

2021 TJTP Territorial Just Transition Plan

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1. Outline of the transition process and the identification of most negatively affected territories within the Member State

Reference: point (a)(b) of Article 11(2), Article 6

1.1 The expected transition process

Ireland's transition towards a climate-neutral economy has gathered pace in recent years. The *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) (CALCD) Act 2021* provides for a transition involving a 51% reduction in carbon emissions (2018-2030) and an objective to achieve a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy by 2050. The Act provides for a just transition, within the wider statutory framework of climate action, enabling increased new employment and opportunities, while supporting those most negatively impacted.

Ireland's *Climate Action Plan 2021(CAP21)* sets out policy commitments, incorporating indicative ranges of sectoral emission reductions, to meet this statutory requirement for a 51% reduction in emissions by 2030. It includes a reduction in electricity sector emissions from 10.6 million (M) (T) to 2-4MT of CO₂, outlining how electricity demand from renewable sources will increase up to 80%, where achievable, cost effective and without compromising security of supply. At least 2 GW of additional gas generation capacity will be required by 2030, largely by mid-decade, to ensure security of supply, and underpin increased renewable electricity capacity. However, overall the proportion of electricity generated by natural gas is expected to decline from c.50%-30% by 2030 as renewable generation increases.

Use of peat for electricity generation has fallen – from at one point delivering one third of Ireland's total generation capacity. By 1990 peat provided 19% of the energy input into electricity generation which had reduced to 1.5% in 2021. It is expected that this figure will be negligible by 2024, when peat is no longer burned in Ireland's generation system. Over the same period, the share provided by gas has increased from 27% to 48% and by renewables from 1% to 23%. The *National Energy and Climate Plan ('NECP') 2021-2030* incorporates existing and planned policies and measures, to deliver a 30% reduction by 2030 in non-ETS greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels.

Peat harvesting activities had also been sustained through government support via a Public Service Obligation (PSO) which obligated the ESB to purchase a fixed amount of peat-fired electricity. Funding for this PSO ended in December 2019. The premature and unexpected, closure of two peat burning stations in the Midlands in 2020, prevented 2MT of Bord na Móna (BnM) peat being burned annually, reducing carbon emissions by 51% (by avoiding at least 1.25MT of carbon dioxide emissions per annum) and contributing to a 7.9% reduction in generation emissions. The remaining Midland based station in Edenderry, which uses peat and biomass is scheduled to replace peat with biomass from 2024, which will further reduce carbon emissions.

Measures are being taken to achieve a reduction of GHG emissions from the extraction of peat through the launch of the Enhanced Decommissioning, Rehabilitation and Restoration Scheme (EDRRS), an initiative aligned to Ireland's National Peatlands Strategy (2015-25), which sets out a vision providing a long-term framework to responsibly manage Ireland's peatlands. Since 2021, works commenced on 35 bogs through the EDRRS. Estimated climate benefits from emissions avoided and future sequestration, via the implementation of enhanced rehabilitation measures and rewetting are:

- Carbon Storage versus No Rehabilitation - 62-78MT
- Tonnes of CO₂ avoided - 3.3MT

These indicative figures will continue to be updated through carbon monitoring as part of the EDRSS project.

Wetlands are reported as a separate category for the Land Use Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector as part of Ireland's national inventory. This is a source of emissions, and, along with emissions from Grasslands, results in the LULUCF sector in Ireland being a net source of emissions - unlike the majority of EU countries. Therefore, it is imperative that emissions in this category are reduced through major peatland restoration and rehabilitation schemes such as EDRSS and LIFE. The most recent data from Ireland's EPA indicates, that emissions in the Wetlands category have more than halved from their peak of 4.2 MtCO₂eq in 2015 to 2.0 MtCO₂eq in 2021.

CAP21 and the NECP incorporate an Implementation Plan for the Midlands Region, supported by a Just Transition Commissioner. The Midlands Regional Transition Team (MRTT), established by the Midlands local authorities, plays a key role in coordinating regional and local strategic partnerships, supported by the European Commission's Secretariat Technical Assistance to Regions in Transition (START) facility and participation in the EU Just Transition Platform. Other targeted supports include a National Just Transition Fund (NJTF) which provides €22.1M in grant funding bringing €15M in additional funding to the region and supports an estimated 178 direct and 999 indirect jobs, as reported by the grantees.

These initiatives have ensured that this Territorial Just Transition Plan (TJTP) is built on strong foundations laid by prior national interventions.

Timeline

NECP targets will be updated to align with updated statutory target emissions reduction targets for 2030 contained in the CALCD Act. Member States' updated draft NECPs are due by end June 2023, with final versions to follow by end June 2024. Ireland's NECP targets will be updated to align with updated statutory target emissions reduction targets for 2030 provided for in the CALCD Act 2021 and EU 'Fit for 55' targets.

A Long-Term Climate Strategy will be published in 2022, reflecting Ireland's enhanced statutory national climate ambitions. Building on the decarbonisation pathways to 2030 set out in the CAP21, it will identify indicative pathways beyond 2030, towards climate neutrality by 2050, underpinned by analysis of transition options across key economic sectors. This will inform future policy making, business investment decisions and household, community and citizen action, grounded on just transition principles.

1.2 Territories expected to be the most negatively affected

Achieving net-zero emissions requires transformational change across the economy and society, with impacts more acutely felt in certain sectors.

Economic/ Employment impacts

BnM and the Electricity Supply Board (ESB), were important employers within the Territory, building communities which were economically reliant on the interdependent sectors of agriculture, peat harvesting and the energy industry.

The ESB is a statutory public corporation operating from power generation to supply. While traditionally an important employer in the Territory, use of peat for power generation has declined for many years, which has impacted direct and indirect employment. Power stations in Ferbane and Rhode, both in Co. Offaly, closed in 2003. In 2019, the ESB submitted a planning application seeking to transition West Offaly Power Station from peat to biomass starting in 2020, which was rejected in July 2019. A subsequent review of options for both West Offaly and Lough Ree Power Stations post-2020 revealed no viable business model beyond 2020 and ceased the generation of electricity in April 2020. The direct

impact on local employment saw 68 ESB workers redeployed. All ESB peat burning stations are now closed.

