

Agriculture and Environment

What paths will policy take?

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Introduction

Membership of the European Union has had a major impact on the island of Ireland in terms of agricultural development and also in terms of the environmental legislation, commitments and obligations.

In terms of agriculture, while the farming communities in both jurisdictions have benefitted from access to markets and capital, membership of the European Union has had perhaps the greater impact for the farming community in the Republic of Ireland. Although farms in Northern Ireland are and were smaller than those south of the border,¹ the agricultural sector in Northern Ireland was more developed than that south of the border prior to the 1970s. The farming community in Northern Ireland were beneficiaries of the cheap food policy pursued by the British Government after World War II,² the sector was more diversified, they had access to the British market and received a better price for their product than their neighbours south of the border.

Prior to 1973 the agriculture sector in the Republic of Ireland was not as developed or diversified, with little access to capital or markets beyond Britain. Upon joining the European Economic Community in 1973 the farming community in the Republic of Ireland suddenly had access to capital for investment in infrastructure and in skills development, and importantly access to markets with large populations of consumers. The farming community also benefitted from the fact that rural development, and in particular developing agriculture and associated industry, to create employment in rural settings and generate rural economic growth has always been a key policy priority of the European Union.

In terms of the environment, membership of the European Union has had a major impact on environmental policy in both jurisdictions on this island. From the Single European Act in 1987

and throughout all subsequent treaties, protection of the environment is identified as an objective of the European Union. Policy from the European Union has strongly influenced environmental legislation, policies in relation to sustainable development, biodiversity, waste management, natural resources, marine life, bird life, renewable energy and the setting of emission reductions targets, on both parts of the island.³ In the coming years the Republic of Ireland will continue to set national environmental targets as determined by European Union ambitions and targets, and will have access to resources and supports from the Green New Deal. It remains to be seen what impact Brexit will have on environmental policy in Northern Ireland, however one thing is clear, the incentives and resources once available to policymakers in both jurisdictions will now only be available to policy makers in the Republic of Ireland.

Agriculture – an all island perspective

Agriculture remains hugely important to economic development on the island of Ireland. According to the latest data the agri-food sector contributed 7.5% of GNI in the Republic of Ireland in 2018, and it employs approximately 173,000 people, representing 7.7% of total employment.⁴ In Northern Ireland the agri-food sector is also a major economic contributor, and as with the Republic, agriculture has been identified as a key driver of future economic development. The latest figures show that the sector accounts for around 71,000 local jobs and contributes £1.45bn to the economy of Northern Ireland.⁵ Dairy and cattle account for the highest agricultural outputs respectively in both jurisdictions. Farm incomes are also highly volatile in both jurisdictions, with dairy farms in particular vulnerable to fluctuations in market prices. The abolition of milk quotas in the European Union in 2015 has resulted in increased supply of milk and volatility in market prices. Many Irish farmers on both sides of the border borrowed to invest to scale up production with the expectation of demand from Russia, China and other world markets. Whilst dairy farming is the most profitable form of farming across the island of Ireland, it is also the most volatile due to price fluctuations and a high dependency on them is not a sustainable way to maintain farm incomes.

In 2018 average family farm income in the Republic of Ireland was €23,333, a decrease of 21 per cent on the previous year.⁶ As ever, there was a wide variation in farm incomes, with 29 per cent of farms earning an income of less than €5,000 in 2018, 15 per cent earning between €5,000 and €10,000 per annum and 31 per cent earning between €10,000 and €30,000 per annum. About half of farm families in the Republic of Ireland require off-farm income to remain sustainable. Average farm income is highest on dairy farms and in the South East region. The Northern and Western region is the most disadvantaged region with the lowest farm income and the highest reliance on subsidies. Some key farm statistics from the Teagasc Farm Survey include:

- Average family farm income was €23,483 in 2018.
- 44 per cent of farms earned a farm income of less than €10,000 in 2018.
- Direct payments accounted for 79 per cent of all payments received to dairy farms, 84 per cent to tillage farms and 57 per cent to cattle-rearing farms.
- Just 32 per cent of farms are considered economically viable with 34 per cent considered vulnerable.
- 52 per cent of farm households have off-farm employment and 40 per cent of cattle farmers work off-farm.

