



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Eco-Scheme

DAFM Staff Jan 2023

Aidan Mullally

Key Learning



- Background to Eco-Scheme.
- Overview of Agricultural Practice^{*} 1 Space for Nature
- Overview of Agricultural Practice^{*} 2 Extensive Livestock Production
- Overview of Agricultural Practice 3 Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage
- Overview of Agricultural Practice^{*} 4 Planting of Native Trees and Hedgerows
- Overview of Agricultural Practice 5 Use of GPS Controlled Spreaders / Sprayers
- Overview of Agricultural Practice 6 Soil Sampling and Appropriate Liming
- Overview of Agricultural Practice 7 Planting of a Break Crop
- Overview of Agricultural Practice 8 Sowing of a Multi Species Sward

^{*} *Enhanced Practice counts as 2 x Eco Scheme actions*

Administration of the Eco-Scheme



- The Eco-Scheme application process will be online, integrated with the BISS application and administered by Direct Payments in Portlaoise.
- Intended that Eco-Scheme payments will issue to farmers annually (Oct / Dec) – Similar timeline to BISS payment.
- Eligibility – All **active farmers** who make commitments to observe agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment.
- Farmer can opt in/out on annual basis, can change agricultural practices annually.
- Farmer must successfully deliver **two** agricultural practices to qualify for an Eco-Scheme payment.

Administration of the Eco-Scheme



- The Eco-Scheme is costed based on income foregone and costs incurred in accordance with Art 31 (7) (b).
- Intend to only partially compensate but some flexibility to increase payment rates if uptake is low.
- In as much as possible trying to avoid overlap of actions with ACRES from double funding, administration, compliance etc.
- Depending on uptake, payment rate is approx. €77/ha/yr.

What is the Eco-Scheme?



Agri-Environmental Scheme that rewards Farmers for undertaking actions that are beneficial to **climate, biodiversity, water quality** and the **environment**.



Eco-Scheme – Agricultural Practices



AP1

Space for Nature

AP2

Extensive Livestock
Production

AP3

Limiting Chemical Nitrogen
Usage

AP4

Planting Native Trees and
Hedgerows

AP5

Use of GPS Controlled
fertiliser
Spreaders/Sprayers

AP6

Soil Sampling and
Appropriate Liming

AP7

Planting of a Break Crop

AP8

Sowing of a Multi Species
Sward

- 8 AP's - Farmers are required to select and complete 2 APs annually.
- Three enhanced options AP1, AP2 and AP4, can count as 2 actions where obligation is met.
- Criteria for each Agricultural Practice is set out in the Eco-Scheme section of the BISS Terms and Conditions.