BnM portfolio of c.80,000 hectares contains over 130 bogs, which mirror the proposed Territory - largely in Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath, as well as parts of adjoining counties of Roscommon, Galway, Tipperary and Kildare. From 2015, BnM had planned an exit from commercial extraction of peat by 2030. However, the sudden decision to close West Offaly and Lough Ree in 2020, resulted in the 380 BnM workers who supplied the plants, leaving through on a Voluntary Redundancy scheme – 210 permanent employees and 170 seasonal employees, with a further 70 retirees/resignations. During this transitional period, a focus was placed on reducing the requirement for contractors and where possible if the skillset was transferrable a BnM employee would displace contract resources. Significant government funding was provided to support workers, companies and communities affected. However, exact figures are not available to reflect significant indirect impacts on contractors in Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath, as well as parts of adjoining counties of Roscommon, Galway, Tipperary and Kildare, living in the vicinity of BnM bogs.

Following the cessation of commercial extraction of peat for power generation, the ESB announced that it would develop plans for the future use of West Offaly and Lough Ree sites as renewable energy centres, with proposed technologies including synchronous condensers and energy storage capabilities at both locations. ESB's *Driven to Make a Difference: Net Zero by 2040* strategy sets out a roadmap to achieve net zero emissions by 2040, committing to a science based target for 2030 for decarbonising operations which supports the company's continued growth. BnM announced its *Brown to Green Strategy*, a move to a climate solutions company, focusing on renewable energy, recycling, peatland restoration and habitat management the provision of other low carbon goods and services. While workers have or will be offered redeployment within BnM, ongoing restructuring of ESB and BnM activities will also have further implications for indirect and induced employment in the region. However, further winding down of peat-related activities in the region includes planned cessation of peat burning (now 70% of output) at Edenderry from 2024 and closure of the briquette factory at Derrinlough early in 2024, will further impact 76 peat supply operatives and 15 sales operatives who will be redeployed, as well as wider socio-economic impacts, such as loss of purchasing power within rural communities, loss of seasonal employment and reduced local authority rates with consequences for the provision of local services.

Evidence Base for Most Negatively Affected Territory

Following an analysis through an evidence-based and objective assessment process, it is proposed that the Territory should include Counties Offaly, Laois, Longford, Westmeath, and Roscommon, as well as five additional Municipal Districts (MDs Ballinasloe (Co. Galway), Athy and Clane-Maynooth (Co. Kildare), Carrick-on-Suir and Thurles (Co. Tipperary).

This analysis is based on two studies;

- the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) funded a study and report - *D3 Report on the Transition Process Toward Climate Neutrality*, which sets out a territorial analytical methodology to allow an appraisal of the 'most affected' territories. This identified the 'most affected' territory as the Midlands NUTS 3 (Counties Offaly, Laois, Longford, Westmeath) and Roscommon.
- DECC commissioned an additional statistical analysis by *People & Place* to provide a more fine-grained analysis at Municipal District level. While data is not available at sub county level during the transition period since 2020, this allowed a more fine-grained overview of the most 'negatively affected' areas. This was motivated by the need to ensure a 'whole-of-territory' approach, so the geographical delineation of the transition is commensurate with socio-economic realities, and not the vagaries of administrative boundaries.

The following paragraphs summarise main take aways from these studies;

- The five main industrial installations associated with peat harvesting, are located at county boundaries - Lough Ree (Co. Longford, but borders Roscommon), West Offaly (which borders Counties Galway and Roscommon) and Edenderry Power Station (borders Co. Kildare) and the Derrinlough Briquette Factories (Co. Offaly, but just 25 kilometres from Co. Galway) and the Littleton Briquette Factory (Co. Tipperary). Most impacted employees were reported as being resident in counties of Laois, Offaly, Westmeath, Kildare, Roscommon, Longford, Tipperary, and Galway.
- Almost 30% of BnM's peat bogs are located outside the boundary of the NUTS 3 Counties and Co. Roscommon. The CORINE database of Ireland's most significant boglands including the presence of significant peatlands beyond NUTS3 in Eastern parts of Co. Tipperary – from Templetouhy to Killenaule and North and West Kildare – around Prosperous, Allenwood, Timahoe, Carbury, Rathangan and Kilberry. Analysis of economic data highlighted that the geography of these bogs and associated installations, strongly impacted on adjoining MDs, with travel-to-work patterns clearly extending beyond the boundaries of NUTS3 and Roscommon.
- This geographic focus was mirrored by socio-cultural, heritage and community identity characteristics associated with boglands, which were not delimited by administrative regional and county boundaries. Sites classified as having 'very high' sensitivity incorporating Natura 2000, SACs and NHAs also traverse county boundaries, incorporating geographic features such as the Sliabh Blooms; Lough Ree; Lough Ennel; Lough Forbes; and several boglands – most notably in the Ballinasloe MD
- By way of an example, Edenderry Powerplant is almost equidistant from the centre of Edenderry and the border with Co. Kildare (7km), and the second-closest town to it is Rathangan (Co. Kildare) – a distance of just 12km. Much of the built environment and the identity of towns such as Rathangan and villages such as Lullymore (also in Co. Kildare) are closely associated with life on the boglands. The close proximity of parts of East Galway to key peat industrial and manufacturing plants such as the now closed West Offaly peat-fuelled power plant (14km from Ballinasloe) and the significance, for the Thurles and Carrick-on-Suir MDs, of the now closed Littleton Briquette factory add to the body of evidence that supports an approach that transcends administrative boundaries and reflects socio-economic realities in delineating the appropriate JT territory.
- The *People and Place* statistical analysis pointed to the appropriateness and usefulness of sub county units, namely municipal districts, in ensuring the objective, robust and valid designation of the EU JTF Territory's geographical footprint. Similar or greater levels of socio-economic constraint, incorporating demography, society, well-being, economy and ecology, were identified in sub county areas, outside NUTS3 and Roscommon, associated with their historical dependence on peat and peat related activities.

The proposed territory comprises 19 municipal districts, who all have a direct association with Ireland's traditional peat industry and face similar challenges in transitioning to a post-carbon economy and society. The analysis undertaken, gives a baseline for the geographical context, informing an evidence based approach to selection of operations for inclusion in the EUJTF programme.

