AGRI-FOOD STRATEGY

2025

Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment

Philip Farrelly & Co

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

AGRI-FOOD STRATEGY 2025

SCREENING STATEMENT FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Prepared on behalf of

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Regulatory Context

This Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report was prepared by Philip Farrelly & Co in association with Scott Cawley Ltd. for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). It provides information on and assesses the potential for the proposed Strategy to impact on sites of European-scale ecological importance.

The responsibility for carrying out the assessment lies with the DAFM and this report facilitates the AA Screening by the DAFM.

The preparation of the Draft Strategy has regard to Article 6 of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive). This is transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477) (hereafter referred to as the Habitats Regulations) and Part XAB of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010. Since the Draft Strategy is not covered by the Planning Acts it falls under the remit of the Birds and Habitats Regulations.

Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive sets out the requirements of Member States, that within European sites, they maintain and restore those habitats and/or species that a site has been designated to favourable conservation status, and avoid damaging activities that could significantly disturb species or lead to deterioration of their habitats or habitat types:

Article 6(2): "*Member States shall take appropriate steps to avoid, in the special areas of conservation, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated, in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of this Directive".*

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites (Annex 1.1).

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out a further assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)):

Article 6(3): "*Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public*."

The subsequent paragraph allows proposed plans and projects to be approved in certain conditions.

Article 6(4): "*If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for*

imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest."

This report has informed the Appropriate Assessment Screening process for the Draft Agri-food Strategy 2025.

1.2 Appropriate Assessment: Purpose and Process

Industry sectoral groups, representative of the stakeholders involved in this area have commenced preparation of the Draft Strategy under the coordination of DAFM. This Draft Strategy will set out the underlying trends and projections of how the sectors are expected to change in the period up to 2025.

All such strategies, such as the Draft Strategy, must be prepared and examined to ensure that there will not be any significant adverse effects on sites that are designated for their special habitats and wildlife. These particular sites are regarded to be of European importance and are part of the European Commission's Natura 2000 network of sites. They are termed Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) under the E.C. Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPA) (hereafter "European sites"[1]) under the E.C. Birds Directive. The Irish Government has a legal obligation to protect these sites.

The process of assessing the Draft Strategy was a structured exercise with a series of steps. The overall purpose of the process was to ensure that the Strategy, when implemented, does not result in adverse effects on the "integrity" of the European sites within the Natura 2000 network. The overall process is termed "Appropriate Assessment".

The first step was to look at the overall Strategy in principle and to answer the questions: is it likely that the implementation of this Strategy could result in likely significant effects on the European sites within the Natura 2000 network? It does not matter where these sites may be – impacts can occur across administrative boundaries. This step is known as "Screening" and is required by Part 5 Section 42(2) of the Bird and Habitats Regulations. The Screening Stage was carried out prior to the drafting of the Strategy and a Screening Report and Determination has been published alongside the Draft Strategy.

If the screening stage results in a judgement that likely significant effects may occur or cannot be ruled out, then a more detailed AA is required. Whilst the structure of this

[1] Natura 2000 sites are defined under the Habitats Directive (Article 3) as a European ecological network of special areas of conservation composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II. The aim of the network is to aid the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. In Ireland these sites are designed as *European sites* - defined under the Planning Acts and/or Birds and Habitats Regulations as (a) a candidate site of Community importance, (b) a site of Community importance, (c) a candidate special area of conservation, (d) a special area of conservation, (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area. They are commonly referred to in Ireland as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

assessment process is not specified in the legislation, there are guidance documents that are used to provide an indication of how this assessment may be carried out.

In order to ensure that the Draft Strategy complied fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Philip Farrelly & Co in association with Scott Cawley Ltd, on behalf of DAFM carried out the screening of the Draft Strategy in principle, to see if it required an AA. The Screening determination records this decision.

1.3 Aim of this Report

The aims of this report are:

- Identify the generic relationship and potential for impacts between the proposed Agri-food Strategy 2025 and the Natura 2000 site network;
- To determine if the implementation of the Draft Strategy could result in likely significant effects on the Natura 2000 site network.

