



Irish Whiskey

Sustainable Together

Sustainability Roadmap 2022



Irish Whiskey Association
Drinks Ireland

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The Irish Whiskey Association is the representative voice within Drinks Ireland working to promote, protect and represent the Irish Whiskey category globally.

www.irishwhiskeyassociation.ie
 @IrishWhiskeyAsc



Message from our Chair

Ireland is a small island, with a large whiskey industry. As the world's oldest whiskey tradition, and the EU's second-largest spirit export, the Irish whiskey industry takes seriously our responsibilities to be sustainable, both locally and globally. As worldwide sales of Irish whiskey continue to increase, our industry is determined to work together to decrease our environmental impact.

Irish whiskey is one of Europe's leading geographic indications (GI). While GIs such as Irish whiskey are rooted in principles of traditional production, traditionality need not be a barrier to the type of innovation required to make our production practices more energy and water efficient. Like other major spirits categories, our industry depends on complex international supply chains, both upstream and downstream. We are committed to minimising the life-cycle environmental impact of these supply chains, while maximising our support for Irish farming and local suppliers. In doing so, we can help futureproof our industry.

This roadmap seeks to build on our industry's existing high-level of commitment to sustainability by mapping-out our shared vision, goals and objectives for the future. This is not just an environmental strategy. It also addresses the importance of economic and social sustainability, something on which the Irish whiskey renaissance has impacted very positively. This roadmap aligns with and supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals and government policy across the island of Ireland.

This roadmap identifies a series of actions for Irish whiskey businesses. Sustainability will mean different things for different companies, depending on activity, location, length of establishment, etc. It will be up to individual businesses to decide which actions they wish to bring forward. This aligns with the guidance of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development



John Quinn

"Individual companies can also leverage the roadmap to focus their own strategic approach to the SDGs and make informed decisions as to where they can have the greatest impact."

The Irish Whiskey Association will actively support members with implementation through facilitating education and knowledge transfer, leading sectoral engagement with state agencies and stakeholders, convening collaborative initiatives and facilitating a user-friendly model of reporting.

While this roadmap has identified a number of targets in specific areas, the most important change that this roadmap seeks to bring about is one of mindset and culture. By forging a shared understanding and commitment to sustainability in our industry, the achievement of targets over subsequent years will become much more attainable.

I wish to thank all Irish Whiskey Association members who contributed to the development of the roadmap and to the Director of the Irish Whiskey Association, William Lavelle, for leading the overall project.

I look forward to seeing our industry working together to make Irish whiskey more sustainable.

John Quinn

*Chairman, Irish Whiskey Association
Global Brand Ambassador, Tullamore D.E.W.*



Roadmap at a glance

Our Shared Vision

The Irish whiskey industry will work together to make Ireland the home of the world's most sustainable distilleries and whiskey brands, making a net-positive contribution to the environment, climate, people and place; and forming an important part of a regenerative and circular economy in Ireland and globally.

Our Shared Goals

1. Reducing our environmental and carbon impact

Our industry will take a target-focussed approach to reducing the direct environmental impact and carbon emissions of Irish whiskey production, actively supporting the goal of Ireland reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 and sooner where possible.

2. Strengthening our place in the regenerative and circular economy

The Irish whiskey industry will actively promote and implement sustainable sourcing, reuse and recycling, to minimise the life-cycle environmental impact of our inputs, products and co-product, and to maximise support for sustainable Irish farming.

3. Delivering a positive impact for people and place

The Irish whiskey industry will positively impact the economic and social sustainability of the communities we work in, while empowering and supporting our workforce and consumers.



Energy

The Irish whiskey industry will reduce the energy impact and carbon emissions of our distillery operations, actively supporting and delivering on national climate targets.



Grain

The Irish whiskey industry will use sustainably produced malt and grain and will support Irish farmers by buying more Irish produce and supplying more co-product for feed.



Water

The Irish whiskey industry will reduce our water usage and trade effluent, in turn reducing our impact of Ireland's water resources and infrastructure.



Wood

The Irish whiskey industry will be responsible users of wooden casks and will support increased tree planting in Ireland.



Packaging

The Irish whiskey industry will comprehensively reduce the impact of waste through the development and use of sustainable packaging.



Habitats

The Irish whiskey industry will protect and nurture biodiversity on our sites.



Community

The Irish whiskey industry will support the sustainable economic growth of the communities we call home, including through the continuing sustainable development of Irish whiskey tourism.



Workforce

The Irish whiskey industry will promote inclusive recruitment and representation, in support of a talented and diverse workforce.



Consumer

The Irish whiskey industry will educate our consumers on the content and sustainability of our products; and promote responsibility by all those enjoying Irish whiskey.

Our Responsibility

“Without a strengthening of policies, greenhouse gas emissions are projected to rise beyond 2025, leading to a median global warming of 3.2°C by 2100.”
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, working group on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, 2022

“46% of habitats in Ireland are now recorded to be in decline.”
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland, Government of Ireland, 2019.

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”
- Brundtland Report, United Nations, 1987

“A Sustainable Food System is profitable throughout (economic sustainability), has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability) and has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability). Ireland should become an international leader in sustainable food systems.”
- Food Vision 2030, Government of Ireland, 2021.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The challenges facing the planet and facing Ireland are now beyond question. But the responses that are required are also increasingly clear.

The Irish whiskey industry is committed to meeting our responsibilities to contribute to a sustainable future for the environment, climate, people and place. This means sustainability

across all three pillars – social, environmental, and economic.

At the heart of the sustainability mission are the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which were unanimously adopted by United Nations (UN) member states in September 2015. The SDGs continue to provide an important unified framework for driving and measuring progress when it comes to tackling

some of the most pressing challenges facing our society. This roadmap represents our response to the call for action set-out in SDGs.

This roadmap also represents our commitment to actively support and deliver on the ambitions and targets set-out by the Governments across both parts of our shared island as well as supporting implementation of the EU 'Farm to Fork' strategy.

“The State shall, so as to reduce the extent of further global warming, pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of the year 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.”

- *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, Ireland*

“The Northern Ireland departments must ensure that the net Northern Ireland emissions account for the year 2050 is at least 100% lower than the baseline.”

- *Climate Change (No. 2) Bill, Northern Ireland*

Reducing carbon emissions

Climate legislation in both Ireland and Northern Ireland targets a net zero carbon economy across the island of Ireland no later than 2050.

The Government of Ireland’s Climate Action Plan targets a reduction of Ireland’s enterprise emissions by approximately 40%. Northern Ireland climate legislation targets a total 48% reduction of all emissions by 2030. A specific reductions target for industry will be confirmed in future carbon budgets.

This roadmap commits our industry to actively supporting the goal of Ireland reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 and sooner where possible. This includes meeting all interim reductions by 2030 and 2040.

An assessment by the Irish Whiskey Association, based on member data, has identified the main contributors of carbon emissions from Irish whiskey production.



In order to meet our emissions reduction objectives, the Irish whiskey industry will work to reduce our own scope 1 carbon emissions from distillery and bottling operations and scope 2 carbon emissions from energy supply. But we will also need to work with our suppliers and partners to reduce the high level of scope 3 emissions from across our value chain, particularly from purchased grain/malt.

Our Industry

Ireland is the home of whiskey, but with a chequered history. In 2010, there were only four distilleries in operation, while sales were under five million cases. But the decade that followed has proved to be a phenomenal one for the Irish whiskey industry, known as the Irish whiskey renaissance.

In 2022, Ireland is home to over 40 distilleries distilling over 100 million LPA of whiskey spirit every year, with over 3.5 million casks of Irish whiskey maturing across the island.

Since 2010, global sales of Irish whiskey have increased by 150% to over 13 million cases worldwide.

