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

Report on the Recommendations and Calls to Action of Citizens' Assembly and Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss

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Prepared by the National Parks and Wildlife Service
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Foreword

The Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss and the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss provided an opportunity to give voice to people of all ages living in Ireland on the important topic of biodiversity. I am grateful to the members of the Assemblies who invested considerable time and energy in this vitally important process and welcome the opportunity to present the Government response to the Recommendations and Calls to Action of the Assemblies. I would like to especially thank the members of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss for their unique insights in their Calls to Action. Both Assemblies have enabled time and space for debate on the emergency that is biodiversity loss. I believe that trust was built and a greater understanding of the issues facing biodiversity across society was achieved.

It is heartening to see that the Recommendations and Calls to Action of the Assemblies are aligned with many of our existing policies, and that many are already in progress. We have expanded the network of National Parks and Nature Reserves across the country, including establishing new ones, and increasing investment in those we already have. There is better oversight of public expenditure that impacts biodiversity, with new systems to track and report on measures that improve or adversely affect biodiversity. We have committed to review nature governance across the State, including the roles and responsibilities of Government Departments, Bodies and Agencies in relation to biodiversity action. We are exploring the ways in which the rights of nature could be formally recognised, including the potential for constitutional change, a key recommendation of the Citizens' Assembly.

It is important for us now to reflect further on the voices of the Assemblies and to identify new pathways to deliver on their ambition. The National Restoration Plan to be developed under the recently approved EU Nature Restoration Regulation will provide further opportunities to reverse biodiversity loss.

Malcolm Noonan T.D.

Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform

1 Background

1. The Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss (CABL) was convened as a commitment in the Programme for Government, in recognition of the vital role that biodiversity plays in the continued health of our society, economy, species and planet.
2. The CABL published its report in March 2023 and agreed 159 Recommendations, including 73 high level and 86 sectoral specific recommendations, reflecting the depth and breadth of the topics discussed.
3. The first Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss (CYPABL) was convened in October 2022 and brought together 35 randomly selected members aged 7–17 from across Ireland to explore, discuss and create calls to action on how to protect and restore biodiversity in Ireland.
4. The CYPABL published their report in April 2023 with 58 Calls to Action, under seven themes.
5. The Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly were deliberated by the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Environment and Climate Action, who held a series of engagements with stakeholders, including members of the Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss.
6. Following public engagement and written submissions, the Joint Oireachtas Committee published their report in December 2023, containing 86 Recommendations.
7. Building on the written submissions to the Joint Oireachtas Committee, the National Parks and Wildlife Service examined the Recommendations and Calls to Action of both Assemblies and the Joint Oireachtas Committee and sought interdepartmental input.
8. A report on draft responses to the Assemblies was presented to the Senior Officials Group on the Environment and Climate Change for review and discussion. Suggested revisions are incorporated in this final report.

9. The NPWS analysed the commonalities between the Recommendations from the Joint Oireachtas Committee and those of the Assemblies, seeking input from Departments as necessary. This analysis is included in Appendix I.

2 Analysis of Recommendations and Calls to Action

10. In some instances, the Recommendations and Calls to Action of the Assemblies are complex and multifaceted. Many are considered by existing policies including, but not limited to the National Biodiversity Action Plan, the Climate Action Plan and the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan.

11. Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan was published in January and strives for a 'whole of government, whole of society' approach to the governance and conservation of biodiversity. This Plan is an umbrella policy, which, together with focussed biodiversity action, draws out biodiversity relevant actions from other policies.

12. Of the 159 Recommendations of the CABL, 134 (84.3%) are considered in progress, 15 (9.4%) are being implemented and 10 (6.3%) are not being implemented. 52 (89.7%) of the 58 Calls to Action of CYPABL are considered in progress, three (5.2%) are being implemented and three (5.2%) are not being implemented.

13. In progress means that elements of the Recommendation or Calls to Action are incorporated into existing Government policies/strategies/action plans. This Report does not give an analysis of the degree of implementation or the effectiveness of implementation of any commitments.

14. It is encouraging that a considerable proportion of the Recommendations and Calls to Action are considered Implemented or In progress. The implementation of a National Restoration Plan (NRP) under the EU Nature Restoration Regulation will further advance progress. It is clear, however, that additional enhanced and targeted approaches are needed at scale to meet the full ambition

[1] Numbers are rounded to 0.1%, and as a result totals may display small discrepancies

of the Assemblies and reverse the trends of biodiversity loss.

3 Areas that warrant further additional consideration

15. The Assemblies and Joint Oireachtas Committee call for increased training, education and awareness of biodiversity. The 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan allows for progress in this area, but does not fully address the calls for mandatory biodiversity training across the civil service, or for education programmes on biodiversity to be introduced across a wide range of sectors.

16. There are calls for closer examination of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), particularly in relation to flooding. The establishment of a national strategy for NBS warrants further consideration.

17. The Joint Oireachtas Committee recommend the use of natural capital accounting to support biodiversity goals. The recently published Natural Capital Accounting Guide from the National, Economic and Social Council (NESC) advocates for the use of this approach to inform decision-making. A collective vision on progressing Natural Capital Accounts is required.

18. The Joint Oireachtas Committee suggests that regulations be introduced to require the re-use and recycling of precious metals and materials, and that enforcement of such regulations should be prioritised over the use or extraction of new materials in order to protect biodiversity. This is a complex issue that is worthy of further deliberation by relevant Departments.

19. There are calls for biodiversity to be additionally considered in the planning process, including an exploration of the concept of Net Gain. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are engaging with public authorities and private sector champions in this area who are testing these principles.

20. There were several recommendations relating to raising revenue for biodiversity through appropriate taxation or penalties. There is a commitment for a high-level review of fiscal policy, however further consideration should be given to exploring all avenues.

4 Next Steps

21. Officials in the NPWS will work closely with colleagues in the interdepartmental Biodiversity Working Group to address any perceived shortfall in delivering appropriate action to deliver on the ambition of the Assemblies.

22. The 4th NBAP will be updated in 2027 to include further actions for biodiversity identified through this process and to reflect the National Restoration Plan.

23. The reporting outputs associated with relevant national policy documents will be reviewed to determine the effectiveness of government policy on reversing the trends of biodiversity loss, in particular the review of the 4th NBAP.

24. Progress in delivery of action for biodiversity will be tracked via the reporting mechanism outlined for delivery of the 4th NBAP. The Biodiversity Working Group will report to the relevant Senior Officials Group twice a year and a report will be brought to Cabinet annually.

