



# National Biodiversity Conference 2022



An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



# ACT NOW *for* NATURE

8th & 9th June — Dublin Castle







An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



### Brought to you by:

The National Parks and Wildlife Service, is an executive agency of the **Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage**. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is the statutory body for nature conservation in Ireland, working to conserve a representative range of Irish ecosystems, to maintain and enhance populations of flora and fauna in Ireland, to designate and advise on the protection of habitats and species identified for nature conservation, to implement national and EU legislation and policies for nature conservation and biodiversity, to manage, maintain and develop State-owned National Parks and Nature Reserves, and to promote awareness of natural heritage and biodiversity issues.

### Event organisers:

**Natural Capital Ireland** is a not-for profit organisation leading the conversation on the sustainability of Ireland's natural capital. Membership is free to all and comprises a range of organisations and individuals from public and private sector organisations, NGOs, academia and civil society groups interested in the development and application of the natural capital approach in Ireland. We are structured as a non-profit Company Limited by Guarantee, governed by a Board, led by a Steering Committee and administered by a Secretariat.

### Supported by:



An Roinn Comhshaoil,  
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide  
Department of the Environment,  
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**OPW** Oifig na  
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An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
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Food and the Marine



**Roinn an Taoisigh**  
Department of the Taoiseach



[www.biodiversityconference.ie](http://www.biodiversityconference.ie)



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# WELCOME MESSAGE



Minister Noonan

It was a privilege to be a part of the National Biodiversity Conference and meet the hundreds of people across society who came to talk, listen, learn and contribute to our common goal of drafting an ambitious National Biodiversity Action Plan.

Throughout the many sessions the same words played out over and over again: engagement, collaboration, co-operation and integration. This is a community that wants to work together, make a difference and have their voices heard.





At the conference I committed to a number of strategically important biodiversity projects and initiatives, including an additional €17m to support breeding waders and their habitats in the wider countryside and three sets of €100,000 per year for the next five years to support some exceptionally valuable initiatives that work with our teams across critical areas in research, engagement and policy:

- The first is the **Farming for Nature Project** to support its development and outreach. This work involves engaging with farmers, enabling knowledge-sharing and delivering peer learning to support biodiversity conservation in agricultural landscapes. We know that farmers are at the heart of the solution to the biodiversity emergency. This investment will support the development of these approaches among the wider agricultural community.
- The second is the **National Biodiversity Forum** to expand its role to do more in the area of science-policy. This will support effective evidence-based action, as well as stakeholder consultation work across the wider sector.

- The third is the **All-Ireland Climate and Biodiversity Research Network**. This network has the potential to design and synergise research that supports the kind of integrated climate and biodiversity policy measures that we need to see to deliver real change. Increasing funding for the secretariat will enable programme extension across Northern Ireland and help to build connections across Europe.

Further to this, I committed €300,000 over three years to support the monitoring stream of **BiodivERsA**, which is the European biodiversity partnership supporting excellent research on biodiversity, with an impact for society and policy and also €500,000 over five years for Community Foundation Ireland's **Environment and Nature Fund**.

Much has happened over the last 12 months: the Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted at COP15 in Montreal, the Nature Restoration Regulation has exponentially increased focus on biodiversity across the EU and at home the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss have published their recommendations. We are folding these ambitions into the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan and we will continue to advocate for nature.

Lastly, I would like to extend my gratitude to all the speakers, supporters and the organisers from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Natural Capital Ireland for their dedication and commitment to delivering what was a fantastic conference, the outputs of which will be felt for many years to come.



## Malcolm Noonan

Minister of State for Housing  
and Electoral Reform

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**“Lastly, I would like to extend my gratitude to all the speakers, supporters and the organisers from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Natural Capital Ireland for their dedication and commitment to delivering what was a fantastic conference, the outputs of which will be felt for many years to come.”**

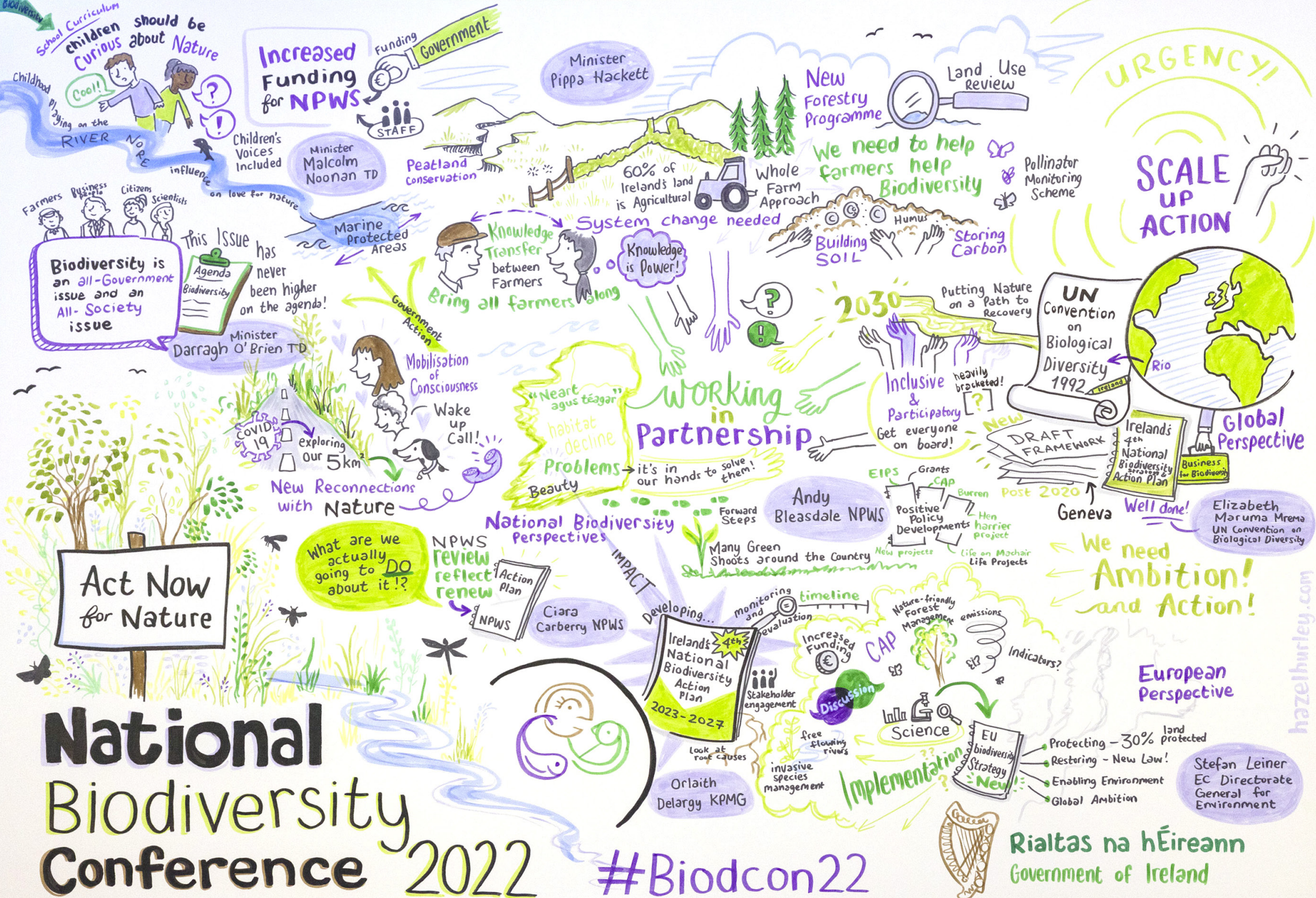




# National Biodiversity Conference

#Biodcon22

Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland





# Conference overview

## Introduction/Overview of Conference themes



Ireland's second National Biodiversity Conference was held in Dublin Castle, Dublin, on Wednesday and Thursday the 8th and 9th June 2022. More than 690 people attended in person and online across the two days, including people from public and private sector organisations, non-governmental organisations, academia, voluntary groups and individuals. The conference was held as an important part of the public awareness and consultation process on Ireland's fourth National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP), providing a platform for a diversity of voices to come together to discuss challenges, explore solutions and establish ways to collaborate more effectively on implementing the country's headline nature conservation policies.



The first National Biodiversity Conference in February 2019 aimed to increase awareness of the ongoing loss of biodiversity in Ireland and internationally, and to highlight the threats which this poses to our economy and communities. The conference brought together a broad cross-section of society, from academics and decision makers to businesses interests and local communities, to discuss the best solutions to the challenge. It also served as a showcase for many of the important nature conservation projects being carried out by local communities, businesses, non-governmental organisations and government agencies around the country.

In May 2019, the Dáil formally recognised a climate and biodiversity emergency in Ireland, highlighting the need for a more concerted and co-ordinated national effort to address the issue and avoid the potentially devastating impacts which biodiversity loss threatens for Irish society.





In October 2021, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) began work on Ireland's fourth National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP), following on from the third plan which was in place for the period from 2017 to 2022. Support for the development, consultation and communication aspects of the NBAP development is being provided by a consortium of experts led by KPMG in Dublin. Noting the evidence that the biodiversity crisis has continued to intensify, it's increasing connection with the impacts of climate change, and the failure of previous efforts to effectively halt the crisis, the fourth NBAP aims to establish a new framework for the conservation of biodiversity which more effectively involves all sectors of government and society, tackles the most urgent threats facing Ireland's ecosystems, habitats and species, and works to specifically address and strengthen the essential contributions which a healthy natural environment makes to human well-being in Ireland.

Increased political and policy focus on biodiversity conservation, linked to discussions on the forthcoming EU Nature Restoration Law and the build-up to negotiations for a Global Biodiversity Framework (at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, CBD COP15, Montreal, December 2022) have placed further emphasis on the intimate connections between nature and people.





Demonstrating the aims of a whole-of-government approach to the NBAP, the conference was led by several government departments and state agencies which will have greatest responsibilities for implementing actions under the NBAP. The various conference sessions dealt with some of the main NBAP themes – fostering a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to the biodiversity crisis, strengthening partnerships for nature, addressing urgent conservation needs, and the importance of addressing biodiversity loss and climate change in a co-ordinated manner – and related these themes to key sectors of society and the economy, including academia, culture and heritage, agriculture, forestry, business and enterprise, and the marine environment.

The kinds of transformative social, scientific and policy initiatives required to realise the vision of a combined national effort to safeguard our natural heritage will depend on improved communication and co-operation between all sectors of society. Therefore, the Conference also promoted an additional theme of strengthening and fostering partnerships, exploring how communities, businesses, civil society organisations, local authorities and state agencies could work better together to ensure Ireland's biodiversity is conserved for future generations.





# Conference programme

The opening plenary session on Wednesday 8th June presented a series of national, regional and global perspectives in the biodiversity crisis, placing the fourth NBAP in the context of Ireland's obligations under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, European Union biodiversity policy and legislation, and recent reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

A series of 1.5-hour parallel sessions then explored various sectoral perspectives on the NBAP and the biodiversity crisis. These covered issues in the marine sector, forestry, agriculture, data science, and the role of formal gardens, aquaria and zoos, with an additional session on the importance of a whole-island approach to biodiversity conservation in Ireland. In order to ensure that each parallel session could contribute meaningfully to the overarching conference agenda of informing development of the next NBAP, the sessions set out to explore a common set of key questions, framed in the context of the individual session themes:

1. What are the key actions required of various sectors to ensure a positive outcome is delivered for biodiversity?
2. How can each sector best support the delivery of those actions?
3. What opportunities exist for developing/strengthening cross-sectoral partnerships for biodiversity?





A discussion panel was also held in plenary on the afternoon of Day 1 to discuss the role of the media in helping to address the biodiversity emergency and engaging a broader public audience on the issues. After the close of proceedings for day 1, conference attendees were invited to a reception hosted by Dublin Zoo, who provided a tour of the zoo with talks from zoo staff.

On the morning of Day 2, before the commencement of conference proceedings a team from KPMG held a breakfast workshop where conference attendees could learn more about the draft NBAP and provide their own perspectives on key issues. Conference proceedings were then opened with a keynote speech by Taoiseach Micheál Martin, who reinforced the message of shared responsibility for the biodiversity emergency and its solutions.

Parallel session resumed during the rest of the morning. These included consideration of novel mechanisms for financing the restoration of biodiversity, links between biodiversity, culture and human well-being, the important work of community-led initiatives, conservation issues in freshwater ecosystems, the role of the planning system in accounting for biodiversity, and increasing engagement on biodiversity in education and business.



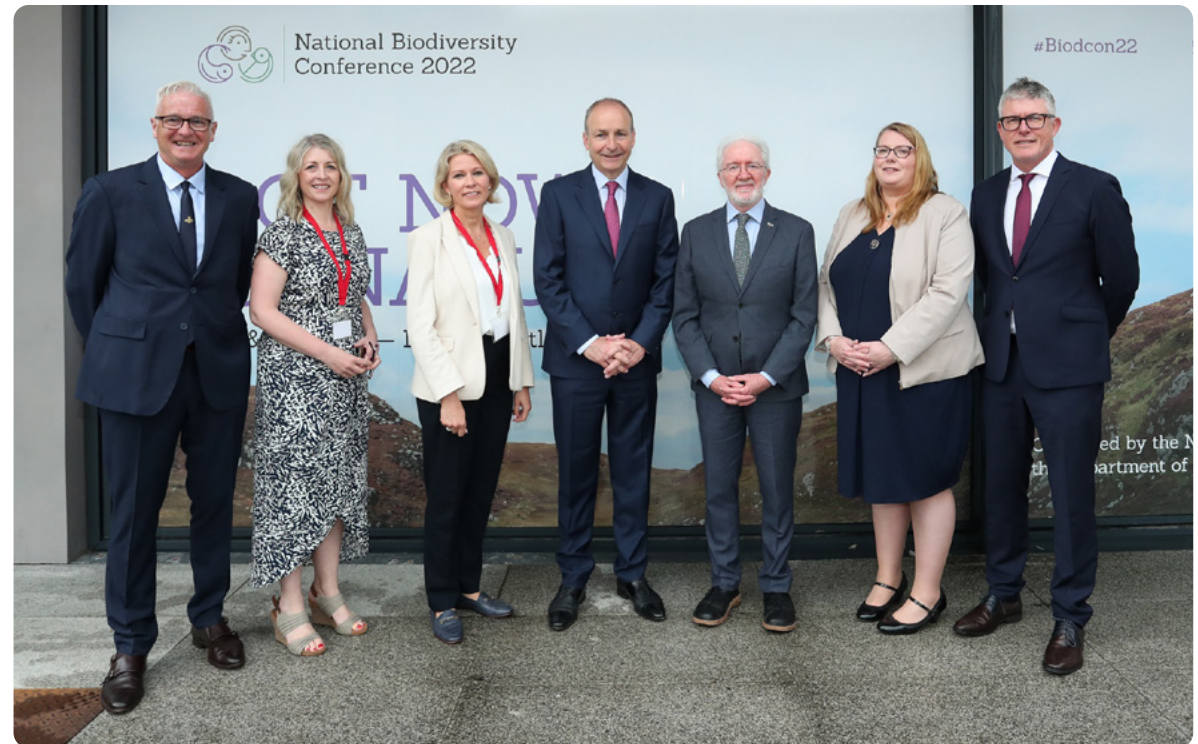
The afternoon plenary session started with a second panel discussion, on the role of the environmental NGO sector and other civil society organisations in addressing the biodiversity emergency and helping to ensure effective implementation of conservation measures. This included perspectives from civil society organisations working in nature conservation, education/youth, and poverty/international development.

