

The slide features a background image of two young green seedlings with heart-shaped leaves and water droplets on their surfaces, growing from dark soil. A white rectangular box is centered on the slide, containing the title and date in green text, and the logo and name of Growing Media Ireland in brown text.

# Teagasc Nursery Stock Meeting

24<sup>th</sup> June 2020



Growing Media Ireland

# Who is Growing Media Ireland?

- GMI represents the majority of horticultural peat producers in Ireland, large and small (excluding Bord na Mona)
- GMI members are committed to best environmental practice in horticultural peat harvesting and the responsible use of peat for both professional horticulture and the retail market
- GMI members only harvest horticultural peat on non-designated bogs

## Irish Horticultural Peat Sector

- 5,500 hectares - 0.4% of total Irish peatland
- 0.52% - CO2 emissions from horticultural peat is 0.52% of projected total Irish emissions
- 6,600 direct and 11,000 indirect employees in the Irish Horticultural Sector
- € 497m - employment value
- € 239m - value of Exports

## Legal and Planning Problems

- September 2012 - Peat Harvesting “exempted development”
- April 2013 - An Bord Pleanála decision, no longer “exempted development”
- April 2013 - February 2018 - Judicial Review Process
- March 2018 - December - Leave to Appeal - Declined
- January 2019 - Statutory Instruments amended legislation
- July 2019 - Friends of the Irish Environment Injunction
- September 2019 - High Court Quashed Statutory Instruments

## Current Regulatory Process

- Apply to An Board Pleanála for leave
  - If granted then:
- Apply to an Bord Pleanála for Substitute Consent (18 - 24 months)
  - If granted then:
- Apply to Local County Council for Planning Permission (18 - 24 months)
  - If granted then:
- Apply to EPA for a licence (24 - 30 months)

## Proposed GMI Solution

The solution is not complicated:

- Remove Peat Harvesting from the Planning regime (again)
- Improve the environmental licensing process to comply with the guidance from the High Court Judgement

## Horticultural Peat Stocks

- Sufficient good quality peat stocks for between 12 - 18 months
- If no harvesting in 2021, then only imported products for 2022
  - Increased leadtimes (allow 2 - 3 weeks for deliveries)
  - Much greater pressure on growers to carefully plan deliveries
  - Less flexibility
  - Bulk deliveries will probably be prohibitive on cost grounds; most likely only delivery formats will be IBC Bags and Big Bales
  - Much increased cost e.g...:
    - Nursery stock delivered in Big Bales will increase by approx. €31/m<sup>3</sup>
    - Nursery stock currently delivered in Bulk will have to be delivered in Big Bales, resulting in perhaps a €37/m<sup>3</sup> increase

## Peat and the Programme for Government

- The draft Programme for Government includes the aspiration to ‘Exit from Peat in the Midlands’
- In this heading the proposed coalition parties commit to ‘Publish and implement a detailed all-of-Government implementation plan consistent with the recommendations of the first report of the Just Transition Commissioner.’
- Kieran Mulvey’s Just Transition Progress Report suggests:

***“If we are to encourage and support investment in the Midlands and other areas, then some fasttrack ‘one-stop-shop’ arrangement needs to be considered for planning, licensing and regulatory compliance.”***

- Let us hope that this issue is given the required priority to ensure that harvesting can recommence in 2021



Thank you for your  
attention

**Growing Media Ireland CLG**

Chairman: John Neenan

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