5 Recommendations of the Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
1	The State must take prompt, decisive and urgent action to address biodiversity loss and restoration and must provide leadership in protecting Ireland's biodiversity for future generations.	Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) was launched in January and is the first such Plan to be on a statutory footing, meaning that certain public bodies must report on the measures adopted in support of biodiversity. The NBAP outlines obligations for the Minister to report on progress of implementation of the Plan at least once a year, bringing this report to Cabinet annually. The 4th NBAP also includes a suite of actions around the establishment and implementation of a National Restoration Plan to contribute to the ambition of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and global restoration targets. Ireland had a leadership role in stewarding the Nature Restoration Regulation to approval in the European Institutions.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
2	The Assembly believes that the State has comprehensively failed to adequately fund, implement and enforce existing national legislation, national policies, EU biodiversity-related laws and directives related to biodiversity. This must change.	The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Strategic Action Plan is in progress. Exchequer resources for the implementation of action for biodiversity is available. Budget 2023 provided for the establishment of an Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund, with €3.15 billion available for climate and nature spending between 2026 and 2030. The supporting legislation for this fund was passed by the Oireachtas in June 2024. The 4th NBAP commits to reviewing licensing and consent systems to facilitate sustainable activities within Natura 2000 sites, reviewing aspects of the legislative framework and to increase compliance through enhanced resourcing for enforcement. Objective 2 of the NBAP outlines a suite of actions relating to urgent conservation and restoration needs.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
3	The ambition of the State needs to be significantly increased to reflect the scale of Ireland's biodiversity crisis. Adequate funding must be made available to address this crisis. This is likely to require substantial and sustained increases in expenditure, which should be made available immediately and guaranteed in the long term.	Funding for individual policy measures will be proposed by Departments with responsibility for those particular areas and will be considered and approved in the context of the annual Estimate process. An additional €3.15 billion will be made available for climate and nature spending between 2026 and 2030.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
4	The responsibility for the implementation and enforcement of biodiversity related legislation, directives and policies by all state bodies and agencies must be made clear, with each body/agency held publicly accountable for their performance. This should be supported by an independent review of implementation and enforcement of biodiversity related legislation, directives and policies.	Action 1B2 of the 4th NBAP commits the NPWS to conduct a review of nature governance, including the roles and responsibilities of Government Departments, Bodies and Agencies as they relate to the achievement of biodiversity actions and commitments. The NPWS Review also provided an independent review of many elements of the NPWS work programme. The 4th NBAP is the first such Plan to be published on a statutory footing, with a Biodiversity Duty under the Wildlife Amendment Act 2023 that will ensure that relevant public bodies are held accountable for their performance. There will be oversight by a Senior Officials Group and the independent Biodiversity Forum has the mandate to provide recommendations to the Minister on any aspects of the National Biodiversity Action Plan.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
5	The State must provide, communicate and implement a plan for the conservation and restoration of biodiversity for the benefit of its people.	The 4th NBAP commits to the development of a National Restoration Plan, as mandated in the Nature Restoration Regulation.	In progress
6	Local leadership, local communities and the activities of the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) sector must be actively developed and resourced to assist the State in addressing the biodiversity crisis.	The Heritage Council is rolling out the Local Authority Biodiversity Officer Programme, with the aim of having at least one Biodiversity Officer in every Local Authority by the end of 2024. The NPWS operates the Local Biodiversity Action Fund and the Peatland Engagement Scheme. The NPWS also provides support for the Community Foundation Ireland Biodiversity Grant scheme among others. eNGOs are involved in many of these schemes.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
7	In taking action to protect and restore biodiversity, nature-based solutions aimed at protecting, sustainably managing and restoring ecosystems should be prioritised where possible.	The promotion of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) is referenced throughout the 4th NBAP. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) includes measures for NBS in coastal and marine systems. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) published *Nature-based Solutions for the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas* for urban planning and design professionals and the OPW is actively pursuing a NBS approach. NPWS are actively engaged in escalating efforts to restore degraded habitats.	In progress
8	As a matter of urgency areas and species of High Nature Value, including but not limited to the national network of Natura 2000 sites and protected species, should be protected from further degradation through the implementation and enforcement of existing legislation and directives.	There are a number of actions in the 4th NBAP to address areas and species of High Nature Value: - Restoration programmes will be developed through the National Restoration Plan - The NPWS publish and implement Species Action or Threat Response Plans with population targets for threatened and endangered species that are in Unfavourable status or have declining trends. - Publication of Management plans for National Parks.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	Management plans should also include restoration programmes.	- Development of restoration plans for Blanket bogs. - Implementation of Raised bog action plans. DAFM and the NPWS are collaborating on a new €25m breeding wader EIP. The 4th NBAP commits to the delivery of a National Restoration Plan with specified targets for the restoration of Annex I habitat types, as required under the Nature Restoration Regulation.	
9	Ireland's varied land and seascapes across and around the island must be supported, and appropriate monitoring systems designed to suit their local environment. Higher incentives and supports should be provided to prioritise the preservation and restoration of rare and threatened species.	Monitoring Is in progress through Articles 12 and 17 of the Birds and Habitats Directives and through obligations under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the National Emission Ceilings Directive (NECD) linked to actions under NBAP Objective 4. DAFM have awarded a contract will undertake long-term biodiversity monitoring to evaluate related measures under the CAP strategic Plan. Actions under Objective 2 of the 4th NBAP cover incentives for preservation and restoration of rare species, including: NPWS	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		Farm Plans; CAP Agri-climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES); LIFE projects; European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs), notably for the pearl mussel and breeding waders. NPWS are also rolling out a conservation programme that will support the rare and threatened species and habitat for species.	

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
10	Ireland needs to recognise its global responsibility, including through our local actions, in terms of our consumerism, resource usage and our international biodiversity responsibilities. The State should advocate for a shift in emphasis in EU and international economic policy away from GDP expansion as a goal in itself and towards the goals of societal and ecological wellbeing.	The Programme for Government commits to develop processes to advance social solidarity, equality of opportunity, and reach ecological harmony and economic equity. In this regard, progress continues to be made on developing, monitoring and embedding Ireland's well-being framework into the policy-making system. The second iteration of the Beyond GDP – Quality of Life Assessment was published on Budget Day 2024. The latest analysis provides a positive picture of how living standards in Ireland are progressing, as well as identifying areas where further progress is required. The report also includes distributional analysis of the impact of the tax and welfare changes introduced in Budget 2024, as well as further analysis from a gender, equality and green budgeting perspective to complement more traditional macro-fiscal analysis. In addition, discussions on well-being took place at the National Economic Dialogue, and the annual well-being progress report was published. From an international perspective, there is ongoing engagement with and support for the European Commission	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		and OECD's work on emphasising the importance of well-being considerations and enhancing the use of distributional analysis in policy development. Action 5B1 of the 4th NBAP commits to increase Ireland's Overseas Development Aid contributions to biodiversity-related projects. In action 3B11, the Business for Biodiversity Ireland platform commits to engage with businesses to become nature positive, to include analysis of supply chains.	
11	An all-island approach and wider transboundary approach should be taken into consideration with regard to biodiversity conservation and restoration.	Cross-border initiatives such as PEACEPLUS and the Shared Island Initiative are proceeding. There is increased ambition for cross-border collaboration throughout the 4th NBAP, particularly in relation to research and to work on Invasive Alien Species (IAS).	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
12	The State should renew and stand by its commitment to implement the objectives and targets of the EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy and play a leading and supportive role in the adoption and implementation of a new EU Nature Restoration Regulation.	The 4th NBAP commits to the developing a National Restoration Plan, expanding protected areas, developing Species Action Plans to ensure no deterioration of trends of EU protected species. Ireland had a leadership role in stewarding the Nature Restoration Regulation to approval in the European Institutions.	In progress
13	All Governmental Departments must explicitly acknowledge the State's declaration of a Biodiversity Emergency and take immediate and targeted action.	The 4th NBAP is on a statutory footing and proposes that each entity responsible for actions in the Plan report on the progress of implementation. In addition, relevant public bodies are bound by a Biodiversity Duty which requires them to report on how they have given due consideration to biodiversity in their programmes of work.	In progress
14	All biodiversity incentives and grants should be results-based,	The evolution towards results-based schemes has built on the work of LIFE projects, EIPs and the NPWS Farm Plan Scheme, resulting in a broader uptake of results-based schemes as part	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	supported by monitoring and evaluation.	of the CAP Strategic Plan. Other grants could be considered as results-based, if provided as seed funding to grow organisations or to engage local communities.	
15	People in primary production industries should implement practices that conserve biodiversity and be incentivised for biodiversity enhancement and associated ecosystem service provision.	Further to the supports within the CAP Strategic Plan, the Food Vision 2030 Strategy aims to deliver significant benefits for the Irish agri-food sector through a sustainable food systems approach. The Strategy includes primary agriculture, food and drink processing and manufacturing, fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing, forestry and forestry process and the equine sector. The Strategy takes a systematic approach to addressing the challenge of ensuring that Ireland can continue to produce high quality foods in a manner that protects the environment and mitigates climate change. Protection conservation and enhancement of biodiversity is a key tenet of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), and the related European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), which provides funding for measures aligned with the objectives	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		of the CFP. EMFAF, is the primary funding package for the Irish seafood sector, and provides funding to fishers and aquaculture producers to support measures related to these objectives. Fishers work with both the Marine Institute and Bord Iascaigh Mhara to implement conservation measures in marine areas. The Forestry Programme 2023-2027 was created in alignment with Ireland's Forest Strategy and as such, is designed to provide lasting benefits for many key areas including climate change, biodiversity, wood production, employment alongside enhancing societal benefits. The Afforestation Scheme offers a choice of 12 forest types including Native Forests (FT1) and Forests for Water (FT2). FT1 promotes native forest biodiversity, within the wider landscape, to deliver ecosystem services such as soil and water protection and landscape enhancement. FT2 aims to create new native forest in strategic locations, where this landuse change would deliver specific ecosystem services regarding the protection of water and aquatic ecosystems or	

