



**PAPER NSMC AGR 2 (09) JC**

**NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**AGRICULTURE SECTORAL FORMAT**

**CAFRE GREENMOUNT**

**21 JULY 2009**

**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ**

1. The eleventh North South Ministerial Council meeting in Agriculture sectoral format was held in CAFRE, Greenmount on Tuesday 21 July 2009. The meeting was attended by Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Edwin Poots, MLA, Minister of the Environment and Brendan Smith, TD, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Minister Gildernew chaired the meeting.
2. At the meeting, Ministers reviewed developments in relation to EU agricultural matters and welcomed the European Commission's actions in addressing the dairy market situation. Ministers also welcomed the recent concessions secured in Brussels in relation to the implementation of sheep electronic identification and emphasised the importance of ongoing cooperation in the matter.

**CO-OPERATION ON ANIMAL HEALTH**

3. Ministers noted progress on activities for the delivery of the draft All-Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy.

4. Ministers welcomed arrangements for a cross-border event in the Autumn which will bring together key stakeholders to discuss the delivery of the Strategy. This event will help build genuine partnerships in the development of policy and will enable stakeholders to discuss a strategic approach and a forward work programme.

## **PLANT HEALTH AND PESTICIDES**

5. Ministers noted that the final report from the Plant Health and Pesticides Steering Group on a joint strategic approach to plant health and pesticides will be presented to a meeting of the North South Ministerial Council in the Autumn.

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

6. Ministers welcomed a presentation from the International Centre for Local and Regional Development on its recent study on rural restructuring which considers the impact and future of rural restructuring policy and practice throughout the island.
7. The Council welcomed the positive impact of co-operation on the 2000-2006 EU Programmes for the cross-border rural economy including the creation of 80 new rural enterprises and assistance to 600 enterprises through the Rural Development measure of INTERREG IIIA.
8. Ministers also welcomed the opening of the Rural Development sub-theme of the EU INTERREG IVA Programme for applications and the approval of a PEACE III project which seeks to address issues of sectarianism and racism in a rural context and the allocation of funding for co-operation projects, including cross border projects, under the LEADER elements of the two Rural Development Programmes 2007-13.

## **NEXT MEETING**

9. The Council agreed that its next meeting in Agriculture sectoral format would take place in November 2009.

**Joint Secretariat**  
**21 July 2009**