1.4 Overlap with the Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Draft Strategy will carried out concurrently with the screening process. There will be several areas of overlap and in accordance with good practice in terms of data gathering and sharing, data on European sites and potential sensitivities and threats that will be provided to the SEA team.

1.5 Consultation Strategy

The DAFM received consultation responses at a pre-Draft Stage from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht on 7th May 2015. The AA Screening stage has taken full account of these observations.

2 OVERVIEW OF THE DRAFT AGRI-FOOD STRATEGY 2025

2.1 Relationship between the proposed Draft Strategy and other Plans and Programmes in the Agriculture Sector

The Draft Strategy is a non-statutory proposal that sits at a high level in terms of the range of policies, plans and programmes that may influence the agriculture sector in Ireland. Above it is the overarching Common Agricultural Policy which applies across Europe. This is implemented in Ireland by the Rural Development Programme and the various sectoral plans and programmes which set out the basis for the development for individual sectors and how they are managed (e.g. Seafood Development Programme). The Draft Strategy is seen to be complementary to the RDP and takes into account the measures proposed within the RDP.

The Draft Strategy provides a series of recommended actions that will be followed by the industry to achieve projected changes in the individual sectors. Since some of the other sectoral development plans and programmes are in some cases, also in the process of being drafted or being finalised, it is important to ensure that the Draft Strategy is cognisant of these other plans. In terms of the Appropriate Assessment, several of these other plans and programmes have undergone assessment including the following:

- Ireland's Forestry Programme 2014-2020;
- Rural Development Plan 2014-2020; and
- Seafood Development Programme (Draft) 2014-2020.

In the hierarchy of sectoral plans and programmes, the above are all set at the national level and do not transpose easily into Regional, County or Local-scale changes that are easier to address in an environmental assessment context. Nevertheless the Draft Strategy will propose changes to agricultural that are measurable at the local level and may drive investment and opportunities in certain areas and sectors.

2.2 Overview of Receiving Environment

The Draft Agri-food Strategy 2025 will be a strategic national plan and therefore will apply to the entire of the Republic of Ireland. The entire Natura 2000 site network in the Republic of Ireland and any trans-boundary impacts with the Natura 2000 site network in other Member States must be considered as the Strategy will apply to all relevant agricultural activities across the State. The Strategy itself will not identify specific regions or areas for the implementation of the Strategy. Therefore the receiving environment is considered to be the entire of the Irish State and Natura 2000 site network in the Republic of Ireland and any associated trans-boundary Natura 2000 sites.

3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

3.1 Statement of Authority

The preparation of this report was carried out by Paul Scott and Ashling Cronin of Scott Cawley Ltd. They were part of the overall Environmental Analysis team lead by Philip Farrelly & Co Ltd. The findings of the report will help inform, and be integrated into, the AA Screening of the Draft Strategy by the DAFM.

Paul Scott is Director with Scott Cawley Ltd. Paul holds a first class honours degree in Environmental Biology from the University of Liverpool and a Masters in Pollution and Environmental Control at the University of Manchester. He is a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) with the Society for the Environment (Soc Env) and a Full Member of the CIEEM. He is an experienced environmental scientist, specialising in impact assessment and ecology. He has experience in a wide variety of environmental assessment and management projects and also has acted as a member of environmental assessment Expert Panels. Paul has prepared guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment to UK and Irish central government and local authorities. Paul has prepared ecological guidance notes designed for planners and developers on behalf of the four Dublin local authorities. Paul has been involved in several Appropriate Assessments of complex projects and land-use plans including the Cherrywood SDZ, Meath County Development Plan, East Meath Local Area Plan and variations to the Meath, Dublin and Kildare Development Plans. Paul developed a review package for Appropriate Assessment as part of the EPA STRIVE funded project Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment. He lectures on EIA and Appropriate Assessment practice at University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin and NUI Galway.