Irish whiskey is a protected Geographic Indication, meaning Irish whiskey can only be distilled and matured on the island of Ireland. The growth of Irish whiskey sales abroad is delivering for Ireland at home: creating jobs, attracting tourists, supporting local communities, increasing purchasing from Irish farmers and suppliers; and boosting exchequer revenues. Our industry now directly employs over 1,600 people across the island of Ireland, contributing approximately €700 million in gross value added to our shared economy.

The Irish whiskey industry is proud of our economic contribution to Ireland. But our industry is also conscious of our ecological impact, both in Ireland and internationally. A growing industry can leave a growing footprint and our industry relies on complex global value chains, both upstream and downstream.

In recent years, the Irish whiskey industry has made massive strides in reducing our environmental footprint. Our member companies have demonstrated a high level of commitment, followed through to implementation, across a range of areas from improving water efficiency, decarbonising energy supply, increasing the use of sustainable packaging, planting trees and nurturing biodiversity.

The existing sustainability credentials of the Irish whiskey industry provides a strong foundation off which this roadmap seeks to build.

Irish whiskey industry 2022

- Over 40 distilleries
- Over 100 million LPA production
- 3.5 million casks maturing
- Over 13 million cases sold



Our Roadmap

“A roadmap is a strategic plan that translates a vision into actionable goals and activities.

An SDG sector roadmap enables leading companies to collaborate and articulate a common approach for how their industry can maximize its potential to contribute to achieving the critical SDG agenda. This in turn will help the sector to collectively strengthen its license to operate, manage operational and regulatory risks, and open up new growth markets.

Individual companies can also leverage the roadmap to focus their own strategic approach to the SDGs and make informed decisions as to where they can have the greatest impact.”

- World Business Council for Sustainable Development, SDG Sector Roadmaps Guideline

This is the first sectoral roadmap developed for the Irish whiskey industry and has been developed with reference to established models for sector roadmaps, including the SDG Sector Roadmaps Guidelines published by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. The guidelines recommend the following steps in development of a sectoral roadmap.



The Irish Whiskey Association’s approach to developing this roadmap has been to:

1. Map what our industry is doing
2. Understand what more our industry could be doing
3. Identify how we can work together to support doing more

This work commenced in Autumn 2021 and has involved:

Sustainability Mapping

Member companies were surveyed and asked to submit details of current sustainability measures with returns assessed to identify common positions and best practice.

Regulatory Mapping

An audit was conducted of existing and proposed legislative and regulatory requirements.

Member Engagement

Meetings were held with interested groups of member companies to discuss and develop policy on a range of topics, including carbon footprinting, water & wastewater, tree-planting, and local economies. This work was overseen and further inputted to by the Sustainability Steering Group established by the Association.

Stakeholder Engagement

Consultation was conducted with state agencies and key stakeholders in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Independent peer review

This roadmap is structured to outline:

- Our shared vision
- Our goals to achieve this vision. Each of the three goals link to a number of the UN SDGs.
- Nine focus areas. Each of these focus areas sets out voluntary actions for business and identifies supports from the Irish Whiskey Association.

Our Shared Vision

The Irish whiskey industry will work together to make Ireland the home of the world's most sustainable distilleries and whiskey brands, making a net-positive contribution to the environment, climate, people and place, forming an important part of a regenerative and circular economy in Ireland and globally.



Goal 1

Reducing our environmental and carbon impact

Our industry will take a target-focussed approach to reducing the direct environmental impact and carbon emissions of Irish whiskey production, actively supporting the goal of Ireland reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 and sooner where possible.

Sustainable Development Goals

This goal will support the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:

- 

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- 

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- 

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
- 

13 CLIMATE ACTION

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.
- 

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- 

15 LIFE ON LAND

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Primary focus areas

This goal will be primarily supported by the following objectives and focus areas:

 **Energy**
The Irish whiskey industry will reduce the energy impact and carbon emissions of our distillery operations, actively supporting and delivering on national climate targets.

 **Water**
The Irish whiskey industry will reduce our water usage and trade effluent, in turn reducing our impact on Ireland's water resources and infrastructure.

 **Habitats**
The Irish whiskey industry will protect and nurture biodiversity on our sites.

The goal will also be supported the following objectives and focus areas:

 **Grain**
The Irish whiskey industry will use sustainably produced malt and grain and will support Irish farmers by buying more Irish produce and supplying more co-product for feed.

 **Wood**
The Irish whiskey industry will be responsible users of wooden casks and will support increased tree planting in Ireland.

 **Packaging**
The Irish whiskey industry will comprehensively reduce the impact of waste through the development and use of sustainable packaging.

Goal 2

Strengthening our place in the regenerative and circular economy

The Irish whiskey industry will actively promote and implement sustainable sourcing, reuse and recycling, to minimise the life-cycle environmental impact of our inputs, products and co-product, and to maximise support for sustainable Irish farming.

Sustainable Development Goals

This goal will support the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:

- 

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- 

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
- 

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- 

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.
- 

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Focus areas

This goal will be supported by the following objectives and focus areas:



Grain

The Irish whiskey industry will use sustainably produced malt and grain and will support Irish farmers by buying more Irish produce and supplying more co-product for feed.



Wood

The Irish whiskey industry will be responsible users of wooden casks and will support increased tree planting in Ireland.



Packaging

The Irish whiskey industry will comprehensively reduce the impact of waste through the development and use of sustainable packaging.



Goal 3

Delivering a positive impact for people and place

The Irish whiskey industry will positively impact the economic and social sustainability of the communities we work in, while empowering and supporting our workforce and consumers.

Sustainable Development Goals

This goal will support the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:

- 

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- 

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- 

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
- 

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- 

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Focus areas

This goal will be supported by the following objectives and focus areas:



Community

The Irish whiskey industry will support the sustainable economic growth of the communities we call home, including through the continuing sustainable development of Irish whiskey tourism.



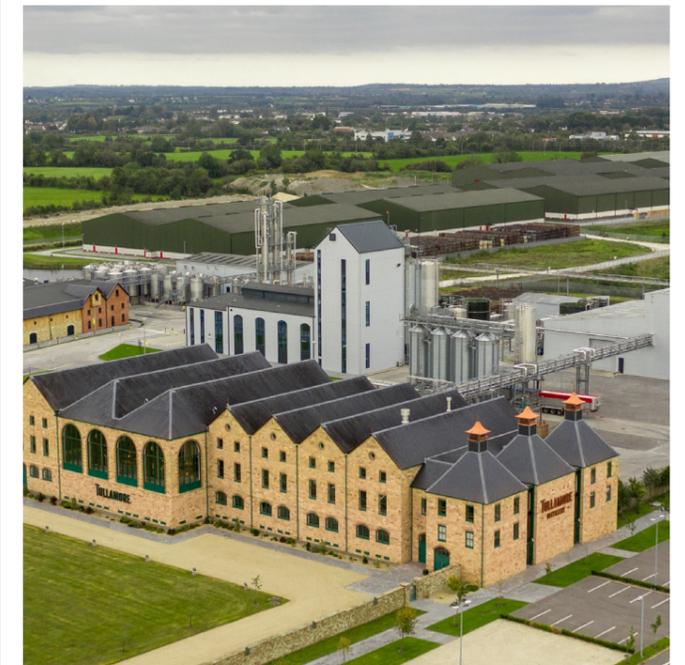
Workforce

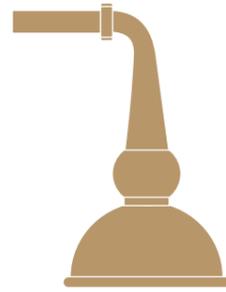
The Irish whiskey industry will promote inclusive recruitment and representation, in support of a talented and diverse workforce.



Consumer

The Irish whiskey industry will educate our consumers on the content and sustainability of our products; and promote responsibility by all those enjoying Irish whiskey.