These statistics highlight the challenges the farming community faces in terms of generating sufficient income. Only a minority of farmers are, at present, generating an adequate income from farm activity and even on these farms, income lags behind the national average. Farm incomes are also inconsistent, as the prices of commodities fluctuate and gains are predicated on expanding dairy production which runs contrary to climate commitments.

It is clear that farming itself is not enough to provide an adequate income for many families as evidenced by the over reliance on direct payments and the number of farmers engaged in off-farm employment. Advances in technology and mechanisation have meant that many farmers can seek alternative ways to generate income. From the mid-1990s, off-farm employment by farmers increased significantly. However, during the recession, many of these jobs were lost. A strong potential has been identified for alternative farm enterprises such as niche tourism and food production. However, these need significant support, and are likely to attract younger and better educated farmers.

A 2019 paper from the Central Bank on the uncertain outlook for Irish agriculture found that low profitability and a high reliance of farm incomes on direct payments represent an important weakness in the sector and that any future negative shock – even one less material than Brexit – would further expose the underlying weaknesses in the sector.⁷ This serves to highlight the hugely negative potential of Brexit to farming communities on the island of Ireland. Access to the €5bn Brexit fund announced as part of the €750billion EU Recovery Plan will provide some financial support to the sector in the Republic of Ireland.⁸ It remains to be seen what additional support will be available to the sector in Northern Ireland.

Farm incomes in Northern Ireland fell by 26 per cent between 2018 and 2019, and are expected to fall by a further 14 per cent in 2020 highlighting the vulnerability of farm businesses.⁹ Farm incomes in Northern Ireland have fluctuated considerably over the past eight years, representing challenges for the long-term sustainability of farming, and the economic viability of many farm businesses. In fact, dairy farmers and cattle and sheep farmers in Northern Ireland had the lowest average farming incomes across the entire UK.¹⁰ Farmers in Northern Ireland, like their counterparts in the Republic are also reliant on payments from the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Basic Payment System to support farm incomes. In 2019, financial support from CAP was worth £281million to 23,609 farmers, representing around 60 per cent of farm incomes, however as always there is significant variations between farm types. The long-term sustainability of farming and the economic viability of farms is a significant challenge to the farming communities in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The age profile in farming is a challenge for the community North and South of the border. In Northern Ireland the median age of farmers is 58 years with just 6 per cent of farmers aged under 35,¹¹ a similar trend is observed South of the border with a quarter of all farmers aged over 65 and just 5 per cent aged under 35.¹² It is clear that farming itself has struggled to provide an adequate income for many families over a number of years as evidenced by the over reliance on direct payments and the age profile in both farming communities. The impact of the Covid-19 crisis on regional and rural employment will have a further negative impact on the incomes for farming households all across the island. The impact of Brexit could make this situation considerably more challenging.

Threats to farm incomes across the island

There are threats to the incomes of farming communities on both sides of the border on the island of Ireland. Beef farmers in particular in the Republic of Ireland are very concerned about

the impact of the EU-Mercosur trade agreement on their livelihoods. If ratified by the European Parliament the EU-Mercosur trade deal will eliminate tariffs on roughly 90 per cent of Mercosur's exports to the EU over 10 years – chiefly agricultural products such as beef, poultry, and fruit and in turn, EU companies would pay less tax to export products – mostly machinery, car parts, and dairy products like cheese – to Mercosur.¹³ This trade agreement would not only appear to undermine the income security for European farming communities, it also undermines the commitments and ambitions of the 'European Green Deal and the focus on climate action and sustainability of CAP 2021-2027'.

This deal would lock the European Union into an unsustainable economic model, entirely at odds with the stated aims of the Green Deal for Europe. It is difficult to reconcile importing significant amounts of agricultural products such as beef, poultry and fruit (which the EU itself already produces) and the increased emissions that this will inevitably lead to supporting one of the stated aims of the Green New Deal – Greening of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with a Farm-to-Fork strategy. What incentive is there for farmers in the Republic of Ireland and their counterparts across the European Union to invest in sustainable forms of agriculture and the Farm-to-Fork Strategy if they have to compete with agricultural imports from the other side of the world? At a national and EU level policy should support and incentivise sustainable agricultural practice and the incomes for farm families, not undermine them.