Ashling Cronin is an Ecologist at Scott Cawley Ltd. Ashling holds a first class honours Master's degree in Ecological Assessment and an honours degree in Applied Ecology from University College Cork. She is a Graduate Member of the CIEEM. Ashling has experience in the survey and assessment of a range of habitats and species including: Phase I habitat survey and mapping, mammal surveys (including bats, badgers, and otters), bird, freshwater and ground beetle surveys and impact assessment. She has conducted river corridor habitat surveys including assessment of fisheries potential, and is experienced in biological and physiochemical water quality monitoring. She also has experience of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment having conducted research in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency and was involved in the production of the SEA Process Checklist (EPA, 2008). Ashling regularly prepares Appropriate Assessment Screening Statements for a range of development types and has prepared Natura Impact Statements/Reports for various development types and plans.

3.2 Formal Guidance

The Screening stage has taken account of guidance contained in the following documents:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities.* (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision).
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001); hereafter referred to as the EC Article 6 Guidance Document. The guidance within this document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive.
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC* (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000); hereafter referred to as MN2000.
- *Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC. Clarification of the Concepts of Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence.* Opinion of the European Commission (European Commission, January 2007).
- *Guidelines for Good Practice Appropriate Assessment of Plans Under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive* (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011)

3.3 Sources of Information Used

Information relied upon included the following information sources:

- Online data available on European sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie;
- Information on the status of EU protected habitats and species in Ireland (National Parks & Wildlife Service, 2013a and 2013b);

- Information on the threats, pressures and breeding status for EU protected birds species extracted from Irelands Article 12 submission to the EU Commission on the *Status and trends of birds species (2008-2012)* accessed online[2];
- Information on the conservation status of birds in Ireland (Colhoun & Cummins, 2014);
- Information on Annex I bird species (Kingston, N., 2012).

3.4 Timing of Screening

There is no legal requirement as to when the screening of a strategy for likely significant effects should take place, apart from that it must be done before the strategy is "made". Good practice agreed amongst AA professionals is that it should be a relatively brief stage at the beginning of the drafting of the strategy. Its aim is to decide if the proposed strategy needs to be taken forward to a more detailed level of assessment (Appropriate Assessment or AA). Screening is not the same as an AA – it only requires sufficient information to decide if a significant effect is likely. An AA goes into more detail to test whether those effects could result in damage to the Natura 2000 site network.

The Screening stage was undertaken prior to the drafting of the Strategy. This enabled the highlighting of particular impact pathways between the agricultural sector activities and the sensitivities of the Natura 2000 sites network and hence helped to identify the industry sectors that could have a direct conflict with these sensitivities.

4 SCREENING

4.1 Identification of Reasons for Designation and Generic Pressures and Threats from Agriculture

In order to identify whether the Natura 2000 site network could be potentially affected, it was necessary to describe the Natura 2000 site network in the context of generic threats and pressures potentially arising from activities of the agricultural sector, to Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of SACs and SPAs.

Threats and pressures and conservation status for QIs were extracted from the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (NPWS, 2013a & 2013b). Threats and pressures for SCIs were extracted from Irelands Article 12 submission to the EU Commission on the *Status and trends of birds species (2008-2012)*[2]*.* The conservation status of bird species were obtained from Colhoun & Cummins (2014) *Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2014-2019*.

Potential threats and pressures arising from agricultural activities to SACs and SPAs are summarised in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1. Potential threats and pressures to SACs

Activity	Qualifying Interest	Conservation Status
Abandonment / lack of mowing (A03.03)	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad
	6510 Lowland hay meadows	Bad

[2] http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=ie/eu/art12/envuvesya/IE_birds_reports-14328-144944.xml&conv=343&source=remote

Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing (A04.03)	2130 Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*	Bad
	2140 Decalcified Empetrum dunes*	Inadequate
	2150 Decalcified dune heath*	Inadequate
	2170 Dunes with creeping willow	Inadequate
	2190 Dune slack	Inadequate
	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	3180 Turloughs*	Inadequate
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	4060 Alpine and subalpine heath	Bad
	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
	6130 Calaminarian grassland	Inadequate
	6210 Orchid-rich calcareous grassland*	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad
	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7210 Cladium fen*	Bad
	7220 Petrifying springs*	Inadequate
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	8240 Limestone pavement*	Inadequate
	1013 Geyer's whorl snail (*Vertigo geyeri*)	Inadequate
	1014 Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (*Vertigo angustior*)	Inadequate
	1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail (Vertigo moulinsiana)	Inadequate
	1065 Marsh Fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia*)	Inadequate
	1528 Marsh Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hirculus*)	Favourable
Agricultural intensification (A02.01)	2130 Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*	Bad
	2140 Decalcified Empetrum dunes*	Inadequate
	2150 Decalcified dune heath*	Inadequate
	2170 Dunes with creeping willow	Inadequate
	2190 Dune slack	Inadequate