Energy

The Irish whiskey industry will reduce the energy impact and carbon emissions of our distillery operations, actively supporting and delivering on national climate targets.

This objective supports the roadmap goal of **Reducing our environmental and carbon impact** and relates to both scope 1 carbon emissions from direct distillery operations and scope 2 carbon emissions from energy supply.

Distilling and bottling has been identified as one of the two largest sources of energy use and emissions from Irish whiskey production. To meet our commitments to deliver on national climate plans and targets, our industry must do more to make our distilleries more energy efficient and to decarbonise our energy supply

This roadmap supports a **Reduce, Recover, Replace** approach.

1. Reduce	Reduce the energy requirement of distilleries through innovation in distillery processes.
2. Recover	Recover heat and energy from distillery processes for reuse in other distillery activities.
3. Replace	Replace energy supply with more renewable, decarbonised energy sources

Reducing energy use in distilling can be challenging, particularly as Irish whiskey is a protected Geographic Indication and must be produced in line with defined traditional practice. The challenges will not deter our industry from our goal to be more energy efficient. But it does reinforce the rationale for working together to support innovation and to share knowledge on best practice.

Already, many Irish whiskey distilleries and bottling providers have implemented measures to reduce their energy use or are putting in place ambitious plans and investments to deliver on this objective.

This roadmap proposes a signature project to facilitate innovation and knowledge transfer within the Irish whiskey industry. This will involve member companies sharing best practice in energy efficiency in distillery operations and it will require the active participation of state agencies and key stakeholders to support implementation.

An assessment by the Irish Whiskey Association has identified an ongoing reliance by many distilleries on fossil fuels. This is no different to other sectors of the Irish economy. However, many distilleries have begun taking action to decarbonise their energy supply. This roadmap will support continuing action on this front.

Actions for business

- Reduce energy use, particularly in distillery operations, through introduction of new technologies and other efficiency measures including heat and energy recovery.
- Decarbonise energy supply through replacement of non-renewable energy sources.
- Reduce emissions in line with Irish and Northern Irish climate action plans and in line with future targets that may be agreed by our industry.

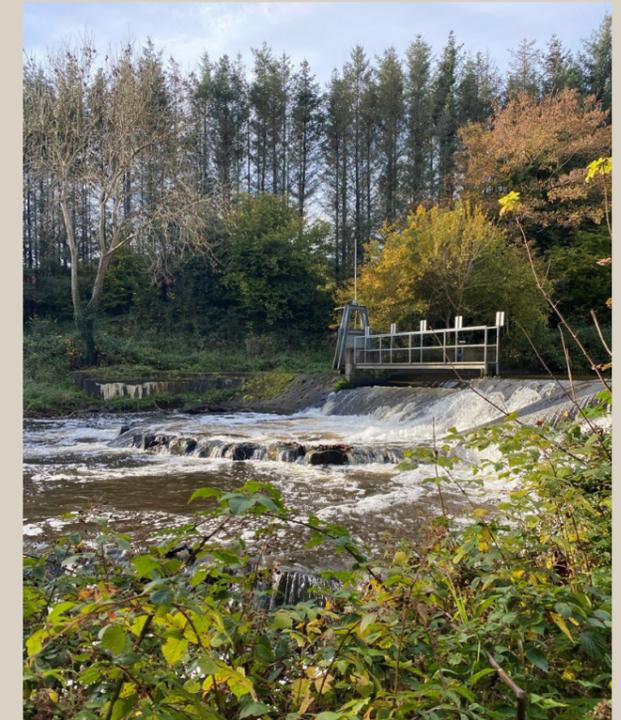
Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Work with state agencies on a signature project to facilitate innovation and knowledge transfer within the Irish whiskey industry and to support implementation of best practice energy efficiency in distillery operations.
- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer through the Knowledge Still programme and new Knowledge Hub on energy performance monitoring, emissions reporting and energy supply.
- Lobby for funding support for the introduction of new technologies and other efficiency measures.

Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Energy use: **kWh/LPA** (or alternative depending on source)
- Emissions: **kg CO² per LPA**



Rademon Estate Distillery in Co. Down sustainably source all of their power from on-site wind and hydro turbines.



The newly-constructed malt distillery at Bushmills uses up to 30% less energy.



Powerscourt Distillery utilises 100% renewable biogas to make their whiskey and then harnesses the heat from the mashing process using heat exchangers to power the underfloor heating for the Visitor Centre.



Grain

The Irish whiskey industry will use sustainably produced malt and grain and will support Irish farmers by buying more Irish produce and supplying more co-product for feed.

This objective primarily supports the roadmap goal of **Strengthening our place in the regenerative and circular economy**. Scope 3 carbon emissions from the production of purchased grain and malt are the largest contributor to carbon emissions from Irish whiskey production. Therefore, this objective is also critical to supporting the roadmap goal of **Reducing our environmental and carbon impact**.

The Irish whiskey industry are proud supporters of Irish farming. The Irish whiskey industry purchases over 100,000 tonnes of Irish barley and malt annually, while production of distilling grade malt in Ireland has increased 400% over the past decade. As sales of Irish whiskey grow, demand for Irish barley and malt continues to grow.

- **The Irish whiskey industry purchases over 100,000 tonnes of Irish barley and malt annually**
- **Production of distilling grade malt in Ireland has increased 400% over the past decade**
- **Over 350,000 tonnes of co-products (spent grain/pot ale) are reused as high-quality animal feed every year.**

Irish whiskey distilleries are also using more and more Irish oats, wheat, rye and other grains.

Given that over 95% of Irish whiskeys are blends, increases in demand for both barley and maize are inextricably linked – increases in demand for maize means increases in demand for barley. However, there is a requirement to import maize which is not grown in Ireland.

The Irish tillage sector is leading the way on sustainability in agriculture. According to the Teagasc Crops 2030¹ report “cropped land area produces less GHG emissions at 1.18 t/ha of CO₂ equivalent compared to dairy 8.7 t/ha, beef 4.4 t/ha. Ireland’s crop production is efficient in nutrient use achieving nitrogen use efficiencies of more than 60% compared to 25% for grass production.”

This roadmap commits to supporting a sustainable and vibrant future for the Irish tillage sector and to actively supporting both farmers and maltsters to continue to reduce carbon emissions.

The Irish whiskey industry doesn’t just buy from farmers. We also give back through the circular economy. Every year, over 350,000 tonnes of co-products from Irish whiskey production (spent grain/pot ale) are reused to become high-quality animal feed. This practice fully supports Irish and EU policies to reduce food waste.

¹ 2020, Teagasc, Crops 2030 – www.teagasc.ie

Actions for business

- Require that all Irish malt, barley and grain used in Irish whiskey production is certified by IGAS, the Irish Grain Assurance Scheme.
- Require traceability and sustainability credentials for any imported malt, maize or grain.
- Sponsor or support the development and implementation of sustainable, regenerative agricultural practices in the tillage sector, including supporting measures to further reduce scope 3 emissions from tillage farming.
- Re-use 100% of the co-products of Irish whiskey production (spent grain/pot ale) to eliminate all organic waste.



Irish Distillers’ unique and accredited ‘Sustainable Green Spring Barley Scheme’ aims to support the long-term viability of the spring barley sector in Ireland by incentivising farmers to continually improve their sustainable practice.

Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer through the Knowledge Still programme and new Knowledge Hub in relation to sustainable agriculture & sourcing.
- Seek amendments to the Product Specification to enable the use of greater volumes of ‘green malt’, with lower carbon emissions, in the production of Grain Irish Whiskey.
- Through Drinks Ireland, work with Teagasc, farmers and maltsters on initiatives to support reductions in carbon emissions from both tillage farming and malting.
- Support members to re-use distillery co-products in compliance with relevant legislation, regulations and best practice, either through specialist companies or with farmers.



