts of Committee Debates**

**18 December 2012** – Environment Pillar (*Ms. Anja Murray, Mr. Alex Copland, Mr. Andrew St. Ledger and Mr. Cillian Lohan*)

**15 January 2013** – Burren Farming for conservation programme (*Dr. Brendan Dunford, Sharon Parr, Dr. James Moran and Mr Michael Davoren (Burren Irish Farmers Association)*)

**29 January 2013** – Comhairle na Tuaithe (*Ms Finola Moylette, Chairperson, Mr. Des Moore*)

**12 February 2013** – Teagasc (*Mr. Pat Murphy and Catherine Keena*), National Association of Regional Game Councils (*Mr. David Scallan, Mr. Seán Doris and Mr. Simon Devereux*) and Golden Eagle Trust (*Mr. Lorcán O’Toole*)

**19 February 2013** – The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (*Mr. Kevin Smyth, Mr. Paud Evans and Mr. Declan Mullins*) and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (*Dr. Ciaran O’Keeffe and Dr. Andrew Bleasdale*)

**26 February 2013** – United Farmers Association (*Mr. Bertie Wall and Mr. Sean Guerin*) and Irish Farmers Association (*Mr. John Bryan, Mr. Gerry Gunning, Mr. Tom Fadian and Mr. Flor McCarthy*)

**18 June 2013** – Wicklow Uplands Council (*Mr. John Medlycott, Ms. Cara Heraty, Mr. Pat Dunne*) and Teagasc Wicklow Land Use Advisor (*Mr. Declan Byrne*)