The conference closed with a presentation from the National Biodiversity Forum, providing perspectives on the conference sessions and on the core issues to be addressed by Ireland's fourth NBAP.



# Key messages

- The type of transformative change required to address the biodiversity crisis in Ireland requires a strong focus on a whole-of-government approach, with every state and semi-state agency and local authority required to take action to understand and address their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity. The responsibility for ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of Ireland's biodiversity must be spread across all areas of government. This should be supported by legislation which sets out minimum actions required of all relevant local, regional and national government offices to address and report upon their role in halting the biodiversity crisis.
- The issue of biodiversity is also a whole-of-society concern, and all individuals, communities, civil society organisations and businesses must be aware of how their well-being and the prosperity of Irish society are supported by biodiversity conservation and threatened by biodiversity loss. This requires greater focus in formal and informal education on the state of Ireland's biodiversity and the importance of nature's contribution to people.



- Building on the Seeds for Nature and lessons learned from the great number of local community-based initiatives for nature conservation across the island of Ireland, new community projects and partnerships for nature should be encouraged, supported and sustained to ensure that every citizen and all urban, sub-urban and rural communities have the tools and guidance required to minimise their own/household ecological footprints and act for nature conservation in their local area.
- The private sector has a particularly important role to play in addressing the impacts and dependencies of the Irish businesses and the nation's broader economic activities on biodiversity. Businesses should be encouraged and supported, including through the provision of training and guidance, to move from limited focus on site-based actions for wildlife to understand and respond to the ways in which their value chains interact with biodiversity, ecosystem services and natural capital, at home and overseas.
- The urgent need for a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach requires a new and broad-based social compact for biodiversity based on forging meaningful and effective partnerships for nature. City and county councils and other local government offices can play a key role in bringing government, communities and businesses together to address local biodiversity issues in an effective and transparent manner.







- Creating meaningful partnerships for nature will require strengthening co-operation and tackling the sources of conflict which may arise between, e.g., landowners, land users, conservation needs and private sector interests. Barriers to effective partnerships should be identified and addressed through enhanced open dialogue with and between stakeholders, highlighting areas of common concern e.g., established through natural capital and ecosystem service-based approaches.
- In particular, the relationship between Ireland's food sector and the biodiversity crisis must be tackled more effectively, with all actors from individual farmers and fishers to multi-national corporations, as well as interconnected sectors including heritage, tourism, public health and enterprise development engaged in developing and delivering a nature-positive food system in support of national biodiversity policies and priorities. This includes addressing perverse subsidies and replacing them with incentives for food production that addresses issues in food and nutrition security whilst delivering positive outcomes for nature.
- The valuation of land in Ireland has for too long been based only on its production capacity or development potential. There is a need for a new and more holistic approach to land-use planning and development which recognises the wider social, environmental, cultural and economic importance of biodiversity and which places the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem services on a par with other objectives of strategic forward planning at local, regional and national levels. This could include zoning designations for biodiversity, ecosystems services and natural capital in order to more effectively halt biodiversity loss, identify priority areas for protection and restoration, and enhance nature's contribution to people through local planning processes.
- The development/enhancement of partnerships for nature must be carried out on an all-island basis in order to effectively address the trans-national and transboundary aspects of the use, conservation and restoration of biodiversity and the benefits it provides. Experiences from the Shared-island Initiative and the all-island work of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) have demonstrated the value of cross-community-based approaches to conservation, and also highlighted the need to strengthen collaborative efforts on ongoing initiatives such as the all-island invasive species and pollinator plans.



- The development and implementation of biodiversity policies must acknowledge and account for the diversity of perspectives and experiences within and between communities throughout the country. This includes ensuring that efforts towards education, awareness raising, training and incentives for biodiversity address the various needs of all stakeholder and wider elements of Irish society, whilst accounting for the opinions and preferences of those who are most marginalised, disadvantaged, and vulnerable; the most vulnerable members of society may be most impacted by the loss of ecosystems services that are essential to human well-being, and may benefit most from the social, cultural and economic benefits of nature restoration.
- Efforts to address climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to conserve and restore Ireland's biodiversity, should be more completely integrated at all stages of the policy cycle. Whilst trade-offs and compromises will often need to be considered between actions aimed at addressing climate change and biodiversity loss, integrated planning and assessment of measures and their impacts is essential. With growing evidence that biodiversity loss can exacerbate climate change-related social and economic risks, and that the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of biodiversity can significantly enhance climate change measures, it is clear that biodiversity conservation and restoration should be placed at the heart of climate action.
- The effectiveness and durability of a whole-of-government, whole-of society approach to biodiversity will largely be dependent upon the degree of resourcing provided by central government, the strength of supporting legislation, and the degree to which the policy process engages all sectors of society. Transparency in how policies are prioritised, developed and implemented will be important to ensure ongoing buy-in from all stakeholders. The important role of the Irish public, and Ireland's youth in particular, in shaping biodiversity policy and leading on action for nature should also be strengthened.





# Conference itinerary

Day 1 – Wednesday 8th June

Day 2 – Thursday 9th June





# Conference itinerary

Wednesday 8th June 2022

## Opening Plenary Session

- 09:15 – 09:20 Welcome address – Niall Ó Donnchú, Director General NPWS
- 09:20 – 09:30 Darragh O'Brien, TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- 09:30 – 09:45 Malcolm Noonan, TD, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform
- 09:45 – 10:00 Senator Pippa Hackett, Minister of State for Land Use and Biodiversity
- 10:00 – 10:15 Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity
- 10:15 – 10:35 Stefan Leiner, Head of Biodiversity Unit, European Commission Directorate General for Environment
- 10:35 – 11:30 Break and networking
- 11:30 – 11:50 Andy Bleasdale, NPWS – National Biodiversity Perspectives
- 11:50 – 12:10 Ciara Carberry, NPWS – Review, Reflect, and Renew: Transforming the NPWS
- 12:10 – 12:30 Aoife Doyle & Orlaith Delargy, KPMG – Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan
- 12:30 – 13:30 Break

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## Wednesday 8th June 2022

### *Parallel Sessions Group 1*

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13:30 – 15:00



#### 1. Changing Oceans: Working together to protect and restore our marine and coastal environment

**Chair:** Richard Cronin, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

**Speakers:** Tasman Crowe, University College Dublin; Grainne Ni Chongaile, Caomhnu Arann;  
Ditte Mandøe Andreasen, Taenketanken Hav; Seamus Bonner, Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation;  
Dominic Pattinson, OSPAR



#### 2. Food, Forests and the Future 1: The role of forestry in driving nature recovery

**Chair:** Barry Delaney, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

**Speakers:** Kevin Collins, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; David Fallon, Irish Water; Tadhg MacIntyre, Maynooth University;  
Ciaran Fallon, Coillte; Fergus Moore, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine



#### 3. Building Partnerships for People and Nature – The Shared Island Initiative

**Chairs:** Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer, Monaghan Co. Co.; Lisa-Dee Collery, Department of the Taoiseach's Shared Island Initiative

**Panellists:** Jeanne Moore, National Economic and Social Council; Collette O'Flynn, National Biodiversity Data Centre;  
Derek McLoughlin, Wild Atlantic Nature;  
Sara McGuckin, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs – Northern Ireland

15:00 – 15:30

Break and networking

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Wednesday 8th June 2022

*Parallel Sessions Group 2*

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15:30 – 17:00



#### 4. Actions for Nature – NPWS partnerships and initiatives

**Chair:** Ciara Carberry, NPWS

**Speakers:** John Carey, Corncrake LIFE; Susan Callaghan, NPWS; Michael Davoren, The Burren Programme



#### 5. Food, Forests and the Future 2: The role of agriculture in driving nature recovery

**Chair:** Ted Massey, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

**Speakers:** Pamela Boyle, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Daire O'hUallachain, Teagasc;  
Douglas McMilan, Green Restoration Ireland Co-op;  
Patricia Deane, South Kerry Development Partnership



#### 6. Enhancing the Evidence base : Research and Data4Nature

**Chairs:** Jane Stout (Trinity College Dublin) and Catherine Farrell (LIFE on Machair)

**Speakers:** Liam Lysaght, National Biodiversity Data Centre; Aoife Delaney, NPWS; John Connolly, Trinity College Dublin;  
Lisa Coleman, University College Dublin; Maeve Henchion, Teagasc; Danny Norton, University of Limerick;  
Alice Wemaere, Environmental Protection Agency



#### 7. Places for People and Planet: The role of Zoos, Gardens and Aquaria in supporting the NBAP

**Chair:** Andrew Mooney, Dublin Zoo

**Speakers:** Christoph Schwitzer, Dublin Zoo; Kira Mileham, IUCN Species Survival Commission;  
Andrea Dempsey, West African Primate Conservation Action; Sean McKeown, Fota Wildlife Park; John Lusby, Birdwatch Ireland;  
Matthew Jebb, National Botanic Gardens, Dublin



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## Wednesday 8th June 2022

### *Plenary*

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17:00 – 17:10

**Ana Maria Hernandez Salgar**, Chair of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services



17:10 – 18:00

**Panel discussion: The Biodiversity Emergency and the Media**

**Chair:** Cara Augustenborg, University College Dublin

**Panellists:** Jane Stout, Trinity College Dublin; Marcus Stewart, EcoEye;  
Philip Boucher-Hayes, RTE

18:00 – 18:30

Refreshments and networking

18:30

Field excursion to Dublin Zoo



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Thursday 9th June 2022

*Plenary*

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08:00 – 08:45 NBAP Breakfast Clinic  
Facilitated by KPMG, NPWS, and Natural Capital Ireland



09:00 – 09:15 **Keynote Speech**  
Taoiseach Micheál Martin, TD

09:15 – 09:40 Networking



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## Thursday 9th June 2022

### *Parallel Sessions Group 3*

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09:40 – 11:10



#### **8. Financing Restoration: The role of blended finance in catalysing restoration and investment**

**Chair:** Shane McGuinness, University College Dublin

**Speakers:** Paul Chatterton, Landscape Finance Lab; Renee Kervliet-Hermand, IUCN; Suzanne Nally, NPWS; Adam Gibbon, AXA-IM



#### **9. Communities in Action: Villages, towns, farms, townlands**

**Chair:** Tina Roche, The Community Foundation for Ireland

**Speakers:** Faith Wilson, Ecological Consultant; Fiona McGowan, Ecologist/Community Wetlands Advisor; Chris Uys, Abbeyleix Bog Project; Brigid Barry, Farming For Nature



#### **10. Connecting National Priorities 1: Biodiversity, Culture and Social Well-being**

**Chair:** Lorcan Scott, Wildlife Officer, The Heritage Council

**Speakers:** Paddy Woodworth, Sanctuary in Nature and Heritage; Brendan Dunford, Burren Life; Helen Riddell, Bere Island Conservation; Brian Dunne, Wicklow Uplands Council; Aoibhinn Ni Shuilleabhain, University College Dublin; Caitriona Carlin, National University of Ireland, Galway



#### **11. Connecting National Priorities 2: Climate Action and Biodiversity**

**Chair:** Gerry Clabby, Department of Environment and Climate Change

**Speakers:** Eamon Haughey, Atlantic Technological University; Grace Cotter, University College Dublin; Maryann Harris, Dublin City Council; Shirley Clerkin, Monaghan County Council; Aileen O'Sullivan, Coillte



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## Thursday 9th June 2022

### Parallel Sessions Group 4

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11:40 – 13:10

→ **12. Water from Mountains to Coasts: Promoting recovery in freshwater and water-dependent ecosystems**

**Chair:** Colin Byrne, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

**Speakers:** Margaret Keegan, Local Authority Waters Programme;  
Cormac McConigley, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Ciara O'Leary, Fisheries Ireland;  
Trish Murphy, Inishowen Rivers Trust; Adrian Conway, Local Authority Waters Programme

→ **13. Connecting National Priorities 3: Biodiversity and the Planning System**

**Chair:** Enda Mullen, NPWS

**Speakers:** Maeve Flynn, An Bord Pleanála; Henk van der Kamp, Planning consultant;  
Claragh Mulhern, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Aebhín Cawley;  
Annette Lynch, NPWS

→ **14. Education & Outreach – Inspiring Public Engagement**

**Chair:** Ella McSweeney

**Speakers:** Virginia Teehan, The Heritage Council; Melinda Lyons, Technical University, Dublin; Liam Lysaght, National Biodiversity Data Centre

**Panellists:** Nuala Madigan, Irish Peatland Conservation Council; Maura Kiely, Leave No Trace Ireland; Congella Maguire, Clare County Council;  
Lorraine Bull, Biodiversity Officer, Dublin City

→ **15. Business for Biodiversity: Driving nature-positive business models**

**Chair:** Lucy Gaffney, Ireland's Business for Biodiversity Platform

**Speakers:** Conor Kretsch, Natural Capital Ireland; Cillian McMahon, Business in the Community, Ireland; Maighread Cremin, Musgraves;  
Jean Kennedy, Devenish Foods; Keith Scanlon; Mark McCorry, Bord na Mona; Maeve O'Reilly, Gas Networks Ireland;  
Hedda Dick, Coillte Nature