2. Assessment of transition challenges, for each of the identified territories

Reference: point (c) of Article 11(2)

Territory: Just Transition Territory in Ireland

2.1. Assessment of the economic, social and territorial impact of the transition to a climate-neutral economy of the Union by 2050

Reference: point (c) of Article 11(2)

The labour market impact of the transition presented particular challenges within the proposed Territory, due to pre-existing economic and social disparities. 58.2% of the proposed Territory's population resides in rural areas, over 20% higher than the national average, with a higher age dependency rate, proportion of children under 17, adults over 65 and disability rate than national averages. Most of Counties Roscommon, Longford and Offaly, northern parts of Co. Westmeath, the west of Co. Laois and most of the Carrick-on-Suir MD are classified as disadvantaged. Gross median household income of the Territory is lower than the national average. Business demography data highlights the significance of indigenous employment and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) for the region. Irish-owned firms with less than 10 employees accounting for the vast majority of firms providing employment.

Low levels of education attainment are most prevalent in peat dependent communities as the Industry provided relatively well-paid jobs which did not, in the main, require tertiary education qualifications. 30.6% of the Territory's population did not progress to the senior cycle of second-level education, over 3 percentage points higher than the State level of 27%. Just 27.5% of the population has a third-level qualification, 5% below the national average. Older age profiles, low population density and where limited local public transport makes addressing skills deficits challenging.

Economic/ Direct impacts on employment

In 1980 BnM employed 7,100 people, with many others employed in contract work including seasonal peat extraction. This figure declined over time, but according to the 2021 study funded through the SRSP on the Challenges, Needs and Recommended Actions, between Jan. 2019 and May 2021, an estimated 1,000 employees and contractors were directly impacted in BnM. In the period January 2019 to May 2021, a total of 560 employees left or were redeployed in BnM due to closure of the two ESB power plants and the associated peat supply. Prior to these closures, the Littleton Briquette Factory and associated 'home' supply bog had closed with the loss of circa 125 employees, while the closure of BnM coal distribution centres led to the loss of 45 jobs prior to that.

Approximately 350 employees changed roles to the EDDRS, primarily from peat harvesting roles, however, the longer-term sustainability and requirements of these roles is such that they are deemed less stable and certain than the prior roles with BnM were before the transition. BnM has re-entered a growth period, following a period of decline, made possible by restructuring and reshaping business units and re-focusing its business as a climate solutions organisation. This has opened new opportunities and in 2021 plans to create 1,435 jobs in the Midlands by 2026 were announced. 80% of the Bord's operations are now focused on renewable energy production, recycling, peatland rehabilitation, and sustainable product development. BnM operates a landfill gas utilisation facility in Co. Kildare which generates renewable electricity for 8,500 homes.

Plant closures also impacted ESB employees. There were no compulsory redundancies among the estimated 68 staff, as solutions such as voluntary severance, early retirements and transfers were found. The ESB's plans in relation to the development of the sites of the two power stations demonstrate a commitment to invest in renewable energy generation and energy storage in the region on a long-term basis.

Indirect Economic Impacts

The wider employment effects on the regional economy of declining commercial extraction and power generation using peat have also had significant indirect impacts. Downstream impacts such as the reduction in indirect employment, business spend and expenditure in the local economy. Indirect employment includes the hiring of external contractors, which were impacted as plants and operations shut down. Negative impacts of reduced indirect expenditure in the regional economy were also highlighted during public consultation on the draft Territorial Plan, particularly for retail and hospitality sectors- noting that the transition has led to reduced activities across all sectors – agriculture, construction, research and development, social enterprise and transport, posing a key challenge to provide communities with opportunities for sustainable communities for future generations. Respondents to the public consultation highlighted that the nature of peat production meant that many impacted

contractors often also farmed marginal holdings, using peat for personal or local use, with many experiencing significant drops in income. Agriculture is an important economic driver in impacted peat dependent rural communities, with almost 8% of households headed by a farmer, higher than the national average. Although, potential interventions to support marginal farmers towards economic diversification and equipping impacted communities to reskill and avail of new and innovative opportunities in the green economy is challenging, due to low population densities and poor local transport, unlocking such solutions will determine the success of EU JTF interventions.

Socio-Economic Impacts

While the primary challenge during the transition out of peat has been the impact on jobs and communities in the impacted region as the labour-intensive peat industries are wound down, public consultees expressed clear concern about the wider socio-economic impacts and the resulting impacts on rural depopulation. In this rural Territory, there are limited alternative local-employment opportunities workers with highly specific and thus hard to transfer skillsets. Development of local social enterprise, retail and tourism were seen as crucial to provide tangible opportunities for economic growth of direct benefit to impacted communities. Respondents noted that job losses often resulted in role transfers as breadwinners leading to more participation by women.

Traditionally the peat industry, power generation and industrial heritage have been hugely significant for this region – economically, culturally and socially. Wider socio-economic impacts were apparent in the public consultation which highlighted that the peat industry was a huge source of pride, providing an anchor to the community in terms of economic benefits, inter-generational knowledge and skills transfer, attracting new members to the community, providing a sense of cohesion and identity and creating a wide range of supporting technical and soft skills. While providing well-paid employment, other social benefits were provided - supporting local communities and sports clubs. Consultees noted a desire that young people are not forgotten. BnM also funded several housing schemes for employees in the region. The peat industry attracted new members to the community, creating a wide range of supporting businesses and technical and soft skills, providing a sense of cohesion and identity. BnM is exploring new activities to leverage its significant land holdings in the areas of biodiversity and tourism which may bring new spin-off benefits for the Territory

Existing Government/EU Interventions

The EU and Irish government has already supported a number of interventions in the Territory to address these socio-economic impacts, through various initiatives.

- A grant of €738,820, has been awarded by the NJTF to develop Rhode Green Energy Park by re-purposing the former Rhode power station into a green energy park to provide serviced sites for energy enterprise with potential for future incubation space and a feasibility study exploring data centre integration with renewable energy and green hydrogen. This incorporates a feasibility study to examine a combination of renewable technologies, carbon abatement technologies including batteries, syngas production (forest residue & feedstock energy crops) and hydrolysis for green hydrogen production.
- The EDRRS scheme optimises climate, environmental, ecological and hydrological benefits to contribute to the well-being of current and future generations. The EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility, through the NRRP, is investing up to €108 million in EDRRS to rehabilitate 33,000 hectares of peatlands over 82 BnM bogs, previously used for peat extraction for electricity generation. Rehabilitation of over 10,000 hectares of peatlands has taken place to date and will encompass 32,779 hectares when complete, protecting between 62-78MT of existing carbon stores.

