A Chara,

Irish Water welcomes the publication of, and the opportunity to comment on, the current public consultation on the Draft Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Sector – June 2019.

In the coming years Irish Water will invest nearly €5billion in the continued improvement of our water and wastewater services. This investment will ensure the secure and sustainable water and wastewater services, essential for health, our communities, the economy and the environment.

Irish Water welcomes the opportunity to continue working with the agriculture community and DAFM and recognises the importance of integrated catchment management (ICM). We note it’s inclusion in the recently published draft water quality and water services infrastructure climate change sectoral adaptation plan and consider that ICM can provide a cost-effective, sustainable means to reduce the sources of pollutants, and to slow, limit or restrict pathways of pollutants to waterbodies, in particular nutrients, pathogens, sediments and pesticides. We emphasise the closed nature of the loop between catchment nutrient management, protection of water bodies, their sustainability as sources for water abstraction and treatment and in turn the delivery of water supplies to communities, industry and agri-food production facilities themselves.

Irish Water notes that the cross sectoral issues and priority impacts of the plan considers water quality, water infrastructure, water availability and ground water. These are significant interdependencies and in particular water quality and water availability. Irish Water would welcome the opportunity to collaborate further on this with DAFM in the national interest.
Irish Water would like to highlight some significant interdependencies and cross-sectoral impacts below:

- The impact on drinking water sources and the competing needs for water resources in times of drought
- Surface runoff of sediment and organics leading to water treatment issues and associated increased costs such as increased risk of trihalomethane (THM) formation in treated water
- Exposure of water resources, including groundwater, to pesticides, herbicides, animal health products and other substances of concern to public health and the environment.

Significant capital investment will be required in water services infrastructure over several years to achieve the objective of climate change resilience and Irish Water look forward to collaborating with DAFM to achieve this resilience.

If you should have any further questions or require any clarifications with regard to our response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Gerry Galvin
Chief Technical Officer