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Thursday 9th June 2022

*Closing Plenary*

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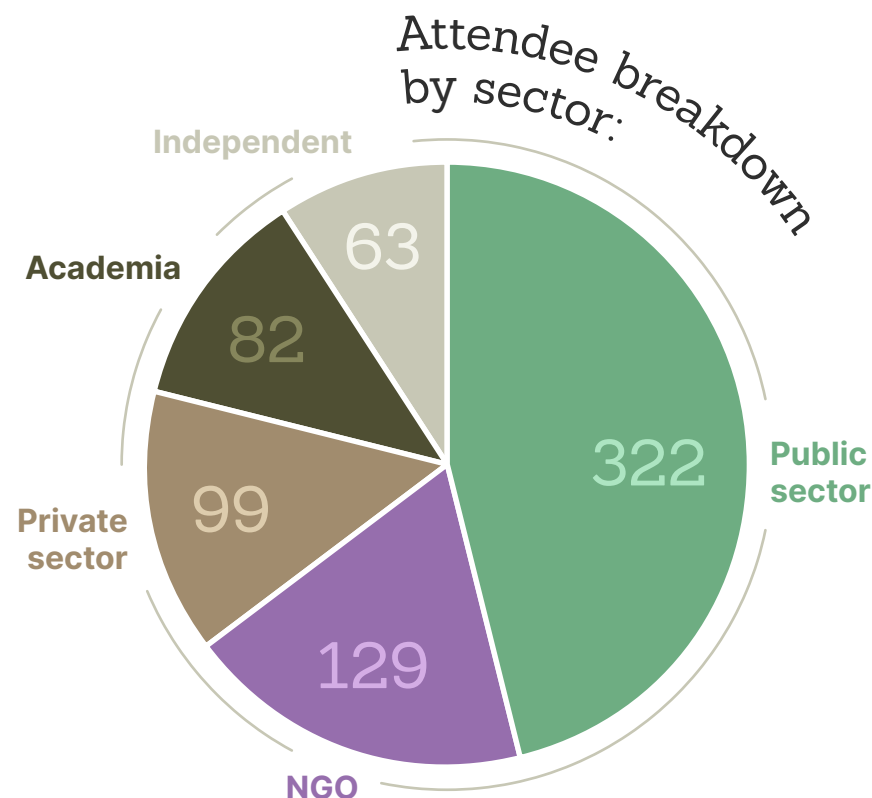
- 14:10 – 15:00 **Panel discussion: Voices for Nature – the role of Civil Society Organisations**
- Chair:** Karen Ciesielski, Irish Environment Network
- Panellists:** Pádraic Fogarty, Irish Wildlife Trust; Oonagh Duggan, Birdwatch Ireland; Sadhbh O'Neill, Dublin City University; Donal Griffin, Fair Seas Campaign; Michael McCarthy Flynn, Oxfam Ireland; Anabel O'Hora, ECO-UNESCO
- 15:00 – 15:45 **National Biodiversity Forum: Wrap up, Feedback from sessions, and NBF perspectives**
- Chair:** Tasman Crowe, University College Dublin and Chair of the National Biodiversity Forum
- 15:45 – 16:00 **Closing remarks from NPWS**
- 16:00 – 16:45 Networking
- 16:45 Close



# Attendance

Total attendees registered:

**692** of which **243** were for online attendance only



Gender break-down:

Female attendees 397

Male attendees 274

Other 4  
Not stated 20





# Impact

## Communication stats



### Conference website

[www.biodiversityconference.ie](http://www.biodiversityconference.ie)

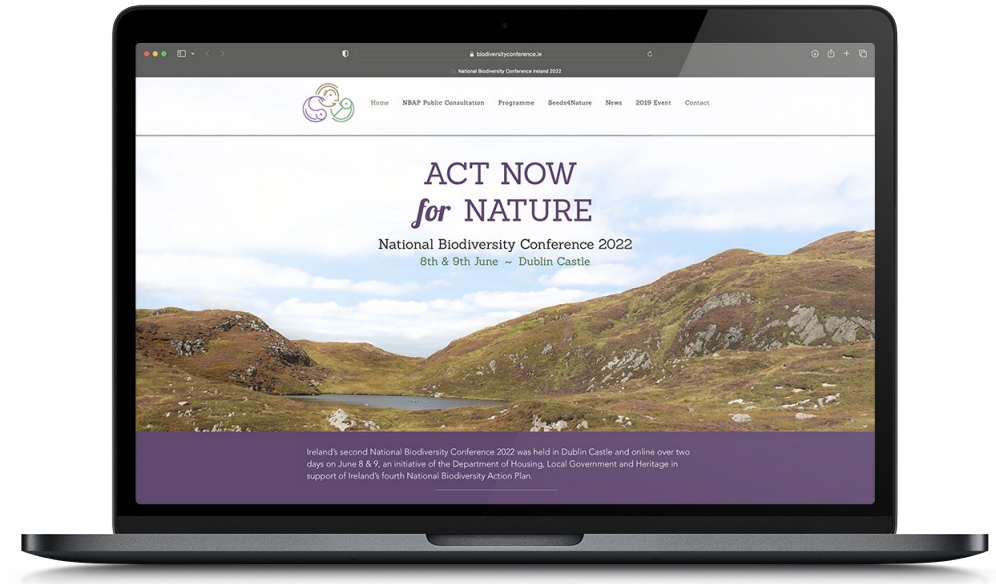
- 390+ Newsletter subscribers through the website
- 10,000+ site sessions since the site launch in April 2022
- Launch Day: April 11, 2022 400+ visitors
- Conference Days (June 8th, 9th) 1,600+ visitors



### Twitter

@BiodCon\_ie

- Followers: 2,328 (up 250+ since April relaunch)
- Twitter stats for month of June (conference month):  
Tweet impressions: 58.4k (up 140.3% on previous month)  
Profile visits: 24.7k (up 260.2%)



- Mentions: 466 (up 747.3%)
- Top Conference Tweet: Earned 5,312 Impressions
- #Biodcon22 hashtag trended on Twitter by lunchtime on Day 1 of the conference



## Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/biodiversityconferenceireland>

- **1,500+** followers (**up 200+ since page relaunch in April**),  
5K people reached May–June.



## Instagram

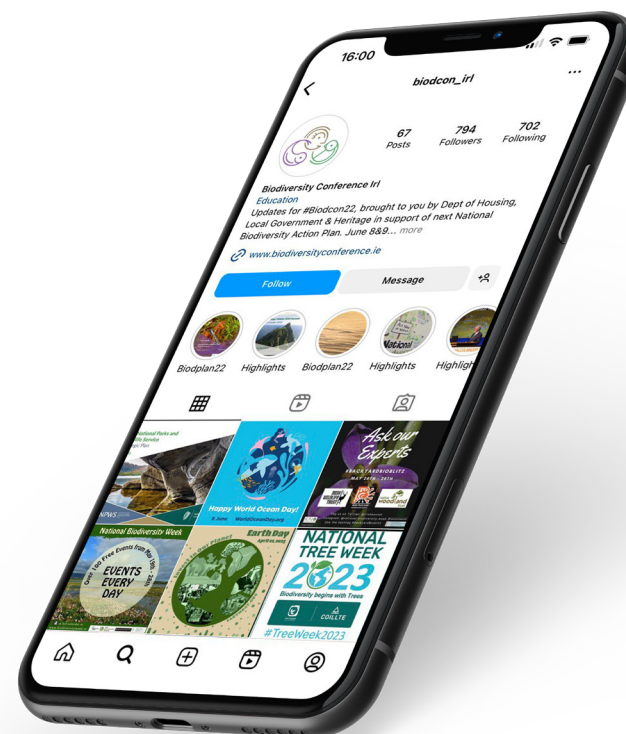
[https://www.instagram.com/biodcon\\_irl](https://www.instagram.com/biodcon_irl)

- Account newly launched in March 2022 to build followers,  
began posting early April – **gained 400 followers to date**
- Top post – Malcolm Noonan video received **137 views**
- Conference posts averaged **10–20 likes each**



## LinkedIn

- Conference-related posts on Natural Capital Ireland  
LinkedIn and Business For Biodiversity Social Media Channels  
over peak days between June 7th–11th 2022 saw a  
**50% boost in average numbers  
of new followers gained:**






- NCI LinkedIn – **1,224 total followers**  
**(105 New followers in the month of June,  
peaking two days after the Conference, June 10th–11th)**
- Business For Biodiversity **223 followers**  
**(gained 100 in conference month)**, 200% more page views  
on post-launch conference days (June 10th–11th)

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## Media prior to Conference

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### Irish Times

-  Citizens' Assemblies on biodiversity and Dublin mayor launch with joint event
-  Plans to transform parks and wildlife service to go to Cabinet 'within weeks'
-  Another Life: Remaking our 'neglected garden' of nature conservation Michael Viney: Welcome reform of the National Parks and Wildlife Service takes shape



### RTE Radio 1

-  Mooney Goes Wild Sunday 6 June 2021


### Irish Examiner

-  National Biodiversity Conference to take place this week to determine action plan


### Independent

-  National conference to address urgent issue of biodiversity loss
-  How continuous cover forestry can allow timber harvesting and maintain forest cover | Independent.ie


### Government PR

-  Government announces National Biodiversity Conference to take place June 8–9

### Afloat

-  Fishers, Scientists, Environmentalists Urged to Participate in National Biodiversity Conference

### Construction Ireland

-  International Experts Prepare For National Biodiversity Conference



## Media during and post Conference

### Independent

- 🔗 'New era' needed to protect biodiversity across island of Ireland – Taoiseach
- 🔗 Taoiseach vows to make amends for years of neglect of nature and those who campaigned for the environment
- 🔗 Ireland not ready for EU demands to 'bring back nature', minister warns
- 🔗 Just six new biodiversity officer posts to be created despite warning that nature is in dire decline and last chance to save it is slipping away
- 🔗 Just one ecologist on planning board to influence key zoning decisions

### Belfast Telegraph

- 🔗 'New era' needed to protect biodiversity across island of Ireland – Taoiseach

### Irish Examiner

- 🔗 Climate campaigners accuse Government of not protecting Irish biodiversity
- 🔗 Ireland 'embarrassingly bad' after '30 years of inaction' on biodiversity crisis
- 🔗 'Ireland must reverse a lost decade of biodiversity damage'
- 🔗 Taoiseach: Politicians have not taken the biodiversity crisis seriously enough
- 🔗 Intensive land use 'a bigger driver of biodiversity loss than climate change'

### RTE

- 🔗 Taoiseach urges 'new era' in protecting biodiversity

### RTE Radio

- 🔗 National Biodiversity Conference gets underway in Dublin today
- 🔗 National Biodiversity Conference 2022 – Mooney Goes Wild

### RTE Morning Ireland

- 🔗 National Biodiversity Conference gets underway in Dublin today | Morning Ireland – RTÉ Radio 1

### RTE TV George Lee

RTE video cameras recorded both days of the event, airing on "Six One News" and News at One"

### Farming Independent

- 🔗 Major public art plan in place to 'reimagine' Enniscorthy



## Irish Country Magazine/IFJ

- Is localisation and clever marketing the key to a sustainable future food model?

## Irish Farmers Journal

- Results-based farm schemes 'way forward' for nature – Taoiseach

## IFJ column

- Lack of farmers at biodiversity conference

## Breaking News

- 'New era' needed to protect biodiversity across island of Ireland – Taoiseach

## Dublin Gazette

- National Biodiversity Conference takes place this summer

## Caro.ie

- National Biodiversity Conference 2022

## Dublin.ie

- National Biodiversity Conference

## Irish Wetlands

- National Biodiversity Conference 2022 – Irish Ramsar Wetlands Committee

## Limerick Leader

- 'We must think long-term' – Taoiseach calls for protection of biodiversity in Ireland

## Longford Leader

- 'We must think long-term' – Taoiseach calls for protection of biodiversity in Ireland

## The Heritage Council

- Minister Malcolm Noonan announces six new Biodiversity Officers in 2022

## Nightcourses.com

- National Biodiversity Conference 2022



## Nature Magic Podcast

- Episode 55 The National Biodiversity Conference 2022 Act Now for Nature

## Northern Ireland Environment Link

- National Biodiversity Conference 2022




## Gov.ie

-  [Speech by Minister Malcolm Noonan at the National Biodiversity Conference 2022](#)
-  [Keynote by the Taoiseach Micheál Martin at Ireland's second National Biodiversity Conference Dublin Castle](#)

## Website of Minister of State Ms. Pippa Hackett, TD

-  [National Biodiversity Conference 2022 – Speech](#)















## NCI Blogs

-  [New National Biodiversity Conference 2022 on the theme 'Act Now For Nature' launched by Government](#)
-  [Call for NCI members to volunteer to help out at the National Biodiversity Conference](#)
-  [Business for Biodiversity platform launched by ministers at National Biodiversity Conference](#)

## All Biodiversity Conference blogs

-  [News | National Biodiversity Conference 2022](#)

## Protest coverage

-  [\*\*Irish Times\*\*](#)  
Environmental campaigners protest outside Biodiversity Conference in Dublin
-  [\*\*Irish Examiner\*\*](#)  
Climate campaigners accuse Government of not protecting Irish biodiversity
-  [\*\*Irish Examiner\*\*](#)  
Anja Murray: Up to our knees in dead canaries
-  [\*\*Journal\*\*](#)  
Environment protesters hold 'dead canary' protest seeking biodiversity protection
-  [\*\*Irish Mirror\*\*](#)  
Government slammed over lack of action on biodiversity as 'they need to start to putting their money where their mouth is'
-  [\*\*Breaking News\*\*](#)  
Campaigners picket 'talking shop' biodiversity conference
-  [\*\*Offaly Express\*\*](#)  
Climate campaigners picket 'talking shop' biodiversity conference
-  [\*\*Kilkenny People\*\*](#)  
Climate campaigners picket 'talking shop' biodiversity conference
-  [\*\*Kildare Nationalist\*\*](#)  
Campaigners Picket 'talking Shop' Biodiversity Conference
-  [\*\*Belfast Telegraph\*\*](#)  
Campaigners picket 'talking shop' biodiversity conference
-  [\*\*Roscommon Herald\*\*](#)  
Campaigners picket 'talking shop' biodiversity conference
-  [\*\*Limerick Leader\*\*](#)  
Climate campaigners picket 'talking shop' biodiversity conference
-  [\*\*Buzz.ie\*\*](#)  
National Biodiversity Conference: Protests over inaction on saving Ireland's environment
-  [\*\*Newstalk:\*\*](#)  
"Sea levels are rising, so are we."  
Extinction Rebellion



## Business For Biodiversity Coverage

### Agriland

New platform launched to help businesses tackle biodiversity crisis

### Athlone Advertiser

'Business for Biodiversity' platform to help businesses take strategic action

### Business Plus

Government Launches Business For Biodiversity Platform

### Council Journal

New 'Business For Biodiversity' Platform for Business to take action for Biodiversity

### Irish Times

All farmers must play part in tackling Ireland's biodiversity crisis – Minister Hackett

### Irish Examiner

Ireland Must Reverse a Lost Decade of Biodiversity Damage

### Irish Tech News

Business For Biodiversity will help businesses to take action for Biodiversity

**NCI Business For Biodiversity Platform** launched by Ministers at National Biodiversity Conference





# Conference sessions

Day 1 – Wednesday 8th June







**Chair:**  
**Niall Ó Donnchú**

Director General NPWS

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## Opening Plenary Session Part 1

**Main themes:** Urgent action is needed to reverse biodiversity loss trends for the welfare of Irish citizens. Robust legislation and education are central to this mission. All farmers must be supported to deliver on-farm actions for biodiversity.