- In 2021, €14 million was allocated for peatland conservation, management and restoration measures by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Both EDRRS and LIFE have reskilled workers, mitigating some expected job impacts, providing a transitional role, and sustaining employment lifespan until scheduled completion in 2024. For protected raised bogs the NPWS has accelerated significantly its programme of restoration in recent years. From 2018 to date, with increased funding and resources, restoration measures have been completed on circa. 4000 hectares of designated raised bogs. 8,483 ha has now been rehabilitated through EDRRS (mid-June 2022) and will not be available for commercial use. Further works on raised bog SACs and NHAs are underway and planned for 2022 and beyond through NPWS programmes and EU LIFE projects such as LIFE Peatlands and People. These rehabilitation and restoration efforts will assist Ireland in reaching our national conservation target to restore raised bogs within the network to a favourable conservation status. The NPWS has not yet calculated emissions factors (EFs) reductions in relation to this programme of accelerated restoration on the designated raised bog network as the work is currently ongoing.
- The *Peatlands and People Project* was supported by €10 million through an EU LIFE Programme, to a consortium, led by BnM, to develop a regional Peatlands Knowledge Centre of Excellence, a Just Transition Accelerator, including bioeconomy, Accelerate Green, to support enterprise development in the region, and an immersive People's Discovery Attraction. This project intends to further estimate emissions factors for a fuller suite of cutover habitats. Eight companies were supported by Accelerate Green, in 2022 through provision of tools, advice and mentoring in transitioning to a green economy.
- The *Warmer Homes Scheme* offers free energy upgrades for eligible homeowners who are most at risk of energy poverty, with 145,000 free upgrades supported by the scheme since 2000. The scheme is available to homeowners who own and live in their own home and are in receipt of certain Department of Social Protection payments. Homes are first surveyed to determine which upgrades can be installed and funded. These can include attic/cavity or internal/external wall insulation, secondary works such as lagging jackets, draught proofing and energy efficient lighting. New heating systems and windows are occasionally recommended. For those not eligible, a suite of Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) home insulation schemes including an 80% grant for attic and wall insulation is also available from the SEAI. Energy suppliers such as electricity and gas retailers also support homeowners, financially or otherwise, in carrying out energy upgrades on their home. In return, these suppliers can then claim credits towards their legal targets under the Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme.
- To address capacity within the retrofit sector, a retrofit loan guarantee scheme under the NRRP and the ESF+ programme. For example, the SOLAS Green Skills Action Programme is funded through the NRRP for 2021 and 2022. It is proposed to build on this through ESF+ on its completion, with provision of future green skills modules as a component of vocational training courses delivered through SOLAS and the ETBs to be funded through ESF+ from 2023.
The Department of Social Protection, SOLAS and the MRTT have worked together to provide employment support for workers affected by the phasing out of fossil fuel production in the Midlands. This has consisted of engagement sessions, job fairs, education, retraining and employment opportunities, generally in the renewable energy sector. The relevant Education Training Boards (ETBs) provided one-to-one career support to impacted BnM employees. Over €800,000, funded through ESF and the National Training Fund, has supported retraining in a range of areas including IT, retrofit, sustainable agriculture as well as dumper, excavator and telescopic handler courses.
- The National Just Transition Fund was established in 2020 to support innovative projects that contribute to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the Wider Midlands region, and have employment and enterprise potential. This is supporting 56 innovative projects, which includes 16 projects which started project delivery in September 2020 and 40 larger value projects which started project delivery from June 2021. The Fund has three priorities:

1. Employment and enterprise supports: to support innovation and investment proposals to generate sustainable employment in green enterprise.
2. Training supports: to retrain and reskill workers to assist local communities and businesses in the Wider Midlands to adjust to the low carbon transition. The *Bord na Móna Employee Supports: Training and Upskilling Project* has also been established under this Fund to continue work carried out following peat plant closures in 2020, preparing and upskilling workers for other career paths.
3. Community transitioning supports: to support proactive communications with affected communities and other stakeholders in the region, establish best practice sharing networks, and assist in developing local transition plans.

2.2. Development needs and objectives by 2030 in view of reaching a climate-neutral economy of the Union by 2050

Reference: point (d) of Article 11(2)

The EU JTF will contribute to the diversification and modernisation of the Territory making it competitive, to support communities to seize transition opportunities, supporting its viability in the long-term, by addressing the following development needs.

1. Enhance the Business Environment and Create Employment Opportunities

The EU JTF will complement national initiatives, broadening the economic base into sectors identified in the Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) and the SRSP report, including clean energy initiatives, targeted at peat workers and their local communities, offering tangible, more sustainable alternatives, to the 24,000 people leaving the Territory daily for work/study. The Regional Enterprise Development Fund supports enterprise as part of implementation of the nine Regional Enterprise Plans (REPs). The fund already supports 7 strategic projects in the Territory, with grant approvals of approximately €8m since 2017. The new Green Transition Fund will help businesses implement low carbon business models. The Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and SEAI have funded a number of bioeconomy related research and innovation projects to build the knowledge base and research outputs suitable for piloting, scaling and demonstration. The EU JTF will explore opportunities for innovative pilot initiatives for the circular and bioeconomy in the region.

Supporting long-term local resilience will sustain EU JTF interventions, driving endogenous sustainable growth, to support impacted peat communities through economic development, while maintaining industrial heritage and community stability. S3 identifies retail and tourism, as the most employment intensive sectors in the country, particularly in rural areas, such as this Territory. The EU JTF will also support SMEs, aligning and complementing Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES), REPS, regional tourism strategies, the national policy statement on the bioeconomy and SME supports provided through the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs). Stakeholder-led initiatives can best identify priorities for investments in human capital and the EU JTF will empower the community and social pillars through funding SMEs and social enterprise.

2. Enhance the Skills Profile

As described above, under Existing Government/EU Interventions, a pro-active approach to skills provision for impacted BnM workers has been taken, with significant supports being provided this cohort. Sectoral skills for the green economy are being funded through the *Solas Green Skills Programme*. Action 1.3 of the MREP supports Regional ETB proposals for a *National Pilot on Sustainability and a Rural Centre of Excellence* in the Territory. This is a key deliverable of the SOLAS strategy for the FET sector and will not rely on support from the EU JTF.

