



IRISH TIMBER GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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Irish Timber Growers Association call for Carbon payments for landowners who plant trees

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The Irish Timber Growers Association (ITGA) have called for a mechanism to facilitate Carbon payments for landowners who plant trees. The association have made the case that woodland creation and sustainable forest management should be a source of income for growers through their carbon storage capability. This possibility is a reality in the UK, through their Woodland Carbon Code which provides reassurance about the carbon savings that companies can achieve by being associated with woodland planting projects.

A Forest Carbon Code could be established in Ireland which would provide a quality assurance standard for woodland and tree planting projects and generate independently verified carbon units. Such units could then be sold to companies and others who wish to show that they are mitigating their Carbon emissions through Voluntary Carbon Offsets. Donal Whelan of the Irish Timber Growers Association stated that, ‘there is now a massive worldwide market for such Voluntary Carbon Offsets and Ireland will miss out on this opportunity if we don’t establish such a credible and verifiable Forest Carbon Code’.

With the new European Green Deal which aims to protect, conserve, and enhance the EU's natural capital, and protect the health and well-being of citizens from environment-related risks and impacts, those who plant trees and woodlands should be enabled to secure additional income for storing carbon. Afforestation, agro-forestry, and other tree planting initiatives can accommodate these aims and in so doing also complement other farming activities. The EU Commission has the objective of making the EU the world’s first carbon-neutral continent by 2050. With this aim, it’s Farm to Fork Strategy highlights the example of a “new green business model”, where farmers who remove CO2 from the atmosphere and contribute to climate neutrality should get rewarded.

‘There is real potential for afforestation, agroforestry and other tree planting schemes to potentially sell additional voluntary carbon offsets to remunerate our landowners for planting trees and woodlands with all the additional environmental and ecological benefits this would also provide’. ITGA are calling for a Forest Carbon Code to be established in Ireland supported by Government that will facilitate such a credible Voluntary Carbon Offsets scheme for tree planting.

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