

# Deep Demonstration

Sustainable food systems in Ireland



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

## Deep Demonstration partnership: Climate-resilient food systems in Ireland

Press kit

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## The partnership

The Deep Demonstration partnership between EIT Climate-KIC and Ireland’s Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine is supporting the entire Irish land and agri-food value chain to identify and implement sustainable practices, so that farmer communities can thrive and agri-food industries can transition to sustainable business models, all while meeting challenging climate targets.

Decarbonising agriculture and food production is a challenge for many countries. Ireland’s agri-food sector contributes 37% of the country’s overall greenhouse gas emissions. Yet Ireland [has committed](#) to cut 25% emissions in the agri-food sector by 2030, and to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, in line with the EU bloc.

EIT Climate-KIC, Europe’s largest climate innovation initiative, has led systems change and innovation programmes for over a decade. [Our partnership is supporting the Irish government](#) to transform the entire agri-food sector and achieve collective, systemic change while retaining economic, social and environmental prosperity.

We are working with farmers, businesses, policymakers, researchers and citizens to create and implement tailored solutions to sustainability challenges, while ensuring we are learning from each other and collectively pushing forward climate action.

One year in, the partnership has achieved a comprehensive [mapping of the system](#), and [identified concrete ways](#) grouped under seven areas of innovation to overcome challenges for farmer communities and citizens, such as reducing emissions, diversifying incomes, cutting food waste, and shifting to healthy diets.

These include both immediate outcomes in dairy farm emission reduction, sustainable beef production, carbon farming and tillage, as well as long-term objectives such as investing in new value chains and alternative proteins, transforming education, and help entire regions become circular.

# Quotes

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“I believe that this partnership with EIT Climate KIC has the potential to bring new, innovative thinking across the sector, whilst supporting our ambitions and accelerate pathways to climate action. The solutions developed and tested will assist our farmers, rural communities and the wider agri-food and bio-based sector to build resilient approaches and solutions to the challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability.”

**Charlie McConalogue**, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Ireland



“

“This strategic partnership with EIT Climate-KIC highlights my department’s commitment to co-funding innovative solutions to support climate action in the agri-food sector and society. I particularly welcome the ambition of the partnership to build a portfolio of actions, including trialling new practices and technologies, developing, and incentivising new business models, and improving citizen engagement.”

**Martin Heydon**, Minister of State with responsibility for Research and Development, Farm Safety and New Market Development, Ireland



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“EIT Climate-KIC is excited to be partnering with the Irish government to tackle their ambitious agenda and meet their climate targets. We aim to help Ireland become a world leader in developing a sustainable and regenerative bio-economy by bringing our expertise in systems innovation to the table.”

**Kirsten Dunlop**, CEO, EIT Climate-KIC



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“We have been closely working with Irish stakeholders through interviews and workshops to gather their views on barriers and opportunities, but also to map the steps needed to realise Ireland’s ambition of becoming a global leader in sustainable agri-food systems. Now we are diving into the next phase of the Deep Demonstration, by activating a portfolio of innovation solutions across seven flagship areas. This will help us verify, rapidly and at scale, what works and what doesn’t, going through iterations of testing, validation, and learning with partners in the entire value chain.”

**Saskia Visser**, Land use, agri-food and sustainable bio-economy orchestrator & Ireland Deep Demonstration lead, EIT Climate-KIC



# Background information

## What is the Deep Demonstration partnership and how does it support sustainable food systems in Ireland?

The [Deep Demonstration](#) is an international strategic partnership between Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM) and EIT Climate-KIC, Europe's leading climate innovation initiative, to support national climate action in the agriculture and food sector. The partnership will support Ireland to reach its agricultural emission reduction goal of at least 25% by 2030, while helping the land, agri-food sector and communities to thrive.

