

***John Keely***

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Re Submissions on New Forestry Programme 2014 – 2020

To whom it may concern.

With Reference to 4.1.2.2 Forestry for Fibre

I have been working in the Bioenergy Sector for the last eight years, mainly with willow as SRC but have researched and carried out a number of trials on the growing of poplar as SRF. Poplar has out-yielded willow by 50% and is an easier crop to manage agronomically. It can be grown as a 2 year or a 5 year rotation and be expected to last 15 to 20 years. The agronomy of poplar is well established and has been grown in Ireland without disease issues.

It is apparent at this stage that Ireland will not meet it's EU Directive 2009/28 EC which requires that we have 16% of our energy from renewable resources by 2020. (This is expected to cost Ireland over €100m for every 1% we are under this target.)

The fastest and most economical method of reaching these targets is the introduction of SRF poplar planting scheme. The lessons learned from the Bioenergy Establishment Scheme is that the grant payments are not enough to incentivise farmers to plant. At a minimum the incentivisation needs to cover the cost of establishment and pay a substantial premium per year up to first harvest.

Yours Sincerely,

***John Keely***

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