

140/16

19<sup>th</sup> October 2016

## **MINISTER DOYLE LAUNCHES TIMBER FORECAST AND GIS PORTAL**

Andrew Doyle, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine with responsibility for forestry, today launched the All Ireland Roundwood Production Forecast 2016-2035. A demonstration of the Department's new GIS Portal, which displays Timber Production Forecast results geographically, was also provided at the launch.

Welcoming the new Forecast and noting that the increased output of roundwood in the forecasted period will be predominantly from privately-owned forests, Minister Doyle said that;

*“while the mobilisation of the privately owned wood resource has been identified as a challenge, I would like to highlight the measures being taken by my Department to address this challenge, including the availability of a Forest Roads Scheme under the Forestry Programme and support for the training of harvester and forwarder operators, and for voluntary forest certification initiatives. I am also conscious of, and appreciate, the efforts being made by other stakeholders within the sector to assist and facilitate the extraction and sale of roundwood from privately owned forests, including the COFORD Wood Mobilisation and Production Forecasting Group.”*

Minister Doyle also commented on the development of forestry in Ireland over the last number of decades, which was assisted by his Department through various Forestry Programmes, and highlighted its contribution to the economy in terms of employment and exports.

*“The outcome of such development is a proposed increase, according to the Forecast, in wood production on the island from 4 million cubic metres in 2016 to close to 8 million by 2035”* said Minister Doyle.

The forecast, published by COFORD, was a collaborative effort involving Coillte, the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Northern Ireland Forest Service, Teagasc, the Irish Farmers Association, the Irish Timber Council, and the Irish Timber Growers Association.

The GIS Portal accompanying the forecast will generate user defined spatial forecasts up to 2035 for private and Coillte forests. The GIS Portal, which was developed by the Information Management and Technology Division (IMT) of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, may be accessed through <https://publicapps.agriculture.gov.ie/gispublic/rpfms/pages/workspace/public.jsp>.

The portal facilitates the dissemination of comprehensive volume forecast information on the national forest estate in an accessible, reproducible and transparent way.

The COFORD All Ireland Roundwood Production Forecast 2016- 2035 is available through the COFORD link on the Department's website <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/forests-service-general-information/forest-statistics-and-mapping/roundwood-and-forest-based-biomass-forecasting/> or can be purchased through [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie).

**ENDS**