Future trade deals between the United Kingdom (UK) and other countries also pose a significant threat to the incomes of the farming community in Northern Ireland. After the transition period, UK agriculture will be operating outside of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). However, due to the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol farmers and the agri-food industry in Northern Ireland will comply with a range of EU regulations and there is concern that in the long run Britain may move away from these regulations and open up the market to other jurisdictions, creating divergence between both jurisdictions.¹⁴ This will pose a particular challenge to farmers in Northern Ireland, as one of the advantages they currently have is the strength of regulations that they adhere to, and the traceability of their produce. If, over time, the market in Britain (which is the biggest market for the entire agri-food industry in Northern Ireland) is opened up to food imports of a lower standard (and lower price for the consumer) than the current EU based standards via future trade deals then this will have a major impact on the livelihoods of farmers and food producers in Northern Ireland. This remains a possibility, with a recent amendment to the Agriculture Bill to ban the importation of hormone-fed beef and chlorine dipped chicken defeated in the House of Commons.¹⁵

Of further concern to farming communities in Northern Ireland is what will replace the CAP Basic Payment Scheme in 2021. At present the UK Government has stated that the current annual budget for farmers in the UK will be guaranteed for every year of the Parliament (until 2024). However, what happens beyond that is not guaranteed.¹⁶ The faults with the current CAP system are well documented and there is, in the period 2021-2024, the potential to design a new system in Northern Ireland. A new system that incentivises sustainable farming practices, protects the environment and rewards local farmers and communities would also alleviate some of the challenges the farming community in Northern Ireland will face as their counterparts south of the border will be rewarded for moving to a more sustainable system. However, a commitment to designing such a system is by no means assured. The problems with the current CAP basic payment system notwithstanding, it remains to be seen if the UK Government will commit to making up a shortfall of £281million annually beyond the term of the current parliament. Many in the farming and rural communities must surely be very

concerned as to what will happen in 2024 in terms of future trade deals, tariffs and farm income support.

Sustainable agriculture – guiding future policy?

The European Commission's proposals for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2021 to 2027 stipulate that at least 40 per cent of the CAP's overall budget and at least 30 per cent of the Maritime Fisheries Fund would contribute to climate action. This will have implications for Irish agriculture and fisheries as the new system will incentivise more sustainable practices. However, the new CAP will also have a reduced budget meaning there are less funds to be allocated.

CAP payments from 2021-2027 will focus on incentives for farmers to move to more sustainable methods of production. The Basic Payment System is to be replaced by a Basic Income Support for Sustainability payment, indicating the direction in which the European Commission is moving in terms of agriculture policy. Four in every ten Euros spent under the new CAP will involve climate measures, to reduce the impact of agriculture on the environment. An example of this is the priority given to investment in solar panels and other forms of renewable energy on farm houses and barns in CAP 2021-2027. It raises the potential of farmers on one side of the border being incentivised to invest in solar panels for example while farmers on the other side are not.

The refocusing of the CAP budget to climate action presents an opportunity for farmers in the Republic of Ireland to invest in sustainable forms of agriculture and the Farm-to-Fork Strategy has the potential to deliver on short supply chains for farmers, and address some of the issues of product pricing for Irish farmers. One of the key priorities of the Farm-to-Fork Strategy is ensuring a sustainable livelihood for primary producers and making the most sustainable food the most affordable. The goal of this strategy is that European food becomes the global standard for sustainability. It will incentivise more sustainable agricultural practice including reducing excess fertilisation, increasing organic farming, improving animal welfare, and reversing biodiversity loss. Fertilisation, organic farming, animal welfare and biodiversity are all issues raised by Northern Ireland Assembly Research Service as areas of concern or those that require further clarification in relation to the position of the sector in Northern Ireland after Brexit.¹⁷

Farmers on both sides of the border are facing changes in terms of the payments they receive via CAP, or from the UK Government. Farmers in the Republic of Ireland will now be accessing a CAP scheme where four out of every ten euros will be spent on climate measures, and the Basic Payment Scheme is being replaced by a Basic Income Support for Sustainability, implying that climate measures will be at the core of this payment. On the other side of the border the status quo will continue until 2021. After this, the UK Government has committed to fund farmers to the same level as was previously done under CAP until 2024. Things are uncertain from this point on.