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## Darragh O'Brien

Minister for Housing  
Local Government and Heritage

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**“Nature in Ireland and globally has never been under so much pressure. We are the first generation to realise that stark truth and we are the last generation in a position to do anything about it.”**

## Darragh O'Brien

Minister for Housing  
Local Government and Heritage

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- Strong statement of support for a 'whole of government whole of society' approach
- Called for an ambitious programme to meet EU Biodiversity Strategy Targets
- Noted that the Covid pandemic yielded a greater appreciation for nature "on our doorstep" and within our communities due to importance of access to greenspace and natural spaces. We must capitalise on this momentum to protect and restore nature.
- Noted that this generation fully understands the problem of biodiversity loss and that society must act now and with conviction to reverse the trends.

**"Our Department is taking a leadership role in response to the biodiversity emergency."**

**"I want to see an ambitious Plan that reflects the scale and urgency of Ireland's biodiversity emergency."**

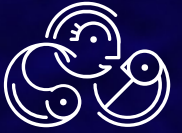


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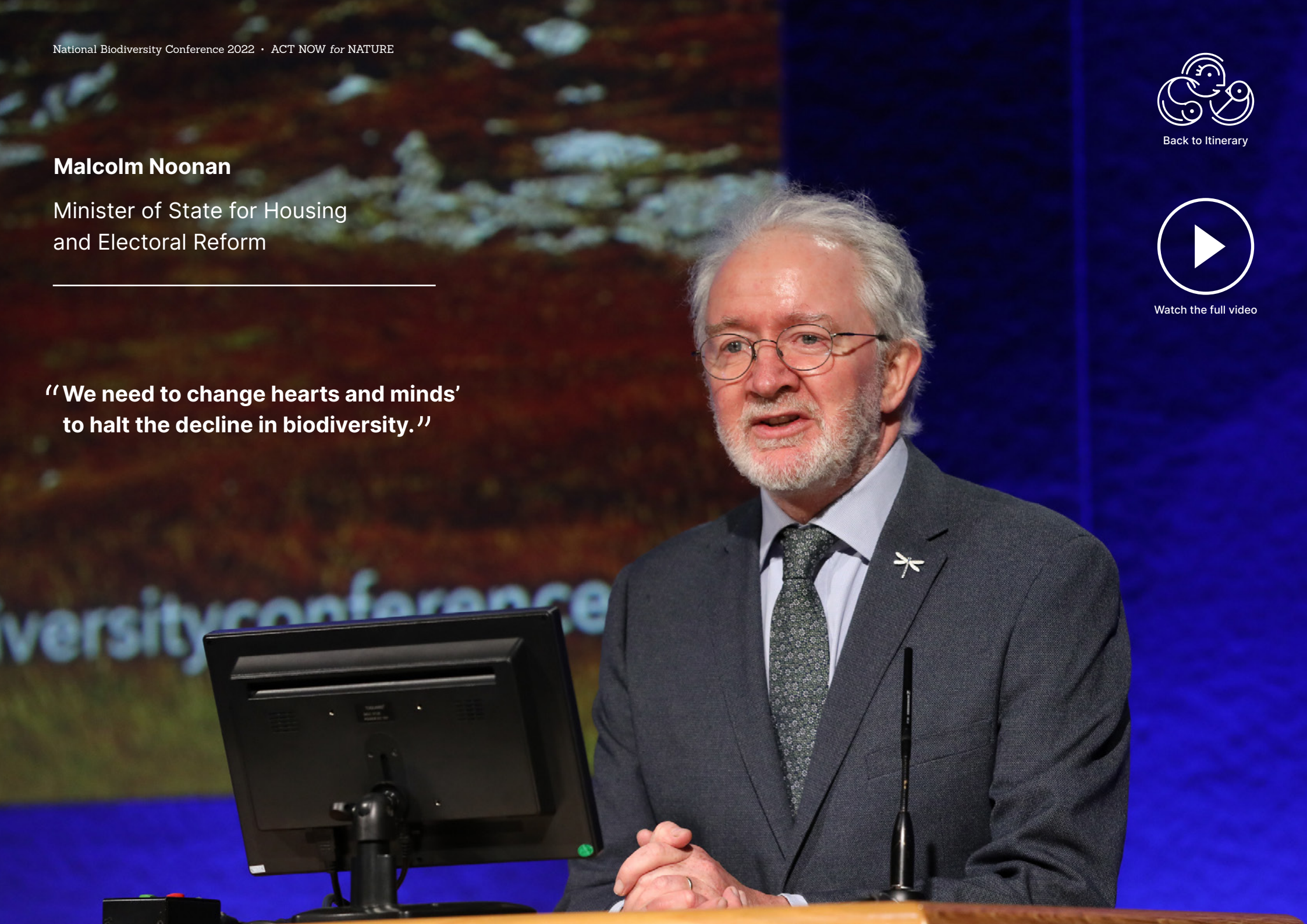
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## Malcolm Noonan

Minister of State for Housing  
and Electoral Reform

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**“We need to change hearts and minds’  
to halt the decline in biodiversity.”**





## Malcolm Noonan

### Minister of State for Housing and Electoral Reform

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- Called for a change of 'hearts and minds' and for Ireland to go from 'laggards to leaders' on nature conservation.
- Noted that the forthcoming NPWS Strategic Action Plan outlines the staffing and resources required and the NBAP sets out the biodiversity protection agenda.
- Stated that invasive species, peatlands, water protection, Marine Protected Areas and ancient woodland are noted as key aspects of the future National Nature Restoration Plan
- Stated that a biodiversity duty and legal backing for the fourth NBAP are imperative.
- Noted that National Parks and Nature Reserves require new legislation to ensure their effective protection. Education liaison personnel are recommended for each National Park.
- Investment in bog rehabilitation and the NPWS Farm Plan Scheme are central to the conservation agenda.
- Local Authority Biodiversity Officers are also vital for the biodiversity protection within local communities. The Community Wetland Forum was noted as an excellent example of community-led biodiversity protection.
- Stated that integration of biodiversity issues into the primary and secondary curricula and improved media reporting are crucial for increasing awareness around biodiversity issues. Noted that a new Head of Communications will be appointed by NPWS to improve biodiversity awareness.
- Stated overall that an increase in the pace of action was crucial.



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**“Political leadership and political courage are needed as a key part of the jigsaw of restoration of nature and a whole shift in our relationship with the natural world around us.”**



## Pippa Hackett

Minister of State for Land use  
and Biodiversity

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Watch the full video

**“Biodiversity doesn’t recognise borders or field boundaries, land parcels or herd numbers. That’s why it’s essential to embrace farming practices that support biodiversity across the whole farm.”**

**“It takes a lot of time and energy to work against nature.”**



## Pippa Hackett

Minister of State for Land use  
and Biodiversity

---

- Highlighted the ongoing Land Use Review lead by the Environmental Protection Agency as central to restoring biodiversity.
- Highlighted Project Woodland, in train since January 23rd, which aims to improve the management of existing forests and siting of new forests.
- Noted that sixty percent of Ireland's land area is under agriculture. All farms must engage with Farming for Nature initiatives. Farmers must be supported to deliver the required changes to Ireland's food system.
- A key priority is to significantly increase the area of land under organic farming.
- Noted that Agri-Environment Climate Measures under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP AECM) results-based payments scheme are a crucial measure to support Farming for Nature. Farmers need to be advised and encouraged to take the right action in the right place — There should be no split between intensive farmers and those farming for nature, all farmers must contribute to biodiversity protection.
- Encouraged further action at local level, noting that local level programmes are vital as shown by the European Innovation Partnerships

**“Farmers that are thinking about soil carbon & humus are thinking about the future. Farmers that are thinking about water quality are thinking about their communities.”**

**“All farmers can play a huge role in helping reverse our #Biodiversity crisis — let's all work together on this.”**



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## Elizabeth Maruma Mrema

Executive Secretary of the  
UN Convention of Biological Diversity

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**“This critical juncture of history, more than ever we need ambition and follow-up actions to avert the triple planetary crises we are facing (climate change, biodiversity loss and health).”**

## Elizabeth Maruma Mrema

Executive Secretary of the  
UN Convention of Biological Diversity

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- Encouraged further action at local level, noting that local level programmes are vital as shown by the European Innovation Partnerships

**“We are pleased to note that your country has recently launched a Business and Biodiversity Platform, which we believe will facilitate actions and partnerships by the private sector for biodiversity. This is a crucial initiative as business activities have significant impacts on biodiversity.”**

**“We also believe this is an opportunity to mainstream biodiversity into strategies, plans and activities of relevant sectors and stakeholders involved in the process.”**



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## Stefan Leiner

Head of Biodiversity Unit,  
European Commission Directorate  
General for Environment

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**“Biodiversity needs not only to be a whole-of-government issue, but a whole-of-society concern — Every citizen, every local authority and every part of government must be involved. Our health and our GDP depends on having healthy ecosystems – nature is essential for our social and economic future.”**





## Stefan Leiner

Head of Biodiversity Unit,  
European Commission Directorate  
General for Environment



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- Noted that the EU as well as each of its Member States, is a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and has its own biodiversity action plan (the EU's "Biodiversity Strategy").
- Despite significant efforts across Europe, the ambitious goals under previous biodiversity strategies were not fully met and did not succeed in halting the loss of biodiversity in Europe. Intensification of land use is a major challenge.
- The IPBES global assessments show that without concentrated effort we could lose up to 1 million species in the next decade. EU strategy needs more concrete, achievable, and measurable targets.
- Nature and biodiversity are high on the EU political agenda, with the EU taking a whole-of-government approach, mainstreaming biodiversity across many service areas.
- The new strategy has four pillars: (1) Protecting (collectively) 30% of Europe's land and sea area, with 10% strictly protected; (2) Restoring nature, including enhancing and restoring habitats and species within protected areas and the wider landscape; (3) Creating the right enabling environment for implementing the strategy, e.g. by increasing knowledge and improving governance, new partnerships between governments, business and civil society, and a goal of reaching 10% of the EU's budget earmarked for biodiversity by 2027; (4) A global dimension and ambition, including aligning Europe's action plans with the EU Biodiversity Strategies and the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- The EU Nature Restoration Law (due June 22nd 2022) aims to restore 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers, peatlands and pollinator and farmland bird populations. Urban greening and reduced pesticide use are key priorities.
- Biodiversity needs not only to be a whole-of-government issue, but a whole-of-society concern – Every citizen, every local authority and every part of government must be involved. Our health and our GDP depends on having healthy ecosystems – nature is essential for our social and economic future.



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**Andy Bleasdale**

NPWS:  
National Biodiversity Perspectives

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## Andy Bleasdale

### NPWS: National Biodiversity Perspectives

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- Wanting and knowing the changes required isn't always enough to attain biodiversity goals. Greater engagement and responsibility sharing will be key – the solution to biodiversity challenges cannot fall on a single organisation, even NPWS. All of our government departments and wider society need to own the solutions.
- The national ambition for the conservation and restoration of biodiversity has increased significantly since the first National Biodiversity Conference in 2019. Ireland was one of the first countries in the world (after the UK) to declare a national biodiversity emergency.
- Bad news: we've seen significant declines in grasslands, peatlands and marine environments. Birds, butterflies and bumblebees are under continued threat.
- Good news: a new NPWS leadership team is in place, staffing and funding has improved significantly, the prioritised action framework has been prepared, the CAP has been extended (mainstreaming the Burren program), and many local cooperation and EU co-funded projects are underway.



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## Ciara Carberry

NPWS: Review, Reflect, Renew:  
Transforming the National Parks  
& Wildlife Service

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## Ciara Carberry

### NPWS: Review, Reflect, Renew: Transforming the National Parks & Wildlife Service

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- Our task is to create a shared sense of urgency within the broader population and to provide leadership when people ask what they're supposed to do about it.
- "The necessity for far reaching change of the NPWS is conclusive." The NPWS has been going through a major transformation: the strategic action plan runs from 2022 to 2024.
- The implementation decision was taken in full knowledge of the resourcing required to implement the action plan, including the immediate filling of 60 critical posts.
- What was it about the design of the NPWS that made it ineffective? The governance structure of the organisation wasn't supporting good decision making. The NPWS needed clearer reporting lines, improved accountability for the whole organisation, resources should be directed towards key priorities, and directorates should be structured along functional lines.
- Principal recommendations were split into four themes: governance, people, legal requirements, and comms/technology.



