

Submission from the Wicklow Deer Management Group on the 2nd Draft Policy Vision for Deer Management in Ireland

The Wicklow Deer Management Group (WDMG) welcome the draft discussion document on a Draft Deer Management Policy Vision, issued by the Inter-Agency Deer Policy Group, as a working document. We hope the policies will evolve through the synthesis of contributions from the stakeholders involved.

It is essential that policies proscribed have adequately resources of labour and finance. It is also important that funding be made available to aid the establishment of pilot Deer Management Units and to further research the effect of deer on grassland ref appendix 4 “Developing a Collaborative Strategy for the Management and Control of Invasive Deer Species for County Wicklow”, see attachment

The document raises many important issues and shines a light on subjects that the WDMG have been discussing for many years.

The Wicklow Deer Management Group (WDMG) is a common interest group comprised of deer hunters and land owners / managers. The members of the group are representatives of the following organizations:

- 1 The Wicklow Deer Society – (Deer hunters / managers)
- 2 The Irish Deer Society – Leinster Branch (Deer hunters / managers)
- 3 The Irish Farmers Association (Private landowners / farmers)
- 4 The Irish Timber Growers Association (Private forest owners)
- 5 Coillte (The semi-state forestry company)
- 6 The National Parks and Wildlife Service (Responsible for the management of the Wicklow Mountains National Park and the administration of deer shooting licenses)

Members of the WDMG have a common interest in the sustainable management of deer in Wicklow. However, there is a consensus within the group that current deer numbers are unsustainably high in the county.

The WDMG has been in existence for approximately 16 years during which time it has served as a forum for its members to discuss deer management issues and as a means of understanding the many different views held regarding the management of wild deer in Wicklow.

As the only active deer stakeholder group in Ireland to have set up a deer management group it is essential that we are represented on any Stakeholder group, photo of Minister Jimmy Denehan with WDMG meeting Ballinastoe group members attached. Also see attached report “Developing a Collaborative Strategy for the Management and Control of Invasive Deer Species for County Wicklow” commissioned by WDMG, funded by the Heritage Council and prepared by Paddy Purser, Dr Ruth Carden and Faith Wilson.

The WDMG would like to see Stakeholder group with an independent Chairman.

Again the WDMG believe that they are uniquely qualified to participate and contribute to the development of a National Deer management Policy.