The farming community in Northern Ireland faces considerable uncertainty. It is unclear if they will be incentivised to pursue sustainable agricultural practices and measures that will protect and enhance the environment in a similar manner to their counterparts in the Republic. It is also unclear if they will be able to compete with produce which is seen as the global standard for sustainability.

Environment

In terms of the environment the Republic of Ireland has been a poor performer, persistently missing Europe 2020 emissions reduction targets and the country faces a significant challenge to get on the right trajectory to meet the 2030 emissions reductions targets (the temporary drop in global emissions as a result of the Covid-19 crisis notwithstanding).¹⁸ It is also one of the highest greenhouse gas emitters in the EU,¹⁹ with the highest levels of emissions from agriculture.²⁰

The Republic of Ireland's emissions profile is dominated by agriculture and transport with emissions from both sectors increasing in line with economic growth and employment trends in these sectors. The policy of agricultural expansion (particularly the increase in the dairy herd) pursued since 2012 has led to a commensurate increase in emissions from agriculture annually in the same period.²¹ Although among the poorest performers in the EU in terms of emissions reductions and environmental targets, 'Our Shared Future', the programme for government for the Republic of Ireland published in June 2020 contains significant environmental commitments, which if fully implemented could be transformative for the sustainability agenda.²² The headline commitments of an average of per annum reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions from 2021 to 2030, and the publication of five-year carbon budgets which will set maximum emissions by sector, have the potential to make a real impact on emissions reductions. These commitments are no doubt strongly influenced by the Green Deal for Europe and the fact that the European Commission has made sustainability a key policy priority.

Emissions in Northern Ireland, like those in the Republic of Ireland, are dominated by the agriculture and transport sectors (27 per cent and 23 per cent respectively in 2018).²³ There has been little progress in terms of reducing emissions, and a similar trend is observed of emissions tracking economic trends, with emissions in agriculture and transport being higher in 2018 than in previous years, and in fact analysis shows that no progress has been made towards the baseline set out in the programme for government of the assembly in 2014.²⁴ Northern Ireland faces similar challenges to the Republic of Ireland in terms of an economy dominated by emissions from agriculture and transport. However, the key difference is that policymakers and legislators in the Republic of Ireland will have access to European funds to incentivise emission reductions and to support and buffer those sectors which will be most affected.

Future direction of environmental policy in the Republic of Ireland

The 'European Green Deal' is a roadmap to transform the European economic model by moving to a circular economy, reversing and averting biodiversity loss, and addressing climate change.²⁵ It contains a political commitment to become the first climate neutral continent by 2050 with the ambitious aim to ensure that the economy serves people and society and gives back to nature more than it takes away. The deal will influence and guide environmental policy in the EU, and in the Republic of Ireland. Proposals in the European Green Deal that should be of particular interest to policymakers across the island of Ireland include:

- A European 'Climate Law' to enshrine the 2050 climate neutrality objective;
- An increase in the EU's greenhouse gas emission reductions target for 2030 to at least 50 per cent, and towards 55 per cent, compared with 1990 levels;

- The introduction of a carbon border mechanism if required to ensure the price of imports accurately reflects their carbon content;
- The Greening of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with a Farm-to-Fork strategy;
- The adoption by the European Commission in 2021 of a zero pollution action plan for air, water and soil.

In the context of Brexit, a carbon border mechanism has the potential to significantly impact the costs of goods for consumers on the island, and the costs of exports to the UK. A zero pollution action plan for air, water and soil will require common frameworks for an all island management of such issues, similar to the cross-border international River Basin Districts that already exist to coordinate implementation of the EU's Water Framework Directive.²⁶ Similarly, the commitments and targets in the EU Biodiversity strategy regarding protecting at least 30 per cent of the land, sea area and nature restoration targets, which will guide environmental policy and legislation in the Republic of Ireland will require a common framework to be implemented fully on the island.²⁷ There is the potential to develop 'ecological corridors' on an all-island basis for example which would provide for the protection of biodiversity, nature and wildlife in both jurisdictions. The biodiversity strategy also contains the target that at least 25% of the EU's agricultural land must be organically farmed by 2030 which has clear implications for the farming communities on both sides of the border, given concerns raised regarding organic standards and the impact on produce from Northern Ireland.²⁸ Significant resources from the European Union (25% of the total EU budget) have been committed to supporting biodiversity, sustainability and climate action, and the Commission has stated that it will further promote tax systems and pricing that reflect environmental costs, including biodiversity loss. This will certainly impact not only on the direction of environmental policy on an all-island basis, it will also have an impact on the price of goods on either side of the border, those with a lower environmental footprint having a more favourable price.