## What is the Deep Demonstration partnership doing?

The strategic partnership sees EIT Climate-KIC apply their '[Deep Demonstration](#)' model of innovation to the entire Irish land, agri-food and bio-based value chain, from soil to farm to fork. This involves working with stakeholders from public, private, non-governmental and higher education sectors to develop a range of strategic, mutually-reinforcing innovation solutions advancing climate action that will be tested and demonstrated.

The partnership has initially [mapped the Irish land and agri-food system](#) to understand existing public and private sector partners and initiatives, identifying key 'levers of change' that need to be pulled in order to transform the system as a whole. It is now creating a framework to connect and integrate existing projects, amplifying their impact, as well as identifying and introducing new innovation actions across business, the public sector, and farming communities. This portfolio of mutually-reinforcing innovation projects will be supported by grant funding and private investment capital.

A unique element of this methodology is the rapid 'learning by doing', that captures and shares lessons of what works (and what does not) in each intervention. This intelligence enables governments, industry and communities to inform decision-making in an agile and unbiased way, and thus be more effective.

## Who is behind this partnership?

The Deep Demonstration team includes both EIT Climate-KIC experts and DAFM officials. It also involves the wider Irish land, agri-food knowledge and innovation ecosystem and leaders from Ireland's land, agri-food public and private sectors, who regularly review and input on the partnership's findings and proposals in a core "Consultative Group".

These are: Aldi Ireland; Bank of Ireland; BioAtlantis; Bord Bia; Coillte; Dawn Meats; Dept. of Enterprise, Trade & Employment; Dept. of Environment, Climate & Communications; Dept. of Taoiseach; Dept. of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science; Enterprise Ireland; Environmental Protection Agency; Ernst & Young; IBEC; Irish Farmers' Association; Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, Irish Grain Growers Association; National Economic and Social Council; Ornuu; Science Foundation Ireland; Teagasc; TirLan; University College Cork; University College Dublin.