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		would reinforce and expand areas of alluvial forests. Other schemes include the Native Woodland Conservation Scheme, which is aimed at the restoration of existing native woodland through the provision of financial support to forest owners towards the cost of appropriate works. Disclosures under the EU Taxonomy legislation may lead to green investment to primary producers.	
16	The State must work with all stakeholders to review Ireland's current food policy in the context of the biodiversity crisis, particularly in agriculture and marine sectors, to balance between the affordability and quality of food. This review must take into consideration vulnerable sections of the	The National Food Waste Prevention Roadmap considers biodiversity objectives.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	population and ensure reasonable standards of living, and result in a plan to address these issues.		
17	The Irish business community needs to engage with biodiversity and show leadership in the same way that they have begun to engage with the issue of the climate crisis.	Government are creating an enabling environment through support for the Business for Biodiversity Ireland platform. There will be reporting requirements for many businesses under the EU Taxonomy Regulation and the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD).	In progress
18	In order to drastically reduce the use of pesticides by at least 50% by 2030 in line with EU policy, the State should incentivise and encourage the domestic and commercial use of natural, cost friendly alternatives, sustainable practices and biodiversity-friendly	Ireland supports the overall objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) continues to regulate the sale and use of pesticides in accordance with the existing rigorous EU regulatory framework.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	solutions. It should also regulate the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers, while maintaining food security. This should coincide with the improvement of schemes for the safe disposal of unused hazardous materials, as well as their containers.		
19	Examples of good practice in relation to biodiversity protection and enhancement should be actively identified and supported with funding, infrastructure and other supports provided to enable replication or expansion of these practices, in partnership with those who design and operate such initiatives and schemes, e.g. the	The learnings of various LIFE, EIP, Horizon and NPWS Farm Plan projects are being incorporated into agriculture policy. The *Best Practice in Raised Bog Restoration* guidance document has been published. Similar guidelines are being developed for blanket bogs. There are many guidance documents produced by the All-Island Pollinator Plan (AIPP).	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	Burren Programme, Biodiversity Regeneration In a Dairying Environment (BRIDE) programme and the Sustainable Uplands Agri-environment Scheme (SUAS).		
20	The State is urged to take into account the recommendations from the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss, an initiative featuring our next generation, and continue to engage with children and young people on the environment.	Action 1D10 of the 4th NBAP will support the establishment of a Children and Young People's Biodiversity Forum. The Calls to Action of the CYAPBL are considered by this report.	In progress
21	There must be a whole of State approach to drafting and implementing a new statutory National Biodiversity Plan, aligned	The Wildlife Amendment Bill 2023 places the NBAP on a statutory footing with a pre-determined cycle. A 'Whole-of-Government, whole-of society' was undertaken to	Implemented

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	with the Climate Action Plan, supported by legislation and properly funded. This and subsequent plans must not be constrained by electoral cycles and should have clearly defined ecological targets (e.g. the number of species on the at-risk list to be halved), with appropriate monitoring and timelines, to which all parties at national, regional and local levels are fully committed.	draft the 4th NBAP and it is aligned with the relevant elements of the Climate Action Plan. The 4th NBAP includes SMART targets.	
22	There should be a senior ministerial position, with an associated Department, with responsibility for biodiversity.	The establishment of a senior ministerial position is a matter for consideration at Government formation.	Not being implemented

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
23	There should be a permanent, cross-party Standing Oireachtas Committee on Biodiversity Loss, which will consider and respond to the recommendations of this Assembly, within 6 to 12 months.	Biodiversity is considered under the remit of the Joint Oireachtas Committee for Climate and the Environment and this committee has considered and responded to the recommendations of the CABL. It is a matter for the Oireachtas to give further consideration to this recommendation.	In progress
24	There should be a new national independent agency to act as a centralised biodiversity coordinating structure to: i. Coordinate: a. Government Departments in their biodiversity-related actions. b. Government policy and ensure the coherence of these policies. ii. Coordinate budgets related to	The NPWS has been established as an executive agency and is responsible for most of these functions. The Biodiversity Forum provides independent oversight for the NBAP, however it does not have a statutory footing. The establishment of Biodiversity Advisory Council (to align with the Climate Change Advisory Council) is a matter for Government.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	biodiversity actions. iii. Drive consultation around biodiversity actions. iv. Oversee and coordinate enforcement organisations. v. Implement, monitor and report biodiversity actions transparently. vi. Oversee education and public engagement related to biodiversity. vii. Oversee and coordinate research and data collection. viii. Act as a point of contact for members of the public and industry to liaise with supports related to biodiversity conservation and restoration. ix. Act in alignment with the Climate Change Advisory Council.		

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	x. Set up an Emergency Task Force.		
25	The new National Biodiversity Plan and all policies related to biodiversity action at national and local level should be developed in partnership with the people and sectors most affected by changes (i.e. local communities, farmers, fishers, business, etc.). In many cases consultation has to move beyond the current status quo, with trust having to be rebuilt and relationships realigned.	The 4th NBAP was developed through public consultation, including through the 2nd National Biodiversity Conference held in 2022. The 4th NBAP proposes enhanced outreach across sectors via the Biodiversity Forum. The NPWS appointed a Head of Engagement and Communications in 2023. Ongoing LIFE projects carry out community engagement.	Implemented
26	The new National Biodiversity Plan should have clear targets with ambitious and achievable timelines	The 4th NBAP includes SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) targets. Regional and local targets are set through local plans mandated at national level.	Implemented

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	at national, regional and county level for halting biodiversity loss, restoring and enhancing biodiversity.		
27	In addition to recent developments in judicial structures in environment and planning, the State must develop an environmental court at Circuit and District Court levels, in order to hold policy makers, businesses and citizens to account.	The planning system is the most appropriate and effective place to deal with planning concerns and there are established processes in place already (that are subject to ongoing review). Furthermore, it would not appear that there is a sufficient volume of work at Circuit or District level to justify a separate environmental court. The major litigation in the environmental and planning area is in the area of Judicial Review, where the High Court has exclusive first instance jurisdiction under the Constitution. To that end, a dedicated Planning and Environmental Court has recently been established in the High Court.	Not being implemented

