



15<sup>th</sup> April, 2019

Circular 05/2019

To all Registered Foresters and other Stakeholders

**Re: Reconstitution of Woodland Scheme (Drought)**

The Reconstitution of Woodland Scheme (Drought) is effective from the date of this Circular, and applications under the scheme may be submitted to the Department before 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Background

Ireland was significantly impacted by drought conditions over the summer months of 2018. Replanting of these losses and maintenance of required forestry standards following drought damage presents a significant financial challenge to forest owners and their foresters. For that reason this Reconstitution of Woodland Scheme (Drought) is introduced to offer financial support for affected owners and their foresters.

Scheme Objectives

The objectives of this scheme are as follows:

- Reconstitute newly planted forests significantly damaged by the drought conditions of 2018, replacing dead trees with plants of acceptable quality, provenances and species.
- Ensure that all works conform to the requirements of the Afforestation Scheme and associated forestry and environmental requirements.

Eligibility

- Only private forest owners who planted during the period between 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and whose entire plantations sustained a minimum of 30% losses are eligible to apply under the Scheme.
- Only land afforested under the following schemes is eligible for grant aid under this Scheme:
  - Afforestation Scheme;
  - Native Woodland Scheme;
  - NeighbourWood Scheme;
  - Reconstitution of Woodland Scheme (Chalara – Ash Dieback).



- To qualify for the scheme, the entire plantation area must have experienced 30% or greater mortality. Within eligible plantations satisfying this requirement, grant aid will then only be given to those plots that have experienced 30% or greater mortality. Individual plots demonstrating mortality of less than 30% will not be eligible for payment.
- Eligible scheme applicants must be the owner, leaseholder or joint manager of the land at the time of the application. Exceptions to this rule will only apply where:
  - (i) the owner is deceased and his/her legal representative submits the application; or
  - (ii) the owner consents in writing to the submission of the application in the name of a designated third party.
- Applicants must provide documentary evidence of ownership and of leasing or joint management where relevant if requested, as detailed in the *Forestry Standards Manual (2015)*.
- Expenditure declared for funding must be directly related to the objectives of this Scheme in order to be deemed eligible.

#### Grant Rates

This grant scheme is cost-based, subject to the costs approved by the Department at Form 1 (approval) stage or the maximum rates detailed below, whichever is the lower. As a result, evidence of costs expended and receipts for items purchased must be retained and produced on the request of the Minister.

Maximum Grant rates are as follows:

|          | Percentage Failure rate      | Max Grant rate €/ha |
|----------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| GPC 1-4  | Greater than or equal to 50% | 708                 |
|          | 40% to 49%                   | 566                 |
|          | 30% to 39%                   | 425                 |
| GPC 5-12 | Greater than or equal to 50% | 984                 |
|          | 40% to 49%                   | 787                 |
|          | 30% to 39%                   | 590                 |



Grant aid will depend on the original GPC category and level of damage. For plots greater than or equal to 30% mortality, grant aid will be allocated based on the GPC and the mortality level involved. Applications must include the following details of all the plots in the plantation whether or not they have suffered damage:

- Plot numbers
- Plot GPC
- Plot area
- % Mortality Present
- Area affected (hectares)
- % of plantation affected

#### Funding Conditions:

- Given budgetary considerations the Minister reserves the right to alter rates and/or scheme conditions if the Scheme is oversubscribed. This decision will be made when all applications have been received by the due date of 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2019.
- Payment of future forestry premiums will be dependent on all failed trees being replaced within the date specified in the Drought Scheme approval document.
- The maximum grant only applies to non-insured forest owners.
- All grant payments under this scheme will be subject to an inspection regime at pre-planting and post-planting stages to ensure that plant losses declared are correct and that they subsequently have been replaced.
- Form 2s under this scheme must be submitted by 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019.
- Applications will be deemed ineligible if the Afforestation Form 2 was submitted and paid after 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 and no Form 2A was submitted at the time.
- For those who have not yet submitted an Afforestation Form 2 for drought affected sites, submit the Afforestation Form 2 with Form 2a. Then submit a Form 1 RCW Drought before the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019.



### Scheme Document

A scheme document outlining scheme terms and conditions in greater detail can be found at

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/grants-and-premium-schemes/2014-2020>

### Further Information

All queries and documentation regarding the scheme should be directed to

Approvals Section

Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine,

Johnstown Castle Estate

Co. Wexford

Tel. Lo-Call 1890 200 509

Web: [www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service)

Ann Cunningham

Assistant Principal

Forestry Division