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## Orlaith Delargy

KPMG: Ireland's 4th National  
Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP)

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- Too many actions in the 3rd NBAP were open-ended: the data to track the action was unavailable, there was no legislative basis for the action etc.
- Ireland's biodiversity action plan must become a biodiversity impact plan.
- The 4th NBAP will cover 2023 to 2027.  
Key considerations for creating the plan:  
Build on successes, while addressing implementation challenges of previous plans;  
Achieve greater coherence between biodiversity policy and other policies; Achieve buy-in across government and society; Focus on the root causes of biodiversity loss; Strengthen the science base and availability of data.
- KPMG reviewed 60+ documents and created a list of 1,800 potential actions to include in the next NBAP. Those actions were whittled down for the first draft of the plan and will be further refined through stakeholder engagement and the public consultation (scheduled for summer 2022).

- 4th NBAP will have clear roles and responsibilities, measurable indicators, and a timeline for tracking and managing targets. The latest (second) draft includes 6 main objectives:

1. Foster a whole of government, whole of society approach to biodiversity
2. Meet urgent conservation and restoration needs
3. Recognise nature's importance for people and society
4. Embed biodiversity at the heart of climate action
5. Enhance the evidence base for action on biodiversity
6. Strengthen Ireland's contribution to international biodiversity initiatives

(The scope and specifics of objectives, actions and targets contained in the draft NBAP may be revised and subject to change following consultation across government and a public consultation phase beginning later in the summer)



[Watch the full video](#)

# 1. Changing Oceans: Working together to protect and restore our marine and coastal environment



**Chair:** **Richard Cronin**, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

**Key take-aways:** Discussions on best practice highlighted the importance of a co-operative approach, bringing communities together, starting small but thinking big. Activities that engage schools and educators to inform and explore issues and solutions are important. Existing achievements should be highlighted, particularly where they show the value of co-operative approaches.

New legislation and action plans should be informed by consultation, with ambitious but achievable targets. There are important links to consider between “bottom-up” approaches and high-level regional agreements. As a positive, stakeholder engagement is improving, a more holistic view of biodiversity is taking place and inclusion of natural capital in the conversation is improving, and the message has gotten across to the public.

Complex issues in the marine environment must be addressed through collaborative mechanisms that rely on trust, with a trusted arbiter who can bring together conflicting sectors and businesses. These processes rely on balanced representation between different stakeholder groups.

Discussions on challenges to addressing marine biodiversity issues noted that change needs to be

more transformative to meet the scale of the biodiversity emergency. There is a lack of capacity to address biodiversity issues amongst some stakeholders – improved funding for individual projects, addressing the lack of current protection for marine areas, ability to identify and hire qualified people. There is some confusion about links/overlap with climate change which complicates the solutions. The marine planning framework is lacking an ecosystem-based approach, so more examples of its employment at sea need to be highlighted and there are many overlapping pressures on the marine environment that require a holistic approach. Also, there needs to be greater involvement of the business community.

Discussions on how people can work better together across society, across sectors and across government highlighted the importance of earning and building trust between stakeholder groups, and the value

of a natural capital approach in bringing disparate concerns to a shared solution. The likelihood of conflict on some issues should be acknowledged, with suitable mechanisms in place to resolve issues. There is also a need to share “what works”, building a set of concrete examples to better explain issues and solutions to people. There is a need for greater data- and experience-sharing including best practices from other countries, and more resourcing to enable all stakeholders to participate meaningfully. This could include supports for using technology to allow greater representation at discussion fora. The biodiversity officers network must be properly resourced within the local authorities, and young people must be encouraged to become more involved. While decision making must be based on data and science, there is also a need to avoid jargon and use clear language accessible to target groups.

# 1. Changing Oceans: Working together to protect and restore our marine and coastal environment



**Chair:** **Richard Cronin**, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



Watch the full video

## Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Introduction**



17:15

**Ditte Mandøe Andreasen**

Taenketanken Hav



03:06

**Richard Cronin**

Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



25:05

**Grainne Ni Chongaile**

Caomhnu Arann



09:35

**Seamus Bonner**

Irish Islands Marine  
Resource Organisation



32:33

**Dominic Pattinson**

OSPAR





# 1. Changing Oceans: Working together to protect and restore our marine and coastal environment



**Chair:** **Richard Cronin**, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



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## Footage shortcuts...



43:29

**Tasman Crowe**

University College Dublin



54:25

**Q&A**



## 2. Food, Forests and the Future 1:

### The role of forestry in driving nature recovery



**Chair:** **Barry Delaney**, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

**Key take-aways:** Biodiversity policy alone has failed to address the loss of biodiversity in agricultural lands, so there is a greater role now for agricultural policy and the actions of farmers and landowners. Under the EU's 'Green Deal', 10% of 'non-productive' farmland should be designated as 'space for nature'; at present many farmers have achieved this already, with extensive farmers often having 30%. Intensive farms may have 6–7%.

It is important to note that whilst the quantity of habitats is important, the diversity of habitats and the quality of habitats are important also. Discussions noted that knowledge transfer and better guidance and advisory elements will be key to ensuring nature positive farming practices. The importance of on-farm support funding from outside of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) mechanisms was highlighted, e.g. 'Just Transition' funds, EU LIFE supports, and buy-in from the private sector etc. Policy must recognise ecosystem service delivery, but the market has a role to play too – people must be willing to pay a premium for produce from nature-positive farming methods.

The importance of regular communication and engagement with stakeholders was highlighted. It was noted that some types of habitat don't seem to be valued from a farm payment perspective, even though they may have locally very high biodiversity value, though this should be addressed by next iteration of CAP. Better 'co-operative structures' are needed for sharing across large scales – this may be achieved through EIPs and new agri-environment climate measures.

## 2. Food, Forests and the Future 1: The role of forestry in driving nature recovery



**Chair:** **Barry Delaney**, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine



Watch the full video

### Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Barry Delaney**



Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



35:50

**David Fallon**



Irish Water



01:27

**Fergus Moore**



Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



48:33

**Tadhg MacIntyre**



Maynooth University



19:50

**Kevin Collins**



Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



60:42

**Ciaran Fallon**



Coillte



## 2. Food, Forests and the Future 1:

### The role of forestry in driving nature recovery

**Chair:** **Barry Delaney**, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine



[Watch the full video](#)

### Footage shortcuts...

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01:14:50 **Q&A**



### 3. Building Partnerships for People and Nature – The Shared Island Initiative



**Chairs:** **Shirley Clerkin**, Heritage Officer, Monaghan County Council

**Lisa-Dee Collery**, Department of the Taoiseach's Shared Island Initiative

**Key take-aways:** One of the areas of recommendations from the all-island work of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) is the development of a strategic working group on valuing nature and the economic value of nature. Convening a stakeholder group to really engage and look at accounting mechanisms, to understand areas like natural capital accounting and what could be done next is one such recommendation.

One priority topic requiring a new action plan is invasive species, since a shared island approach is required to better protect borders (e.g. from accidental import or release of potential new pests). There is a need to start monitoring invasive species on an all-island basis, and then raising awareness.

There is a need to define where to go with prioritising and identifying the key (geographic) areas to improve because of connectivity. For example, identify areas for nature recovery networks, and where/how to begin to join up fragmented habitats. A key part of this is simply mapping out what we already have and this is the first step is to analyse priority areas.

The importance of recognising and harnessing local knowledge and interest was highlighted; e.g. the all-island pollinator plan framed the language of conservation in terms of our everyday relationship with nature. The work of the Citizens Assembly also informs the quality of the debate and helps empower public actors.

Discussions considered whether a new statutory body in the frame of Waterways Ireland, Intertrade Ireland or Tourism Ireland would work for the biodiversity emergency. One perspective is that the emergency is too acute to wait to set up a new agency, and there is a need to act now. However, a cross-border agency co-operation and a strong remit on the issues is important. Leveraging existing initiatives, such as the Atlantic Project with flexibility to respond to the crisis, could work sooner. Building relationships and directing funding to the right areas would also service better.

The importance of initial funding supports for civil society action with engagement across the island was highlighted, with the example given of the government's Community Climate Action Programme (due to be launched in 2022), and then secondly to put in place a civil society funding stream which will support NGO's across the island.

Considering economic, social and environmental dividends from conservation, linking of biodiversity, climate and other environmental, social and economic issues on an all-island basis is important. A missing link is that rural communities that get involved could perhaps see dividends as well. Mapping out where economic, social and environment issues are addressed together, sharing experience and exploring how to scale up is important.

### 3. Building Partnerships for People and Nature – The Shared Island Initiative



**Chairs:** **Shirley Clerkin**, Heritage Officer, Monaghan County Council

**Lisa-Dee Collery**, Department of the Taoiseach's Shared Island Initiative



Watch the full video

#### Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Shirley Clerkin**

Heritage Officer,  
Monaghan County Council



26:04

**Derek McLoughlin**

Wild Atlantic Nature



05:26

**Dr Jeanne Moore**

National Economic and  
Social Council



39:21

**Sara McGuckin**

Department of Agriculture,  
Environment and Rural Affairs –  
Northern Ireland



13:14

**Collette O'Flynn**

National Biodiversity  
Data Centre





## 4. Actions for Nature – NPWS partnerships and initiatives



**Chair:** Ciara Carberry, NPWS

**Key take-aways:** Successful local level biodiversity conservation depends upon partnership and collaboration. Involvement and support from landowners and local communities are vital. A “corporate” approach to communication doesn’t work – a door to door approach is needed. Strong connections must be built with key stakeholders – farmers, other landowners, agricultural contractors, farm advisors, local people. Bridges should be provided between landowners and state agencies.

The need to “help nature fix the problem” was highlighted – enhancing and restoring existing ecosystems, rather than creating new ones. Decisions on local conservation measures e.g. whether to remove grazing animals from certain areas – should be taken based on knowledge of benefits and risks, alternatives and implications. E.g. potential local cultural/social aspects of decisions should be accounted for. “One size fits all approaches don’t work well in ecological systems”.

There are examples of “gold star” practice in projects such as the Burren Life initiative which should be mainstreamed in education. Public engagement and awareness is important – the new NPWS directorate tasked with communications could look at this and wider issues such as teacher training. Teachers can be empowered to overcome the issue of dis-engagement of children from the natural world. If teachers can be appropriately trained and encouraged to provide strong biodiversity teaching and this can be part of the curriculum, rather than reliance on NPWS or other agencies, this would be valuable. Also need to do a lot more to engage with adults, it should not just be left to NGOs.

## 4. Actions for Nature – NPWS partnerships and initiatives



**Chair:** Ciara Carberry, NPWS



Watch the full video

### Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Ciara Carberry**

NPWS



57:05

**Michael Davoren**

The Burren Programme



25:35

**John Carey**

Corncrake LIFE



67:00

**Panel Discussion**



41:25

**Susan Callaghan**

NPWS



## 5. Food, Forests and the Future 2:

# The role of agriculture in driving nature recovery



**Chair:** **Ted Massey**, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

**Key take-aways:** The need to balance different objectives and values of forestry was highlighted, e.g. forestry has a key role in climate action but this should not be achieved at the expense of biodiversity. The example of the biodiversity strategy for Irish Water which seeks to promote nature-based solutions, including encouraging native woodland plantations, to help provide dividends for climate, water resource security and biodiversity.

Discussions also highlighted the valuable role of urban forests and urban greening in providing multiple benefits – climate, physical and mental well-being through greater nature-connectedness, and other social dividends. Many lessons to be learned from our experience during Covid 19 restrictions. Ireland is behind the curve with regards urban forests, which can help ensure equal access to nature for people in urban areas. Whilst housing is always prioritised over forests or parks, perhaps sites such as disused areas and landfills could be targeted for planting.



## 5. Food, Forests and the Future 2: The role of agriculture in driving nature recovery



**Chair:** **Ted Massey**, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine



Watch the full video

### Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Ted Massey**

Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



38:05

**Douglas McMilan**

Green Restoration Ireland Co-op



03:25

**Pamela Boyle**

Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine



65:38

**Patricia Deane**

South Kerry Development  
Partnership



15:36

**Daire O'hUallachain**

Teagasc



90:00

**Q&A**



## 6. Enhancing the Evidence base: Research and Data4Nature



**Chairs:** **Jane Stout**, Trinity College Dublin  
**Catherine Farrell**, LIFE on Machair

**Key take-aways:** Key needs for the research sector can be described under three interconnected ideas: Finances, Capacity, and People.

**Finances:** There is a need for greater investment in the research sector to meet the growing urgency of environmental degradation. Despite the increase in data availability, there are still significant data gaps that need to be addressed. These cannot be addressed at the scale required without sufficient investment in personnel, data systems, and infrastructure.

The current model of resourcing environmental projects was also highlighted as a Challenge – short-term projects of 2–3 years in duration are vulnerable to disruption if resources become limiting or unexpected problems emerge at key points. Long-term systems and planning are required, and this requires greater investment initially but can pay off in the long run.

**Capacity:** The capacity of the sector must be expanded to meet the data needs of biodiversity decision-making. Training, attracting, and retaining skilled experts in environmental science is crucial. Appropriate skills need to be sufficiently cultivated, valued, and supported by making the research sector attractive compared to alternatives both domestically and abroad and to retain talented thought leaders.

Current funding models and research projects are vulnerable to siloed work streams rather than an interconnected network of multidimensional perspectives.

For example, the areas of social science, governance, and trust were mentioned as vital to environmental research and to support effective decision-making, but are less well integrated across the sector.

**People:** Cultivating a research sector that works for people, as well as delivers for nature, is essential for long-term success. The loss of particularly knowledgeable individuals within broader projects and institutions could pose significant problems if those individuals served as key knowledge holders or network gatekeepers that are not transferred or retained after their departure. The entire landscape of knowledge flow depends on the people involved in those networks and this should be considered for any institutional, sectoral, or project level changes.

Institutional uncertainty or fragility can lead to the loss of knowledge if data structures and governance systems are not equipped to absorb these shocks (e.g. the movement of NPWS between government departments was posed as one example). This has implications for secondary departments that support primary data collection and management systems such as HR, communications, and IT systems that are relied upon for day to day running of research departments.

Individuals within wider society can also be empowered and supported to engage in data collection for nature. Citizen science is one such tool to supply additional biodiversity data although it requires the same level of data scrutiny as any other methodology. In particular, citizen generated data should be subject to the same level of vetting and validation as any other data collection method, which is linked to the limited supply of taxonomic expertise.

Many partnerships exist to facilitate data sharing and collection between research producers and users, and these should be encouraged and supported. No one agency, institution, or organisation can collect all biodiversity-relevant data. Establishing robust, durable data-sharing agreements and procedures that acknowledge the longevity of relevant datasets can create better outcomes for all actors involved in the sector. There are systems of data-sharing but they are not yet automatic or systematic, and data are not yet always standardised or harmonised. Addressing these problems will serve to dismantle key barriers for future collaboration and partnership.

