

From: [REDACTED]
To: [rses](#)
Subject: New Message (sent by contact form at Northern and Western Regional Assembly)
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Submission:

I do not have sufficient time to study your proposed strategies in full before the deadline for submissions but they appear to hit all the right 'feel-good' notes and are broad on generalities.

Yes, bring on the economic development that is mindful of the people and environment. Yes, improve infrastructure - roadways and broadband. Yes, to adequate services and amenities. And, yes to an enviable place for working and living.

Having returned to live in Leitrim after many years, I applaud your intentions for the region but I am particularly concerned for Leitrim's fate.

So, allow me to quote some of your material and make a comment:

"But the potential exists enabled by Objectives contained in the National Planning Framework to unlock the full potential of our 'people' and 'place'. Place matters in strategic regional planning. So do People."

Great, but is having a county almost 20% under forest, which is changing quite rapidly the makeup of our 'place' and 'people' (communities declining, darkness increasing (literally)). Take a walk or drive by a forested area: within it, it is dark and devoid of any other life; it casts a shade on roads (thus hazardous in bad weather and depressing when it is not), on our waterways (adiós tourism and its related employment) on our neighbors. Not to mention the destructive impact on water and land.

"The principal purpose of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) is to support the implementation of the National Planning Framework and the economic policies and objectives of the Government by providing a longterm strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the regions"

Leitrim is mostly rural, is underpopulated and still loses most of its brightest to migration and emigration: but it has great beauty in its people and places which seem to be undermined by the national governmental quest for carbon-eating, non-native, environmental-destroying forests that brings no positive returns to the region. Carrick-on-Shannon is shining in Leitrim but even it is succumbing to being a town of only cafes, pound shops and pubs.

There's already been shifts in the more rural areas of our counties as a result of national policies and to the detriment of the uniqueness of Ireland. Make no mistake about it, there are policies that are acting to deplete that which is uniquely Irish; with the death of the post offices, the smaller communities, the traditional local pub and Irish-owned shop and the increase of urban areas with their chain-stores and lack of planning, you could be in any other country.

"It will also be the way the region organises for success in economic development – for the entire region – to shape a sustainably resilient place."

What makes a place resilient are the people: the farmers, the families, the artists, the thinkers, the entrepreneurs – the locals.