Agricultural Practice 1



1. Space for Nature (Non-productive areas and landscape features) – 7% Baseline / 10% Enhanced

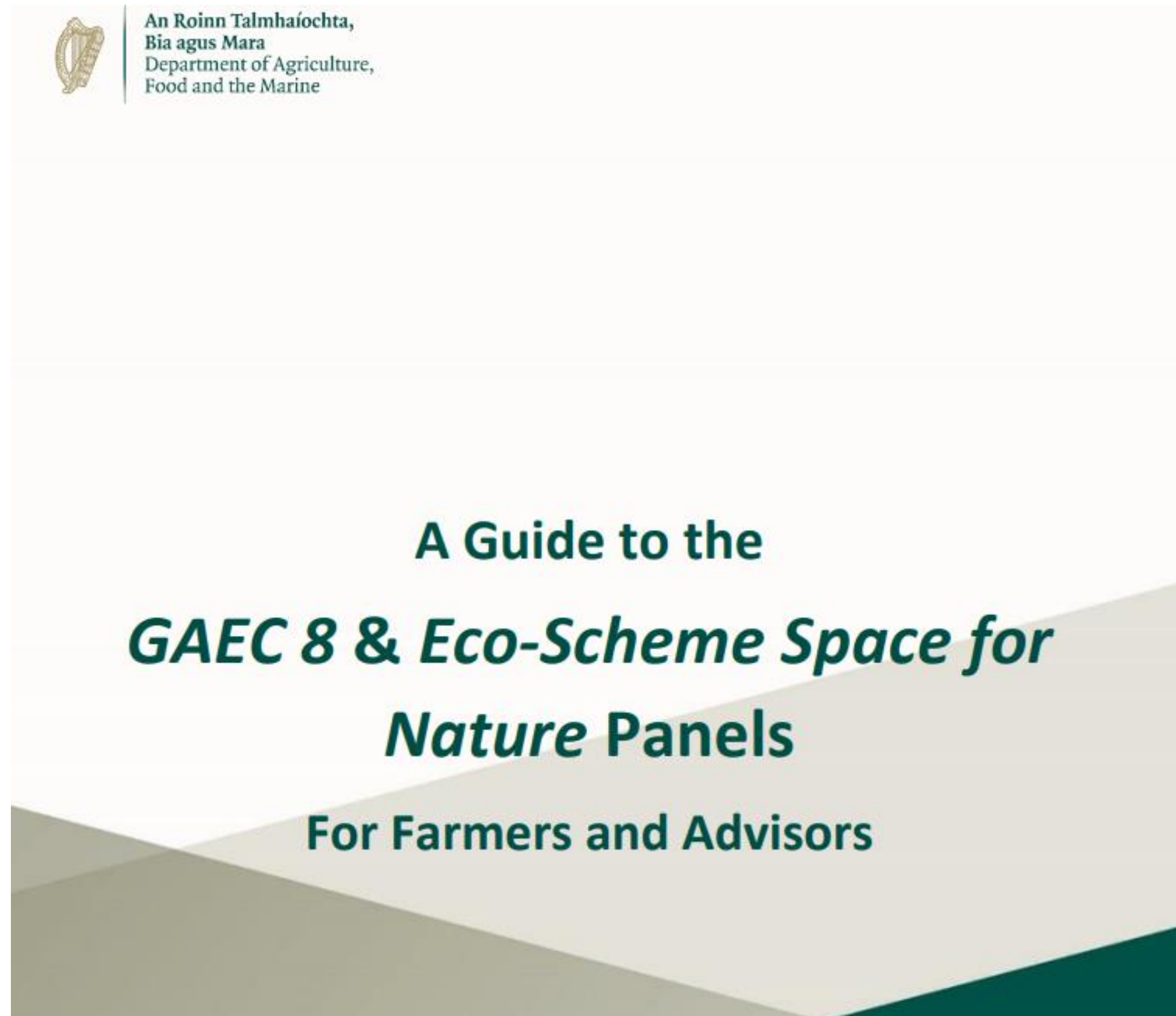
Farmers who devote at least 7% (baseline) of Eligible Hectares to Space for Nature – Meets 1 Eco-Scheme action.

Enhanced Option (Counts as 2 practices): *Farmers who devote at least 10% of their area to Space for Nature.*

Eco-Scheme Space for Nature Feature/ crop types.	
Copse	Habitat
Designated Habitat	Natura - Scrub
Fallow	Scrub/Rock
Habitat	Rock
Orchard	ASSAP - Riparian Zone
Scrub	Pond
Wild Bird Cover	Hedge
Woodland	Drain
Stone Walls	Margin/Buffer (Arable)
Trees	



Check Space for Nature Estimates



Space for Nature Guide for
Farmers and Advisors
available on
www.gov.ie/dafm

Agricultural Practices 2 and 3



2. Extensive Livestock Production

Maximum overall stocking rate of 1.4LU / ha for the calendar year. Minimum stocking rate requirements similar to ANC (0.10LU/ha). Based on previous years stocking rate. Enhanced Option: Max stocking rate of 1.2LU/ha

3. Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage

Stocking rate band will be presented based on previous year's data. Tillage farmers will have limit of 139.41kgs N/ha .



Grassland stocking rate in 2022 (kgs organic nitrogen per ha)	Max permitted application of chemical Nitrogen in 2023 (kgs per ha)
≤90	73
>90-130	89
>130-170	165
>170-210	240
>210	214

Agricultural Practices 4 and 5

4. Planting of Native Trees/Hedgerows

A minimum planting rate of 3 native trees OR 1 metre of hedgerow per eligible hectare per annum.

