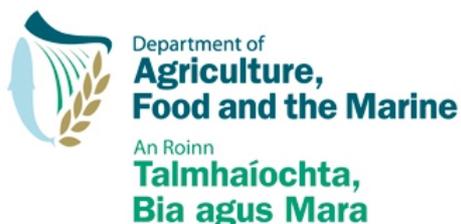


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March 2015

MINISTER HAYES LAUNCHES COFORD REPORT MOBILISING IRELAND'S FOREST

RESOURCE

Minister of State Tom Hayes today launched a COFORD report on the mobilisation of roundwood to meet growing demands for wood fuel and sawn timber in Ireland. The report has been authored by the COFORD wood mobilisation group which comprised growers and processors, Coillte, Teagasc, the Northern Ireland Forest Service, and officials from the Forest Service.

The report analyses the full range of issues impacting on the level of wood mobilisation, including: current and projected roundwood supply/demand dynamics and measures, forest rotation length, forest roads and roading, provision of harvest information to growers, road haulage and transport technology, training, environmental designations and research and development. It addresses these and other topics through 40 specific recommendations.

In welcoming the report Minister Hayes said:

What we are dealing with here is the wood mobilisation challenge: to sustainably double harvest from forests, both state and private, from the current 3 million cubic metres per annum to over 6 million cubic metres by the end of the coming decade.

He went on to say

The report I am launching today is very timely in the context of my announcement last week of the new Forestry Programme, which will run up the end of 2020. It contains a number of measures related to wood mobilisation, including support for the construction of 700 km of new forest roads, or 125 km per year, from now to the end of 2020.

Mike Glennon the chairman of the COFORD wood mobilisation group said:

It is essential that we follow up on all of the recommendations in the report in order to address an already very tight sawlog supply situation. The All Ireland roundwood production forecast does show increasing levels of wood coming to market in the years ahead. But we need to invest and work to make these projections happen, so that the processing sector can secure its raw material at a sustainable level.

The report is available for download at www.coford.ie. For further information contact the COFORD secretariat in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine at 01 6072487

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