Clonakilty Distillery are sourcing 50% of their barley from the distillery’s own lands at Galley Head and from other local farms.

Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Percentage of Irish malt and grain which is IGAS-certified
- Percentage of malt and grain which is fully traceable
- Volume and percentage of co-product reused



Specialist Nutrition
Moist Feed & Forage Specialists

Specialist Nutrition is an experienced animal feeds company, working with Irish whiskey distilleries to re-use co-product and supply a comprehensive range of high-quality feeds to Irish farmers.



Water

The Irish whiskey industry will reduce our water usage, in turn reducing our impact on Ireland's water resources and infrastructure.

This objective supports the roadmap goal of **Reducing our environmental and carbon impact.**

Water is a key ingredient in Irish whiskey production and the Irish whiskey industry is committed to protecting this vital natural resource.

This roadmap supports the principle of:

Less-water-in, Less-effluent-out.

Achieving this would help conserve this precious resource while reductions in trade effluent discharges by distilleries will also reduce the burden on the public wastewater system, in turn supporting broader Government planning and development policy. Already many distilleries have made significant progress in reducing rates of water usage as well as reducing the volume and concentration of trade effluent discharges. Working together as an industry, we can achieve even more, through supporting companies to achieve a target level of water usage in distilling and to share best practice on effluent management and other topics.

This roadmap recognises the importance of internationally-accredited water stewardship. Many members have already participated in water stewardship courses and this roadmap will facilitate much greater participation.

This roadmap calls for full compliance with trade effluent licensing requirements. This is critical to supporting a managed approach to reducing trade effluent discharges while also protecting local watercourses and biodiversity. This is discussed further under the Habitats objective.

Actions for business

- Reduce water usage to an initial maximum of 25 L/LPA for pot and malt distillation, with a subsequent target of 20L/LPA - with the targets for grain distillation to be 50% lower.
- Reduce the overall volume and biological oxygen demand (BOD) concentration of trade effluent discharged to the public wastewater system.
- Achieve a recognised certification in water stewardship.

Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer through the Knowledge Still programme and new Knowledge Hub in relation to water efficiency, effluent management and our potential impact on local water resources.
- Work with state agencies and key stakeholders to support implementation of best-practice water efficiency and wastewater management for distilleries.
- Work with Irish Water and other stakeholders to facilitate access to accredited water stewardship courses for members.

Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Water usage: **L/LPA**
- Volume of trade effluent: **m³ /LPA**
- BOD concentration of trade effluent: **mg/l**
- BOD load of trade effluent: **kg/day**



Slane Distillery operate a catchment system to collect and store rainwater off the roofs of the distillery buildings, which is treated and used for process water.



Great Northern Distillery have reduced their Biological Oxygen Demand discharge to the wastewater system by 80 per cent per LPA since 2016



Irish Water runs a certified Water Stewardship Programme to help businesses to lower their water use, while also protecting the environment.



Wood

The Irish whiskey industry will be responsible users of wooden casks and will support increased tree planting in Ireland.

This objective primarily supports the roadmap goal of **Strengthening our place in the regenerative and circular economy.** However, the tree planting actions under this objective also support the roadmap goal of **Reducing our environmental and carbon impact.**

Under the law and the rules of the Irish whiskey Geographic Indication, Irish whiskey must be aged for at least three years in wooden casks on the island of Ireland. There are currently over 3.5 million casks of Irish whiskey maturing on the island of Ireland.

The Irish whiskey industry is a purchaser of wooden casks from the United States, Spain, Portugal and many other nations. However, in line with our commitment to minimise the life-cycle environmental impact of our inputs, the Irish whiskey industry makes a significant contribution to the re-use of wooden casks, extending the life of all viable casks. For example, the Irish whiskey industry purchases approximately 300,000 used casks from the US whiskey industry every year. Under US law, Bourbon whiskey must be matured in virgin (single-use) American oak casks.

The Irish whiskey industry proudly extends the lives of these casks.

The Irish whiskey industry is also a major purchaser of Irish timber pallets which are used for holding and stacking casks and for shipping.

In recent years, our members have supported the planting of over 120,000 trees in Ireland and this roadmap will support the Irish whiskey industry's commitment to support more regenerative tree-planting across the island of Ireland.



Actions for business

- Ensure casks and pallets are sourced from reputable suppliers with verifiable sustainability credentials.
- Fund the planting of new oak and native broadleaf trees in Ireland in line with expert guidance. Companies are encouraged to set a transparent metric linking the number of trees to be planted to specific levels of activity relevant to their business.

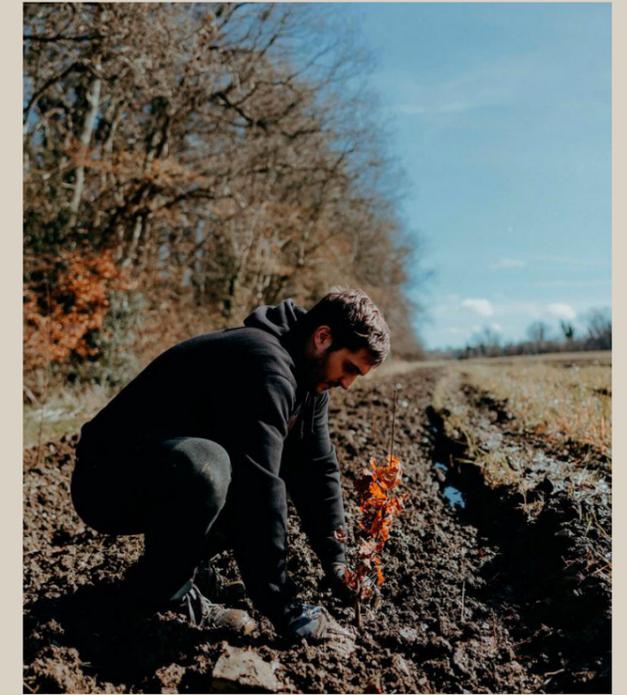
Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Facilitate member access to a common, expertly managed tree planting programme.
- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer through the Knowledge Still programme and new Knowledge Hub in relation to efficient cask management and cooperage practices in order to extend the lifetime of viable casks.

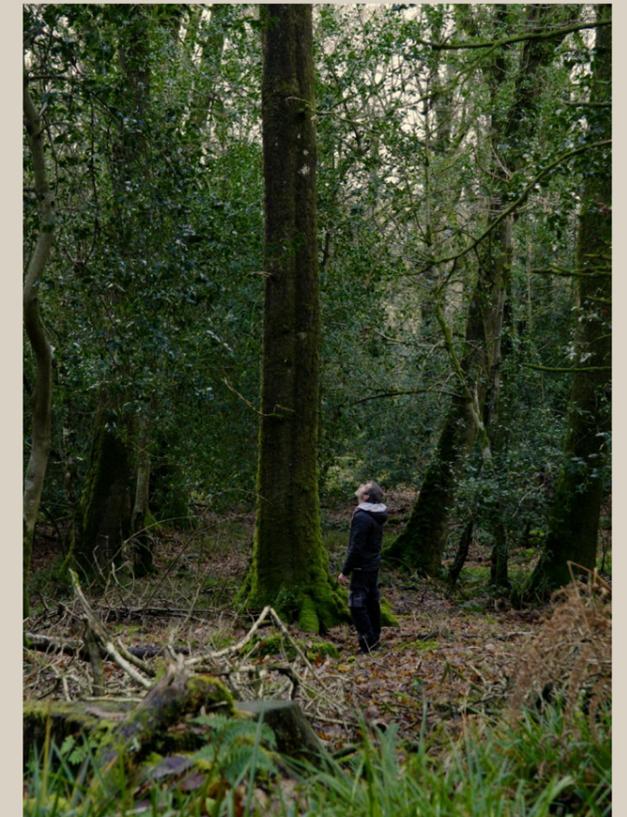
Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Number of trees planted versus company specific target.