## 6. Enhancing the Evidence base: Research and Data4Nature

**Chairs:** **Jane Stout**, Trinity College Dublin  
**Catherine Farrell**, LIFE on Machair



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### Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Jane Stout**

Trinity College Dublin



19:20

**Aoife Delaney**

NPWS



04:50

**Catherine Farrell**

LIFE on Machair



27:56

**Lisa Coleman**

University College Dublin



07:00

**Liam Lysaght**

National Biodiversity Data Centre



36:15

**John Connolly**

Trinity College Dublin





## 6. Enhancing the Evidence base: Research and Data4Nature

**Chairs:** **Jane Stout**, Trinity College Dublin  
**Catherine Farrell**, LIFE on Machair



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47:08

**Q&A**



## 7. Places for People and Planet: The role of Zoos, Gardens and Aquaria in supporting the NBAP



**Chair:** **Andrew Mooney**, Dublin Zoo

**Key take-aways:** Zoos, formal gardens and aquaria are hugely important not only for teaching people about biodiversity loss and conservation, but also to promote engagement (children, adults, families, businesses) with nature and empathy with environmental values, and to encourage people to become advocates and actors for conservation, at home, in the community, and in work.

Support for these institutions in Ireland also supports the conservation work they are engaged with, including a growing number of local, national and global conservation initiatives (e.g. Dublin Zoo's support for the West African Primate Conservation Action and BirdWatch Ireland's barn owl conservation initiatives; the National Botanic Garden's cultivation of endangered Irish flora; Fota Wildlife Park's efforts for a head-starter programme for captive breeding and release of the natterjack toad).

Biodiversity needs to move higher on the social agenda and keep up with the wave of climate advocacy. This would be helped by changing the narrative from lost species to hope for saving species in future, a message strengthened by sharing conservation success stories such as the initiatives supported by Irish zoos, gardens and aquaria.

There is a strong link between ex-situ and in-situ conservation initiatives which can be expanded and strengthened through the work of these institutions.

# 7. Places for People and Planet: The role of Zoos, Gardens and Aquaria in supporting the NBAP



**Chair:** **Andrew Mooney**, Dublin Zoo



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## Footage shortcuts...

Recording not available for the first 10 minutes



00:00

**Christoph Schwitzer**

Dublin Zoo



38:49

**Laura Gardner and  
Suzanne Kynaston**

Wildwood Trust



04:35

**Kira Mileham**

IUCN Species Survival  
Commission



59:00

**Sean McKeown**

Fota Wildlife Park



20:55

**Andrea Dempsey**

West African Primate  
Conservation Action



78:30

**John Lusby**

Birdwatch Ireland





## 7. Places for People and Planet: The role of Zoos, Gardens and Aquaria in supporting the NBAP

**Chair:** **Andrew Mooney**, Dublin Zoo



[Watch the full video](#)

### Footage shortcuts...

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98:55

**Matthew Jebb**



National Botanic Gardens, Dublin



**Address by:**

**Ms. Ana Maria Hernandez Salgar, Chair**

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on  
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

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Watch the full video



“It is important to note  
that the planet is dying”

**Address by:**

**Ms. Ana Maria Hernandez Salgar**, Chair

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on  
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

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**Key points:** The relationship between people and nature is complex and vital. We clearly depend on the contributions which nature provides for our health, livelihoods and well-being. Despite this dependence, societies' choices and actions have directly resulted in the greatest degradation of biodiversity in human history – this includes 75% of the earth's surface has been significantly altered, as well as 66% of the ocean, and 85% of the world's wetlands.

Around one million plants and animals face extinction in the next decade. We can still avert the worst outcomes for people and nature, but only if we achieve transformative change.

Biodiversity emergencies have been declared by countries around the world, and IPBES global and regional assessment reports, prepared by over 2,000 scientists in partnership with IPBES member countries, have been inspirational in driving these initiatives, including the first biodiversity commitments issued by the G7 and G20 (2021). Irish scientists have been involved in preparing several IPBES assessment reports, and that should continue. It is positive that Ireland has been using the growing scientific evidence from IPBES to inform policy, including the decision to amend the declaration of a climate emergency in the Dáil in 2019 to include biodiversity.

Biodiversity is of the same policy propriety as climate change. Ireland's work in linking biodiversity and climate change including through Ireland's Sectoral Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Biodiversity is to be commended.

Biodiversity loss is a major risk for humanity. We have more credible scientific and more credible policy options than ever before, and more ways to communicate the science. We know what is involved, and through there are gaps still we are building knowledge. There is a willingness to apply science to act for nature. Action must happen from the individual to local to global. We must go beyond words and act – we have a generational window of opportunity, and we must shift to greater ambition, greater cross-sector and transdisciplinary actions, in order to grasp it. We must address the critical hidden indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, it just the obvious direct drivers. This means the hidden behaviours and values which lead to biodiversity loss.

**“ Go beyond words and act ”**

**“ Not too late to make a difference  
but only if we start now ”**

# Panel discussion: The Biodiversity Emergency and the Media

**Chair:** Cara Augustenborg, University College Dublin



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**Key take-aways:** Broadcast programmes on biodiversity, when plainly described as being about biodiversity, tend to attract people already interested in the subject. Messaging on the biodiversity emergency may be more effective if linked with political dialogues or linked with messages on other topics which people should pay attention to.

Although we are in a biodiversity emergency in Ireland, the fact of that and its implications are not yet embraced by many people. It is important to not get too far ahead of public opinion (which risks being branded with alarmism), but to try to challenge public opinion (show links with other issues).

Getting people to learn and care about biodiversity is difficult in an era of information overload. Too much technical speak can turn people away. Media consumption has changed significantly since nature programming first became popular.

Although biodiversity loss is a huge existential crisis, communicating it as such all the time can also lose people's attention.

People are part of nature, and it's important that messaging doesn't always put people and nature in a battle against each other. Negative messages about biodiversity loss and its impacts should be followed up with messages of solutions and action.

Biodiversity loss and climate change are interlinked but often treated as separate issues in science and policy; the public and young people in particular often equate them as part of the same issue. Maybe science is being too technical in communicating these issues as separate.

The budgets available for nature programming in Ireland are far less than they were in the 1970s and 1980s. Whilst we need more presenters or personalities who can connect with an audience, budgets for nature programming in Ireland must also be increased.

Broadcast media is limited in the time and resources it can commit to address biodiversity issues, but the consumer (and potential story tellers) should still engage with it and with programme makers as much as possible. The public can reach out to programme makers with ideas on content.

Biodiversity and climate change messages need to be integrated into other forms of programming, e.g. interviewers can ask "what is the biodiversity angle?" when preparing an interview on other subjects. The more that these issues are interwoven throughout the mainstream agenda, the better, especially since biodiversity underpins so much of modern life.

Complex issues such as biodiversity can become topics for misinformation (e.g. greenwashing), particularly when messaging is overly simplistic. It is important to communicate the complexity to the public so they can identify facts from falsehoods.

Communications and messaging around the National Biodiversity Action Plan should bring all sectors of society into the conversation – especially farmers, who are "agents of change" in the Irish landscape, and young people.



# Panel discussion: The Biodiversity Emergency and the Media

**Chair:** Cara Augustenborg, University College Dublin



Watch the full video



**Jane Stout**

Trinity College Dublin



**Marcus Stewart**

EcoEye



**Philip Boucher-Hayes**

RTE



# Conference sessions

Day 2 – Thursday 9th June







## Keynote Speech by Taoiseach Micheál Martin, TD

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Watch the full video

**“Together, we must develop integrated land and sea, urban and rural, North and South, East and West, biodiversity solutions that can be deployed in a fair and just manner, and maximise co-benefits for people and the planet.”**

## Keynote Address by Taoiseach Micheál Martin, TD

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[Back to Itinerary](#)



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**Key take-aways:** The political and policy spheres have not always heeded the messages on biodiversity loss, and its threats to our quality of life, which academia, non-profit organisations and civil servants have been sending for many years.

It has not been adequately incorporated into decision making across many spheres of activity at home in Ireland and globally.

Our fortunes as a species and as a society are inseparable from the fortunes of the natural world of which we are a part. The values of nature have become even clearer during the Covid 19 pandemic – it provided a source of recreation, enjoyment, social interaction and solace.

The great mistake of our species is to think that we are somehow separate from nature, and that we can continue to hollow out nature without consequence for our own well-being.



**“I do sense a deepening acceptance, a growing realisation that our fortunes as a species and a society are inseparable from the fortunes of the natural world of which we are a part.”**



## Keynote Address by Taoiseach Micheál Martin, TD

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**“Nature is essential for human existence and good quality of life. Most of nature’s contributions to people are not fully replaceable, and some are irreplaceable.”**

Many small and almost imperceptible actions that contribute to biodiversity loss rarely make the headlines.

Social and economic prerogatives have not always taken account of the cost of biodiversity loss. As we celebrate the centenary of the State, we acknowledge the role that our vast peatlands, rich agricultural soils and rivers have played in the development of our society and economy; as we look to the future, we do so in the knowledge that those same ecosystems are vital to the resilience of our society, climate and economy long into the future.

Ensuring that resilience demands a bold, ambitious and integrated for the future of nature, water and carbon. We need to find a way forward that will help us to adapt to a future with a changed climate, make space for nature to thrive, and empower a new economic and social vibrancy within our rural communities. New approaches are needed, and though good progress is being made there is a long path to travel.

**“We must now, globally and at home, find a way to shape our activities to continue to provide the social and economic benefits that we must have, while safeguarding the natural world on which we depend.”**

**“We need to find a way forward that will help us to adapt to a future with a changed climate, make space for nature to thrive, and empower a renewed economic and social vibrancy within our rural communities.”**

## Keynote Address by Taoiseach Micheál Martin, TD

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**“As a society we must not shy away from being more ambitious about protecting and restoring nature. All sectors have a role to play, and in that context I’d like to recognise the crucial work of farmers, fishers, foresters, businesses, educators, young people and community groups as agents of change in championing biodiversity and taking action to reverse its loss.”**



[Watch the full video](#)

The government has approved the full implementation of the strategic action plan for the NPWS, to see it renewed and transformed into an executive agency – but biodiversity action and protection goes far beyond the remit of the NPWS. Biodiversity will only be successfully tackled as an all of government, all of society project – planners, local authorities, agricultural advisers, and all agencies of state, and all sectors have a role to play. We have seen how well we can work together in response to a crisis whether public health, international security or climate; biodiversity should be no different. An all-island approach is also essential, working not only north and south, but also east and west (linking with UK partners). The Shared Island Initiative has demonstrated a shared ambition to address biodiversity and climate issues on a cross-border and all-island basis, and there is an opportunity here to move forward quickly and effectively.

There are many examples of society coming together successfully to deliver real impact for rural communities and nature – such as the Burren Programme which led the way some 20 years ago. Results-based community level projects are the way forward, and even more ambition is expected from the NBAP.

In 2020, the Taoiseach signed the UN Leaders’ Pledge for Nature (committing to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030), putting biodiversity at the heart of national and international development co-operation. This recognises that the business case for biodiversity is compelling – the cost of action is significantly less than the cost of inaction.

**“Some part of our human psychology will seek to wish away or deny what is so clearly happening around us but that is no answer. Ní neart go cur le chéile. We must work together, for all our sakes, and find a truly sustainable path forward.”**

## 8. Financing Restoration: The role of blended finance in catalysing restoration and investment



**Chair:** **Shane McGuinness**, University College Dublin

**Key take-aways:** Participants considered the barriers to blended finance initiatives, including the need to speak the same language to overcome conceptual gaps in the finance world. The issues and benefits need to be made comprehensible to people, e.g. relating bogs to something people can understand, making it exciting, providing inspiration to drive action. Feedback from landowners often is that it's too complex, but it needs to be so rigorous and robust, quantifiable and trustworthy.

It's not realistic to have landowners speak the language, so investment advisors are needed on the ground. A dual approach should be cultivated – to answer those worried about peatland restoration on their land, and also what they can gain. Interpreting the science in a more user friendly way.

Investing in nature restoration is a new concept for many key stakeholders (landowners, communities, farmers etc). Biodiversity and livelihoods are difficult to quantify, and there is a need for robust monitoring and governance structures to bring a wide range of stakeholders together; this means addressing barriers in language and knowledge gaps, improving communication with all stakeholders, including communities.

Markets and standards for carbon have existed for more than 10 years, this is not the case for biodiversity and ecosystem services or nature-based solutions. This will

take time to develop but there is nevertheless an urgent need to get started. Projects can begin in abstract, start making investments even if the structure is not perfect and inefficient, start small and learn and build up over time.

Issues regarding uncertainty in project outcomes must be considered – scientists might require a much longer time period than investors to be certain about the project results, and this is best done by being conservative regarding estimates on project outcomes; underestimating whilst being clear on a positive trajectory is important. However, there is a need to start taking action now, even if the market structure is inefficient – support for small scale projects is a good place to begin. Long-term landscape scale thinking required. fairly extensive monitoring mechanism will give data and inform systems and codes.

Peatland carbon projects can be based on reducing emissions from existing peatlands, or removing carbon from the atmosphere. It is important to get these ecosystems into a healthy functioning state so that they can effectively store carbon again, but there is a huge public investment gap to get peatlands back to this condition.

Incentives for investment in restoration should be clear for those (landowners, farmers) who have historically not well managed peatland but can be encouraged to do so. There should also be clear rewards, from public funding, for those who have always managed peatland well (recognising contribution to nature and society).

Initiatives should account for non-quantifiable aspects such as well-being and other qualitative assets, and not only focus on quantitative aspects.