Respondents to the consultation noted that local transport for impacted communities to existing training opportunities in the region remains a key challenge to be addressed. Supported by the National Just Transition Fund, the BnM Employee Training Supports Projects will provide upskilling and retraining support for employees and career guidance is also a feature of the overall project. In addition to this, it is proposed that the priorities for Ireland's EU JTF programme will support the development of specific skillsets in the Territory in the areas such as wetlands rehabilitation, boardwalk and trails development on rehabilitated lands, and in the bioeconomy.

3. Promoting Environmental Sustainability and Industrial Heritage

Particular environmental challenges are associated with the Territory's traditional reliance on the peat industry. It also has environmental resources and assets, many afforded protections under EU legislation including the Natura 2000 framework. Ecological assets, such as the Sliabh Bloom mountains, show how boglands, if restored, can play an important role in carbon sequestration, counterbalancing impacts of human activity which disturbed and depleted much of the Territory's ecological resource base. NESCI's 2021 report 'Addressing Employment Vulnerability as Part of a Just Transition in Ireland' noted the importance of recognising the historical and industrial context of places and communities in a just transition process. Lough Boora is an important exemplar site combining environmental sustainability and industrial heritage and new economic opportunities and improved recreational amenities. It has moved from supplying 1,000,000+ T of peat each year to becoming a sanctuary for wildlife, a prime outdoor recreation attraction with walkways, cycle paths, visitor centre and sculptures, inspired by the area's industrial heritage. The EU JTF will pursue such opportunities for recovery, re-purposing and renewal preserving the Territory's rich heritage, maintaining strong peat community identity and pride of place.

Supports will target improvements in the status of degraded protected habitats, supporting national and EU biodiversity/climate aims, while also boosting economic activity using small/medium sized contractors. Retraining and upskilling can enable former peat workers to undertake restoration work, construction of amenities such as boardwalks where appropriate, creating a positive link between interventions and their communities. Complementary activities involving community engagement, education/awareness activities and provision of amenities will encourage communities to reimagine use of bogs as fossil fuels sources to more sustainable uses.

4. Enhancing potential of region as a place to live, work, invest and visit

As a result of the transition from peat, there is a need in the Territory for safe, reliable and clean local transport solutions connecting more people to more opportunities to work, (re)train, do business, to meet and visit. Sustainable local mobility for impacted communities was identified as a problem, by the SRSP funded analysis and particularly during the youth consultation, underlying the need for provision of carbon neutral local transport infrastructure to support sustainable employment in the Territory and access to innovation/remote working hubs and training and education opportunities. More sparsely populated areas outside of the main urban centres, such as those in the JTF Territory, rely more heavily on personal private transport with a greater reliance on fossil fuels and lower electric vehicle (EV) uptake. A shift toward zero-emissions transport and having an effective and reliable charging network for EVs is therefore an essential part of enabling citizens within the Territory to switch to zero-emissions transport options. The Midlands REP provides a strong focus on amenity and recreation use, and potential for sustainable tourism and strategic trails development in unlocking the regenerative and commercial potential within the Territory. Regional vibrancy and resilience for the next generation within peat communities depends on retaining and attracting young skilled workers and is fundamental to a successful transition. Improved and sustainable local public transport links will increase the economic competitiveness and create better places to work and live for impacted workers and communities.

2.3. Consistency with other relevant national, regional or territorial strategies and plans

Reference: point (e) of Article 11(2)

National Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation 2022-27 (S3)

S3, aligned with *Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy*, will focus on driving enterprise success through enterprise-led research, development and innovation start-ups, competitiveness, productivity and high economic performance, contributing to Ireland's economic and societal resilience and transformation. The Territory has demonstrated capabilities in manufacturing processes and technologies, including Irish Manufacturing Research (IMR) facility, Technological University Shannon (Athlone) academic/training programmes and the Engenuity Engineering Cluster. Sectors with high employment and innovation capability in the Territory include advanced manufacturing, audio-visual/creative, bioeconomy/renewable energy, biopharma and life sciences, financial service/FinTech and food/agritech and ICT. S3, notes opportunities to develop significant capacity in the Low Carbon Economy and supports tourism initiatives noting Retail and Tourism sectors are key employment generators for Ireland, particularly for rural locations. S3 supports the goals of *Our Rural Future Rural Development Policy 2021-2025* through maximising our resources and strengths in the Green Economy to support employment opportunities for rural communities in areas such as renewable energy, sustainable tourism, energy retrofitting, the Bioeconomy and the Circular Economy.

Rural Development Policy: Our Rural Future 2021-2025

Challenges and opportunities facing rural Ireland in future are consistent with global patterns, driven by trends such as ageing populations, urbanisation, the rise of emerging economies, climate change, environmental pressures, increased globalisation, and technological breakthroughs. The EU JTF aligns with this policy, ensuring peat communities can continue to develop and realise their potential, through building resilience and providing interventions for sustainable growth.

National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy

The Government's vision aims towards global leadership in the bioeconomy, moving beyond a compliance and carbon mitigation focus to integrating sustainable economic development into our economic model, as we transition to a low carbon and circular economy.

The EU JTF aligns with this by promoting bio-circularity through identifying, assessing, and balancing policy targets on climate action, innovation, rural and sustainable development and prosperity and welfare and competing uses of land and biomass in order to optimise the use of material (food, fibre, bio-based materials, energy) and non-material (clean air and water, biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, recreation) resources, products, processes and services, including ecosystem services. This approach will ensure supported activities respect local ecological boundaries, protect and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems services, and demonstrate the potential of bio-based solutions in terms of climate and environmental performance, and circularity.

People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025 - Regional Tourism Strategy for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands 2022-2026

Tourism is at the heart of the Government's overall economic strategy and Tourism Strategy *People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025* aims to increase the tourism's economic contribution across local communities. This Strategy is executed through regional experience brands and strategies (Hidden Heartlands 2022-2026 and Ireland's Ancient East 2022-2026 for EU JTF Territory) which aim to

increase tourism's economic impact, making the Territory one of Europe's leading regenerative tourism destinations.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES)

Ireland's 3 regional assemblies have each adopted a 12-year RSES which sets out the long-term spatial, economic and climate policies for the region to 2030. The RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region, includes Counties Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath and Kildare. Counties Galway and Roscommon are included in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly RSES, and Co. Tipperary is within the Southern Regional Assembly RSES. All have economic development, climate action and improving quality of life at their core, consistent with the EU JTF's single specific objective.

