

Irish Deer Management Forum

Second Meeting MINUTES

12.30pm Tuesday, May 5th, 2015

Venue: "Knights Building", 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2

Chair: Judith Annett.

Attendance:

Chris Fox	Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA)	Farming
Pat Hennessy	Irish Farmers Association (IFA)	Farming
Tom Short	Irish Farmers Association (IFA)	Farming
Sean Doris	National Association of Regional Game Councils	Hunting
Damian Hannigan	Wild Deer Association of Ireland	Hunting
John Fenton	Association of Game Shoot Operators (AGSO)	Hunting
Paddy Purser	Pro Silva Ireland/SIF/AIFC	Forestry
Barry Coad	Coillte	Forestry
Liam Nolan	Deer Alliance	Training
Jim Walsh	Individual	Research/Technical
Declan Little	Woodlands of Ireland	Conservation
Declan O'Neill	Wicklow Deer Management Partnership	Deer Management Group
Seamus Dunne	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Government Department
Wesley Atkinson	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Government Department
Tim Burkitt	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Government Department
Gerry Leckey	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Government Department

Apologies

James O Keefe, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

John O Neill, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Sean Eustace, Wicklow Forest Owners Group

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed the members to the meeting and provided a brief outline of the previous meeting, and issues arising from this.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the inaugural meeting were read to the Forum and proposed by Mr. Liam Nolan. The Chair accepted the proposal and the minutes were adopted without changes.

4. Correspondence

Correspondence was received by the forum secretary in relation to Best Practice manuals from Mr. Jim Walsh, This was dealt with in item 5, Issues and Opportunities. Other correspondence

was received by and in relation to media issues from Mr. Liam Nolan, this issue was discussed under item 7.

Additional correspondence was also transmitted to the forum by Mr Pat Meskell, DAFM, on the day of the meeting, briefly outlining the findings of a recent DAFM Bovine TB study carried out on Deer in North Wicklow. The correspondence stated that 16% of deer in a sample of 103 deer killed by DAFM in North Co. Wicklow were infected with TB. Mr Meskell requested that the bTB case be examined by the IDMF and the appropriate responses be examined.

It was deemed that there was insufficient notice of the topic to incorporate TB as a discussion item, nor was there sufficient detail upon which to base a discussion. More information would be required by the forum.

Farming representatives called for recognition or consensus from among the forum that the TB issue exists in relation to deer.

ACTION POINTS ARISING

- Members must notify the IDMF of major issues such as this in advance of meetings, to allow due preparation for discussion on such issues.
- Copies of an interim internal report by DAFM relating to the issue would be made available to the forum after May 11th.
- The Irish Deer Management Forum accepts the bTB is a major issue for farming livelihoods, but that insufficient information exists to warrant an immediate response, and a 'knee jerk' type response is to be avoided by the forum.
- It was decided to bring forward a special presentation or meeting regarding the report and its significance to the IDMF. Options could be developed by members prior to this meeting.
- It may be necessary to co-opt representation from some of the main Conservation NGO's for the purpose of this meeting.
- The meeting will result in developed options to address the issue, including similar precedents elsewhere, the need to step back from the issue, and the context for proposing various solutions. The issue will have to be addressed in a systematic and measured manner.
- The issue should be viewed as an opportunity for the IDMF to generate support.
- DAFM would be asked to issue its own recommendations in relation to the study.

5. Key Issues and Opportunities

Members briefly presented issues and opportunities for their sectors in a tour de table; a full account of these statements is contained in the IDMF issues and opportunities statement document IDMF4 (attached). There was a brief discussion regarding presentations and some of the matters raised.

ACTION POINTS ARISING

- The statements will be compiled and circulated to the IDMF as IDM4, Issues and Opportunities statements.

6. Action Planning

The issues of working groups and prioritisation of work items were explored further. A discussion on deer hotspots followed, including how this issue might best be progressed.

ACTION POINTS ARISING

- The Wicklow Deer Management Partnership will define further areas in Co. Wicklow where assistance is required.
- A working group to pursue best practice development, and the development of a phone app for deer data collection will be pursued, following suggestions from Mr Liam Nolan and Mr Jim Walsh.
- To simplify development of priority groups the Chair and Secretary will prescribe initial groups and convenors on behalf of the Forum membership. Once established, working groups would report progress to the Forum every two months.

7. Media and the IDMF

The chair noted that there had been significant media attention to deer issues in the media in the week preceding the meeting. There is a clear need to make the IDMF part of the story as a new body in place and now working on the issues. This is a positive development, something is being done and this should be reflected in media discussions where members are involved.

The chair stated that there is a need to agree the IDMF approach to dealing with the media and how best to promote the IDMF agenda through the press, website and other media.

ACTION POINT ARISING

- The IDMF website must be prioritised to allow for a central focal point for deer information for the media and the general public to find facts about deer.
- The message on this website needs to be developed by the forum.

8. Field Visit

Given the issues in relation to the BTB report, it was decided to postpone the proposed field trip to Co. Kerry in favour of a regular meeting during June.

9. Members Updates

Damien Hannigan of the Wild Deer Association of Ireland briefly outlined a new deer education/awareness programme currently being delivered to primary schools by his association

10. AOB*

No issues.

11. Next Meeting and general meeting schedule.

The next IDMF meeting will take place in Mid June, 2015.