	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	3180 Turloughs*	Inadequate
	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	6210 Orchid-rich calcareous grassland*	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad
	6430 Hydrophilous tall herb	Bad
	6510 Lowland hay meadows	Bad
	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad
	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7210 Cladium fen*	Bad
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	1024 Kerry Slug (Geomalacus maculosus)	Favourable
	1065 Marsh Fritillary (Euphydryas aurinia)	Inadequate
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (Salmo salar)	Inadequate
Agriculture activities not referred to above (A11)	1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines	Inadequate
Air pollution, air-borne pollutants (H04)	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	4060 Alpine and subalpine heath	Bad
	6430 Hydrophilous tall herb	Bad
	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad
	7150 Rhyncosporion depressions	Inadequate
	8110 Siliceous scree	Inadequate
	8120 Calcareous scree	Inadequate
	8210 Calcareous rocky slopes	Inadequate
	8220 Siliceous rocky slopes	Inadequate
Anthropogenic reduction of habitat connectivity (J03.02)	1065 Marsh Fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia*)	Inadequate
Artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees) (B01.02)	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad

	7110 Raised bog (active)*	Bad
	7120 Degraded raised bogs	Bad
	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad
	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7150 Rhyncosporion depressions	Inadequate
	7210 Cladium fen*	Bad
	7220 Petrifying springs*	Inadequate
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	1024 Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*)	Favourable
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate
Damage by herbivores (including game species) (K04.05)	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad
Diffuse groundwater pollution due to agricultural and forestry activities (H02.06)	3140 Hard water lakes	Bad
Diffuse groundwater pollution due to agricultural and forestry activities (H02.06)	3180 Turloughs*	Inadequate
	3270 Chenopodium rubri	Favourable
	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	1230 Sea cliffs	Inadequate
	3110 Lowland oligotrophic lakes	Bad
	3130 Upland oligotrophic lakes	Inadequate
	3140 Hard water lakes	Bad
	3150 Natural eutrophic lakes	Inadequate

	3160 Dystrophic lakes	Inadequate
	3260 Floating river vegetation	Inadequate
	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7210 Cladium fen*	Bad
	7220 Petrifying springs*	Inadequate
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*)	Bad
	1096 Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)	Favourable
	1099 River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*)	Favourable
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate
	1833 Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*)	Inadequate
	1990 Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera durrovensis*)	Bad
Erosion (K01.01)	1150 Lagoons*	Bad
	1310 Salicornia mud	Inadequate
	1330 Atlantic salt meadows	Inadequate
	1410 Mediterranean salt meadows	Inadequate
	1420 Halophilous scrub	Bad
	2110 Embryonic shifting dunes	Inadequate
	2120 Marram dunes (white dunes)	Inadequate
	2130 Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*	Bad
	2170 Dunes with creeping willow	Inadequate
	2190 Dune slack	Inadequate
	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	4060 Alpine and subalpine heath	Bad
	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
	6130 Calaminarian grassland	Inadequate
	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad

	7150 Rhyncosporion depressions	Inadequate
	8110 Siliceous scree	Inadequate
Fertilisation (A08)	1150 Lagoons*	Bad
	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	6210 Orchid-rich calcareous grassland*	Bad
	6230 Species-rich Nardus upland grassland*	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad
	6510 Lowland hay meadows	Bad
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources (F02)	1110 Sandbanks	Favourable
	1130 Estuaries	Inadequate
	1140 Tidal mudflats	Inadequate
	1160 Large shallow inlets and bays	Inadequate
	1170 Reefs	Bad
	1103 Twaite Shad (Alosa fallax fallax)	Bad
	1349 Bottle-Nosed Dolphin (Tursiops truncatus)	Favourable
	1351 Harbour Porpoise (Phocoena phocoena)	Favourable
	1364 Grey Seal (Halichoerus grypus)	Favourable
	1365 Common Seal (*Phoca vitulina vitulina*)	Favourable
Fishing harbours (D03.01.03)	1170 Reefs	Bad
Forest and Plantation management & use (B02)	2130 Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*	Bad
	2170 Dunes with creeping willow	Inadequate
	2190 Dune slack	Inadequate
	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	6230 Species-rich Nardus upland grassland*	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad
	8240 Limestone pavement*	Inadequate
	1303 Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*)	Favourable