Regional Enterprise Plans (REPs)

REPs are developed by regional stakeholders and focus on collaborative initiatives to realise enterprise growth and job creation. These 'bottom-up' plans complement and build on core strategies of the Enterprise Agencies, the LEOs and other agencies involved in supporting enterprise development, aiming to garner added value and increased impact. The TJTP is aligned to the strategic objectives of the Midlands REP (Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath), the West REP (Galway and Roscommon) and Mid-West REP (Tipperary) to 2024.

Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs)

The EUJTF will seek to support the implementation of the statutory LECPs within the Territory, where interventions align with EU JTF objectives to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition. New LECPs, covering a 6-year period, are currently being developed and are expected to be in place in 2023, setting out objectives and actions needed to promote and support economic, local and community development, both by local authorities alone and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. LECPs are the primary mechanism at local level to bring forward relevant actions arising from national and regional strategies and policies with a local remit. LECPs should, in this regard, build on the objectives of the REPS and the RSES. The LECPs will also be a critical pre-requisite, providing a framework at local authority level, for new programmes and funding, including Just Transition Funding in relevant areas.

Transport

National policy supports a move towards a zero-emission public transport fleet and proposed EU JTF transport actions align with the various national plans and strategies that seek to enhance sustainable and public transport services in the Territory, including the *Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan*, *Sustainable Mobility Policy*, *CAP21*, *Our Rural Future*, the *TFI Local Link Rural Transport Programme* and the *National Disability Inclusion Strategy*. The *Sustainable Mobility Action Plan 2022-2025*. Goal 2 focuses on decarbonisation of local public transport and includes Actions 8 (EV charging) and 15 (decarbonising Local Link buses). EU JTF funding will allow for expedited implementation of projects, providing better local connections in the Territory, connecting more people to access opportunities to work, (re)train, do business, within the Territory.

2.4. Types of operations engaged

Reference: point (g-k) of Article 11(2) and Article 11(5)

The objectives of the EU JTF shall be pursued in line with the objective of promoting sustainable development as set out in Article 11 TFEU, considering the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the

Paris Agreement and the "do no significant harm" principle. For the reasons set out at Section 1 and 2 of the TJTP, the EU JTF shall target alleviating transition impacts, helping the communities directly affected and supporting the transition throughout the Territory. The following operations, through 3 complementary priorities, will diversify and modernise the economic base of the Territory.

Priority 1: Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy

Operations which:

- Foster the economic diversification of the EU JTF Territory through supporting, productive investments in SMEs (incl. microenterprises and start-ups) entrepreneurship and investments in the creation of new firms, particularly in emerging low carbon, circular economy and bioeconomy sectors, and providing services to businesses.
- Support economic, social and local/community development within relevant Local Authority areas through the support to the implementation of local and regional development strategies such as LECPs and REPs, incl. to address the social impacts of the transition.
- Support investments in research, development, innovation, cooperation and demonstration activities that contribute to the development of the circular economy of the EU JTF Territory, incl. the bioeconomy. This will include support for enabling activities such as communication, coordination and alignment with education, training, and skills activities to support productive investments in relevant actors in key sectors such as the bioeconomy including SMEs and Industry for the development of new business models, value chains, products and services in a multi-sectoral approach.

Priority 2: Supporting the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded peatlands and regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets

Supported activities may include:

- Production of feasibility and design studies, environmental assessments and rehabilitation plans.
- Stakeholder engagement activities including landowner negotiations (including compensation payments or land purchase) and education, awareness-raising and community engagement activities.
- Implementation of measures to enable and monitor restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands.
- Regeneration and repurposing of amenity assets including the upgrade of existing industrial heritage assets to best-in-class standards for amenity use.
- Research, knowledge transfer and monitoring activities on restoration measures and overall land management improvements for farmed peat soils.

These actions will complement the activities under Priority 1 by providing employment for impacted workers and communities and by making the Territory a more attractive place to live, work and visit. The research, education, community engagement activities and knowledge transfer possible under this priority will also increase the skills base of impacted communities.

Priority 3: Providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options to enable them to benefit directly from the green transition

- Enhancing sustainable and clean mobility in the Territory by supporting the decarbonisation of local transport to provide clean solutions to the people working, (re)training and doing business in the, EU JTF Territory.

This priority is key to ensuring the success of Priority 1, to ensuring the Territory's population are able to access jobs and training in order to participate in the economic and community diversification activities. Actions supported under this Priority will build more resilient communities by allowing earlier adoption of zero-emissions mobility options, providing workers with better access to local jobs, training and education opportunities. The creation of local sustainable transport solutions will better connect towns, remote working hubs and educational institutions in the Territory, better serving employees.

Economic diversification through these 3 complementary priorities will enhance the regional economy, addressing existing deprivation and rural depopulation and placing it on a path to a more diverse and resilient economy based on climate neutrality.

Synergies and complementarities of the envisaged operations with other relevant Union programmes under the Investments for jobs and growth goal (supporting the transition process), other financing instruments (the Union Emissions Trading Modernisation Fund) to address identified development needs

To maximise the impact of the EU JTF, particular attention has been given to examining potential synergies and complementarities between it and other funds as well as preventing any overlap between interventions and duplication of funding. At a strategic level, there are clear potential synergies between EU JTF supports and the ERDF and European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) priorities and the Common Agricultural Policy. The EU JTF support will complement ERDF priorities on developing smarter more competitive regions, creating greener more energy efficient regions, which align with EU JTF development needs. Local economic activity and community activities in sectors of relevance to the EU JTF Territory will complement ERDF supports.

The JTF will complement the ERDF priorities of developing smarter, more competitive, greener and more energy efficient regions. The JTF will complement existing ERDF measures such as the co-funded Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme. In relation to research, ERDF supports capacity building in research organisations and JTF focuses on key sectors for the transition.