Future direction of environmental policy in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland has long faced challenges in terms of environmental governance, compliance and a perceived lack of accountability.²⁹ Furthermore, managing different rules in two different jurisdictions on the same island also presents a unique set of challenges, particularly in the area of waste management and waste crime.³⁰

Although environment is a devolved competence of the Northern Ireland Assembly, concern has been expressed in a recent report as to whether the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol was considered when the Environment Bill 2019-2020 was drafted.³¹ Environment is one of the areas identified in the protocol for continued North-South cooperation, yet the complexities that this presents are not reflected in the aforementioned Bill. In the Environment Bill 2019-2020 the setting of environmental targets does not extend to Northern Ireland, and will instead be set by the UK government by 2022. Neither will environmental monitoring or environmental improvement plans extend to Northern Ireland. This raises complications as the Republic of Ireland will be setting five-year carbon budgets and targets for national and international environmental obligations, but Northern Ireland will not have the capacity to do the same. A number of specific concerns are identified with regard to the position of Northern Ireland and the Environment Bill 2019-2020 in a report by the Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service including:³²

- Will the proposed Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) be sufficiently resourced to perform its functions effectively?
- Could Northern Ireland potentially face enforcement from a number of bodies e.g.: the OEP in relation to complying with relevant environmental law and the CJEU in relation to complying with legislation listed in the EU Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol?
- Would Northern Ireland specific climate change legislation and a Northern Ireland Independent Environmental Protection Agency allow enforcement under the one body?
- In terms of waste and cross-border fly-tipping – how will associated costs be dealt with and by what authority? Will there be consistency with any associated costs across the border so as to ensure one side of the border doesn't become more attractive for unlawful disposal?
- Could the existence of a land border with a country that currently does not operate a Deposit and Retention Scheme increase the potential for leakage of materials and subsequent fraudulent activity?
- In terms of waste crime what happens with the recovery of costs at cross-border locations, or cross border waste deposit?

There is as yet no clear answer or response to these concerns, and significant work lies ahead for the Northern Ireland Assembly in terms of addressing and responding to them.

As outlined in the introduction, the European Union and the European treaties have had a significant influence on environmental policy and legislation across the island of Ireland. The influence that this will have on policy in Northern Ireland when the UK formally exits the European Union is at present unclear. One clear question is whether or not policy in Northern Ireland will be as ambitious on environment and climate as that in the Republic of Ireland, and if it will be appropriately resourced? There is a strong possibility that in twelve months there will be two very different environmental policy landscapes on this island.

Conclusion

Agriculture and the environment are two of the areas identified in the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol as areas for continued North-South cooperation. Indeed, these areas are two of the policy areas where there is a history of significant cooperation between administrations. This implies potential for future cooperation and the development of common all-island frameworks in these areas.

The clear direction of policy at a European level is a move towards sustainability, with the protection of the environment and nature as a priority, and this is reflected in the policies of the new Commission including the Green Deal for Europe, the Farm to Fork Strategy and the EU Biodiversity Strategy among others. To this end, resources from the European budget are being directed to these priorities to incentivise areas such as sustainable farming and the circular economy. This in turn will guide investment in rural and regional investment, structural funds and the future economies of rural areas across this island.

The direction of policy from the UK, and in turn, Northern Ireland is less clear. Northern Ireland is in a unique position, and the Northern Ireland Assembly has the opportunity to implement positive policy change both for agriculture and the environment. However, this is highly

dependent on financial and policy support from the UK government, and at present there is significant uncertainty surrounding the future direction of such support.