Boann Distillery have planted 1,000 oak & 1,000 native broadleaf trees in Co. Meath as a major initiative to offset the use of wooden barrels.



Glendalough Irish Whiskey source oak for whiskey casks in Co. Wicklow. For every oak tree they fell, they re-plant at least seven new oak trees.



Packaging

The Irish whiskey industry will comprehensively reduce the impact of waste through use of sustainable packaging.

This objective primarily supports the roadmap goal of **Strengthening our place in the regenerative and circular economy**. However, recognising the scope 3 carbon emissions from packaging production, this objective also relates to the roadmap goal of **Reducing our environmental and carbon impact**.

Glass bottles form an integral part of the brand and cultural heritage of premium spirits categories such as Irish whiskey. Many Irish whiskey brands have already introduced innovative lower weight glass bottles or bottles produced from recycled glass. This in turn supported reduced scope 3 carbon emissions. But more can be done, particularly in terms of reducing the emissions footprint of heavier glass bottles used for more premium Irish whiskey expressions.

Glass packaging is already highly recyclable, with the EU recycling rate of glass packaging currently at 76%.

The industry-led platform **Close the Glass Loop**, to which spiritsEUROPE is a founding member, is pushing to increase this rate to 90% by 2030.

In addition to glass, many of our members have taken innovative approaches to ensure all other packaging and packing material are fully sustainable.

This roadmap seeks to challenge and support businesses to continue to do more to reduce the impact of packaging on the environment and to support the circular economy.



Teeling Small Batch is sold in bottles produced from 75% recycled glass.

Actions for business

- Ensure that all primary and secondary packaging is 100% recyclable or reusable.
- Increase the use of recycled material in primary and secondary packaging.
- Eliminate all waste to landfill.
- Re-use viable IBC containers, including through implementation of pre-agreed policies for return of IBCs to distilleries; and ensure appropriate re-use or recycling of all non-viable containers.
- Examine the business case for bottling in-market where there may be scope for substantial reductions in scope 3 emissions arising from elimination of shipping of both empty and filled bottles.



Jameson Irish whiskey is sold in bottles made using up to 80% recycled glass.

Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer through the Knowledge Still programme and new Knowledge Hub in relation to the circular economy, sustainable sourcing and procurement, and developments with respect to new materials, technologies and formats to reduce packaging waste.
- Engage with partners, such as spiritsEUROPE, to support innovation in the development, recycling and re-use of packaging, particularly glass bottles.



Bart's Irish Whiskey from Lough Ree Distillery is sold in a premium glass bottle that is 35% lighter than similar bottles.

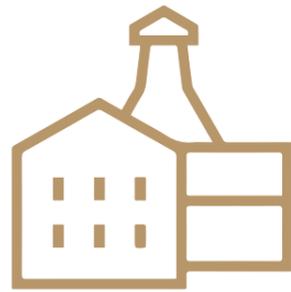
Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Percentage of packaging which is recyclable or reusable.
- Percentage of packaging produced from recycled material
- Percentage of waste diverted from landfill



UAIS Irish whiskey from Ahascragh Distillery is sold in a 100% recycled glass bottle, with 100% recycled paper for the label, a sustainable wood stopper and a biodegradable vegetable-based seal.



Community

The Irish whiskey industry will support the sustainable economic growth of the communities we call home, including through the continuing sustainable development of Irish whiskey tourism.

This objective supports the roadmap goal of **Delivering a positive impact for people and place.**

The Irish whiskey renaissance has seen the number of operational GI Irish whiskey distilleries grow from four in 2010 to over 40 in 2022. Distilling has returned to communities, both urban and rural, across all parts of the island of Ireland. This has delivered a substantial, tangible return to local economies.

The Irish whiskey industry is creating and sustaining quality jobs of significant economic value. Our Irish Whiskey 2010-2020 report included an economic assessment, conducted by Ibec Chief Economist Gerard Brady, which found that the Irish whiskey industry contributed a gross value added of €412,756 GVA per employee in 2019. The GVA per employee in the Irish whiskey industry was six times higher than the average GVA per employee across the remainder of the Irish food and drink industry.

At least 18 distilleries have been developed in previously vacant premises replacing the enterprises which had previously operated there, replacing lost jobs in towns and villages, supporting the local economy and contributing greatly to the vibrancy and vitality of these towns and villages. See map on page 28.

The continuing growth of Irish whiskey exports has catapulted many Irish placenames into the knowledge and imagination of a whole new cohort of international consumers. These brands are supporting incoming tourism as well as supporting the overall 'Brand Ireland' tourism offering.

Irish whiskey distilleries and brand homes attracted over one million visitors in 2019. While numbers collapsed in 2020 and 2021 as a result of Covid-19; visitor numbers are expected to rebound strongly in 2022. In attracting visitors to a community, Irish whiskey tourism is delivering substantial multiplier gains for local economies, particularly through visitor spending. An economic assessment conducted by Fáilte Ireland² for the Irish Whiskey Association has found that visitors to Irish whiskey distilleries spent €63 million in local communities in 2019.

In seeking to grow tourism, this roadmap recognises the need for tourism to be sustainable. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation defines sustainable tourism as: *"Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities."* Irish whiskey tourism is well positioned to deliver on this goal.

- **Gross value added of €412,756 GVA per employee**
- **1.02 million visitors to distilleries and brand-homes in 2019**
- **€63 million spent in local communities by visitors to distilleries**

² Fáilte Ireland applied visitor spend factors differentiated by region, including NI, based on data sourced from CSO, Fáilte Ireland, NISRA

Actions for business

- Implement a local procurement policy to give preference to local suppliers where commercially competitive options exist.
- Develop and implement a sustainable tourism offering to include promotion to others local businesses, (including hospitality) and to maximise the visitor spending in the community.
- Support measures to increase the recruitment and training of staff from the locality.
- Implement CSR or staff volunteering projects to contribute directly to local community causes.
- Seek to direct new developments to re-use vacant buildings and brownfield sites in the locality.

Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer through the Knowledge Still programme and new Knowledge Hub in relation to the development and implementation of local recruitment and procurement policies and in relation to sustainable tourism.
- Promote Irish whiskey tourism, including sustainability and local partnerships, through the IrishWhiskey360° platform, and in collaboration with state agencies.
- Support identified training needs through engagement with Skillnet, state agencies and other relevant stakeholders.

Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Number of local suppliers
- Visitor numbers and spend



The Shed Distillery in Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim has created and sustained 80 jobs, contributing greatly to the economic and social sustainability of this rural community. Many of those who have secured jobs were previously on the live register, some for as long as 8 years.



Dublin's Liberties was once the world's busiest centre of whiskey production. It has now re-emerged as a 21st century hub for distilling with four distilleries, two on James Street and two at Newmarket/Mill Street. The opening of Teeling Distillery in 2015 kick-started a transformative regeneration of Newmarket.



Kilbeggan Distillery was originally founded in 1757 but was closed for 50 years from 1957 to 2007. During this period, the building was used as a car dealership, a piggery and by local craftspeople. But in a remarkable demonstration of resilience, the local community continued to pay the distilling license fee until production recommenced in 2007. The local community also maintained the heritage building. Now, the reopened distillery is paying it back, attracting visitors and supporting the local economy.

Reuse of vacant buildings as Irish whiskey distilleries

01. Crolly Distillery

Former doll factory

02. The Shed Distillery

Former jam factory

03. Connacht Distillery

Former bakery

04. Ahascragh Distillery (in development)

Derelict mill buildings

05. Kilbeggan Distillery

Former distillery, car dealership and piggery. See box on page 27.