Forest planting on open ground (B01)	6230 Species-rich Nardus upland grassland*	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad
	1065 Marsh Fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia*)	Inadequate
Forest planting on open ground (native trees) (B01.01)	1024 Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*)	Favourable
Forest replanting (B02.01)	1024 Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*)	Favourable
Forest replanting (non native trees) (B02.01.02)	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate
Forestry clearance (B02.02)	8310 Caves	Favourable
	1024 Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*)	Favourable
Grassland removal for arable land (A02.03)	3180 Turloughs*	Inadequate
Grassland removal for arable land (A02.03)	6510 Lowland hay meadows	Bad
Grazing (A04)	6130 Calaminarian grassland	Inadequate
	6430 Hydrophilous tall herb	Bad
	7110 Raised bog (active)*	Bad
	7120 Degraded raised bogs	Bad
	1421 Killarney Fern (Trichomanes speciosum)	Favourable
	1528 Marsh Saxifrage (Saxifraga hirculus)	Favourable
Grazing in forests/ woodland (B06)	91A0 Old oak woodlands	Bad
	91D0 Bog woodland*	Favourable
	91E0 Residual alluvial forests*	Bad
	91J0 Taxus baccata woods*	Bad
Intensive cattle grazing (A04.01.01)	1310 Salicornia mud	Inadequate
	1330 Atlantic salt meadows	Inadequate
	1410 Mediterranean salt meadows	Inadequate
	1420 Halophilous scrub	Bad
	3180 Turloughs*	Inadequate
	3270 Chenopodium rubri	Favourable
	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
	6210 Orchid-rich calcareous grassland*	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad

Intensive fish farming, intensification (F01.01)	1160 Large shallow inlets and bays	Inadequate
	1170 Reefs	Bad
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate
Intensive grazing (A04.01)	2110 Embryonic shifting dunes	Inadequate
	2120 Marram dunes (white dunes)	Inadequate
	2130 Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*	Bad
	2170 Dunes with creeping willow	Inadequate
	2190 Dune slack	Inadequate
	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	7220 Petrifying springs*	Inadequate
	8240 Limestone pavement*	Inadequate
	91D0 Bog woodland*	Favourable
	1013 Geyer's whorl snail (Vertigo geyeri)	Inadequate
	1014 Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (Vertigo angustior)	Inadequate
Intensive mixed animal grazing (A04.01.05)	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
Intensive mowing or intensification (A03.01)	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
Intensive sheep grazing (A04.01.02)	1310 Salicornia mud	Inadequate
	1330 Atlantic salt meadows	Inadequate
	1420 Halophilous scrub	Bad
	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
	1014 Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (*Vertigo angustior*)	Inadequate
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate
Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture (F01)	1150 Lagoons*	Bad
	1365 Common Seal (Phoca vitulina vitulina)	Favourable
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate
Non intensive cattle grazing (A04.02.01)	2140 Decalcified Empetrum dunes*	Inadequate
	2150 Decalcified dune heath*	Inadequate
	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	4060 Alpine and subalpine heath	Bad
	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate