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
28	All citizens should be empowered with 'legal standing' to protect nature and biodiversity in court.	There is a commitment in the 4th NBAP for the NPWS to explore the ways in which the rights of nature could be formally recognised.	In progress
29	Each local authority must have at least one full-time dedicated biodiversity officer, the total number of which should be determined by population density, land mass and coastline.	At least one full time Biodiversity Officer is now in place in 24 Local Authorities (March 2024), with a target to have a Biodiversity Officer in all 31 Local Authorities by the end of 2024. The total number of Biodiversity Officers is not linked to population density, landmass, coastline or to biodiversity hotspots.	In progress
30	All relevant Departments, bodies and agencies that deal with biodiversity should have in-house ecological expertise to advise on all biodiversity related policies and activities.	Action 1B3 of the 4th NBAP is for all relevant Departments and Government Bodies to explore the biodiversity expertise and training requirements across Government to ensure the appropriate expertise is available to implement the Plan – this is the first step towards implementing this recommendation. Some Departments have increased biodiversity expertise in recent years.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
31	There should be a referendum of the people to amend the Constitution with a view to protecting biodiversity. The proposal to amend the Constitution should include: a. Human substantive environmental rights, e.g. a right to a clean, healthy, safe environment; a right to a stable and healthy climate; rights of future generations to these or other environmental rights. b. Human procedural environmental rights, e.g. the Aarhus rights regarding access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making and	Action 1C2 of 4th NBAP is for the NPWS to explore the ways in which the rights of nature could be formally recognised, including the potential for constitutional change. Ireland is a signatory to the Aarhus Convention.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	justice in environmental matters. c. Substantive rights of nature, recognising nature as a holder of legal rights, comparable to companies or people e.g. to exist, flourish/perpetuate and be restored if degraded; not to be polluted/harmed/degraded. d. Procedural rights of nature, e.g. to be a party in administrative decision-making, litigation, etc. where rights are impacted/likely to be impacted.		
32	Sufficient funding and resources to meet the challenges of biodiversity loss must be allocated to all relevant bodies to sufficiently protect and enhance biodiversity,	An Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund was announced in Budget 2024. The supporting legislation for this fund was passed by the Oireachtas in June 2024.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	and implement and enforce related national and EU laws, directives and policies. This must be guaranteed in the short and longer term.		
33	The Government's economic strategy needs to continue nurturing and embracing fully the 'Beyond GDP' concept and ensure that the National Well-being Framework, encompassing Environment, Climate and Biodiversity, is at the very core of economic decisions made now and in the future.	Annual reporting across the Budget cycle is advancing the National Well-being Framework into decision-making. DPENDR are advancing further integration of the Framework into policy-making and expenditure. An inter-Departmental Group is driving further integration across Government.	In progress
34	The Well-being Framework for Ireland should be modified so that it more accurately measures	Government has committed to a formal review of the Framework after 4 years (2026). As per recommendation 33, the Wellbeing Framework is reported on annually, featuring across the budget	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	economic, social and environmental progress in Ireland, with the metrics reported alongside GDP as an indication of how well Ireland is doing, and be given a strong role in shaping policy and informing the annual budgetary process.	cycle, including the Summer Economic Statement, which provides forecasting for budgetary decisions.	
35	The State must undertake a comprehensive review of current and future taxation and levy policies, regulations and incentives to assess their impact on biodiversity.	The Department of Finance have committed to include a high-level assessment of biodiversity in certain fiscal measures in the context of Green Budgeting.	In progress
36	The State should significantly increase commitments and long-term funding with specific and targeted tax incentives and tax	The Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund was announced in Budget 2024 and will be operational from 2026 to 2030. The supporting legislation for this fund was passed by the Oireachtas in June 2024.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	breaks to incentivise and support the regenerative economy, green technology and biodiversity activities.	Tax incentives and tax breaks may be considered part of the fiscal measures referred to in recommendation 35.	
37	The Assembly supports the State making Ireland a global leader in sustainable finance models.	Through actions set out in the Ireland for Finance strategy and the Sustainable Finance Roadmap, as well as the adoption of a supportive and realistically ambitious stance in the EU sustainable finance legislation process, Ireland is helping to lead in sustainable finance.	In progress
38	The State should introduce a lower 'green rate' for loans that fund biodiversity initiatives.	The Growth and Sustainability Loan Scheme (GSLS) uses a counter guarantee from the European Investment Fund to make €500 million in competitively priced loans available to SMEs, including primary producers. The scheme provides for long term lending terms of up to ten years. Loans under the GSLS, ranging from €25,000 to €3 million, can enable SMEs to make essential investments in their growth and	Implemented

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		resilience, and, in particular, climate action and environmental sustainability. At least 30% of the scheme's lending capacity is directed towards these areas, which are crucial to Ireland's sustainable transition, and benefit from a further 'green' interest rate discount. Applications can be made online via the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) hub.	
39	Planning levies should include a proportional contribution, ring-fenced to conserve and enhance biodiversity.	The level of contribution, and the types of development to which development contributions should apply and the expenditure of income from development contributions are determined at local authority level, in accordance with the powers vested in elected members in relation to the adoption of Local Authority development contribution schemes.	Not being implemented
40	In addition to a dedicated biodiversity budget, Governmental Departments and agencies should	All current funding is bound by fiscal policy rules.	Not being implemented

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	be permitted to roll over any unspent biodiversity funding into the next year.		
41	The State should establish a framework for corporations and large businesses, as major users of natural resources, to provide financial contributions to fund the conservation and restoration of biodiversity.	Peatland Finance Ireland, seed funded by the NPWS, are working towards the establishment and management of a financing system for peatland restoration. LIFE projects, such as LIFE Wild Atlantic Nature and LIFE SNaP Ireland, have a role in developing pathways for businesses to contribute to biodiversity conservation.	In progress
42	Local Authorities are uniquely placed to deliver biodiversity projects. Biodiversity funding and staff resources in local authorities must be significantly increased. Local authorities must be accountable and report on their	At least one full time Biodiversity Officer now in place in 24 Local Authorities (March 2024), with a target to have a Biodiversity Officer in all 31 Local Authorities by the end of 2024. Heritage Officers also play a key role in Local Authorities in linking in biodiversity objectives with the wider heritage values. Guidelines for Local Authority Biodiversity Action Plans will be published by the Heritage Council 2024. Grant schemes for	In progress

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	biodiversity activities. Current resources must be enhanced, and biodiversity given greater priority in the councils' activities.	Local Authority Biodiversity Officers established by the Heritage Council in 2024 will be expanded in coming years. The Biodiversity Officer role includes mainstreaming of biodiversity action across Local Authority activities.	
43	New sector-specific levies/charges on harmful imports must be introduced and ring-fenced for biodiversity. These should include: i. New sector-specific levies/charges on agricultural exports introduced and ring-fenced for biodiversity. ii. New sector-specific levies/charges on retailers introduced and ring-fenced for biodiversity.	Specific levies on targets or imports would need to be consistent with EU trade policy and must be compliant with WTO rules.	Not being implemented

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44	There should be an immediate review of existing frameworks and mechanisms for the implementation and enforcement of biodiversity policy and legislation. This review should identify those responsible, address gaps in responsibilities and policies, highlight areas with insufficient funding and result in a plan to address these issues.	Action 1B2 of the 4th NBAP commits the NPWS to conduct a review of nature governance, including the roles and responsibilities of Government Departments, bodies and agencies as they relate to the achievement of biodiversity actions and commitments. However, developing a Plan to address areas with insufficient funding will be complex to achieve across Government.	In progress
45	Sanctions for an offence should be proportionate to the offence so they adequately discourage negative behaviour (e.g. penalties should be linked to company turnover), with the offender incurring the cost of undoing the damage. Each Governmental Department,	The 4th NBAP Action 1E3 commits to increase compliance with wildlife legislation. There is an ongoing review and revision of the Environmental Crime Directive underway. The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) is coordinating across Government in relation to Ireland's input to this process. Revisions being considered include an updated list of	In progress