## 8. Financing Restoration: The role of blended finance in catalysing restoration and investment



**Chair:** **Shane McGuinness**, University College Dublin



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00:00

**Shane McGuinness**

University College Dublin



27:25

**Paul Chatterton**

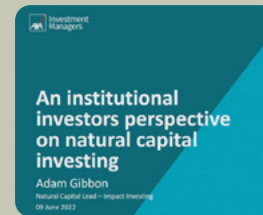
Landscape Finance Lab



07:50

**Suzanne Nally**

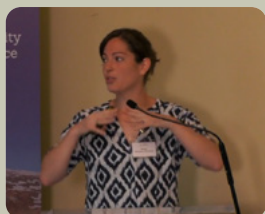
NPWS



38:26

**Adam Gibbon**

AXA-IM



19:07

**Renee Kervliet-Hermand**

IUCN



54:00

**Q&A**



## 9. Communities in Action: Villages, towns, farms, townlands



**Chair:** **Tina Roche**, The Community Foundation for Ireland

**Key take-aways:** There are a growing number of community-led initiatives for conservation around Ireland – e.g. the Community Foundation for Ireland provides important tools for communities to identify and map local habitats and species and produce local biodiversity action plans; the Community Wetlands Forum has a three-year Connecting Communities with Peatlands project – and these should receive greater support and encouragement. An action around mapping biodiversity actions beyond the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is recommended for the fourth NBAP. The NBAP could also explore options for dealing with the challenges of making meadows – this work is labour intensive and disposal of grass clippings difficult.

Communities often work in isolation and building a supportive, open network and 'community of interest' is vital to develop and support projects. Culture and Visual Arts are also an important element of engaging communities with natural heritage.

Farmers are not receiving sufficient support to encourage them to farm for nature. Farmers must be provided with the right incentives to work alongside biodiversity and develop and support more results-based payment schemes. There should be an increase in the level of advice and support for farmers already or willing to engage, for which state and community level initiatives are important. Financial support should also be directed towards community led

projects. There is a significant amount of excellent work and examples from Farming For Nature projects which should be showcased at every opportunity – FFN farmers voices should be heard via media and conferences. The private sector and consumers should be encouraged to play a role in driving FFN, productive farming can go hand in hand with biodiversity protection with the right incentives.

Recommendations for enhancing community initiatives in towns and other residential areas were raised: The Government's Town Centre First Pilot projects (aimed at regeneration towns and combating dereliction and vacancy) should be synergised with local

biodiversity initiatives. New biodiversity-friendly Tidy Towns regulations are needed, (new guidelines have been developed this year). Actions which encourage nature-based solutions as part of urban regeneration and agriculture that jointly address the water, climate and biodiversity crises (e.g. Local Authority Waters Programme – LAWPRO) should be promoted.

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and Community Wetlands Forum provide excellent resources for any community to take action independent of community funding. A website hub similar to the FFN hub would be useful to collate such information.

## 9. Communities in Action: Villages, towns, farms, townlands



**Chair:** **Tina Roche**, The Community Foundation for Ireland

Enhanced efforts to integrate biodiversity across all sectors should be included in the NBAP, linked to socio economic factors or SDGs.

Communities can engage in efforts to improve scientific knowledge through citizen science projects, supported through ENGOs, local monitoring networks, etc. Engagement should focus on “participation not consultation”. Alternative models of conservation, such as land stewardships and custodianship, can ensure that focus is not only on designated areas and green infrastructure.

Local BAPs provide a vision for any town or area but ongoing support and funding is needed to implement the plans.





## 9. Communities in Action: Villages, towns, farms, townlands

**Chair:** **Tina Roche**, The Community Foundation for Ireland



Watch the full video

### Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Tina Roche**



The Community Foundation  
for Ireland



32:57

**Brigid Barry**



Farming For Nature



03:05

**Faith Wilson,**  
Ecological Consultant and  
**Fiona McGowan,**  
Ecologist/Community  
Wetlands Advisor



48:00

**Q&A**



20:00

**Chris Uys**



Abbeyleix Bog Project

# 10. Connecting National Priorities 1: Biodiversity, Culture and Social Well-being



**Chair:** **Martina Moloney**, The Heritage Council

**Key take-aways:** Presentations and participants discussed a wide range of projects inking communities, culture and biodiversity, including a diverse range of stakeholders and actors – school children, asylum seekers, islanders. The value of many different forms of engagement was highlighted, including informal nature, farm or built heritage walks, to payment-based schemes for conservation. These kinds of projects show the significant potential within communities to engage in and help deliver on biodiversity action plans, and the potential of biodiversity conservation to support community cohesion and social well-being.

This type of work is dependent upon appropriate engagement with and support from relevant stakeholders, particularly land owners, businesses etc.

Opportunities for spreading this message should be explored – for example, the work and value of the Citizens Assembly on Biodiversity Loss should be widely promoted to the public.

Projects addressing cultural and community links to biodiversity can learn from each other – experience sharing/knowledge exchange – and this should be encouraged and supported.

Sustainable funding is key – small communities may have great expertise at their fingertips, but resources and support can be spent chasing funding. Easier access to finding, and longer-term funding models, are essential to sustain projects and foster new initiatives.

# 10. Connecting National Priorities 1: Biodiversity, Culture and Social Well-being



**Chair:** **Lorcan Scott**, Wildlife Officer, The Heritage Council



[Watch the full video](#)

## Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Introduction**



32:00

**Helen Riddell**

Bere Island Conservation



00:47

**Paddy Woodworth**

Sanctuary in Nature and Heritage



49:20

**Brian Dunne**

Wicklow Uplands Council



15:05

**Brendan Dunford**

Burren Life



64:50

**Aoibhinn Ni Shuilleabhain**

University College Dublin





# 10. Connecting National Priorities 1: Biodiversity, Culture and Social Well-being

**Chair:** **Martina Moloney**, The Heritage Council



[Watch the full video](#)

## Footage shortcuts...

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88:45

**Caitriona Carlin**



National University of Ireland,  
Galway

# 11. Connecting National Priorities 2: Climate Action and Biodiversity



**Chair:** **Gerry Clabby**, Department of Environment and Climate Change

**Key take-aways:** Participants and panellists discussed various options for integrating biodiversity and climate action – e.g. continuous cover of well-located forestry, restoration of peatlands, more diverse farming (organics, agroforestry etc), nature-based solutions, large scale forestry. It is important to be realistic about trade-offs and compromises between actions for climate change and biodiversity loss – integrated planning is needed.

However, urgent action is needed in all areas – forestry, peatlands conservation and restoration, biodiversity, but implementing the right actions in the right places. There is a need for results based schemes that are engaged, locally based, flexible and autonomous.

There is a need for more research on the interplay between biodiversity loss, ecosystems, and climate change, and on integrated solutions but this should not stop action. Engagement of local communities is essential, along with greater resources and funding. This should include providing expert local government staff in actionable roles using more defined actions and targets.

# 11. Connecting National Priorities 2: Climate Action and Biodiversity

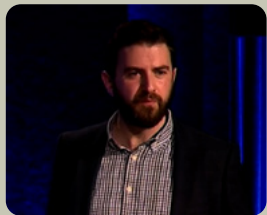


**Chair:** **Gerry Clabby**, Department of Environment and Climate Change



Watch the full video

## Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Eamon Haughey**

Atlantic Technological University



48:45

**Grace Cotter**

University College Dublin



23:30

**Shirley Clerkin**

Monaghan County Council



01:01:35

**Maryann Harris**

Dublin City Council



36:18

**Aileen O'Sullivan**

Coillte



01:17:03

**Q&A**





## 12. Water from Mountains to Coasts: Promoting recovery in freshwater and water-dependent ecosystems



**Chair:** **Colin Byrne**, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

**Key take-aways:** The discussion explored concrete initiatives and actions that can make a difference to biodiversity. It was noted that there is a lot of local community work happening but it is not easy to find information on where or how effective such work is – there is a need for better data capture and evaluation.

Although there is a huge amount of ongoing capital investment in our cities and towns by a range of agencies, there is a lack of general co-ordination and knowledge exchange, e.g. some agencies don't know what others are doing within the same topic or area. There is a need for improved communication and coordination – get everybody in one room, start to do things differently. Nature-based solutions are not being sufficiently adopted and money is being spent (on conservation) without necessarily getting all the benefits. Efforts are required to get landscape architects, designers, engineers working together from the outset of local project development – and realise that this is not just a water issue. We can get significant added value by doing things differently and promoting urban greening more generally, not just focused on dividends for water.

Riparian buffer zones can have an important impact on water quality – farmers should be encouraged/incentives given for retaining wide buffers and trained in their maintenance.

Data is the key to proving that interventions are successful, but it is necessary to decide at the outset of a project what the aim is and how success will be measured. Aims should include valuing public goods that land can provide e.g. other than food production.

The importance of secure funding for Rivers Trusts and other initiatives was highlighted – a lack of core funding for staff can limit what these projects can achieve. Locally based initiatives and project leaders have a good understanding of the local issues and know the local landowners, and have time to have conversations which state agencies may not. A lot of learning about NBS is gained through informal conversations. Community

based organisations enjoy a greater level of trust than state agencies as they have no enforcement role. This is lost without adequate funding and other supports.

It was noted that the EU has an aim of achieving 25,000km of free flowing rivers by 2030, and 950km is the target for Ireland. This will require a dedicated team and need funding locked in long term. Barrier mitigation needs to be incorporated into OPW work.

# 12. Water from Mountains to Coasts: Promoting recovery in freshwater and water-dependent ecosystems



**Chair:** **Colin Byrne**, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



Watch the full video

## Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Colin Byrne**

Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



41:45

**Trish Murphy**

Inishowen Rivers Trust



06:15

**Margaret Keegan**

Local Authority Waters  
Programme



55:32

**Ciara O'Leary**

Fisheries Ireland



28:30

**Adrian Conway**

Local Authority Waters  
Programme



70:06

**Cormac McConigley**

Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



## 12. Water from Mountains to Coasts: Promoting recovery in freshwater and water-dependent ecosystems



**Chair:** **Colin Byrne**, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



Watch the full video

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83:20

**Q&A**



# 13. Connecting National Priorities 3: Biodiversity and the Planning System



**Chair:** Enda Mullen, NPWS

**Key take-aways:** Biodiversity needs to be embedded into every level of the planning system, from the National Planning Framework to County Development Plans and Local Area Plans, if it is to be taken very seriously.

Planning is a creative process and we need to look at new solutions; need to move from old planning principles to new approaches. Need to move from:

- Area-based planning to broader planning networks;
- Demand-based planning to supply-based;
- Separation to synergy;
- Urban planning focus to rural planning focus

Biodiversity is only one element of the eight environmental topics covered in Environmental Impact Assessments. Information needs to be accurate and complete. But, also, planning authorities need

to have sufficient ecological expertise to make good decisions. The concept of “no net loss” needs to change to “nature positive” when making planning decisions, linking with nature restoration policies. Ecologists need to be involved at every stage of the planning process, from strategic planning to project delivery.

Planning also needs to start designating areas to be set aside for nature, areas which are not shared with people. Furthermore, the public has an essential role in the planning process. This needs to be retained and enhanced.



# 13. Connecting National Priorities 3: Biodiversity and the Planning System



Chair: **Enda Mullen**, NPWS



Watch the full video

## Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Enda Mullen**

NPWS



30:59

**Maeve Flynn**

An Bord Pleanála



06:04

**Claragh Mulhern**

Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



50:47

**Aebhín Cawley**



20:25

**Henk van der Kamp**

Planning consultant



01:06:42

**Annette Lynch**

NPWS



# 13. Connecting National Priorities 3: Biodiversity and the Planning System

**Chair:** Enda Mullen, NPWS



[Watch the full video](#)

## Footage shortcuts...

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01:20:27 **Q&A**



# 14. Education & Outreach – Inspiring Public Engagement



**Chair:** Ella MacSweeney, Journalist

**Key take-aways:** The discussions highlighted that there has been a fundamental shift in public perception of nature during and post-pandemic; the importance of nature to everyday life has become more apparent, and people want to do something positive. To capitalise on this there is a need to identify drivers at community level and support “bottom-up” action. Avenues for encouraging collaboration between people, communities and projects are required to avoid duplication and maximise resources.

However for many especially young people there is a disconnect with nature which needs to be addressed – what is different now, in terms of education, which has led to this? Revisiting communication outlets such as ENFO could be considered. More evidence is needed on what educational and awareness-raising approaches work to drive interest and engagement on biodiversity. This should inform a co-ordinated national approach on awareness and education.

Third level education is an important avenue for education on biodiversity and its importance, explaining visible nature with wider processes e.g. geology, climate, water etc. Specific general skills such as nature identification, habitat management should be promoted.

Beyond formal education, there needs to be a meaningful framework for engaging the public, with clear messages and efforts to build meaningful partnerships. Communities can be best engaged through use of appropriate and common language – this means using appropriate means of communication and engagement that are relevant to the specific audience(s). Connections between biodiversity and other key issues such as climate change, and the need for co-ordinated action, should also be emphasised.

# 14. Education & Outreach – Inspiring Public Engagement

**Chair:** **Ella MacSweeney**, Journalist



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## Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Introduction**



38:18

**Liam Lysaght**

National Biodiversity Data Centre



01:33

**Virginia Teehan**

The Heritage Council



51:30

**Panel Discussion**



26:12

**Melinda Lyons**

Technical University, Dublin





# 15. Business for Biodiversity: Driving nature-positive business models



**Chair:** **Lucy Gaffney**, Ireland's Business for Biodiversity Platform

**Key take-aways:** The session highlighted the fundamental importance of biodiversity to all sectors of business and the economy. The Business for Biodiversity Platform has been launched (at the conference) to encourage and incentivise Irish businesses to assess their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity, with a view to managing and availing of associated risks and opportunities respectively throughout a business' value chain.

Presentations emphasised that taking meaningful action on biodiversity is about reimagining and evolving business models to become more nature positive. The idea of "nature positive" is a next step on the conversation around biodiversity conservation, and it is a concept we need to become familiar and comfortable with.

Examples were given of how businesses can start small and effect positive change within their organisation by engaging with staff, suppliers, investors and other partners, helping them to understand the issues, seeking their input, and exploring opportunities for collaboration on becoming biodiversity positive. Co-operating with scientific research projects, local community initiatives and local authority policies on biodiversity can provide knowledge, inspiration and ideas for action on biodiversity at local level and beyond.

The session pointed out that many businesses feel that the issue of biodiversity is just another optional add-on which they do not have the time or resources to deal with; this is similar to the attitudes of business in the 1970s and 80s when issues of workplace health and safety came to the fore, and in the 1990s and 2000s when issues of corporate social responsibility and sustainability really grew as a public concern. Today, the fundamental importance of biodiversity to local, national and global economies and society is understood in detail, and it is time for the business sector to start to grasp this message and act on it, in their own interest and in the interest of the communities and societies which they operate in.

