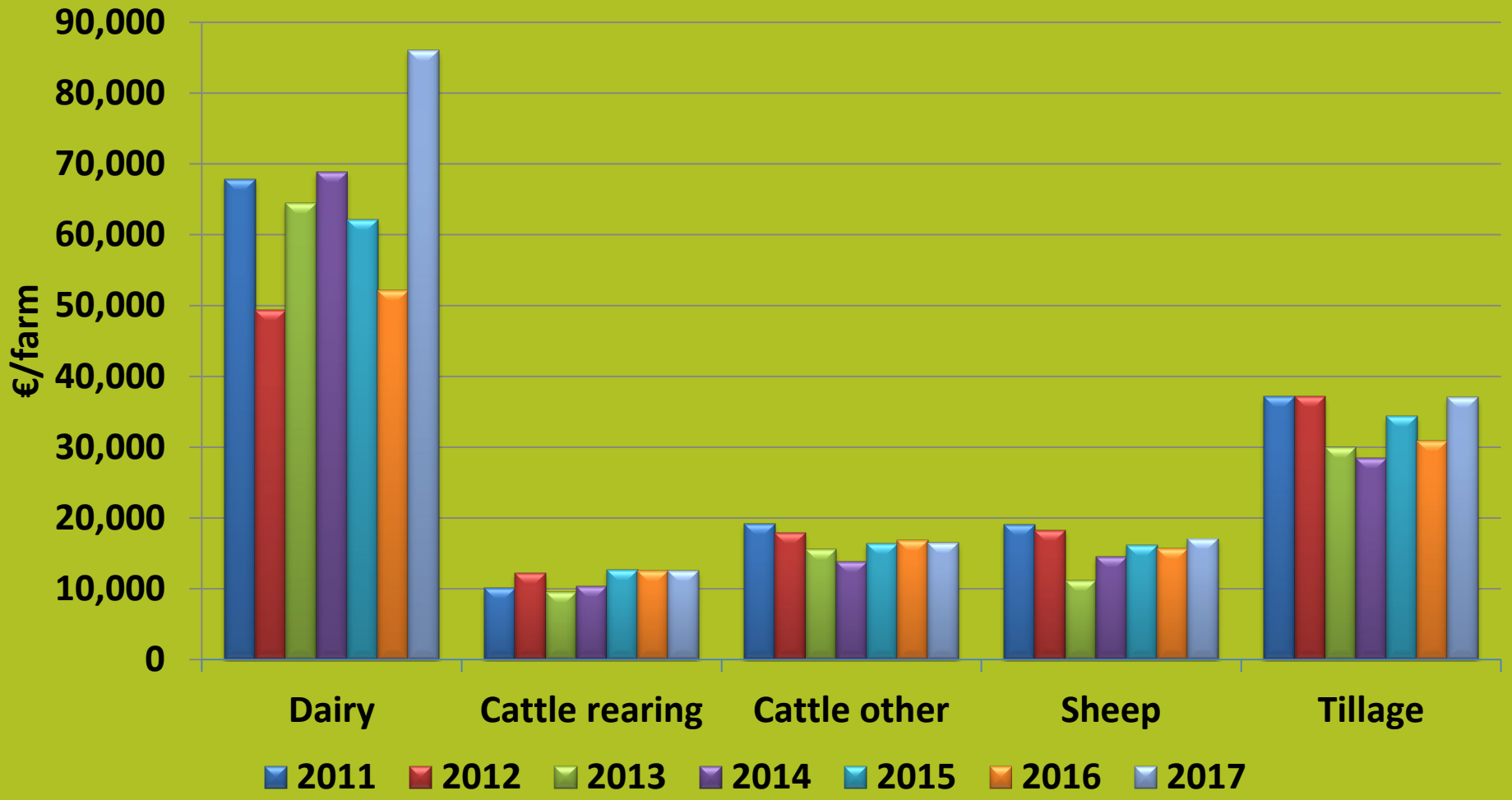


Dairying – the external costs of doing business

Professor Gerry Boyle, Director Teagasc

Presentation to ICOS Annual Conference, Killashee House Hotel, Co. Kildare, November 7th, 2019

Family Farm Income (FFI): includes DPs 2011-2017



* Average of June and December

The external costs

- Environment

- gaseous emissions ...