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	organisation and agency responsible for enforcement should be provided with training, a clear remit, have sufficient resourcing and should be held accountable.	environmental crime offences, harmonised sanction types and levels, measures to strengthen international investigation and prosecution, improvements to the collection of statistical data and measures to improve national enforcement chains.	
46	All penalties for any breach of pollution or environmental legislation/regulations should be increased to meaningful economic levels, reflecting all damage caused plus enforcement and restoration costs, with criminal sanction where necessary.	A regulatory review of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (Agriculture) Regulations took place in 2023. The review is ongoing and revised EIA (Agriculture) Regulations are expected as a result of this review. As part of the review and revision of the Environmental Crime Directive, penalties for environmental breaches will be harmonised across EU Member States.	In progress
47	The State must provide a streamlined and easily accessible system of small grants, information and support for the public to	There are existing grant schemes for domestic and non-domestic retrofitting which may support biodiversity objectives, although biodiversity is not a criterion for grant aid.	In progress

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	undertake biodiversity action on residential properties.	The Irish Green Buildings Council, supported by SEAI, launched a new community of practice, a networking group for building professionals and property managers working on biodiversity and the built environment in Ireland. They hosted a webinar series and published a factsheet offering useful insights to those working in the construction and property industry on what can be done to help nature thrive in the built environment. It includes a Biodiversity Checklist of the 10 things to do for a better Built Environment. The All-Island Pollinator Plan (AIPP) has produced a Pollinator-friendly guide for Housing Estate management.	
48	The State must provide funding and infrastructural supports to local community and voluntary groups, including the settled and nomadic Traveller community, and other	Action 1D4 in the 4th NBAP commits the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), DECC and NPWS to build support for community biodiversity initiatives. Funding already exists though the NPWS Small Recorder Grant Scheme, Community Foundation Ireland, LEADER, Local Agenda 21,	Implemented

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	groups engaged in actions addressing biodiversity loss and restoration, e.g. managing invasive species, participating in citizen science, creating biodiverse spaces, and protecting and monitoring the health of the local environment, etc.	Shared Island Fund, the Community Heritage Grants Scheme, Tidy Towns, Climate Justice and the Peatlands Community Engagement Scheme.	
49	The State must continue to promote and support the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan as a way of supporting communities and individuals to contribute to biodiversity initiatives.	The 4th NBAP commits continued support for the AIPP.	Implemented
50	The State must align initiatives in Rural Regeneration and	DRCD have indicated a willingness to support community biodiversity initiatives in the 4th NBAP.	Implemented

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	Development with local, community based biodiversity activities.	Climate Justice is a core programme theme in the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024-2028, with a focus on facilitating a just and equitable transition to a greener economy and society through: Education/awareness programmes and sustainable community initiatives; Supporting advocacy work to promote a just transition to a greener society and economy; and Supporting development of community gardens, community allotments and biodiversity programmes. A number of SICAP Programme Implementers are raising awareness and taking practical steps to mitigate climate change and loss of biodiversity and are focusing on climate justice actions such as raising awareness of, and seeking to mitigate, the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups. Examples include: - South East Cork Area Development (SECAD) has a dedicated SICAP community biodiversity officer, and SICAP Ecology and Wellbeing Officer;	

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		- Through Kerry Social Farming SICAP is supporting all host farms to adopt biodiversity actions on their farms; - Monaghan's SICAP Programme Implementer supported community members in applications for grants for community gardens etc.	
51	The State must ensure the expansion of community gardens and allotments through local authority initiatives in conjunction with private landowners, in both urban and rural communities.	DRCD provide funding for community gardens through a range of programmes that include the Community Services Programme (CSP), CLÁR programme (Measure 1) and the Community Recognition Fund programme.	Implemented
52	The value of NGOs engaged in biodiversity should be recognised in early consultations on all relevant plans, policies and projects.	NGOs contribute to the Biodiversity Forum, a group that provides guidance to the Minister in matters relating to the National Biodiversity Action Plan and participate in various stakeholder fora.	In progress
53	NGOs engaged in biodiversity should be appropriately funded in	See recommendation 54. eNGOs also compete on the open market for targeted schemes with measurable outcomes.	In progress

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	the short, medium and long-term to undertake targeted schemes with measurable outcomes and strict accountability measures.		
54	Core funding should be provided for collaborative work between NGOs and their partners.	Government provide limited core funding for eNGOs.	In progress
55	The public must be encouraged to live in a way which reduces their impact on biodiversity loss. The State must develop public awareness and engagement campaigns on biodiversity and biodiversity loss, to educate people on the fundamental role of biodiversity in our lives and provide resources to inform people on what	A Head of Engagement and Communications has recently been appointed to NPWS. Awareness campaigns are supported through the NPWS Education Officers, the Local Biodiversity Action Fund and through the work of LIFE IP Wild Atlantic Nature, with an action in that project dedicated to raising awareness of the Natura 2000 network. Engagement with citizens and community awareness will be a key objective of all Local Authority Biodiversity Action Plans.	In progress

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	they can do in their own lives to support biodiversity.	Work on these has commenced at local level in areas where Biodiversity Officers are in place.	
56	The State must develop an interactive website and app with easy-to-understand information on how the State and EU work together on environmental issues, where Ireland adheres to EU directives and the penalties of non-adherence. It should provide examples of good practice, information on what individual citizens can do, and details on who to contact for various issues. The website should highlight what collective action is occurring locally that people can participate in.	This recommendation covers many existing websites. Gov.ie is the main repository of information from Government in relation to a range of topics, including climate action, biodiversity and sustainability. DECC is reviewing content on this platform to ensure that all climate and environment related content is as accessible and useful as possible. The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) website provides information on the Community Foundation Ireland Biodiversity grant schemes, Pollinator guidelines, Citizen Science biodiversity data and information. The NPWS website provides information relating to protected sites and species and results relating to reporting under the Nature Directives. The LIFE SNaP Ireland project will deliver a consolidated data infrastructure for delivery of conservation measures on a national scale.	In progress

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57	The State must establish a public information campaign to promote the benefits of buying local and seasonal produce.	In progress via Bord Bia promoting the use of seasonal produce. DAFM published the National Strategy for Horticulture in June 2023 that includes actions to increase demand for local and seasonal produce.	In progress
58	Local authorities should play a central role in informing people of the importance of biodiversity in their areas.	In progress via the Local Biodiversity Action Fund, providing funding to Local Authorities s to carry out awareness projects. Engagement with citizens and community awareness will be a key objective of all Local Authority Biodiversity Action Plans. Work on these has commenced at local level in areas where Biodiversity Officers are in place. Public awareness events will be held during Biodiversity Week, Heritage Week, Hedgerow Week and others.	In progress
59	There should be mandatory and ongoing biodiversity training provided for any civil or public servant whose work impacts on wildlife and biodiversity.	Local Authority Biodiversity Officers will provide biodiversity training for Local Authority staff and elected members, with the support of the Heritage Council.	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		Action 1D11 in the NBAP relates to the roll out of the Nature Skills Training Programmes, however this is not mandatory.	
60	The Natura 2000 biodiversity sites provide opportunities for education for local communities. A programme should be established to promote awareness of the importance and vulnerabilities of these sites.	A Natura 2000 awareness programme being undertaken as part of LIFE IP Wild Atlantic Nature (WAN) project.	In progress
61	The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NWPS) should be funded to expand its education remit to make the public more aware of the importance and current conservation status of our protected habitats and species.	The NPWS have approval to establish a Head of Education position.	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
62	Children and young people are integral to ensuring the environment is protected. In line with the current National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development – ESD to 2030, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth with the Department of Education, the Teaching Council, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, and the Teacher Education Support Service(s) should continue to engage in meaningful curriculum reform and teacher education to explicitly incorporate teaching and learning on biodiversity in early childhood, primary and post-primary curricula.	The 4th NBAP commits to the Department of Education (DOE), the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) and the NPWS to work together to align the aims of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development - ESD to 2030 and the NBAP and to develop and progress mutual actions. The Heritage in Schools Scheme provides a panel of Heritage Specialists who visit primary schools (in-person or virtually) to help children and their teachers learn about and appreciate their local heritage. The Scheme supports the stated aims and objectives of the Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (SESE) curriculum and provides an additional educational tool and resource for teachers. A pilot programme for heritage training (including biodiversity) in secondary schools is in preparation by the Heritage Council.	In progress

