

- **STEP 4:** That NCF then connects with current or future business clients that wish to contribute to the fund, and presents them with a list of native woodlands with planting approval.
- **STEP 5:** Businesses can engage NCFs to describe or measure in a scientifically verifiable manner, the environmental benefits that are likely to be generated by the new native woodland. These could include, for example, an improvement in water quality in local rivers and streams, the positive impact the woodland will have on biodiversity in the area, or the amount of carbon that will be captured as the woodland develops.
- **STEP 6:** An individual business can then decide to support a particular project that best fits its requirements regarding size, location, the types of environmental benefits that are most relevant to it, etc.

While the business will have no ownership rights in relation to the native woodland being established or to any ecosystem service (including carbon) that the woodland may provide, this information can be used by it in a variety of ways. For example, this information can be used to demonstrate the commitment of the business to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and also to increase awareness amongst its employees, customers and trading partners of the benefits of native woodlands to society.

Cost elements of the WEF

Any costs required to fund the work of the NCF in quantifying ecosystem services, for example, will be a matter for the participating business and the NCF.

Currently, the Department covers the cost of woodland establishment and also pays a premium to the woodland owner each year for 15 years. Based on the average size of native woodland establishment projects in 2017, (i.e. 4.35 hectares), this equates to a State contribution of approximately €70,000. The amount required for an individual business to participate in the Woodland Environmental Fund is €1,000 per hectare, as a once-off top-up payment to the landowner upon establishment of the native woodland.

If your business is interested in taking part in DAFM's Woodland Environmental Fund pilot project, please contact Karl Coggins at e-mail karl.coggins@agriculture.gov.ie / tel. 053-916 5521 / 087-9942450.



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