GHGs and Ammonia ✓

- water quality

- biodiversity

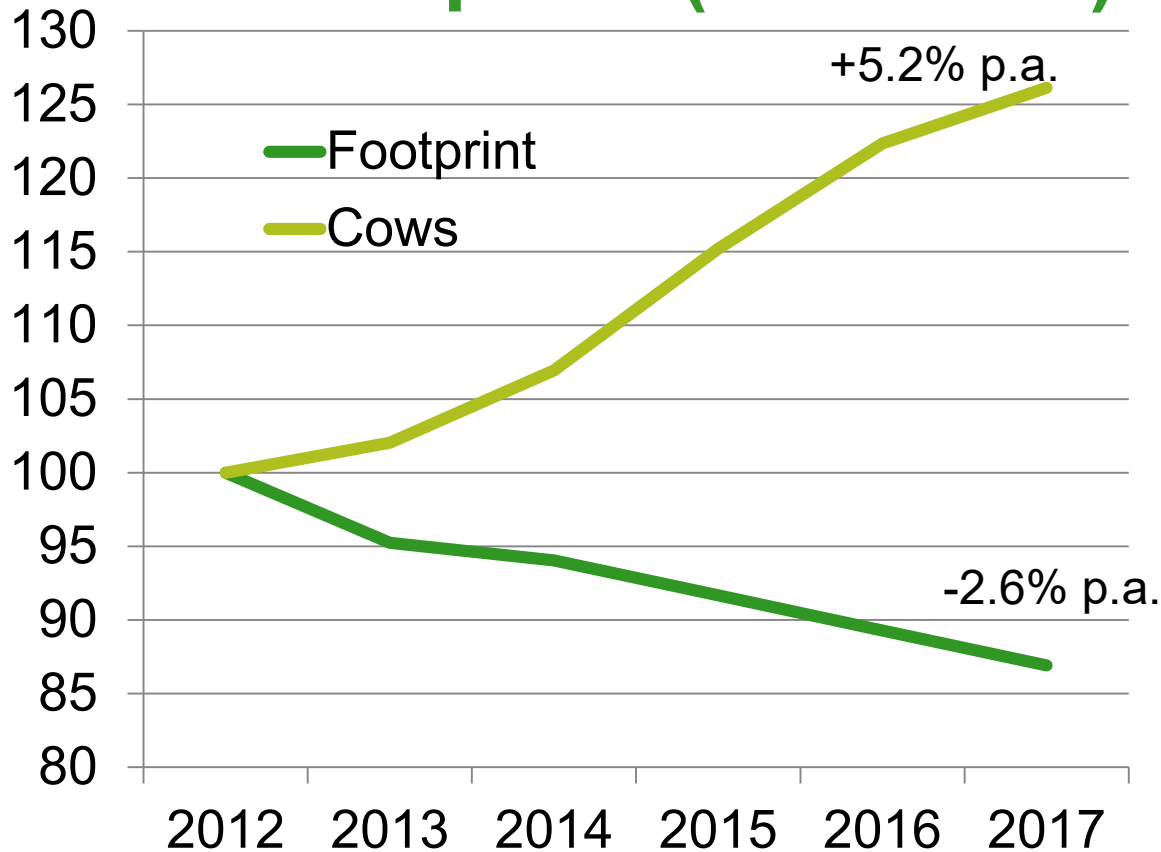
Co-
related
solutions

- Calf welfare

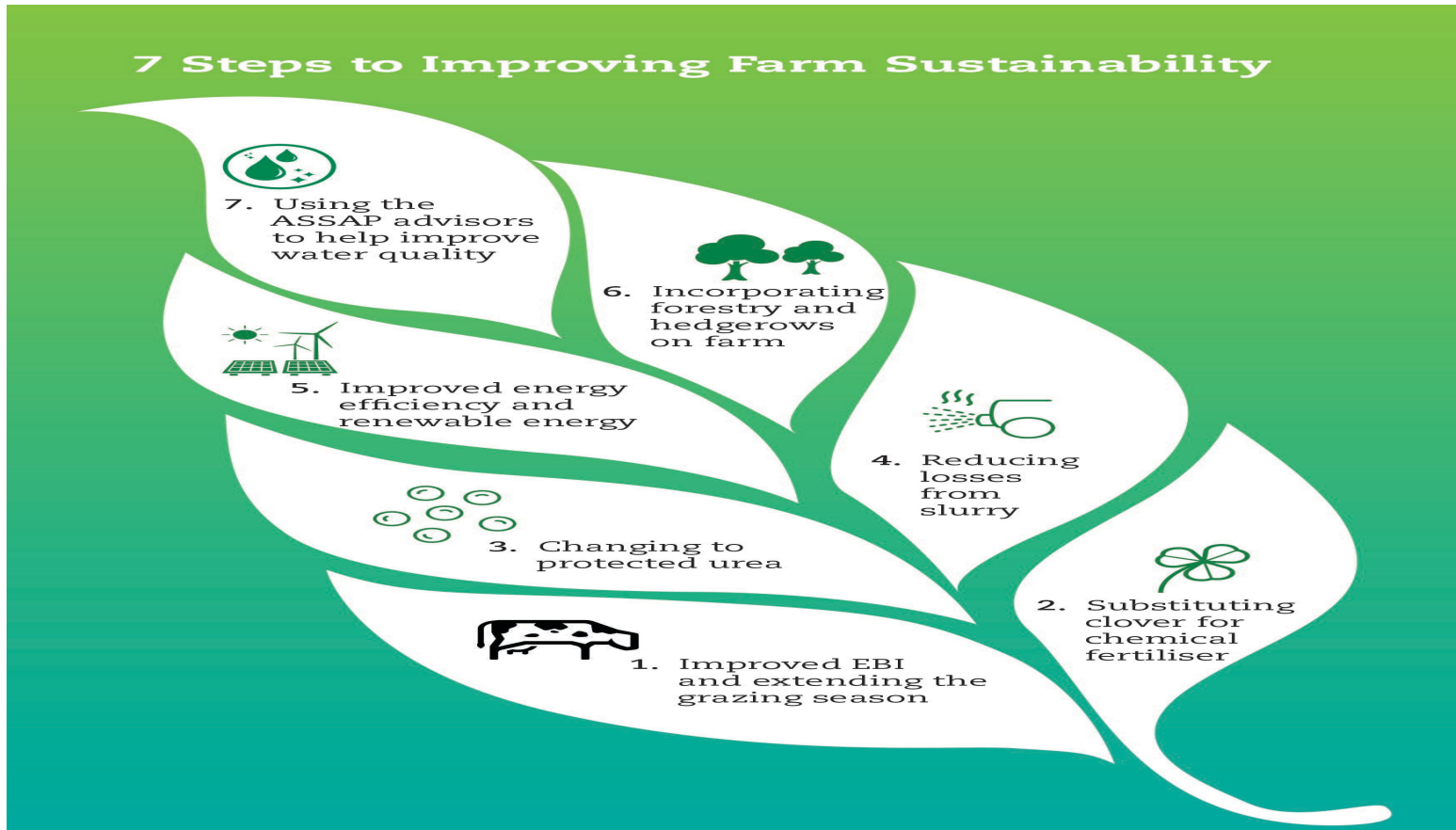
The emissions challenge

- The national emissions target requires a reduction in the absolute level of emissions
- Emissions have to be reduced by 10%-15% by 2030 while holding livestock numbers constant
- Emissions = Numbers x Footprint

But dairy cow numbers growth exceeds the decline in carbon footprint (2012=100)