The ESF+ focus on employment, skills and lifelong learning is aligned with the EU JTF objective to address social impacts of the transition. EU JTF skills and training support will focus on those who have been most impacted by the transition in sectors of specific relevance to the just transition process such as land restoration.

NRRP priorities advancing the green transition, social and economic recovery and job creation align with EU JTF objectives. The Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF) is funding the EDRRS which uses bog rehabilitation to deliver climate benefits, with the co-benefit of helping BnM workers retrain and upskill in the field of bog rehabilitation. There will be synergies between the EU JTF and the RRF in relation wetlands rehabilitation, primarily focused on Natura 2000 sites in the Territory, which are different and complementary to the peatland rehabilitation project support by the RRF. As regards skills and training, the RRF will fund an extensive programme of recovery skills, including green skills, covering the whole of Ireland. The JTF will complement this work by targeting upskilling opportunities on land restoration.

The EU LIFE Peatlands and People Programme is developing a regional Peatlands Knowledge Centre of Excellence, a Just Transition Accelerator, Accelerate Green, to support enterprise development in the region, and an immersive People's Discovery Attraction. EU JTF supports to rural SMEs and wetlands restoration is complementary to the EU LIFE programme. The actions revolving around wetlands restoration supported by the JTF, including restoration measures and some research activities on carbon sequestration can add value to the work carried out by the EU LIFE project.

The development of the Agricultural Knowledge & Innovation System under Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan is complementary to the EUJTF. In particular the priority area Supporting Innovative Approaches to Regeneration and Repurposing of Land can link in with AKIS measures on Knowledge Transfer, Farm Advisory Service, EIP-AGRI and the National CAP Network. Potential complementarities with Horizon Europe's climate mission may be explored.

Proposed operations will be reviewed on approval, to ensure they demonstrate synergies and complementarities with other relevant EU programmes under the Investment for jobs and growth goal (supporting the transition process) and other financial instruments to address the identified development needs. The respective Managing Authorities of the Funds will continue to explore ways in which synergies and complementarities can be further developed between EU funding programmes during their lifetime, through participation in the Partnership Process Steering Group (PPSG), Partnership Agreement Working Group (PAWG) and Partnership Agreement Monitoring Committee (PAMC) and mutual representation of Managing Authorities on Programme Monitoring Committees.

Synergies and complementarities with planned support from the other pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism

The Just Transition Fund is one of three pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism which provides an overall framework for the EU to support and finance regions most exposed to transition challenges. Investments under the Just Transition Fund may be complemented by a combination of grants and loans to private sector entities under a dedicated window of the EU's InvestEU instrument (Pillar 2) and through a specific Public Sector Loan Facility managed by the European Investment Bank (Pillar 3). Proposed investments in larger projects, for example, in relation to transport, renewable energy, energy efficiency, or retrofitting, may be better suited to seeking support from these pillars, particularly if sponsored by larger private sector entities or by public bodies. These Pillars could be used to assist in addressing the potential development needs of the Territory, for example, enhancing the business environment, creating employment opportunities, enhancing the skills profile, promoting environmental sustainability and industrial heritage and enhancing the potential of the region as a place to live, work, invest and visit.

Under Pillar 2, the InvestEU Just Transition Scheme will provide a budgetary guarantee under the InvestEU programme and the InvestEU advisory hub acts as a central entry point for advisory services. It will provide around €1.8 billion from the EU budget to the InvestEU Programme and is expected to mobilise €45 billion in mostly private sector investments across the EU. It could, for example, include projects for decarbonisation, economic diversification of the regions, energy, transport and social infrastructure. The InvestEU Just Transition Scheme may enable investments in a wider range of projects than the Just Transition Fund, in line with the InvestEU Regulation and in the InvestEU Investment Guidelines, in the areas of:

- Sustainable infrastructure (e.g., projects in sustainable energy, digital connectivity, transport and circular economy)
- Research, innovation and digitalisation
- SMEs
- Social investment and skills (for instance projects in education and training, social housing and healthcare).

To be eligible, InvestEU projects must:

- Address market failures or investment gaps and be economically viable
- Need EU backing in order to get off the ground
- Achieve a multiplier effect and where possible crowd-in private investment
- Help meet EU policy objectives.

Support under Pillar 2 can be guided by Ireland's S3 e.g., the following sectors overlap with InvestEU thematic areas.

- Digitalisation and digital transformation
- Innovation diffusion
- International collaboration on RD&I
- Improving the national enterprise research and innovation system.

Under Pillar 3, a new Public Sector Loan Facility (PSLF) aims to provide subsidised financing to public sector projects for the benefit of the regions concerned, targeting projects which do not generate sufficient revenue and would otherwise not get financed. For example, the PSLF can support investments in energy and transport infrastructure, district heating networks, digitisation, renovation or insulation of buildings, environmental infrastructure for smart waste and water management, transition to a circular economy, land and ecosystem restoration and decontamination up-skilling, re-skilling, training and social infrastructure including care facilities and social housing. The PSLF is administered by DG Regio and its management has been delegated to the European Climate Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) which will launch calls for proposals on the Commission's Funding&Tenders portal. Potential beneficiaries (which include public law bodies and private law bodies with a public service mission) can apply for advisory support on the InvestEU Advisory Hub website. Applications need to contribute to the development needs and priorities identified in the TJTP.

Public consultation responses indicated general interest in the wider opportunities to support private investment projects for economic diversification in the area, emphasising the accessibility of low-cost loans for public sector, SMEs and entrepreneurs. The public consultation identified Pillars 2 and 3 as opportunities to support private investment and projects for decarbonisation, economic diversification of the regions, energy, transport, digitisation, social infrastructure, renewable energy generation and storage projects, circular economy, social infrastructure upskilling and training, food, manufacturing, construction, tourism and for the development of sites for business workplaces, remote working hub facilities and community facilities.

3. Governance mechanisms

Reference: point (f) of Article 11(2)

3.1 Partnership

Development of this Plan leveraged existing key relationships within the impacted Territory, developed during the initial national response to the abrupt cessation of commercial peat extraction, particularly, work carried out by the Just Transition Commissioner, the MRTT and establishment of the NJTF. In accordance with Art. 8 of the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) and the partnership principle, the development, implementation and monitoring of the EU JTF, has and will continue to benefit from the involvement of a range of key stakeholders including the public, agencies of the state at local, regional and national level, impacted businesses, key social partners and research bodies. This informed the EU's SRSP analysis and subsequent consultation on the draft TJTP which has refined the potential types of operations to be supported, ensuring the evolution of the Territory's requirements following national interventions. The SRSP report on Governance and Stakeholder Engagement lists organisations consulted as part of this analysis.