06. Dingle Distillery

Former sawmills

07. Clonakilty Distillery

Former bank building

08. Church of Oak Distillery

Derelict mill buildings

09. Powerscourt Distillery

Derelict estate buildings

10. Roe & Co Distillery

Former power plant

11. Pearse Lyons Distillery

Former church

12. Slane Distillery

Former estate buildings

13. Boann Distillery

Former car showroom

14. Great Northern Distillery

Former brewery

15. Cooley Distillery

Former state alcohol plant

16. Belfast Distillery (in development)

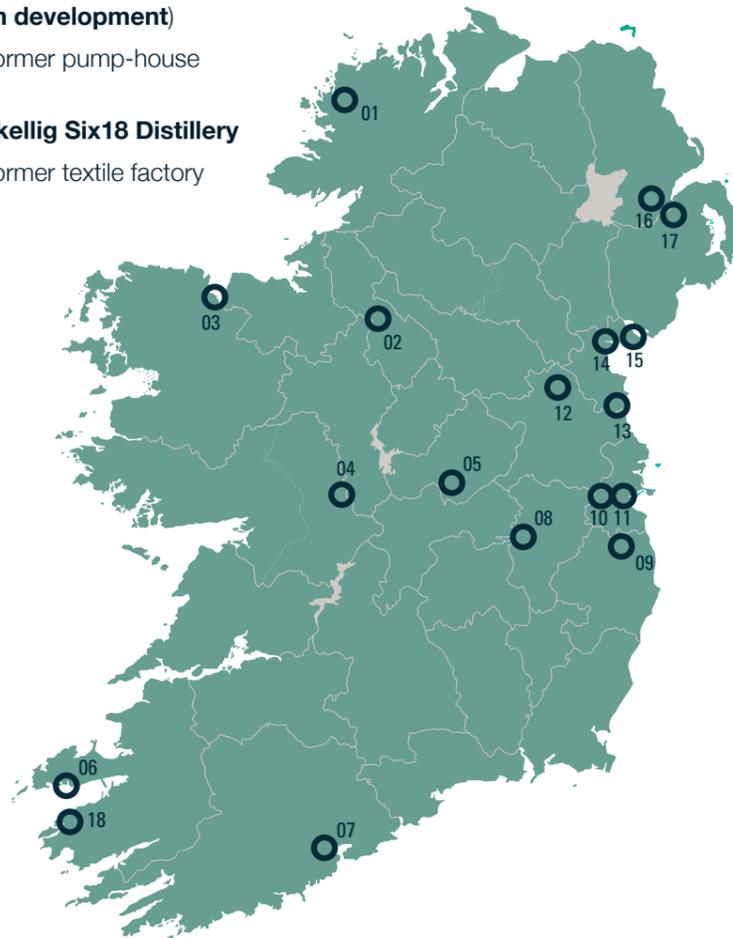
Former prison wing

17. Titanic Distillery (in development)

Former pump-house

18. Skellig Six18 Distillery

Former textile factory



Lough Ree Distillery: Contributing to Ireland's Just Transition

Lough Ree Distillery's founders, Clancy siblings Peter, Sheila and Michael started distilling gin and vodka in their hometown of Lanesborough, Co. Longford in 2018. At the time the new business venture may have seemed insignificant, given the economic and social development benefit to the area from peat harvesting and power generation since the 1950's.

In two short years, culminating with Bord Na Mona ceasing peat harvesting operations and Lough Ree Power coming off the National Grid for the last time in December 2020, the local economic landscape had changed dramatically.

In recognition of the impact that transition away from carbon intensive activities would have on regional and local employment, economies and communities, the Just Transition Fund 2020 was launched by Government. Lough Ree Distillery was allocated €1 million under the fund towards their Phase 2 development project. This will involve the development of a full -scale Irish Whiskey distillery and visitor experience on a standout site, overlooking Lough Ree, 50 metres from Lanesborough's historic bridge. A funding agreement is now in place and the Clancy siblings look forward to laying down whiskey from the new distillery in 2023.



Workforce

The Irish whiskey industry will promote inclusive recruitment and representation, in support of a talented and diverse workforce.

This objective supports the roadmap goal of **Delivering a positive impact for people and place.**

The Irish whiskey industry was once a male-dominated industry. But one very positive trend during the Irish whiskey renaissance has been the diversification of staffing across all levels of our industry. A new assessment carried out by the Irish Whiskey Association indicates that the gender split across the industry is now 63% male, 37% female.³

Many companies are achieving gender balance across their workforce. More importantly, we are seeing increasing levels of female participation across technical roles and at management and leadership team level. The Irish whiskey industry is proud to have female founders, master blenders, head distillers and managing-directors. This roadmap seeks to support ongoing career development in our industry.

It is critical that all players in our industry ensure that the high levels of diversity in our staffing are reflected in the selection of staff to represent companies and the industry in public activities. This is an objective which the Irish Whiskey Association intends to take a stricter position on.

With the Irish whiskey industry operating across a range of settings, our industry is committed to supporting the wellbeing, health and safety of all our staff and visitors.



³ Based on data provided by companies or otherwise publicly available. Total sample of 1,187 staff or over 70% of industry staffing

Actions for business

- Implement recruitment and staff development policies to build a diverse and inclusive workforce, and to support rewarding long-term careers in the industry, across all areas of the business and at all levels of staffing and management.
- Ensure that representation in industry and public activity is reflective of the diversity of the workforce.
- Implement a comprehensive health and safety plan and practices to protect all staff and visitors by creating an environment where accidents do not happen, in line with legislation and best practice.



Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Require diverse and inclusive representation by member companies at association events.
- Address identified education, training and research needs through engagement with Skillnet, third level institutions and other relevant stakeholders.
- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer through the Knowledge Still programme and new Knowledge Hub on legislative requirements and best practice relating to health and safety for Irish whiskey production and visitor sites.



Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Gender balance at staff and management levels
- Number of accidents





Habitats

The Irish whiskey industry will protect and nurture biodiversity on our sites.