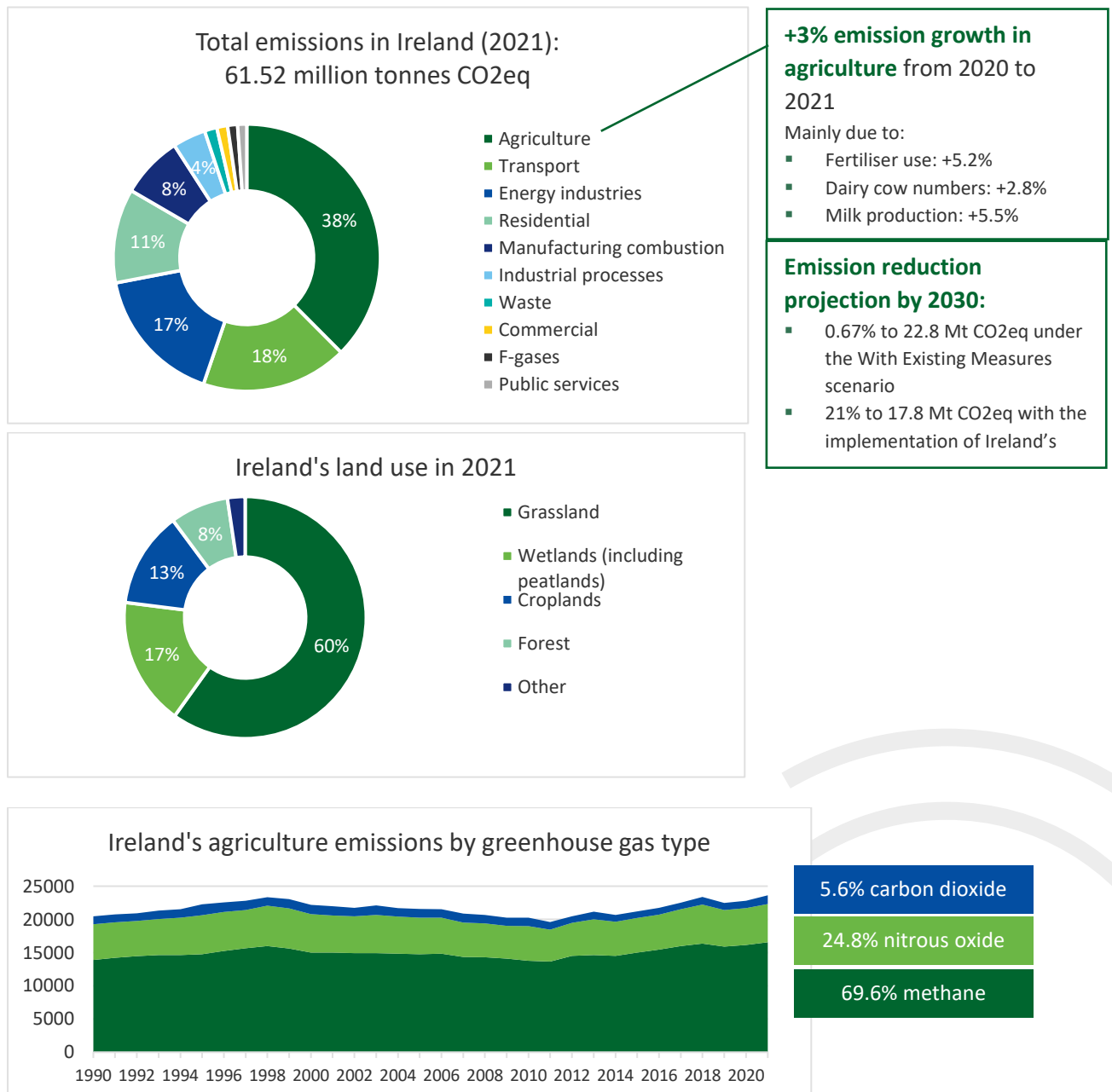
## About EIT Climate-KIC

EIT Climate-KIC is Europe’s leading climate innovation agency and community. We use a systems approach to shape innovation to support cities, regions, countries and industries meet their climate ambitions, acting in the ‘messy middle’ between commitments and reality.

Together with our partners across the globe, we implement. We open pathways to shift mindsets and behaviours, and enable decision makers and investors to act. We orchestrate large-scale demonstrations that show what is possible when cycles of innovation and learning are deliberately designed to trigger exponential decarbonisation and build resilient communities.

# Facts and figures

## Ireland’s land and agri-food system (Source: [Irish Environmental Protection Agency](#))



## Deep Demonstration partnership: identified flagship innovation areas

### 2050 focus

**1**

#### **Long-term, strategic vision for 2050.**

Include a broad range of communities and experts (younger generations, consumers, other sectors) to shape the future of Irish food systems.

**2**

#### **Innovation and investment in new value chains.**

Such as alternative proteins (for both human food and as feed additives), feed additives that deliver methane reduction, and circular production thanks to fungi and seaweed.

**3**

#### **Circular bio-economy models in regions and multiple value chains.**

Such as regenerative and local food production, industrial symbiosis, societal shifts to increase healthier diets, and designing waste out of food production.

### 2030 focus

**4**

#### **Diversify incomes through carbon farming and nature credit frameworks.**

Support a just transition for primary producers by rewarding carbon sequestration and biodiversity practices in alignment with EU frameworks.

**5**

#### **Certified climate-neutral beef production.**

Explore the potential to create a label for producing and demonstrating climate neutrality, starting with suckler beef, and scaling to other beef systems.

**6**

#### **Emission reduction in dairy farms.**

Engage the dairy sector to define and set a baseline for sustainable dairy production, and explore what the transition would concretely mean for dairy farmers and the dairy industry.

**7**

#### **Grow and diversify the tillage sector.**

Increase tillage areas, introduce multi-crop farms, and strengthen collaboration with beef and dairy to reduce chemical fertilisers and increase the amount of homegrown protein for food and feed.

## Contact

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