Dear Sir / Madam,

I refer to the consultation on the Draft Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan: Agriculture, Forest and Seafood published for consultation in June 2019 and set out below our observations with regard to flooding and flood risk management. These comments are made within the context of our prior engagement and any future meetings to coordinate on proposed actions.

The OPW welcomes the consultation on the Draft Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan, the identification of flooding and extreme precipitation events as key climate impacts for the sectors, the recognition that climate change may increase flood risk in the future and that relevant actions should consider such future risk. Adaptation Objective 3.14 of the Plan consists of ‘Greater awareness of OPW flood risk mapping to inform decision making’, which is welcomed.

The OPW also welcomes references to green infrastructure initiatives (page 14) and the OPW is involved in a number of similar initiatives involving Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRMs) that maybe relevant to the Draft DAFM Sectoral Climate Change Adaptation Plan. NWRM type projects can potentially generate multiple benefits such as sediment runoff reduction, nutrient reductions, water quality improvements, biodiversity gains and improvement in flood resilience.
Through the National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme, flood maps for the current condition and also two potential future scenarios (the Mid-Range and High-End Future Scenarios) along with Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) were prepared. The flood maps and FRMPs are available from the OPW web portal: www.floodinfo.ie. The flood maps can also be made available if not already held by the relevant bodies by contacting our Data Management Section at maps@opw.ie

Some more specific comments are as follows:

- Page 15: Water Resource and Flood Risk. Please note that fluvial as well as coastal flooding can also impact on farm buildings as well as residential properties and buildings associated with food production, which might noted in this context.

- Page 48: Steps towards Building Resilience. The last action in the table is “Develop a register/database of Climate Change related events or incidents for Seafood Infrastructure, including storm damage, flooding, and aquaculture-related events to allow for informed policy and decision making”. The OPW maintains a register of flooding events accessible at www.floodinfo.ie, which may be a useful source of information in this regard.

- DAFM may also wish to make reference to the OPW’s Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study (ICPSS). The ICPSS is a national study that was commissioned in 2003 with the objective of providing information to support decision making about how best to manage risks associated with coastal flooding. See https://www.opw.ie/en/flood-risk-management/floodanderosionmapping/icpss/ for more information.

The OPW would be happy to provide any further information as necessary and/or to respond to any queries you may have in relation to this submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Mark Adamson
Asst. Chief Engineer
Head of Flood Relief and Risk Management Division