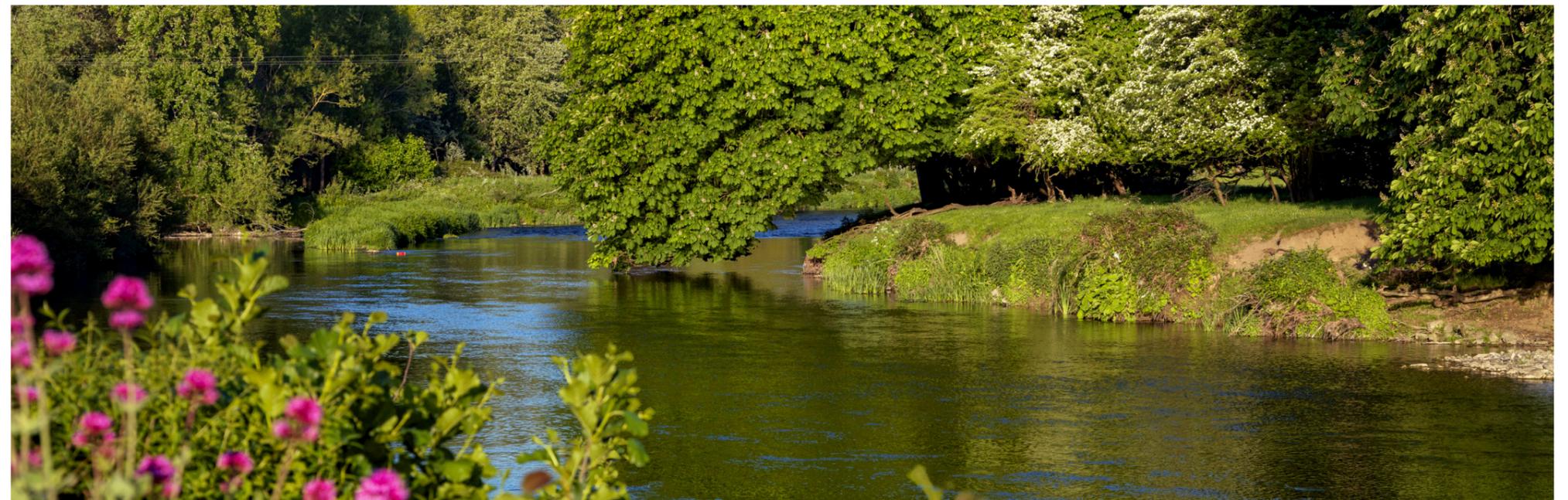
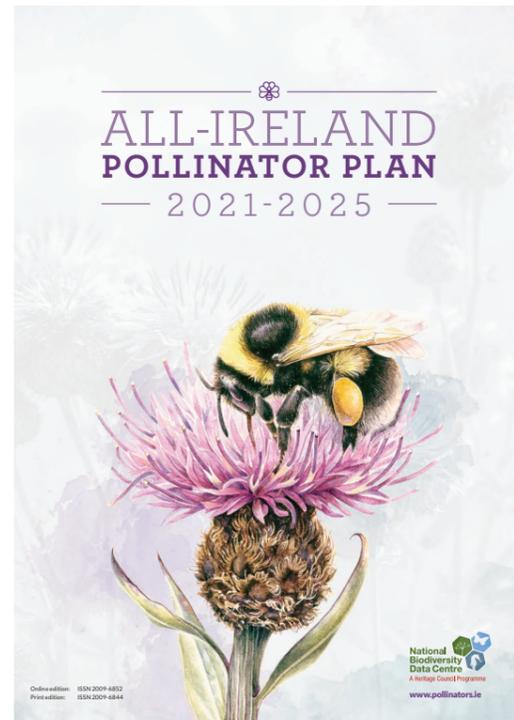
This objective supports the roadmap goal of **Reducing our environmental and carbon impact.**

Preserving biodiversity is not just an ecological goal. It is an economic imperative. Biodiversity, including the preservation of pollinators, is critical to the sustainability of farming and of food and drink production.

Many Irish whiskey distilleries and maturation sites have implemented on-site biodiversity measures from provision of beehives, to planting of wildflower areas and restoration of natural watercourses. Tree planting is also being undertaken and this is supported by this roadmap under the Wood objective.

The Irish Whiskey Association has signed-up as a supporter of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and this roadmap will support member companies in signing-up and implementing actions under the plan.

This roadmap calls for full compliance with both planning permission requirements and trade effluent licensing requirements. This is critical to protecting local watercourses and biodiversity.



Actions for business

- Implement an expertly-produced plan to protect and rehabilitate natural habitats on production and maturation sites.
- Sign-up as a Business Supporter of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and implement pollinator-friendly actions in line with the plan.
- Protect local water resources by ensuring full compliance with applicable environmental and planning requirements; and by implementing relevant firewater retention measures at production and maturation sites.

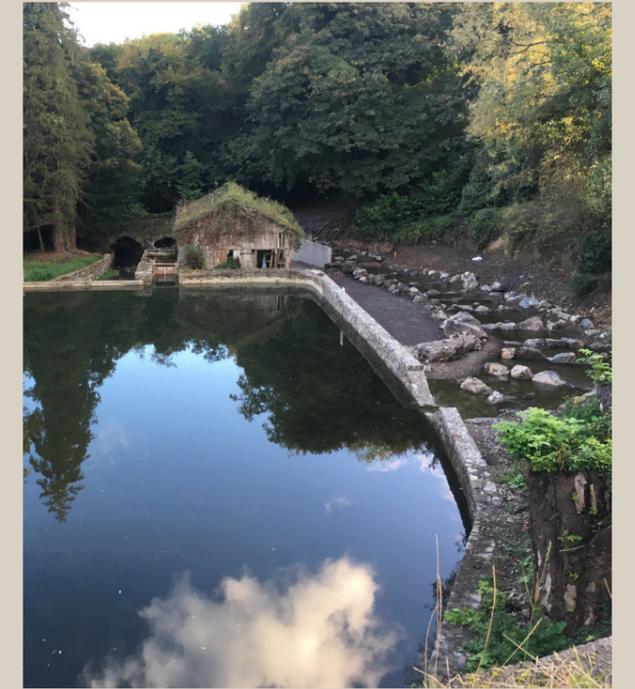
Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Facilitate education and knowledge transfer on implementation of pollinator-friendly actions in line with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and on the protection of local water resources, including implementation of firewater retention measures.

Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- Number of pollinator-friendly actions



Slane Distillery has restored the mill pond on Harlinstown Stream and constructed a new salmon ladder.



Many distilleries have introduced pollinator-friendly actions including planting wildflower areas.



Consumer

The Irish whiskey industry will educate our consumers on the content and sustainability of our products; and promote responsibility by all those enjoying Irish whiskey.

This objective supports the roadmap goal of **Delivering a positive impact for people and place.**

The consumer remains the most important player in the Irish whiskey's downstream value-chain. As global sales of Irish whiskey have grown 150% over the past decade, our category has gained many new consumers.

Our industry has a responsibility to our consumers who are increasingly demanding more information on ingredients, nutritional content, provenance and the sustainability of what they are buying, even more so in the case of premium produce. The Irish whiskey industry is committed to the provision of information to consumers, both through compliance with the law and best practice guidance and through voluntary initiatives. The Irish Whiskey Association previously worked with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to develop the first-ever guidelines on the labelling and marketing of Irish whiskey.

Irish whiskey is a premium drinks category. While overall sales of Irish whiskey continue to grow, sales of premium and super-premium priced Irish whiskey are growing much faster. For example, in the United States, our largest-

market, sales of super-premium Irish whiskey sales have grown 165% since 2015 and now account for one in six bottles of Irish whiskey sold in the US.⁴ The accelerating premiumisation of Irish whiskey aligns with the growing consumer trend of: **Drinking Less, but Drinking Better.** Through both their B2C marketing and B2B engagement, Irish whiskey brands are actively supporting the offering of more premium drinking experiences while constantly promoting responsible enjoyment of Irish whiskey.

Per capita consumption levels in Ireland have fallen by a significant 24.8% since its peak rate in 2001. But promoting responsible drinking is a constant commitment. Drinks Ireland and our member companies continue to work with key stakeholders in Ireland to use their influence to greatly reduce cultures of excessive or harmful drinking and to reboot the 'Irish relationship with alcohol'.

⁴ 2022 Economic Assessment, Distilled Spirits Council of the United States

Actions for business

- Provide accessible consumer information of the sustainability of Irish whiskey brands.
- Ensure 100% compliance with all statutory and industry requirements relating to Irish whiskey labelling, responsible marketing and provision of health information.
- Ensure the provision of ingredient and nutrition information on-label or on-line.

