Poor fodder production in 2018 compared to average

Satellites can look at green cover using a vegetation index that ranges from 0 (no vegetation) up to 1 - with Irish summer grass having values > 0.8. By adding up monthly observations across the year we can get an idea of how well grass has grown throughout the season. Here we used NASA modis images produced each month in 2018 and summed them up from Feb to October. We compared them with average Feb-Oct growth for the ten years 2002-2012.

We can see that the eastern agricultural regions produced between 5 and 10% less grass than normal this year - equivalent to about 1 ton/ha less. This is the impact of the cold winter and summer drought this year. Interestingly the natural areas in the bogs and uplands produced more biomass this year, as they were less constrained by water shortage and responded to the increase in temperature.

Projection: WRS 84

Datasets used:
MODIS Monthly NDVI products 2002-2018
We acknowledge the use of NASA MOD13a3 Monthly composite products

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