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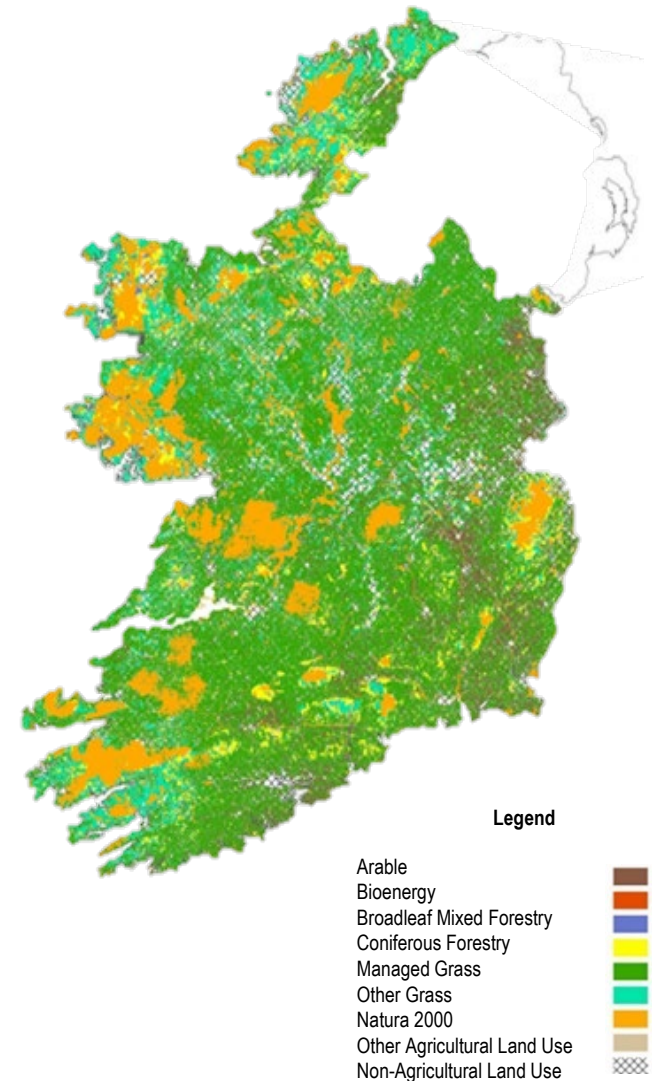
# ***Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss***



*Paul O'Brien, National IFA Environment Chair  
15<sup>th</sup> October 2022*

# Extensive family farm model

1. Farmers manage and own over 70% of the land area of Ireland.
2. Approx. 140,000 family farms, with an average land holding of 32.5 hectares.
3. Predominately extensive grass-based livestock farming system.
4. 90% of Utilisable Agricultural Area is permanent grassland and meadows compared with EU average of 31%.
5. The average livestock herd per farm is 69 cattle, while the average dairy herd is 83 cows - generally low to moderate stocking rates.
6. 42% of farms are financially viable.



## Biodiversity on farms

**12-14%**  
on average the  
*Space for Nature*

**33%**  
Farms in agri-environment  
schemes  
(2.5 times EU average)

**1/3** of farms  
are classed as  
**High Nature Value**

**6,605km**  
of new **hedgerows**  
planted since 1994. (**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**largest hedgerow in EU**)

**20,000 ha**  
of **wild bird** cover  
(**5<sup>th</sup>** largest crop)

**81%** of new  
**forests** planted by  
farmers since 1980's.  
Farmers now manage  
**400,000 ha**

# New Green Architecture

CAP 2023 – 2027



**Good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAECs).**

**Landscape features will be paid.**

**A minimum of 4% “space for nature”.**

**25% of CAP payment conditional on additional environmental actions.**



**€256 million to increase area under organics to 7.5% or 337,500 ha in 2027.**

## Take home messages

**1. Extensive Farming System**

**2. *Space for Nature*  
(on average 12-14% of farms)**

**3. 33% of farmland in agri-environmental schemes**

**4. Farmers in designated land need to be properly compensated**

**5. Collaborative approach to nature conservation works best**

**6. New funding structure needed outside of CAP**

**7. Incentive-based biodiversity policy**

**8. Full engagement with farmers on EU Nature Restoration Law**

**9. Farmers property rights must be respected**

**10. There needs to be further engagement between the Citizens Assembly and farmers.**