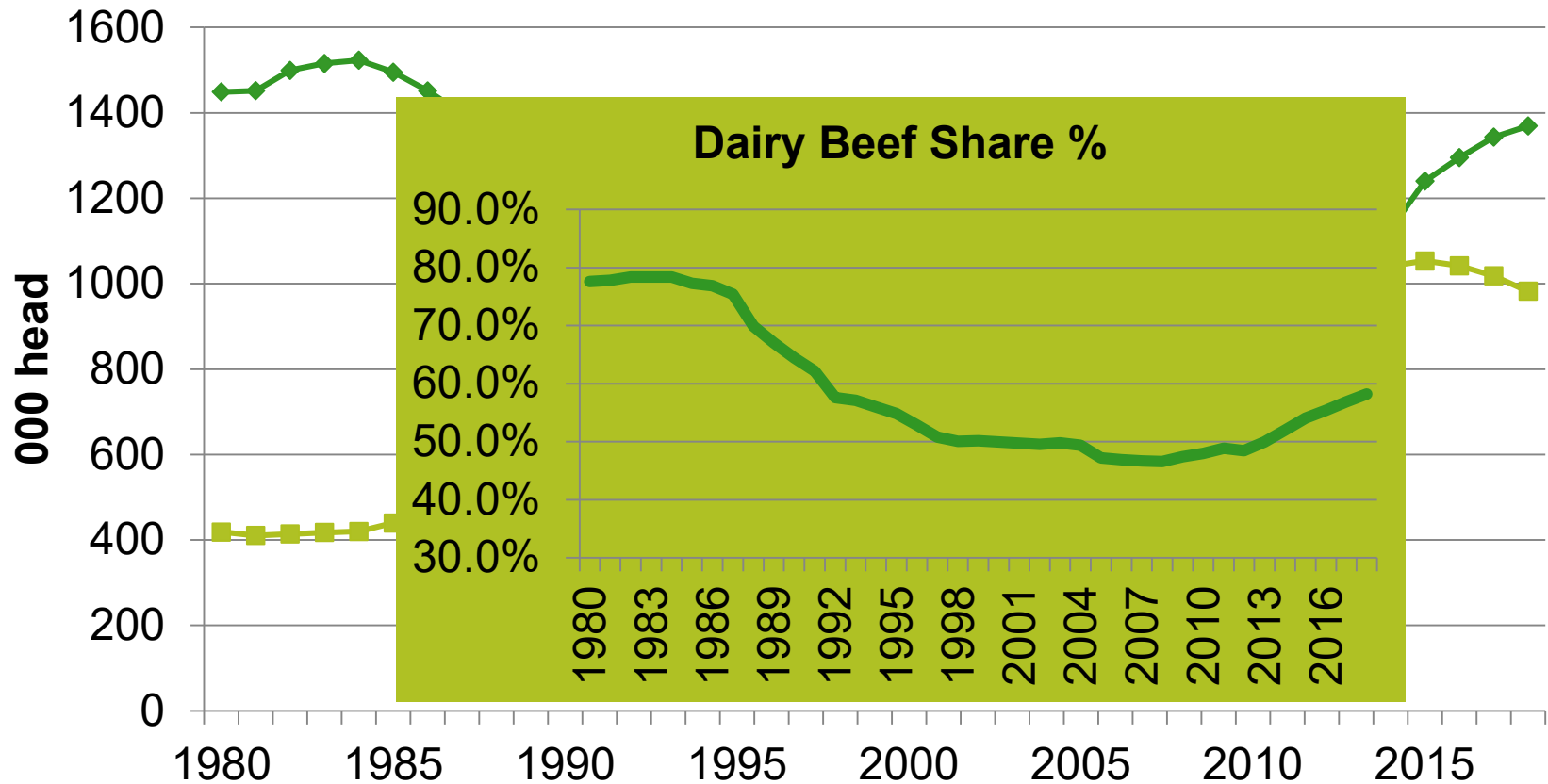
Gaseous emissions – we know what to do – Teagasc MACC



But how to deliver these changes?