	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad
Non intensive mixed animal grazing (A04.02.05)	5130 Juniper scrub	Inadequate
Non intensive sheep grazing (A04.02.02)	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	4030 Dry heaths	Bad
	4060 Alpine and subalpine heath	Bad
	6230 Species-rich Nardus upland grassland*	Bad
	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad
	7150 Rhyncosporion depressions	Inadequate
	8110 Siliceous scree	Inadequate
	8120 Calcareous scree	Inadequate
	8210 Calcareous rocky slopes	Inadequate
	8220 Siliceous rocky slopes	Inadequate
	1230 Sea cliffs	Inadequate
Pollution to groundwater (point sources and diffuse sources) (H02)	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	3180 Turloughs*	Inadequate
Reduced fecundity/ genetic depression in animals (inbreeding) (K05.01)	1103 Twaite Shad (*Alosa fallax fallax*)	Bad
Restructuring agricultural land holding (A10)	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7210 Cladium fen*	Bad
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel (Margaritifera margaritifera)	Bad
Stock feeding (A05.02)	3180 Turloughs*	Inadequate
	6210 Orchid-rich calcareous grassland*	Bad
	8240 Limestone pavement*	Inadequate
	1014 Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (*Vertigo angustior*)	Inadequate
Surface water abstractions for agriculture (J02.06.01)	3150 Natural eutrophic lakes	Inadequate
	7220 Petrifying springs*	Inadequate
Use of fertilizers (forestry) (B05)	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate

Water abstractions from groundwater (J02.07)	21A0 Machair*	Bad
	3110 Lowland oligotrophic lakes	Bad
	3130 Upland oligotrophic lakes	Inadequate
	3150 Natural eutrophic lakes	Inadequate
	3160 Dystrophic lakes	Inadequate
	4010 Wet heath	Bad
	6410 Molinia meadows	Bad
	7110 Raised bog (active)*	Bad
	7120 Degraded raised bogs	Bad
	7130 Blanket bog (active)*	Bad
	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7150 Rhyncosporion depressions	Inadequate
	7210 Cladium fen*	Bad
	7220 Petrifying springs*	Inadequate
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	1013 Geyer's whorl snail (*Vertigo geyeri*)	Inadequate
	1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*)	Bad
	1833 Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*)	Inadequate
	1990 Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera durrovensis*)	Bad
Water abstractions from surface waters (J02.06)	7140 Transition mires	Bad
	7210 Cladium fen*	Bad
	7230 Alkaline fens	Bad
	1106 Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)	Inadequate

Table 2. Potential threats and pressures to SPAs				
Pressures & Threats	**Qualifying Interest**	**Conservation Status**	**Season**	**Annex I - Yes/No**
A02 - modification of cultivation practices	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
	A346 Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A140 Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes
	A156 Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A043 Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A142 Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A098 Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A082 Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A082 Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A038 Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A037 Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes
A03 - mowing / cutting of grassland	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
A03.01 - intensive mowing or intensification	A122 Corncrake (*Crex crex*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
A03.03 - abandonment / lack of mowing	A122 Corncrake (*Crex crex*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
A04 - grazing	A179 Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)	Red	B - Breeding	No
	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
	A182 Common Gull (*Larus canus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No

	A346 Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A140 Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A065 Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)	Red	B - Breeding	No
	A001 Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
A04.01 - intensive grazing	A122 Corncrake (*Crex crex*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
A06 - annual and perennial non-timber crops	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
A08 - Fertilisation	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
A11 - Agriculture activities not referred to above	A045 Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A043 Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A038 Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A229 Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
B01 - forest planting on open ground	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
	A140 Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A098 Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A082 Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A082 Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A037 Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes

B02 - Forest and Plantation management & use	A082 Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A098 Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
F01 - Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture	A137 Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A144 Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes
	A169 Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A048 Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A054 Pintail (*Anas acuta*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A130 Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A140 Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes
	A141 Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A143 Knot (*Calidris canutus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A156 Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A160 Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A162 Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A142 Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A050 Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A067 Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)	Red	W - Winter	No

	A069 Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A005 Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A062 Scaup (*Aythya marila*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A164 Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)	Green	W - Winter	No
F02 - Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources	A009 Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*)	Green	B - Breeding	No
	A016 Gannet (*Morus bassanus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A184 Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A188 Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A137 Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes
	A182 Common Gull (*Larus canus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A048 Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A130 Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A141 Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A143 Knot (*Calidris canutus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A156 Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A160 Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A162 Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)	Red	W - Winter	No

	A179 Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A065 Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A001 Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
	A001 Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A069 Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A005 Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A062 Scaup (*Aythya marila*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A003 Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A063 Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A017 Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A184 Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)	Red	B - Breeding	No
H01 - Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish)	A052 Teal (*Anas crecca*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A054 Pintail (*Anas acuta*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A056 Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A051 Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A065 Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)	Red	B - Breeding	No
	A050 Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)	Red	W - Winter	No