Engagement with relevant partners during the programme preparation stage has been done in a transparent and effective way. Partner consultations have followed several steps and processes. Documentation was circulated to members of the PPSG and the PAWG, notices of public consultation and consultation reports have been published on the government website with links to the www.eufunds.ie and EMRA's websites. The output of partnership actions has informed and shaped the programme. Partners have been integral in their feedback during preparation and amendments to the programme as appropriate. Timely, transparent and effective communication will be key to successful partnership engagement and to ensure visibility to the broader public is maintained.

3.2 Monitoring and evaluation

A key monitoring mechanism for EUJTF implementation will be a Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC), which will be set up within three months of the date of the approval of the EU JTF Programme, meeting at least once a year to review progress in programme implementation. Reflecting the partnership principle and the European Code of Conduct on Partnership, membership will include representatives of the managing and national Authorities, audit authority, intermediate bodies, regional and local stakeholders, incl. local elected representatives, representatives of economic and social partners and civil society bodies, and representatives from other EU funds under shared management. Partners and stakeholders will be directly involved in delivering the performance framework and monitoring of progress.

Programme contributions to Ireland's country-specific recommendations, evaluations and follow up findings and actions will be tracked by the PMC to enable fulfilment of enabling conditions and progress to administrative capacity-building for public bodies, partners and beneficiaries as relevant. The PMC will monitor progress in achieving milestones and targets, consider any required amendments to the programme as well as tracking evaluations and follow up findings and actions. A Programme evaluation plan, outlining implementation reporting, will be submitted to the PMC by EMRA within a year of Programme approval and a mid-term evaluation carried out in 2025 to track progress made in achieving milestones for output indicators delivered.

3.3 Coordination bodies

Two groups were established by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to assist in the development of EU-funded programmes covered by Ireland's Partnership Agreement, including the EU JTF, and to promote complementarity between EU Funds and national instruments. These structures will remain in place for implementation.

- **The Partnership Process Steering Group of the Funds (PPSG)** has broad ranging membership including representatives from relevant Departments, other CPR funds, economic and social partners, representatives of marginalised groups, disability, gender equality and non-discrimination, civil society bodies, the Common Agricultural Policy, the Recovery & Resilience Plan, and the Brexit Adjustment Reserve. It assists programme authorities in developing a Partnership Agreement, and identifies and establishes mechanisms to address synergies, complementarities and enhance cooperation across programmes.
- **The Partnership Agreement Working Group (PAWG)** coordinated the preparation of the Partnership Agreement, ensured complementarities between the funds and with other EU instruments and played a key role in the development of a common approach to the horizontal principles.

The EU JTF will continue to participate in the National Communications Committee, which coordinates EU-funded programmes communications activities.

In relation to horizontal enabling conditions, the Fund works closely with the Irish Human Rights Equality Commission to strengthen the institutional capacities of partners in advancing equality and human rights during programme implementation.

3.4 Public Consultation

Public consultation on the TJTP took place from December 2021 to March 2022 including an online survey, a portal for individual/group submissions, and a series of public workshops focused on the development needs of the region. 240 respondents from a broad range of organisations engaged with the process. 57 online workshop participants, 82 online survey responses and 40 written submissions were received. A separate youth workshop (16–24 years) was also held. A report giving an overview of the responses and findings is publicly available.

Findings reflected a need for an EU JTF to support economic transition, and that community networks be supported and sustained into the future. It was acknowledged that a new, collaborative model for development, building on the Territory's existing assets and emerging opportunities is needed. Respondents identified a need to focus on employment and socio-economic impacts on communities throughout the Territory, not just on peat workers. The need to attract families to the area at the family formation stage, addressing low population densities, by making the Territory an attractive place to live, work and visit was also a clear message from the consultation. Bottom-up and community-based approaches were favoured, with a focus on microenterprises, eco-tourism and building new green skillsets for the transition, through accessible, local opportunities.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment of the EU JTF intervention will assess the likely significant environmental effects of implementation of this proposed EU JTF, which will include statutory public consultation.

4. Programme-specific output or result indicators

Reference: Article 12(1) JTF Regulation

Justification for the necessity of programme-specific output or result indicators based on the types of operations envisaged

Most of the indicators to be used to monitor the progress and results of the Programme are EU JTF common indicators as provided in Annex III of the Regulation.

To fully report on the expected impact of the Programme, it is however necessary to develop programme-specific indicators that are tailored to the operations that the Programme will support. Overall, the Programme will use two programme-specific output indicators and two programme-specific result indicators.

PSO1 and PSR1 (see tables) have been specifically designed to monitor and report on action 1.2 under Priority 1 “Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy”. This action aims at supporting the implementation of local and regional economic strategies that have been or will have been adopted through a bottom-up democratic process involving key local stakeholders. As the strategies will not all be adopted at the time of Programme launch and to account for the fact that will all be somewhat different to cater for local specificities, as none of the existing common indicators were deemed suitable to capture the intended outputs and results of the expected operations. The programme-specific output indicator will therefore capture the number of those identified strategies that have been supported by the Programme and the programme-specific result indicator will monitor the population covered by the strategies implemented through the supported projects and therefore benefitting from those operations that will be aligned with the transition priorities and key local needs.

PSO2 and PSR2 (see tables) have been developed to monitor and report on activities supported as part of Priority 3 “Providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options to enable them to benefit directly from the green transition”. Under this priority, the Programme will support the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points in key locations in the Territory. To report as accurately as possible on these operations, the choice was made to use a programme-specific output indicator which is the exact same as RCO 59 in the list of ERDF indicators. This will enable the Programme to report on the number of EV charging points being installed in the Territory. Regarding results, a programme-specific result indicator will allow reporting on the annual active usage time of the newly installed EV charging points, i.e. the time they are in use. Those two programme-specific indicators are necessary to reflect progress made under this priority using indicators from a complementary programme that will be applied to the specific JTF Territory.

Reference: point (g-k) of Article 11(2) and Article 11(5)