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**From:** Treasurer Kiltyclogher Community Council [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 February 2019 10:20  
**To:** rses  
**Subject:** RSES - Agri-Food section.

I wish the following to be noted in relation to the RSES Draft as published:

Section 4.5.3 Agri-Food makes the following assertion: "Agriculture, if it is to join into the low carbon economy to which the region aspires will have to radically change and manage its operational practices."

This sweeping statement is a mischaracterisation of a large element of the farming sector in the NW region. This region contains a huge variety of soils, landscapes & topography & agriculture has over the centuries evolved to reflect these variations. In the mountain & hill areas which cover large parts of the region, low-intensity sheep & suckler cow production are the usual agricultural practices - and these are already low-carbon, sustainable systems. The soils in the hills invariably have a high peat content which acts as a carbon reservoir - so these farms are actually sequestering carbon far in excess of any that they produce.

In addition, biodiversity in hill areas requires the continuation of traditional grazing & this is now well recognized. For example, important birds such as the Hen Harrier & Grouse depend upon the natural vegetation of the hills being grazed by farm livestock.

In summary, the section of the plan dealing with Agri-Food is too short. The report acknowledges that Agri-Food is the biggest indigenous sector but fails to properly assess the contribution it makes to the region (a contribution upon which tourism in the region heavily relies). And the draft section concludes with a statement far more appropriate to intensive farming in the south-east of Ireland than to farming in the north-west. What is needed is a longer, more nuanced treatment which considers the challenges & opportunities which the different types of farming in this region will face in the coming years.

Regards,  
Liam Gallagher  
Kiltyclogher Community Council  
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