

ITGA calls for carbon payments

The Irish Timber Growers Association (ITGA) has called for a mechanism to facilitate carbon payments to farmers who plant trees.

“We make the case that woodland creation and sustainable forest management should be a source of income for farmers through their carbon storage ability,” says Donal Whelan, technical director, ITGA.

“This possibility is a reality in the UK, through the Woodland Carbon Code.”

He says a similar 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,” he explains.

“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.”

He says now that Project Woodland is under way, there is an opportunity for an Irish Forest Carbon Code supported by Government. He points to the new European Green Deal, which aims to ensure that Europe will be the first carbon-neutral continent by 2050. “With this aim, its Farm to Fork strategy highlights the example of a ‘new green business model’, where farmers who contribute to climate neutrality should be rewarded.”

There is potential for afforestation, agroforestry and other schemes to sell additional voluntary carbon offsets to remunerate farmers for planting trees, with the additional environmental and ecological benefits this would provide.

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