Public Consultation on the *Draft Climate Change Adaptation Sectoral Plan for Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Sector*

Consultation Questionnaire

1. Details:

Full Name: Tom Canning

Organisation where applicable: Tom Canning Agricultural Consultants Ltd

or

Member of the public: 

Subsector:

- Dairy
- Beef
- Sheep
- Mixed
- Arable
- Horticulture
- Fisheries
- Industry
- Prepared Consumer Foods

Other: Advisory Support Services for Dairy and Beef Farmers

2. What do you think are the changes in climate that are having the most impact on those working in the agriculture, forest and seafood sector?

- Extreme Rain: X
- Storminess
- Drought
- Flooding
- Extreme heat
- Seasonal stability: X

Other: ____________________________________________
3. **What do you think the main impacts from climate change will be on the agriculture, forest and seafood sectors?**

   Please Explain:
   
   Increased incidents of drought in drier areas.
   
   Fodder quality and supply is affected by weather extremes.
   
   Increased incidents of nutrient run off.
   
   Increased production costs coping with extreme weather events.

4. **How are those working in the sector currently adapting to climate change?**

   Please Explain:
   
   Increased use of LESS in applying slurry.
   
   Greater focus on addressing soil fertility issues.
   
   Adoption of breeding policies to produce more productive animals.
   
   Improved grassland management to maximise output from grass.
   
   Large scale investment in pollution control facilities.

5. **Where do you get climate related information?**
6. **What additional information do those working in the sector need to adapt to a changing climate?**

Please Explain:
- Improved access to focused research on areas designed to reduce emissions.
- LADAR information to identify and quantify landscape features.
- Improved mapping system to identify high risk areas on farms, eg. Flood plains vulnerable watercourses, buffer zones, etc.
- Redesign of NMP online systems to allow recommendations to be presented in a targeted simplified way.

7. **How do you perceive and use weather and climate information to inform management decisions?**

Please Explain:
- Weather and climate information, critical in the design of fertiliser plans, grassland management and stockland carrying capacity advice, fodder budgeting etc.

8. **Is the source of inputs to your farm or business affected by climate change; if so what supply chains?**

Please Explain:
- Poorer soils/ground conditions will limit the variety of feed inputs available to farmers.
- Transport of feed inputs such as soya from south America likely to be increasingly scrutinized in the climate change debate.
9. When making investments and management decisions how far ahead do you plan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 1 year</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>1-5 years</td>
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<td>5 - 10 years</td>
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<td>10 years +</td>
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Please Explain:
- 0-1yrs, develop annual plans for fertiliser and feed usage, grassland management, etc.
- 1-5yrs, breeding strategy and stock carrying capacity.
- 5-10yrs, assessment of future options for the farm business and resources required for changes in the farming system.

10. Does the Draft Climate Change Adaptation Sectoral Plan adequately demonstrate the potential impact climate change may have on Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood in Ireland (see section 4 of Draft Plan)?

- Yes
- No
- x Need more information

Please Explain:
The impact of forestry in addressing climate change needs to be quantified and our failure to achieve current planting targets addressed.
More focused government policies required on the development of the dairy, beef and cereal sectors to ensure the viability of farm businesses.

11. The Adaptation Plan’s focus is on actions that can be undertaken over the next five years. Therefore, do you think the Adaptation Objectives are appropriate for the duration of this plan (see section 2 of Draft Plan)?

- Yes
- xNo
- Unsure
Please Explain:
Greater focus required on the training and equitable resourcing of the public/private sector Advisory services to ensure targeted, consistent and value for money delivery of climate change messages to farmers.

12. What three things could the Department do to help you be better prepared to adapt to future climate change?

1. Provide focused training and more equitable resourcing of Advisory service providers to deliver targeted, consistent and effective advice to farmer clients.

2. Introduce mandatory CPD training for all farmers focused on the 3 key areas of sustainability, environmental protection and health and safety.

3. Continue and improve farmer supports for initiatives that address climate change including LESS, alternative energy sources and pollution control facilities.

13. Any other comments?

The role of the private sector advisory services must be supported to ensure that all farmers in Ireland are provided with the necessary advisory support services to implement climate change initiatives on their farms. A AKIS system must be developed that allows the necessary flow of up to date research from research facilities to farmers via the advisory system.

There are conflicting messages coming out of the climate change debate particularly in regard to agriculture. IT’s need to be developed to measure the agricultural sectors contribution in absorbing carbon and Green House Gasses. Replacing dry stock systems with trees as is proposed will have consequences for the structure and balance in rural communities.