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63	In line with the current National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development - ESD to 2030, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and relevant agencies, such as the National Skills Council, Regional Skills Fora, Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, SOLAS etc., should work with further and higher education providers to develop a greater number of easily accessible further and higher education programmes, apprenticeship and community-based education related to biodiversity and environmental sciences.	The 4th NBAP proposes action for DOE, DFHERIS and NPWS to work together to align the aims of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development ESD to 2030 with the NBAP.	In progress

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64	School grounds and local public amenities need to be developed as a support to a diverse and meaningful nature education. In line with this, basic biodiversity training for school staff, including maintenance and grounds staff, should be rolled out on a national basis.	Action 1B3 of the 4th NBAP commits Departments and Government bodies to explore biodiversity expertise and training requirements across the Government to ensure appropriate expertise is available to implement the NBAP. The Heritage in Schools Scheme provides biodiversity training and experiences through the primary school system. This includes development of school biodiversity gardens. Additional support for specific projects may be possible through the Biodiversity Officer posts once rolled out. The NPWS education programme could be expanded to meet the ambition of this recommendation but additional resources would be required.	In progress
65	The Green Schools Initiative should be reformed to ensure nature and	Biodiversity is the 5th theme of the Green-Schools programme and Food and Biodiversity is the 10th theme of the Green-Schools programme. Schools work through the various themes	Implemented

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	biodiversity feature in the initial stages of the programme.	in order via the 7-step process (environmental management system). There are many over-arching links and connections between the themes highlighting the overall links to Biodiversity Loss and Climate. The position of the theme within the programme does not inform the impact/success of the theme at a school level. This is linked to the supports available to the school for the theme. Future iterations and reviews of the programme could look to further enhance the Biodiversity and Food and Biodiversity themes, and the range of supports available.	
66	The State must develop a research strategy to support the national and EU Biodiversity, soil and water strategies, involving all agencies,	There are various research strands covering these topics via the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), DAFM, but not one overall coherent strategy. Research priorities will be assessed under the 4th NBAP Action 4A2. The All Island Climate and Biodiversity Research Network (AICBRN) will build on their gap analysis of research needs	In progress

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	higher-education institutes and other organisations.	undertaken with members and stakeholders through the production of a publication to be submitted to relevant research funding bodies for the purpose of determining what research is required to underpin biodiversity policy objectives. NPWS should be resourced (through the appointment of a Head of Research) to lead in the biodiversity-related research and undertake coordination in relation to soil and water in relation with other Departments and bodies.	
67	The State must create, publish and maintain an integrated habitat, species and land-usage map for the island of Ireland to identify habitat loss and improvement, to support local community awareness and to inform policies and actions of state bodies and organisations.	Action 4B8 of the 4th NBAP requires the NBDC, in partnership with NPWS, to examine the integration of habitat mapping with landcover mapping and assess data gaps. Under Phase 1 of the National Land Use Review, recommendations 18 and 19 relate specifically to Land use mapping and habitat mapping. These recommendations are being advanced through the Land Evidence Forum which is a	In progress

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		cross Governmental grouping, chaired by the Environmental Protection Agency. A first important step in this area is the agreement of an appropriate land use classification scheme.	
68	The State must increase funding to bodies and agencies, including the National Biodiversity Data Centre, local authorities, and State agencies such as the Natural History Museum and Teagasc, to carry out research related to biodiversity.	Funding for research should be delivered to appropriate bodies who undertake biodiversity-relevant research arising from Recommendation 66 above.	In progress
69	The State must fund a programme of work to promote and support citizen science (scientific research conducted with participation of the public) on biodiversity-related research.	The NPWS Small Recorder Grant scheme is in operation for citizen scientists. Funding is also available through Community Foundation Ireland for such purposes. The NBDC are working on a citizen science strategy. The Heritage Council funding for the creation and implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans will include support for citizen science initiatives	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
70	The National Biodiversity Data Centre must be established on a statutory basis, its funding secured, and its role enhanced, particularly with regard to data generation, education, community engagement and citizen science.	The governance of the NBDC has been reviewed and it is now established as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) subject to oversight by Heritage Council.	In progress
71	Increased funding should be made available for the research of new and emerging best practices that offer alternatives to overexploitation of natural resources.	The EPA operate a fund for research and innovation in environmental technologies. The Teagasc 'Farmland biodiversity agricultural ecology' research sub-programme focusses on developing the scientific knowledge base required to underpin policy and farming activity that will contribute to conservation of farmland biodiversity and ecological resources. Funding is being provided to the AICBRN to build on their gap analysis of research needs for the purpose of determining what research is required to underpin biodiversity policy objectives.	In progress

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72	The State must prioritise the shift to all forms of renewable energy to achieve decarbonisation, while ensuring that these developments undertake full consideration of local biodiversity, do not negatively impact biodiversity and enhance biodiversity wherever possible.	Action 2D20 of the 4th NBAP ensures that the governance framework established as part of the work on a revised Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP II) will include biodiversity representatives to ensure that marine biodiversity objectives are included in the development of the Plan, and as part of the updated cycle for the Plan. The Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce, led by DECC, has been established to drive delivery of offshore wind renewable energy, while protecting and conserving marine biodiversity. CAP23 implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings with renewable energy playing a key role. All actions within CAP23 relating to the renewable electricity are integrated with the wider objectives of protecting biodiversity and the environment.	In progress

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		All the actions referred to the Climate Action Plan relating to the accelerated deployment of renewable electricity are integrated with the wider objectives in the CAP to protect biodiversity and the environment as a whole. The objectives of protecting, restoring and enhancing biodiversity and supporting the roll-out of renewable energy are reflected in the national planning framework and national development plan. In the case of specific plans and projects, the mechanisms of Strategic Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Assessment and (in the case of European sites) Appropriate Assessment are in place to resolve these issues and ensure that significant negative impacts are avoided or mitigated and, where possible, benefits created.	
73	The State should ring-fence a percentage of funds raised through	Carbon taxes over 2021-2030 will be used for targeted social welfare and initiatives to prevent fuel poverty and a just transition; national retrofitting programme; incentivise farmers to farm more sustainably.	In progress

