

Notes of Land Evidence Forum meeting (via MS Teams) 22nd June 2022, 10 – 11:30am.

Online meeting.

Chair: Fiona O'Rourke (EPA)

Attendees: Frank Barrett (DAFM), Paul Kane (OSI), Gavin Smith (EPA), Gemma Weir (NPWS), Hugh Carey (DHLGH), Claire Byrne (EPA), Tomás Murray (CSO on secondment to EPA), Gareth John (DHLGH), Lilian O'Sullivan (Teagasc), Mairead Fitzsimons (GSI), Niall Ryan (DAFM), Oliver Molloy (DAFM), Niamh Gibbons (DECC)

Apologies: Ian Doyle (Heritage Council), Lorcan Scott (Heritage Council), Jonathan Derham (EPA), Claire Byrne (EPA), Catherine Dunbar (DAFM)

Agenda

1. Tour de Table – land related developments and activities of interest (20 mins)
2. Landcover map (15 mins presentation, 15 mins questions)
3. (i) Progress of land use evidential review tasks (30 mins)
 - a. Stakeholder mapping (10 minutes)
 - b. Other products – Forest mapping, design work
 - c. Synthesis report and activities until September 2022
3. AOB (10 mins)
4. Dates for the next meeting

No	Mtg Date	Action	Who	Status
26	May	Review the synthesis report proposed outline presented today and add comments on <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Items that are missing- Whether you disagree with any of the content proposed- If you have items that should be considered in this review that haven't already been submitted under the Call for Evidence earlier this year Please submit your comments by the 10th June 2022	All	
27	May	Share the draft EAGLE definitions for land use classes with the group for them to review	FOR	Done
29	June	Complete Doodle poll for September meeting	All	
30	June	Read draft Section 1 of Synthesis Report and provide comments/feedback by 19th July 2022	All	

1. No items for the Tour de Table

2. Landcover Map

GS presented the new landcover map created by OSI and EPA. He outlined the level of detail that the new map will provide: it will be much higher resolution than Corine landcover data. A comprehensive validation process has been undertaken involving organisations on the land evidence forum and GS thanked them for all their time and input.

The improved resolution of the landcover map means that more precise statistics will be available for Ireland's landcover. A trial assessment of the difference between Corine and

the new map, for Co. Wicklow, shows the possible extent of the differences between the two datasets.

Existing use cases that have tested draft sample areas of the landcover data to confirm its applicability include:

- LULUCF (land use, land use change and forestry) reporting as part of EPA inventory and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions
- FLARES research project being undertaken by UCC
- DAFM Farm Environmental Survey pilot study
- EPA illegal waste activities risk map

LOS asked about the application of the LULUCF classes. GS confirmed that it was using the LULUCF guidance established as part of the LULUCF regulations.

PL confirmed that the team were aiming for a September release of the data.

FB asked about documentation of the important national knowledge gathered to create the landcover map. GS summarised the plans for documentation:

- September documentation will be light, and will focus on giving data users the information they need to use the data
- Post September more comprehensive documents are planned
 - Documentation of the landcover classification
 - Documentation of the methodology
 - Documentation of the validation methods and results

GS confirmed that the EPA team would like to create a peer reviewed paper about the landcover map and would need input from experts on the land evidence forum.

FB asked what would follow the landcover map. GS confirmed that EPA and OSI would like to continue to work on the landcover series and that there will always be ways that the data can be improved. PK confirmed the landcover is part of the OSI established suite of products and they plan to maintain it into the future. OSI are considering what form the landcover product will take to meet user requirements.

GW suggested that the team revisit the 2016 National Landcover and Habitat Mapping Programme for Ireland- Use Case Analysis and Economic Value Study, commissioned by the Heritage Council on behalf of the National Land Cover and Habitat Mapping Working Group, to assess if the identified use cases have been addressed or what gaps remain. GS agreed this could be done and that he would like organisations who have uses cases for the data to present them as part of the data release communications process.

NG asked about potential issues with creating a land use map. GS responded that there is significant time needed to review and gain consensus on the land use classes and the end products required. FOR added that the work done on the test land use mapping exercise identified three types of barriers that need to be overcome: the classification and its application to the real world, the availability of data to determine a land use and whether the end products make logical sense (where more than one land use exists at a location, does the combination of land use types make logical sense).

3. Progress of land use evidential review tasks

TM presented the work done on creating a list of stakeholder organisations and groups, and the categorisation work done on the list. This work is ready for the land evidence forum and steering committees to review.

FOR gave a verbal update on progress to date. A designer has been appointed to prepare the documents for publication at the end of September: writing, review and design work will be done in phases over the summer. FOR noted that some research/assessment was underway and some was complete enough to commence work on the synthesis report. The first draft of text for section 1 of the synthesis report was posted to the Glasscubes file share for the group to review. FOR outlined that while there won't be forum meetings throughout the summer, draft synthesis report content will be posted to the Glasscubes as it is being written for the group to review and comment on. All work on the synthesis report needs to be done by 16th September to allow design work to complete by 30th September to meet the end Q3 deadline.

GW asked about the forum to review and discuss future updates and ambition for land mapping work, including the process to review the land use classification scheme.

FOR replied that it was accepted that the land use classification scheme being used in the land use phase 1 review was a draft scheme which has not been reviewed and agreed by the group, but the purpose of using it in the review was to provide some framework to assess all land use classes across the board. The land use review has monopolised the Land Evidence Forum meetings so September is a good time to review the next priorities for this group (the land use phase 1 review will be nearing completion and the landcover map should be complete by then). Reviewing and agreeing the classification scheme and suite of required land use products could be an activity that we plan for October onwards: having some idea of what is required for Phase 2 of the land use review would be useful also.

4. AOB

NG updated that Ministers Ryan and Hackett have asked DECC and DAFM to scope Phase 2 of the land use review. NG also presented the land evidence review work at the Life Care for Climate conference on 8th June in a LULUCF session with Czech Republic, Finland and Italy. Finland expressed an interest in holding a bilateral meeting on land use. NG outlined that a proposed revision to the LULUCF regulation is being progressed.