	A067 Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A005 Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A053 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A062 Scaup (*Aythya marila*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A004 Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A028 Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A125 Coot (*Fulica atra*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A061 Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A059 Pochard (*Aythya ferina*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A229 Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
H03 - Marine water pollution	A140 Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes
	A065 Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A016 Gannet (*Morus bassanus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A017 Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A017 Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A018 Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No

	A184 Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)	Red	B - Breeding	No
	A184 Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A188 Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A199 Guillemot (*Uria aalge*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A200 Razorbill (*Alca torda*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A204 Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A013 Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*)	Amber	B - Breeding	No
	A137 Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A144 Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A148 Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	W - Winter	Yes
	A169 Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A182 Common Gull (*Larus canus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A048 Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A052 Teal (*Anas crecca*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A054 Pintail (*Anas acuta*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A056 Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A130 Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A141 Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A143 Knot (*Calidris canutus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A156 Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A160 Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A162 Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)	Red	W - Winter	No

	A179 Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A051 Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A001 Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A142 Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A050 Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A067 Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)	Red	W - Winter	No
	A069 Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A005 Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A053 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A062 Scaup (*Aythya marila*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A164 Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)	Green	W - Winter	No
	A004 Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
	A003 Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A063 Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)	Amber	W - Winter	No
J02.06 - Water abstractions from surface waters	A001 Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
K03 - Interspecific faunal relations	A466-A/A149 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
	A140 Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes
	A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)	Amber	W - Winter	Yes
	A065 Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)	Red	B - Breeding	No
	A001 Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*)	Amber	B - Breeding	Yes
K03.04 - predation	A122 Corncrake (*Crex crex*)	Red	B - Breeding	Yes

The key output of this stage was the identification of the known threats and pressures, related to agricultural activities, to specific habitats and species listed as QIs or SCIs for SACs and SPAs. These can then be related to the consequences of implementing the Agri-food Strategy 2025 to see if there is a risk of any likely significant adverse effects on the Natura 2000 site network.

5 IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL LIKELY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS

This section documents the final stage of the screening process. It uses the information collected on the generic pressures and threats to SACs and SPAs arising from agricultural activities and describes potential adverse significant effects arising from each industry sector on the Natura 2000 site network, and hence, arising from the implementation of the Draft Strategy (as far as it could be predicted at the initial preparatory stage). This assumes the absence of any safeguards such as agri-environmental schemes, waste management systems or other mitigation measures that may later be incorporated into the Draft Strategy.

5.1 Likely Significant effects in isolation

Table 3 below sets out the relationship between the Draft Strategy and the threats to the Natura 2000 site network. At this stage the detail of the Draft Strategy is not known. Therefore the table below sets out to identify how the industry sectoral sub-groups have the *potential* to interact with the European site network.

In drawing up this table it is appreciated that there are many aspects of the Draft Strategy that may provide positive impacts to the European site network. It should be pointed out that the process of AA is only intended to address adverse impacts and therefore any beneficial aspects of the Draft Strategy policies are not the focus of the screening or subsequent assessment stages.

Table 3 Relationship between the Draft Strategy and threats to the and the Natura 2000 site network
Potential Adverse Impacts
Industry Sectoral Sub-Group: Seafood (including marine & freshwater aquaculture and open water fishing)
• Potential to affect coastal, estuarine and freshwater habitats, species and birds; • Damage to reefs, mudflat, macrofauna benthic communities and other sensitive receptors through emissions of waste products and alteration of the nutrient balance within the system; • Reduction in gene pool strength due to escaping aquaculture stock mating with wild populations; • Transmission of diseases and sea lice to wild stocks; • In areas with a high density of aquaculture - general environmental degradation and reduced aquaculture growth rates; • Poorly-managed aquaculture planning and management can also have negative impacts on important recreational industries such as angling and tourism; • Water quality impacts; • Air quality impacts.
Industry Sectoral Sub-Group: Environment, Forestry and Climate Change
• Direct habitat loss (e.g. peatlands and grasslands) due to afforestation; • Drainage patterns affecting water levels/flow; • Soil erosion and sedimentation; • Inputs of fertilisers potentially impacting on surface and ground waters; • Water quality impacts; • Recreational disturbance.