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	all energy production for biodiversity conservation measures.	Climate Action Fund also established in 2020 and will support nature-based projects and enhance biodiversity. In addition to revenues generated from the Carbon tax, the Climate Action Fund (CAF) was established on a statutory basis in 2020, on the commencement of the National Oil Reserves Agency (Amendment) and Provision of Treasury Services Act, 2020. The Fund is resourced from a number of sources, including proceeds from the levy paid to the National Oil Reserves Agency (NORA) in respect of relevant disposals of petroleum products, after the funding requirements of NORA have been met. It may be used to support nature-based projects that enhance biodiversity and seek to reduce, or increase the removal of, greenhouse gas emissions or support climate resilience in the State.	
74	Current State policy on the management of biodiversity on	Under current CAP cycle, environment, climate and biodiversity form 3 of the 9 key objectives that must be supported under	In progress

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	agricultural lands is not sufficient and requires fundamental review and change to support and incentivise farmers and landowners to protect and restore biodiversity.	CAP funding. This had to be considered in the development of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan which led to significant changes in policy from Jan 2023. DAFM ACRES Cooperation project adopts results-based approach.	
75	The Government must ensure that Ireland's food production is in line with commitments to the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the EU Green Deal and current legal obligations to protect biodiversity, genetic resources (e.g. seed diversity) and water quality. It must phase out all environmentally harmful subsidies in the agricultural and food sector.	Food Vision 2030, Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan, Ireland's Nitrates Action Plan, Climate Action Plan all set out policy in this area. DAFM operate the Genetic Resources Grant Aid Scheme. Potential negative impacts are avoided under the CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) and a comprehensive Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment process was carried out to ensure each intervention had no significant impacts. Any amendments under the CSP are also screened for potential impacts and also consider cumulative impacts with other	In progress

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		prevailing plans/programmes. Further consideration to be given to minimise the Government expenditure harmful to biodiversity as identified in the Green Budgeting Rev.	
76	Government Departments, State and Semi State agencies shall ensure their work is done in a way which ensures collaborative planning, consultation in decision-making and implementation with farmers, local authorities and community groups. This must be underpinned by acknowledging that there is a need for local responses to local environments. Community led, peer-to-peer farming initiatives must maintain their community-led ethos once they are rolled out nationwide. (The Burren	DAFM ACRES Cooperation projects roll out locally led results-based programmes. Biodiversity Officers in Local Authorities (LAs) ensures greater presence of biodiversity skills within LAs. The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) works with community groups to support work to promote better water quality and to encourage more groups to get involved. Further actions are proposed under the new NBAP. The Heritage Council run training for Local Authority Biodiversity Officers that focuses on collaboration, public participation and community engagement. Widespread public engagement with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) process is part of the Heritage Council Guidelines. Biodiversity Officers are collaborating with Burrenbeo Trust to roll out The Hare's Corner	In progress

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	Programme and the BRIDE projects provide potential templates.)	project across four counties in 2024, supported by the Local Biodiversity Action Fund (LBAF) of the NPWS.	
77	Biodiversity targets in national schemes (i.e. Common Agriculture Programme (CAP)/ Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES)) must be made significantly more ambitious, detailed and focused on the medium to long-term. Funding must be increased to support this ambition.	Agri-environmental supports have evolved in each CAP cycle. Most recent programme accounts for social, economic and environmental needs equally. The ACRES programme has increased ambition and focuses on results and outcomes. Action 2B2 of the 4th NBAP supports incentives under results-based schemes. Further work is required to determine value of nature to ensure optimal take up of schemes.	In progress
78	Public incentives and payments for farmers must not restrict them in their ambition to make change for the benefit of biodiversity. All biodiversity incentives for farmers	Changes have applied to the definition of land eligibility for direct payments since the start of 2023. Under the CAP Strategic Plan, landscape features such as hedgerows, ponds etc are eligible for payment.	In progress

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	shall be results-based over the whole farm, with farmers who protect and enhance biodiversity rewarded and paid for the ecosystem services they contribute.	ACRES adopts a hybrid approach of rewarding the delivery of ecosystem services with increasing reward for increasing quality. Many EIPs supported under CAP focus on results-based approaches. Schemes such as LIFE Wild Atlantic Nature Results-Based Scheme adopt a whole farm approach.	
79	Increased access to agri-environmental and payments-on-results schemes must be available to all farmers with commensurate funding.	Funding available will depend on normal budgetary parameters and processes. 54,500 eligible applicants accepted into ACRES scheme which has a budget of €1.5 billion. Funding for EIPs has been greatly increased under the CAP.	Implemented
80	The State must support community leadership and peer-to-peer support in order to share knowledge and	Community Foundation Ireland Biodiversity stream is supported by the NPWS. Awareness programmes being delivered by Local Authorities through the Local Biodiversity Action Fund. The AIPP	Implemented

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	assist local farmers and communities to understand and replicate good biodiversity practice.	promotes community awareness and leadership. There are knowledge exchange schemes as part of various LIFE projects. The Local Biodiversity Action Plan process will incorporate working with community Biodiversity Action Plans to share knowledge, build community and spread awareness of good practice. DAFM operate a Knowledge Transfer Programme for farmers that aims to increase participant's understanding of topics such as: biodiversity; water quality; air quality; climate change and soil health.	
81	The State must further subsidise and incentivise organic farming and locally grown produce. Sufficient resources must be deployed to support an ambitious implementation of Ireland's Strategy for the Development of the Organic Sector for the period 2019 to 2025, to ensure a more supportive	DAFM has committed to increasing organic farmer land area to 330,000ha from 110,000ha before 2027. This will be achieved through the Organic Farming Scheme, increased promotion and developing market demand. Supported through the CAP and through commitments in the NBAP, organic farming will increase to 10%.	In progress

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	environment for the development of organic food and farming in Ireland and for subsequent policies relating to the medium to long-term development of the sector.		
82	Bord Bia must significantly increase the promotion of the organic farming sector in Ireland and actions supporting the Farm to Fork strategy.	Bord Bia has appointed an organic sector manager to execute the strategy for the organic sector. Increased funding for the promotion of organic produce by Bord Bia and campaigns informed by Bord Bia's market research. Action 3B9 of the 4th NBAP is to ensure that the Origin Green programme produces measurable benefits for biodiversity.	Implemented
83	People must be encouraged to consume a more plant-based diet.	The Department of Health has commissioned a review of Scientific Evidence to support *Healthy Eating Guidelines in Teenagers*, which compliments the suite of healthy eating guidelines across the lifespan. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) commenced the review in 2023 and it is expected	In progress

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		to be complete by 2025. These new guidelines will examine evidence to support healthy eating with a particular focus on food sustainability. Subsequently, resources to educate the public on sustainable healthy eating will be made available on the DOH website.	
84	Biodiversity awareness and education training programmes need to be instigated and improved across the agriculture sector, including for farmers, advisors, policy makers, food processors and retailers.	Initiatives in place to ensure delivery of this objective including Knowledge Transfer programme under the CAP. The EIP and LIFE programmes have incorporated elements of environmental education and awareness.	In progress
85	The Green Cert must be adapted by increasing the proportion of credits for sustainable farming. Modules should include the identification and management of	The level and depth of teaching and learning in sustainable farming and nature/biodiversity in the 'Green cert' has increased in recent years.	In progress