Lessons from Irish and international research was discussed which highlight that a primary reason for the biodiversity emergency is the failure of mainstream economics to account for biodiversity and the benefits it provides to society. The loss of biodiversity represents a significant risk to all business sectors, and is intimately connected with other global issues including concerns about health and emerging diseases, climate, energy and food security, water quality, and international security. The success of efforts on these other issues is threatened unless biodiversity is also factored into strategies and actions for positive change.

# 15. Business for Biodiversity: Driving nature-positive business models



**Chair:** **Lucy Gaffney**, Ireland's Business for Biodiversity Platform



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## Footage shortcuts...



00:00

**Lucy Gaffney**

Ireland's Business for  
Biodiversity Platform



36:05

**Maighread Cremin**

Musgraves



10:45

**Conor Kretsch**

Natural Capital Ireland



48:00

**Jean Kennedy**

Devenish Foods



25:20

**Cillian McMahon**

Business in the Community,  
Ireland



62:49

**Keith Scanlon**



# 15. Business for Biodiversity: Driving nature-positive business models



**Chair:** **Lucy Gaffney**, Ireland's Business for Biodiversity Platform



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## Footage shortcuts...



75:33

**Mark McCorry**



Bord na Mona



84:20

**Maeve O'Reilly**



Gas Networks Ireland



99:30

**Hedda Dick**



Coillte Nature

# Panel discussion: Voices for Nature – the role of Civil Society Organisations



**Chair:** Karen Ciesielski, Irish Environment Network



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## Key take-aways:

### On the panel's key take-aways from the conference:

There are already many actions plans, strategies, and frameworks on biodiversity and climate change, and none of them seem to be working. Perhaps the elephant in the room is our food system and the plans to enhance sustainable food output which seem to work against nature. Greenwashing is a significant problem which need to be addressed. Perhaps what we need to do is to start bringing all of these different plans together in a concerted way so that we start making real progress on these crises.

Since 2019 there has been a huge push in recognition of the climate and biodiversity emergencies. One thing we're missing is an overarching policy ambition.

To support an all-of-Government, all-of-society approach, we need an overarching policy to state what we actually want to achieve and how, and have it integrated into every government department. Every sector is still working in its own silo. All of the sectors should fit into the biodiversity message, rather than trying to fit biodiversity into each sector.

The Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss is an important opportunity for representatives of the broader public to put forward evidence-based recommendations for change. We need to learn how to scale up the really successful local level projects so that the incremental change we have witnessed can become truly transformative.

A focus on the root causes of biodiversity loss, not just on the impacts, is hugely important. As stated by the IPBES reports, we need rapid and far-reaching actions which haven't been tried before. We need a collective and individual value change, and must recognise that market dynamics and a focus on metrics like GDP and growth do not account for biodiversity or the impacts of its loss. E ned to have this discussion as part of the development of the next Biodiversity Action Plan.

I think the barriers to effective action on climate are similar to those for biodiversity. Conference attendees demonstrate a large amount of good will, and there is a feeling that we are all on the same page, but in reality, policy makers are often under siege by lobbyists and special interests who can try to undermine policy initiatives. Policy initiatives are very easily corrupted

with bad science and misinformation, to push business as usual. The only effective opposition to the power of vested interests a strong voice from civil society, and unless we have a powerful civil society, local voices may not be heard.

### On the link between people, food production, climate, and nature:

When you consider the price that farmers can charge for what they produce, and the increased pressure they are under to meet demands for more food, sustainability and other regulatory obligations, they are getting less for what they produce. We have moved to a heavily subsidised and resource intensive system to support farming livelihoods, and nature has been heavily impacted as a result. Agricultural indicators for biodiversity are going in the wrong direction, and there is not enough support for farmers to act for nature. The proportion of agricultural budgets earmarked for biodiversity needs to be increased, and payments for public goods ned to be given a higher priority.



# Panel discussion: Voices for Nature – the role of Civil Society Organisations



**Chair:** Karen Ciesielski, Irish Environment Network



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Our agricultural system is part of a global supply chain – even if we achieved a sustainable food system on the island, we still have to look at the inputs and outputs at a global level and consider the wider impacts of our food system outside of Ireland. Oxfam is part of a coalition on business, human rights and the environment, seeking to enact legislation to help protect sustainable food systems overseas that are impacted by business-as-usual models of food production. If enacted in Ireland, such legislation could help empower people who are impacted by the choices we make to protect their rights.

## **On how to bring people, communities and young people along on the journey to halting and reversing biodiversity loss:**

The push for a whole of government, whole of society approach is very important, but more needs to be done to involve young people, including students. Education on biodiversity should start at preschool level. Children in particular can connect with biodiversity more closely and directly than later in life, so involving the early is

key to encouraging them to support action for nature throughout their lives. At second level, short courses on biodiversity similar to existing short courses on climate action should be offered, to show how biodiversity and climate change are linked and also to show how young people can engage with the scientific evidence, including at local level.

Ecological literacy can provide a framework for the change in values which is needed – helping to illustrate that biodiversity cuts across disciplines and is related to issues of equality and place, and explaining the concept of living within planetary boundaries which has long term inter-generational effects. We need a renewed form of public participation. We should consider a constitutional amendment to enshrine the rights to a healthy environment in law.

The role of the state in leading on our climate and biodiversity crises is key, to ensure appropriate funding and leadership is given from local to national level. Tensions between the State and civil society organisations, e.g., where legal cases may be taken against policy.

Engaging and interacting with local communities in an open, transparent and ongoing way is essential to gain their support and to ensure better outcomes for biodiversity.

## **On the importance of addressing biodiversity issues in the marine environment**

Our marine and coastal environments cover an area seven times greater than Ireland's land mass. Healthy, diverse marine ecosystems are important for human health and well-being, from support for air quality, climate mitigation and food systems to wider economic benefits, but we must also promote and appreciate nature for its intrinsic value.

Despite three decades of global agreements and laws and regulations to protect biodiversity the situation is getting worse. The NBAP should have a statutory footing and biodiversity should be put on a par with climate action; this combined with greater public engagement and awareness of the intrinsic value of nature would provide us with a better way forward.

# Panel discussion: Voices for Nature – the role of Civil Society Organisations



**Chair:** Karen Ciesielski, Irish Environment Network



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Nationally there needs to be a way to hold government departments to account for impacts on biodiversity, it can't always be the role of the European Commission; the development of the NBAP should consider this and make sure there is a mechanism put in place to facilitate this accountability.

## **On what Ireland and the world would look like if we were on the road to tackling the biodiversity and climate crises:**

The people who will be most impacted by the actions or lack of actions we take today – our young people – would/should be seriously involved in policy making, not just in a token fashion.

The science and technical evidence and language can seem abstract and not always easy to engage with; everyone attending the conference or engaging in decision making in any capacity or sector, including scientists who are normally expected to have a certain detachment, need to be activists. There are significant impacts happening now which everyone should care about.

Communities want to take action but don't always have the resources or understanding to know what needs to be done at the local level – policy makers and others in government should work with communities to help them lead the change at local level that can have a global impact.

The funding dedicated to environmental measures under the Common Agricultural Policy is only small fraction of the overall CAP budget; in order to ensure that it is used effectively to deliver concrete results farmers need targeted guidance.

There is often a disconnect between the large farming representative organisations and the individual farmers in terms of support for biodiversity; individual farmers are often very proud of the on-farm biodiversity and can be passionate about engaging with conservation measures, but that does not match with the hostility to environmental issues expressed by some large farming groups representing large agricultural corporations and some elements of agri-food media.

Enhancing environmental education in school is important but the urgency of the situation demands a broader approach to public information beyond the schools' network. The Covid 19 pandemic has shown that people can quickly learn and understand complex issues through a dedicated and intensive public information campaign – it is doable when we treat it like an emergency.

# *Panel discussion:* Voices for Nature – the role of Civil Society Organisations



**Chair:** Karen Ciesielski, Irish Environment Network



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# Panel discussion: Voices for Nature – the role of Civil Society Organisations



**Chair:** **Karen Ciesielski**, Irish Environment Network



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**Karen Ciesielski**

Irish Environment  
Network



**Sadhbh O'Neill**

Dublin City University



**Anabel O'Hora**

ECO-UNESCO



**Pádraic Fogarty**

Irish Wildlife Trust



**Donal Griffin**

Fair Seas Campaign



**Oonagh Duggan**

Birdwatch Ireland



**Michael  
McCarthy Flynn**

Oxfam Ireland



## Closing presentation: Conference wrap-up from the National Biodiversity Forum

Tasman Crowe, University College Dublin and Chair of the National Biodiversity Forum

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**Key messages:** Agriculture is recognised as both dependent upon biodiversity but also a driver of decline, and the need for targeted results-based agricultural payment has been emphasised, based on the good work which has already been done. The conference heard about the need to engage more closely with the agriculture community. The participatory approach was emphasised in several sessions, along with co-management and engagement particularly with young people. The holistic approach was also emphasised, particularly linking biodiversity with climate change.

The conference has pointed out that there have been some great Irish successes in species conservation – if we do make the effort we can make a difference.

The important role of Irish zoos, aquaria and botanic gardens in conserving Irish species in-situ was emphasised, and this should be considered in the next NBAP.

In discussions on the Shared Island Initiative, protected areas and invasive species were pointed out as key examples of the need for an all-island approach. We need structures to help us work together, and cross-border projects such as the Marine Protected Area Network (MarPAN) to foster dialogue.

To achieve transformative change, we really need to move outside of our comfort zones and be open to differing points of view, and take time to reach mutual understanding and find compromises.

The wide range of initiatives growing out of dialogues between stakeholders and authorities, bringing important change and new approaches forward.

The Citizen's Assembly and the parallel youth version present a wonderful opportunity for everyone to hear more about a range of views on biodiversity and to bring them into policy and into the NBAP.

Targeted biodiversity action has a fundamental need for data – we need to know what is declining, where and what the causes are. A good evidence base can facilitate conservation, co-operation and help us to reach agreement, but it has to include knowledge as well as data and that includes social and cultural perspectives which are often overlooked but are essential to inform effective actions.

The data session highlighted that though we have a wealth of data it is often patchy, fragmented and dispersed. We need more data but also need to be able to access it in a coherent way. The National Biodiversity Data Centre has the fundamental infrastructure which we need, but it needs more support.

## Closing presentation: Conference wrap-up from the National Biodiversity Forum

**Tasman Crowe**, University College Dublin and Chair of the National Biodiversity Forum

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There is good alignment between Irish, European and global strategies and action plans on biodiversity, which is extremely important.

We (people attending the conference) know that there is a crisis and now are focused on how to resolve it rather than simply discussing what is going on. However, it is important to bear in mind that not everyone understands or cares, however, and it is clear that impactful communication is still essential. We need to inject urgency, since the current approach is not working, and on a fundamental level many of the important indicators are in the wrong direction.

We need to take a solutions-oriented approach – we know what we have to do to save many species, even with small changes, the ideas are there but they need support – implementation is key. The example was discussed of the Fingal County Council biodiversity plan, which openly stated that it would not halt biodiversity loss in Fingal due to a lack of resources.

The wealth of grass-roots enthusiasm for action should be celebrated; we need to do more and provide adequate resourcing to foster and support community initiatives to create the right enabling environment; this includes supporting and engaging with the Business for Biodiversity Platform and other initiatives and actors.

There was a strong emphasis throughout the conference on partnership and a whole-of-society, whole-of-government approach which requires transparency and breaking down of silos, getting different government departments to talk to each other on biodiversity and getting more government departments into (conferences like this) in the future. Voter concern on biodiversity needs to be more apparent to more politicians.

Bottom-up ideas and enthusiasm needs to be combined with top-down leadership – we can't just rely on a groundswell of enthusiasm. We need more resourcing and more capacity building; many sessions pointed out the shortage of people with the right skill sets to process information and give the kind of advice needed.

The conference represents another important step forward for Ireland in terms of understanding the biodiversity crisis and the steps we urgently need to take to protect and restore biodiversity for people in Ireland today and in the future.





## Closing remarks from NPWS

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### Malcolm Noonan

Minister of State for Housing  
and Electoral Reform

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**“ Anyone that works in this area knows that communities are at the heart of biodiversity conservation. That’s why we’re doing everything we can to support them as owners, managers and advocates for nature.”**



# Next steps

## Ireland's fourth NBAP – development and implementation



### Outcomes of the NBAP Breakfast Clinic

The following is a summary of the main comments and questions raised by attendees during the NBAP Breakfast Clinic, as collated and summarised by KPMG.

- Better coherence between Heritage in Schools and Green Schools programme would prevent duplication of effort and maximise effective use of resources. Ecological studies should be incorporated into primary and secondary curricula as a core subject.
- Field ecology groups such as The Dublin Naturalists Field Club and Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland should have been consulted as part of stakeholder engagement on the first draft of the NBAP.
- Improve funding, capacity for and recognition of environmental non-governmental organisation activities and community groups.
- Agricultural intensification needs to be addressed via reduced pesticide and herbicide use and cattle stock numbers. Stopping peatland drainage should be a key aim of the NBAP as drainage turns peatlands from carbon sink to source.
- Communication around the issue of biodiversity needs to be improved. All forms of media need to be used to communicate the message of biodiversity conservation throughout society.
- A representative from Dublin Zoo queried whether actions relating to ex-situ conservation measures will be included in full in the NBAP.
- The NBAP needs Key Performance Indicators that adequately track progress. Will Action Owners identified in the NBAP be obliged to fulfil their assigned actions?
- Will the NBAP have legal backing similar to the 2021 Climate Act? Will a legally binding Biodiversity Duty be included in the NBAP?
- 'Numbers of publications' is not a meaningful Key Performance Indicators for the NBAP.
- Marine conservation: All fishing groups are not represented at the Conference. Are significant efforts underway to engage all stakeholders in relation to fishing and aquaculture NBAP actions?
- Will a new programme for invasive species management be outlined in the NBAP?
- The OPW must take a leadership role in delivering certain actions in the NBAP given their extensive role in land and waterway management.

**The recommendations from the conference will be considered as part of the Public Consultation Process which will underpin the drafting of the 4th NBAP.**





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