An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Climate-KIC
Co-funded by the European Union

Climate KIC – DAFM

Ireland Agri-Food Sector Transformation Deep Demonstration

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Project Overview

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Background

The Irish Climate Action Plan 2021 and the Food Vision 2030 Strategy have set out ambitious plans for the Irish agri-food sector. The goal is to reduce emissions by 22-30% by 2030 and to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Achieving this will require new and innovative approaches by primary producers, industry and beyond.

Ireland needs to embed new thinking and innovative approaches across the agri-food sector to deliver climate goals whilst developing a resilient sector.

The **Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine** has partnered with **EIT Climate-KIC** – Europe's largest climate innovation partnership - to work with public and private stakeholders in the Irish agri-food sector and help the sector deliver an accelerated pathways for climate action.

Incremental changes will help the sector achieve a reduction in emissions, but not enough! To achieve the goals set for the sector requires systems transformation and change across the entire agri-food sector.

Climate KIC will combine their international expertise on climate innovation and system change with local knowledge and organisations to support the agri-food sector to thrive while meeting challenging climate targets.

Our Approach

Climate-KIC will apply their 'Deep Demonstration' model of innovation to the entire agri-food and biobased value chain, from soil to farm to fork to society. This involves working with stakeholders from public, private, finance, civic society, and education sectors to develop and deploy coordinated innovation actions that test – in practice and at scale – and build learning about different solutions.

The partnership will initially map the Irish agri-food system to understand and position public and private sector partners and their initiatives, to understand where and how innovation can catalyse positive change and new opportunities. Next, we will co-develop and deploy coordinated interventions across the sector, developing insights and knowledge on effective pathways for business, primary producers, the public sector, and communities.

A key step will see the partnership identify, mobilise, and deploy both grant funding and private investment (venture, corporate and institutional) capital to support the innovation actions.

The Deliverables

Key outputs for year 1 of the project are:

- A **system map** co-developed and agreed by the Irish stakeholders, showing key relationships, existing initiatives, pinch points, and possible levers of change for innovation.
- A **portfolio brief** – an agreed set of interventions (innovation actions) on leverage points in the agri-food system (regulatory, governance, market-making, citizen engagement/ mobilisation, skills, new technologies, etc.), which will be initiated by different stakeholders and for which there is identifiable budget (grants, government funding, private finance) attached.
- An **investment plan**, identifying the mobilisation of public (EU, Ireland), third sector

A sustainable food system is profitable throughout (economic sustainability), has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability) and has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability). Food Vision 2030

and private funding and finance required to deliver the proposed interventions.

The interventions identified in the first year provide the focus for the deployment of at scale innovations to demonstrate and learn what is possible.

Innovation Levers

An effective innovation system for the Irish agri-food sector requires a strategic approach to R&D funding and private investment and a dynamic, engaged, and responsive knowledge exchange across the different stakeholders.

As a sector there is a need to leverage the advancements in the use of technology and data in farming, fishing, and forests and in food and drink companies, as well as recognising the importance of social behaviours and choices, education, skills, and new business models and value chains, to position Ireland in emerging new markets, to develop insights and identify the key pinch points.

Expansion of climate neutral, nature-based, and bio-based production systems, such as dairy, beef, tillage, horticulture, afforestation, and organic production will be important aspects of any solutions and potentially important interventions.

Additionally, use of data and precision agriculture is evolving at a rapid rate, and it is critical that Ireland's agri-food sector is positioned to take advantage of these trends and approaches.

The agri-food sector needs to build the necessary depth of skills and experience to ensure the optimum mix of diverse, skilled, and appropriately trained talent.

Ireland must embrace the current challenges and focus on driving system change as an opportunity to position the agri-food sector and circular bioeconomy in Ireland at the forefront of global best practices.

To innovate is to make a change, a difference. In a business model, in a value system, in ourselves. Innovation takes us back to childhood – to believe in the possibility of making a difference.

Your Involvement

Collaboration between various public and private organisations and institutions is essential to the success of the project. **Your voice and experience are essential, as any real change must be led by the Irish stakeholders**.

There are a series of workshops and opportunities where you can contribute to building the key insights and help shape future interventions. These interventions could include trialling new practices and technologies, developing, and incentivising new business models, and improving skills and training.

The solutions developed and tested will assist landowners, rural communities and the wider agri-food and biobased processing and manufacturing sector to build resilient approaches and solutions to the challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability.

Systemic change requires systems innovation. This involves multiple innovations and interventions, across multiple levers (points) of change with the aim of fundamentally transforming our systems into better, healthier, sustainable, circular, more resilient, net-zero-emissions systems.