The current Covid-19 crisis has led to much discussion around the need for an all-island policy to deal with the fallout from the pandemic, particularly in relation to travel.³³ In the future there will be a need for an all-island approach and framework to common areas such as agriculture and environmental legislation in particular. How this discussion evolves will be integral to a Just Transition on the island of Ireland and to what path policymakers will take. One of the fundamental principles of a Just Transition is to leave no people, communities, economic sectors or regions behind as we transition to a low carbon future. As outlined in this paper, there is the possibility of significant divergence ahead, with rural and farming communities across the island being guided by different sets of policies and incentives in terms of agriculture and the environment. There is clear common ground across the island for convergence on sustainability, the future of agriculture and the environment. Our rural and farming communities contribute hugely to the social and economic fabric across the island, it would be a shame to see them move in two very different directions, towards two very different outcomes.

Notes

¹ See Mark Allen, "UK Agriculture Bill 2019-20" (19 February 2020).

² See J.K. Bowers, "British Agricultural Policy since the Second World War" (1985).

³ For more detail on the Republic of Ireland see Noel Cahill, "The Impact of European Environmental Policy in Ireland" (2011), and on Northern Ireland see Charlotte Burns et al, "UK Environmental Policy Post-Brexit: A Risk Analysis" (2018).

⁴ Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, "Annual Review and Outlook for Agriculture, Food and the Marine 2019" (2019).

⁵ Mark Allen, "UK Agriculture Bill 2019-20", p.2.

⁶ Emma Dillon et al, *Teagasc National Farm Survey: 2018 Results* (2019), p.8.

⁷ Thomas Conefrey, "New Risks and Old Problems: The Uncertain Outlook for Irish Agriculture" (2019).

⁸ RTE, "7 things to know about the EU virus recovery plan" (21 July 2020).

⁹ Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, "Northern Ireland agricultural incomes in 2019" (30 January 2020).

¹⁰ Mark Allen, "UK Agriculture Bill 2019-20", p.5.

¹¹ Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, "EU Farm Structure Survey 2016: Northern Ireland" (2017), p.5.

¹² Central Statistics Office, *Ireland's Facts & Figures 2018* (2018), p.24.

¹³ European Commission, "EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement" (2020).

¹⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12020W/TXT#d1e32-102-1>

¹⁵ See BBC Wales News, "Chlorinated chicken concern grows among Wales' farmers" (8 June 2020), and Judith Evans, "UK leaves door open to imports of US chlorine-washed chicken" (4 June 2020).

¹⁶ See Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, "Report on Legislative Consent Memorandum on the UK Government Agriculture Bill 2019-2020" (19 March 2020).

¹⁷ Mark Allen, "UK Agriculture Bill 2019-20", pp.13-20.

¹⁸ See IEA, *Global Energy Review 2020: The impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on global energy demand and CO2 emissions* (2020).

- ¹⁹ Eurostat,
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=sdg_13_10
- ²⁰ Eurostat,
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tai08>
- ²¹ Environmental Protection Agency, “Ireland’s Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2018” (October 2019).
- ²² <https://static.rasset.ie/documents/news/2020/06/draft-programme-for-govt.pdf>
- ²³ Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, “Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2018” (2020).
- ²⁴ *ibid.*
- ²⁵ European Commission, COM(2019) 640, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: The European Green Deal (11 December 2019).
- ²⁶ Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have jointly established three cross-border international River Basin Districts, each of which has its own Management Plan that must be implemented by relevant agencies in the respective jurisdictions. For more see Department of the Environment and Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, “Managing Our Shared Waters” (March 2003).
- ²⁷ European Commission, COM(2020) 380, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 – Bringing nature back into our lives (20 May 2020).
- ²⁸ Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, “Report on Legislative Consent Memorandum on the UK Government Agriculture Bill 2019-2020”.
- ²⁹ Ciara Brennan et al, *Policy Paper: The Future of Environmental Governance in Northern Ireland* (July, 2018).
- ³⁰ Differing rules and costs for waste management between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have already fuelled waste smuggling in the past: a price-hike for the cost of landfill in the Republic of Ireland in the early 2000s led to an estimated 250,000 tonnes of waste being illegally dumped in Northern Ireland. See Viviane Gravey, “Brexit and the environment: Challenges and opportunities for the UK and Northern Ireland” (October 2017).
- ³¹ See Suzie Cave, “Environment Bill 2019 -2020” (27 February 2020).
- ³² *ibid.*
- ³³ Vincent Kearney, “Stormont leaders seek special Covid-19 travel summit” (23 July 2020).

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