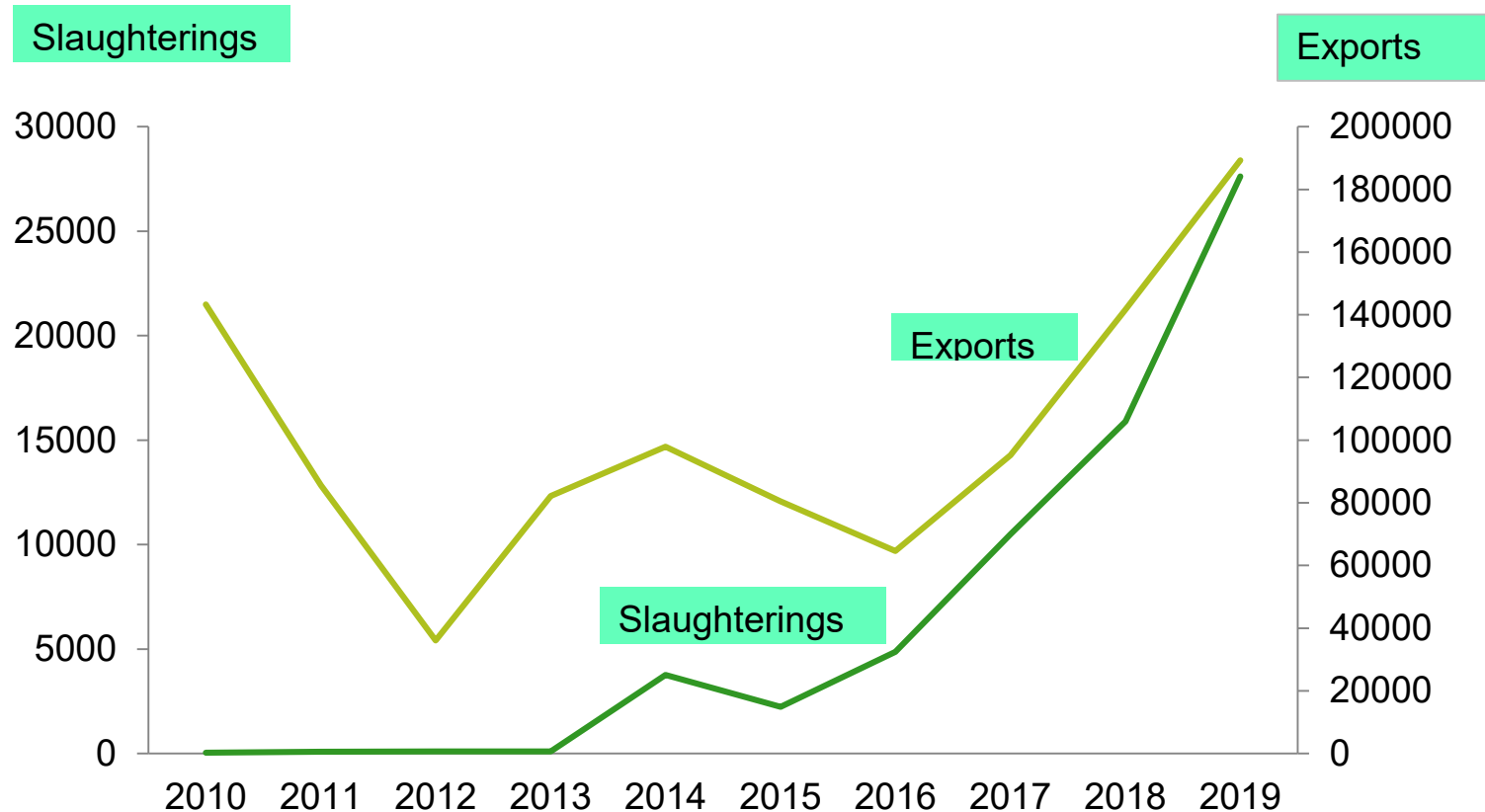
- Transformational change is required and it will cost farmers
- All of industry collaborative response needed... Agencies (Teagasc and Bord Bia); Industry (Dairy and Meat); DAFM
- Teagasc proposes an intensive advisory effort embracing 1) ClimateChange Demo/Signpost Farms (~100) and 2) intensive training programme for farmers, agri-business and consultants
- There is an urgency about delivery

Trends in dairy and beef cows



Source: CSO December Enumeration

Sustainability of current trends in calf disposals?



Calf welfare possible urgent actions

- Working Group to identify actions on calf welfare for next spring
- Brokerage system to facilitate an efficient flow of calves from dairy to rearing farms (role for the marts?)
- Transparently demonstrate calf value based on breed and genetics
- Develop a 'best in class' code of practice for calf rearing on dairy and beef farms focusing on animal health and welfare, nutrition and facilities
- Use sexed semen to reduce the number of dairy breed male calves and establish a sexed-semen laboratory in Ireland
- Implement a new specific KT programme on dairy beef systems, to include calf rearing
- Retain male calves on dairy farms for a minimum of 3-4 weeks (subject to adequate facilities)

Concluding remarks

- There is an urgency about addressing climate change and calf welfare
- In both cases a 'whole of sector response' is needed
- Dairy and beef need to be treated as an integrated circular system
- All dairy farmers must accept that the mitigation of gaseous emissions and enabling a viable dairy calf to beef enterprise are costs of doing business

Thank you