

Charlie McConalogue TD
Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Agriculture House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2
D02 WK12

By email: minister@agriculture.gov.ie



McCumiskey House
Richview
Clonskeagh Road
Dublin 14
D14 YR62
Phone: 01 2680180
Email: info@climatecouncil.ie

7th February 2024

RE: Follow up on Climate Action Plan discussions

Dear Minister McConalogue,

Let me thank you for our informal meeting at the recent COP 28 event in Dubai and to reiterate some of the suggestions touched on in our discussion.

We discussed two important targets in the Climate Action Plan:

- 1) the reduction of total N-fertiliser use to 300kt per year by 2030 and
- 2) the rapid displacement of conventional fertiliser products by protected and stabilised formulations (protected urea).

The sector is to be congratulated on the achievement of the first target already in 2023, which saw the sale of N-fertilisers fall below the 300kt. Sustaining this early achievement is essential as there is a high risk of rebound as fertiliser prices fall. Communication to farmers of the benefits of this lower fertiliser use, without loss of productivity, is an important task for your Department.

The Climate Action Plan sets the target to displace up to 90% of calcium ammonium nitrate (CAN) by 2025 and up to 100% by 2030. However, in 2023 protected urea products represented less than 15% of nitrogen fertiliser sold in Ireland. Protected urea is a market ready product with direct cost benefits to farmers. Teagasc research highlights these reduced costs, along with 78% lower ammonia emissions relative to standard urea, and also with 71%

lower nitrous oxide relative to CAN. Unfortunately, every time a farmer is unable to access this alternative product in their local store there is a significant emissions reduction opportunity left behind. The recently established National Fertiliser Database, NFD, opens up an ideal opportunity to publish in real-time how the sector is responding to the challenge. It is essential and urgent that the Department is very proactive in its communications with both suppliers and farmers in order to ensure that there are sufficient supplies available and that the benefits of switching are communicated to all farmers.

The Council looks forward to providing any further assistance or advice as required to Government.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marie C. Donnelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and 'D'. Below the signature is a solid horizontal line.

Marie C. Donnelly

Chair, Climate Change Advisory Council