Industry Sectoral Sub-Group: Meat and Cereals
• Increased production of animal waste and silage with an attended increased rate of fugitive emission of ammonia which can cause acidification of certain sensitive habitats e.g. peatlands and wetlands; • Increased production of greenhouse gases; • Inputs of fertilisers potentially impacting on surface and ground waters; • Intensification on lands which are farmed extensively or are marginal at present, having impacts on habitats, species and birds; • Loss of ecological corridors/stepping stones linking European sites through removal or inappropriate management of hedgerows, treelines and scrub; • Under grazing of sensitive habitats giving rise to change in species composition and habitat structure e.g. scrub invasion; • Over grazing of habitats leading to habitat degradation or soil erosion and sediment release downstream; • Loss of habitats being converted to cereal production leading to short and long term carbon release (climate change implications); • Increase in the amount of uncovered land in the winter period potentially leading to soil erosion and nutrient/particulate mobilisation to surface and ground waters; • Increase in hydrocarbon usage in machinery.
Industry Sectoral Sub-Group: Milk and Infant Formula
• Change of land-use pattern from: o extensively grazed traditional beef to intensively grazed traditional dairy which may require inputs of fertilisers potentially impacting on surface and ground waters; or o tillage to dairy which may have indirect impacts on SPA bird species reliant on tillage fields for feeding/roosting; • Increases in the dairy herd are likely to occur in regions that are already heavily populated by dairy cows (e.g. on farms that are currently part dairy and part beef). Some of the intensive areas are already within sensitive catchments that arte designated as European sites, such as the Blackwater Catchment in Co. Cork; • Increased production of animal waste and silage with an attended increased rate of fugitive emission of ammonia which can cause acidification of certain sensitive habitats e.g. peatlands and wetlands; • Increased production of greenhouse gases; • Intensification on lands which are farmed extensively or are marginal at present, having impacts on habitats, species and birds; • Loss of ecological corridors/stepping stones linking European sites through removal or inappropriate management of hedgerows, treelines and scrub; • Under grazing of sensitive habitats giving rise to change in species composition and habitat structure e.g. scrub invasion; • Over grazing of habitats leading to habitat degradation or soil erosion and sediment release downstream.
Industry Sectoral Sub-Group: Prepared Consumer Foods (PCFs), Beverages, Horticulture & Retailer
• PCFs- Indirect impacts such as increased air emissions from increased transport impacting on air quality; • Beverages – conversion of marginal land to cereals, release of carbon as a result of ploughing and leaching of fertilisers to ground and surface waters and air emissions; • Horticulture – loss of nutrients to surface and ground waters, pesticide application with potential impacts to habitats, species and/or water quality and sediment release from exposed soils.

The risk of the impact does not automatically mean it will occur, or that it will be significant. However, identification of the risk does mean that there is a possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature and exposure to the risk and the characteristics of the receptor.

5.2 Likely Significant effects in-combination

The following is a list of other strategies, plans and programs that may be considered in identifying in-combination effects:

- National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) (2010 – 2020;)
- Off-shore Renewable Energy Plan (February 2014);
- Strategy for Renewable Energy (2012 – 2020) (DCENR, 2012);

- Grid 25 A Strategy for the Development of Ireland's Electricity Grid for a Sustainable and Competitive Future and Grid 25 Implementation Programme (2011- 2016);
- Your Grid, Your Views, Your Tomorrow, a new draft strategy for the development of Ireland's transmission grid;
- National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (DECLG, 2012);
- Forestry Programme 2014-2020: Ireland;
- National Peatlands Strategy;
- National Strategic Aquaculture Plan;
- National Countryside Recreation Strategy;
- Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP) 2013-2020;
- Draft Bioenergy Plan (October 2014);

6 SCREENING CONCLUSIONS

The Screening process identified the potential for significant adverse impacts on the Natura 2000 site network potentially arising from the Draft Agri-food Strategy 2025.

Based on the information provided above and by applying the precautionary principle it was determined that at this stage it was not possible to rule out likely significant adverse impacts on the Natura 2000 site network; and therefore the AA process should proceed to Appropriate Assessment culminating in the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

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