Enhanced Options (counts as 2 actions):

- *6 native trees/ha OR*
- *2 metres of hedgerow/ha OR*
- *3 native trees AND 1 metre of hedgerow/ha*

List of Tree Species and Hedgerow Species listed on Eco Scheme section of the BISS T&Cs



5. Use of GPS Controlled Spreader and/or Sprayer

Application of all chemical fertiliser (compound or liquid) and/or plant protection products to be applied with a GPS controlled spreader or sprayer. Can be own machine or contractor service.

Agricultural Practices 6, 7 and 8



6. Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming

Carry out soil sampling on all eligible hectares and apply lime in accordance with the soil test results where appropriate (only available as an Eco-Scheme action every 3 years once selected).

7. Planting a Break Crop

Planting of a break crop (beans, peas, oilseed rape or oats or any combination of these crops) on at least 20% of the arable area.

8. Sowing a Multi Species Sward

Sowing of a multi species sward on at least 7% of eligible hectares in the year the action is selected.

Agricultural Practices - Timelines



AP 1. Space for Nature

1st January – 31st December

AP 2. Extensive Livestock Production

1st January – 31st December 2022 (based on 2022 stocking rate)

1st January – 31st December **2023** (where farmer opts to use current year stocking rate)

AP 3. Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage

1st January – 15th September 2023. (Future years 16th Sept - 15th Sept)

AP 4. Planting Native Trees and Hedges

1st October **2022** – 30 Sept 2023

AP 5. Use of GPS Controlled Spreaders / Sprayers

1st January – 15th Sept 2023. (Future years 16th Sept – 15th Sept)

AP 6. Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming

16th September **2022** – 15th Sept 2023

AP 7. Planting of a Break Crop

1st October **2022** – 15th July 2023

AP 8. Sowing of a Multi Species Sward

1st October **2022** – 15th July



Eco-Scheme Validations / Compliance Checks



AP 1. Space for Nature

On The Spot Check (OTSC), Admin Checks

AP 2. Extensive Livestock Production

ANC / AIM data

AP 3. Limiting Chemical Nitrogen Usage

On The Spot Check (OTSC) and Fertiliser Database (when operational), receipts.

AP 4. Planting Native Trees and Hedges

On The Spot Check (OTSC), Receipts

AP 5. Use of GPS Controlled Spreaders / Sprayers

On The Spot Check (OTSC) / TAMS / Receipts

AP 6. Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming

Lab Reports / Fertiliser database (when operational) / receipts.

AP 7. Planting of a Break Crop

On The Spot Check (OTSC) / Receipts

AP 8. Sowing of a Multi Species Sward

On The Spot Check (OTSC) / Receipts



Eco-Scheme Penalty



Example where Eco-Payment is €77 per/ha/yr:

Farmer with 32ha delivers 2 practices = Eco payment of €2,464 ($€77 \times 32$).

Penalty applies to overall Eco-Payment

Farmer with 32ha delivers 1 practice and fails to deliver 2nd practice = ($€38.50 \times 32$) = €1,232 – 10% penalty on total expected Eco payment (€246.4) = Eco Payment of €985.6 (Difference of €1478.4 or 60% reduction in payment)

Farmer with 32ha fails to deliver any practices = (0×32) = €0 – 20% penalty on total expected Eco payment (charge of €492.8)

Summary



- Apply online at same time as BISS (annually thereafter).
- Participation is voluntary
- Payment on Eligible Hectare and NOT linked to entitlements .
- List of 8 agricultural practices beneficial for climate, environment, water quality & biodiversity to choose from – 2 practices to be complete annually.
- Greatest uptake will be - AP1 Space for Nature
- Farmers can review their Space for Nature estimate - edits
- Scheme administered by DAFM Direct Payments section Portlaoise.

A scenic landscape featuring a hill with ruins, a church, and a valley under a cloudy sky. The foreground is a grassy field with yellow wildflowers. In the middle ground, a hill is covered in lush green trees and bushes. At the top of the hill, there are ruins of a stone structure, possibly a castle or fort. Below the ruins, a small stone church with a bell tower is visible. A dirt path leads up the hill towards the ruins. In the background, a valley with fields and a small town is visible, with mountains in the distance under a cloudy sky.

Thank You