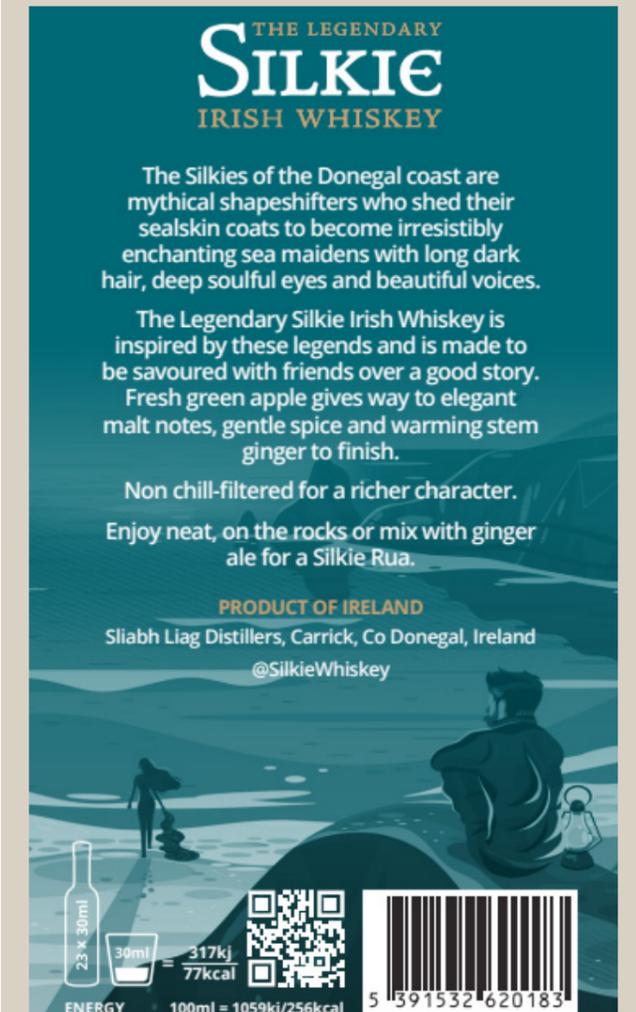
Supports from the Irish Whiskey Association

- Provide continuing guidance and education on statutory and industry requirements as well as new developments relating to Irish whiskey labelling, responsible marketing and the provision of health and sustainability information to consumers.
- Through Drinks Ireland, actively support initiatives to greatly reduce cultures of excessive or harmful drinking and to reboot the 'Irish relationship with alcohol'.

Metrics

The following metrics should be used to record baseline and progress.

- % of brands providing sustainability information to consumers.
- % of labels carrying ingredient and nutrition.



QR codes - an effective model to provide ingredient and nutrition information.

U-LABEL is a consumer-friendly e-label platform. This is a collaboration between spiritsEUROPE, which represents European spirits industry and CEEV, the voice of the European wine sector.

The platform enables consumers across Europe to access information via QR code technology about the spirits products they purchase.

The platform allows any spirits company, small or large, to give EU consumers relevant, standardised and detailed product information, including the list of ingredients, nutrition information, responsible drinking guidelines and information about sustainability.

A number of Irish whiskey brands, such as The Silkie Irish Whiskey from Sliabh Liag Distillers in Co. Donegal, have begun to use QR codes.

Implementation

This roadmap sets out a range of actions for businesses. While it will be up individual businesses to decide which actions they wish to bring forward, it is important that commitment to an action is translated into effective and successful implementation.

Governance

To support effective implementation, businesses should ensure appropriate governance arrangements are put in place.

- Member companies should prepare, regularly update and implement a bespoke sustainability plan for their business.
- Member companies should establish governance arrangements to support implementation of their sustainability plan, including designation of sustainability leads or champions at both leadership team and board level.
- Member companies should put in place systems for verifiable measurement and recording of both baseline data on environment impact and on subsequent improvements.

Supports

Through our Knowledge Still programme, the Irish Whiskey Association has organised a range of education and knowledge transfer events on sustainability topics including:

- **Water and wastewater management**
- **Sustainable packaging for e-commerce**
- **Development of business sustainability strategies**
- **Decarbonising energy supply**

This programme will be continued and intensified under this roadmap. In addition to the specific actions set out under the nine focus areas, the Irish Whiskey Association will ensure that supports are in place at a broader, strategic level.

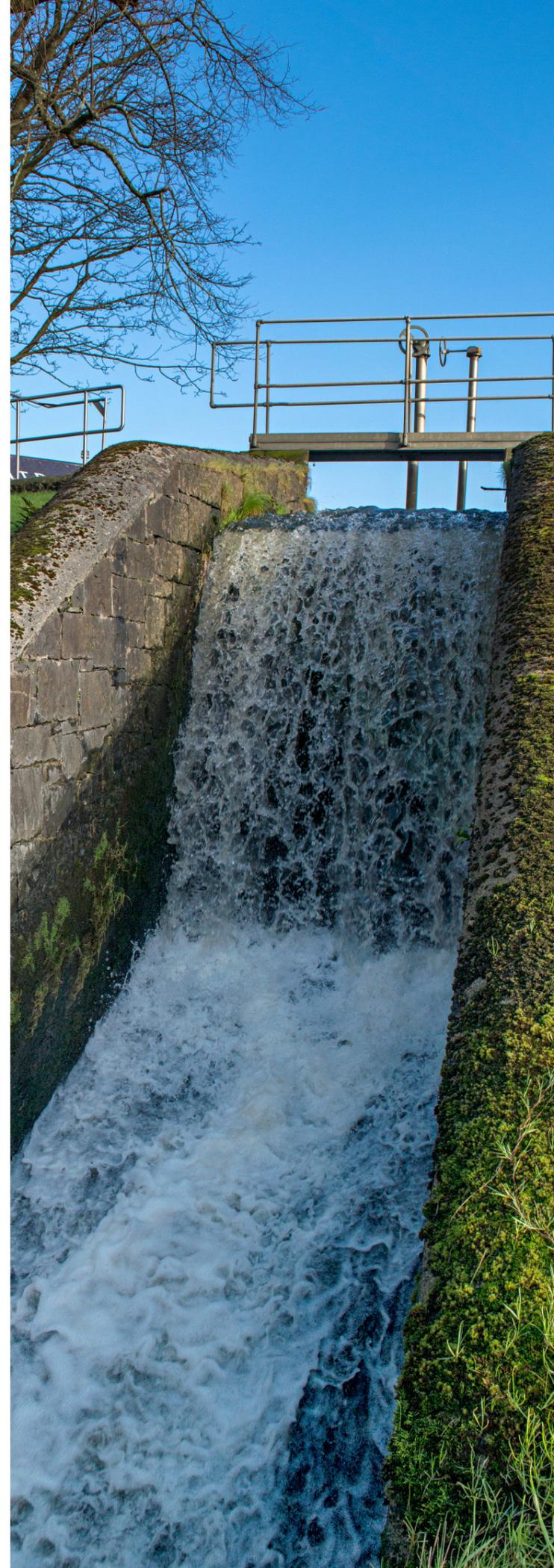
- The Irish Whiskey Association will facilitate peer support, involving interested member companies of similar type and size, to aid understanding and implementation of actions under this roadmap.
- The Irish Whiskey Association will lead sectoral engagement with state agencies and other stakeholders to support member company implementation of the roadmap actions.
- The Irish Whiskey Association will support enhanced accessibility for member companies to both generic and tailored supports offered by state agencies.
- The Irish Whiskey Association will provide an effective lobbying voice on legislative and regulatory developments; and to seek funding support for the introduction of new technologies and other efficiency measures.

Reporting

Monitoring of progress is essential in supporting effective implementation of this roadmap. The Irish Whiskey Association and member companies each have roles to play.

Businesses already face many existing and proposed reporting requirements, both statutory and for voluntary certification schemes. The Irish Whiskey Association will ensure that reporting under this roadmap will be user-friendly and consistent with other reporting requirements.

- The Irish Whiskey Association will provide continuing guidance and education on reporting on sustainability, including in relation to statutory requirements.
- Member companies will submit an annual return to the Irish Whiskey Association on progress under the roadmap actions they have selected for implementation.
- The Irish Whiskey Association will prepare a user-friendly template to support member companies to report annually, facilitating consistency with members' other reporting requirements.
- The Irish Whiskey Association will prepare an annual report card on implementation of this roadmap and the overall sustainability of the Irish whiskey industry.
- The Irish Whiskey Association will examine options for future verification and certification of progress, including possible development of an identity to represent collective efforts.





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