

The slide features a background image of two young green seedlings with heart-shaped leaves and water droplets on their surfaces, growing from dark soil. A white rectangular box is centered on the slide, containing the title and date in green text, and the logo and name of Growing Media Ireland in brown text.

Teagasc Nursery Stock Meeting

24th June 2020



Growing Media Ireland

Who is Growing Media Ireland?

- GMI represents the majority of horticultural peat producers in Ireland, large and small (excluding Bord na Mona)
- GMI members are committed to best environmental practice in horticultural peat harvesting and the responsible use of peat for both professional horticulture and the retail market
- GMI members only harvest horticultural peat on non-designated bogs

Irish Horticultural Peat Sector

- 5,500 hectares - 0.4% of total Irish peatland
- 0.52% - CO2 emissions from horticultural peat is 0.52% of projected total Irish emissions
- 6,600 direct and 11,000 indirect employees in the Irish Horticultural Sector
- € 497m - employment value
- € 239m - value of Exports

Legal and Planning Problems

- September 2012 - Peat Harvesting “exempted development”
- April 2013 - An Bord Pleanála decision, no longer “exempted development”
- April 2013 - February 2018 - Judicial Review Process
- March 2018 - December - Leave to Appeal - Declined
- January 2019 - Statutory Instruments amended legislation
- July 2019 - Friends of the Irish Environment Injunction
- September 2019 - High Court Quashed Statutory Instruments

Current Regulatory Process

- Apply to An Board Pleanála for leave
 - If granted then:
- Apply to an Bord Pleanála for Substitute Consent (18 - 24 months)
 - If granted then:
- Apply to Local County Council for Planning Permission (18 - 24 months)
 - If granted then:
- Apply to EPA for a licence (24 - 30 months)

Proposed GMI Solution

The solution is not complicated:

- Remove Peat Harvesting from the Planning regime (again)
- Improve the environmental licensing process to comply with the guidance from the High Court Judgement

Horticultural Peat Stocks

- Sufficient good quality peat stocks for between 12 - 18 months
- If no harvesting in 2021, then only imported products for 2022
 - Increased leadtimes (allow 2 - 3 weeks for deliveries)
 - Much greater pressure on growers to carefully plan deliveries
 - Less flexibility
 - Bulk deliveries will probably be prohibitive on cost grounds; most likely only delivery formats will be IBC Bags and Big Bales
 - Much increased cost e.g...:
 - Nursery stock delivered in Big Bales will increase by approx. €31/m³
 - Nursery stock currently delivered in Bulk will have to be delivered in Big Bales, resulting in perhaps a €37/m³ increase

Peat and the Programme for Government

- The draft Programme for Government includes the aspiration to ‘Exit from Peat in the Midlands’
- In this heading the proposed coalition parties commit to ‘Publish and implement a detailed all-of-Government implementation plan consistent with the recommendations of the first report of the Just Transition Commissioner.’
- Kieran Mulvey’s Just Transition Progress Report suggests:

“If we are to encourage and support investment in the Midlands and other areas, then some fasttrack ‘one-stop-shop’ arrangement needs to be considered for planning, licensing and regulatory compliance.”

- Let us hope that this issue is given the required priority to ensure that harvesting can recommence in 2021

Thank you for your
attention

Growing Media Ireland CLG

Chairman: John Neenan

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