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	nature/biodiversity features on farmland, combining latest scientific information and traditional knowledge, recognising and preserving skills built by generations of farmers.		
86	The State must offer incentives through agri-environment schemes to farmers that achieve high soil quality status, either from the start of the monitoring programme or as a result of their employing remedial measures.	The EU Soil Strategy proposed the introduction of a Soil Monitoring Law to monitor and report on soil health within member states. This proposed law is currently under discussion at Working Party of the Environment in the EU Council. National action on soil health will be guided by the outcome of negotiations on the EU Directive.	In progress
87	In line with EU Soils Strategy, a National Centre for Soil Science must be established based on up-to-date technology where soil	Many State agencies, universities and private labs are working in this area. DAFM will liaise with all involved regarded the Soil Monitoring Directive progress.	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	testing of physical, chemical and biological properties of soil is subsidised for farmers.		
88	The State must require sufficient information on commodities' labels and menus to improve consumer understanding of the origin of their food and the impact of their choices on biodiversity/environment.	Ireland is awaiting the proposals from the EU on the revision of the Food Information to Consumers (1169/2011), which includes Origin labelling. This publication of the revision has been delayed with no proposed date set. IE notes that Origin labelling is different to sustainability labelling and the two cannot be confused.	Not being implemented
89	More farms and farmers must be encouraged and rewarded for adopting the Silvopasture approach to farming – planting native deciduous trees in amongst pasture lands.	Measures under the Forestry Programme 2023-2027 encourage agroforestry. This proposal includes an establishment grant and premium payment for 10 years.	In progress
90	The State must encourage use of multi-species mixtures and phase	In 2022 DAFM introduced pilot measures to encourage farmers to sow multi- species seed mixtures as part of their reseeding	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	out use of monoculture grass seed mixtures.	programmes. A financial contribution was provided for the cost of the seed. Both measures were reopened with increased budget and payment rates for 2023. CAP Strategic Plan – Eco-Scheme offers support for sowing of multi species swards. ACRES scorecards reward for more diverse swards.	
91	The management of our freshwater systems requires immediate action. It requires increased level of ambition, increased resources for Water Framework Directive implementation (and therefore aquatic biodiversity protection and mitigation), a focus on water quality and aquatic biodiversity outcomes, clarity on roles and responsibilities and accountability for achievement of the outcomes.	The River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027 must aim to achieve the objective of at least good water status for surface waterbodies by defining and implementing the necessary measures within integrated programmes of measures. Measures have been put in place for all waterbodies and a process has been initiated to put in place additional targeted mid-cycle measures, where necessary. There are many factors that will determine the speed and effectiveness of new mitigation measures such as the Water EIP project and national Barriers Mitigation Programme.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
92	The State must provide a single body to oversee and co-ordinate the many relevant bodies that manage, implement, and enforce legislation and policies relevant to freshwater.	Water policy and Nature Heritage policy reside within DHLGH, which facilitates a more integrated approach. However, more broadly, oversight and co-ordination the many relevant bodies that manage, implement, and enforce legislation and policies relevant to freshwater does not necessarily require a single body.	In progress
93	There must be urgent increases in investment by Irish Water to build new and improve existing water treatment plants to prevent the unacceptable discharge of raw or partially treated sewage into any fresh or marine waters. The current timelines and targets are inadequate.	The Government is providing Uisce Éireann with a sustained investment. Budget 2024 has provided €1.6bn to Uisce Éireann to meet the cost of domestic water services. The National Development Plan commits to almost €6bn capital investment to be undertaken by Uisce Éireann in the period from 2021-2025 of which over €4.5 billion will be Voted Exchequer funded in respect of domestic water services. Further detail including specific measures to address urban and domestic wastewater pressures will be available in the Third	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		Cycle River Basin Management Plan (2022-2027), which will be published in Q2 2024.	
94	The management of water catchment areas must be greatly improved, with assessments of water quality to be updated regularly to guide action on restoring water quality.	Through LAWPRO for management and EPA/Local Authorities for monitoring.	In progress
95	Riparian buffer zones, related to agriculture, forestry, industry and extractive processes and urban development must be expanded and take into account local conditions to prevent nutrient and sediment run-off. Schemes must be put in place to incentivise landowners to protect waterways,	Both the recently launched Farming for Water EIP and the Waters of LIFE Project are focussed on implementing the right measures in the right places which will include targeting riparian buffer strips in the correct locations where they are deemed appropriate to break the nutrient and sediment pathway to waterbodies. Funding for these measures will be provided through both projects. Enhanced conditionality under the current CAP Strategic Plan	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	with incremental subsidies depending on the width and quality of buffer zones.	ensures greater protections for water quality and riparian habitat. This is further supported by the green architecture with supports under Pillars one and two of the CAP encouraging expansion of riparian buffer zones and reduction of nutrient and sediment run-off, including actions within the national agri-environment scheme ACRES and EIP programmes.	
96	Local and other relevant authorities must be held responsible for maintaining and improving the conditions of rivers in their areas, working with each other and with State agencies, such as Office of Public Works (OPW), Coillte, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Inland Fisheries Ireland, industry, farmers, private landowners, community groups, etc. Furthermore, local authorities	All public authorities have a duty to exercise their functions in a manner which is consistent with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and which achieves or promotes compliance with the requirements of the Directive. Each authority must also take such actions as may be appropriate in the context of its functions to secure compliance with the Directive and with the provisions of this river basin management plan and the programme of measures established. In addition, as referred to in relation to Recommendation 92, significant steps have been taken to strengthen water governance and the subsequent oversight and co-ordination of	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	and landowners must maintain the highest standards to riparian zones along the rivers in their areas.	the many public authorities that manage, implement, and enforce legislation and policies relevant to freshwater.	
97	It is imperative that penalties for polluting freshwater are significantly increased and enforcement considerably improved.	A key principle of the 3rd RBMP and Programme of Measures is increased environmental compliance through enhanced environmental enforcement, including securing dedicated resources to deliver on this principle. The example of enforcement actions under the Good Agricultural Practices Regulations is provided below; Action: Local Authorities will strengthen the inspection and enforcement relating to agricultural diffuse pollution. A total of 57 new Inspectors in Local Authorities have been allocated for the National Agricultural Inspection Programme (NAIP) and five new staff have been allocated to the EPA to oversee the programme. An additional four staff have been allocated to LAWPRO to help in co-ordinating the activity and avoiding duplication where possible. Inspections will be targeted and risk-based using all	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		the available evidence, including water quality data, the EPA's PIP Maps and the Targeting Agricultural Measures Map on up to 4,500 farms per annum during the lifetime of the Nitrate Action Programme. DAFM will undertake 500-1,000 inspections per year under the GAP Regulations focused in Q1 where risk of nutrient impact on water quality is high. DAFM has increased their derogation inspections from 5% to 10% of all derogation farms per year and will undertake approximately 700 inspections per annum in the 2022-2024 timeframe.	
98	Farmers must have access to continuous training and up to date research in actions and land management practices that protect freshwater biodiversity.	LAWPRO engage with communities through meetings and events (see under Recommendation 84). The Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP) commenced in 2019 with 29 advisors. This has expanded to over 40 advisors who work across all counties collaborating with catchment scientists from LAWPRO to provide farmers with advice on preventing nutrient losses to water. The Water EIP is the largest EIP that will promote the adoption of innovative best	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		practice in nutrient management and address critical gap in measures to protect and restore water quality.	
99	The State must increase support for community groups and NGOs that are working on key projects to improve freshwater systems – e.g. support for Irish Rivers Trusts, group water schemes, angling and community groups.	LAWPRO manages a community water development fund. Community Foundation Ireland also provides supports to community groups to work on biodiversity related projects. The Heritage Council's Heritage Organisation Support Fund provides core funding for national and regional NGOs working on biodiversity (and other aspects of Heritage) including several River Trusts.	In progress
100	The 1945 Arterial Drainage Act is no longer fit for purpose and must be reviewed and updated in order to take proper account of the biodiversity and the climate crisis.	A review of arterial drainage requirements and the underpinning Arterial Drainage Act will be undertaken as part of the 3rd RBMP.	In progress
101	Nature-based solutions must be included in State and community programmes to tackle flood	The OPW, in coordination with other stakeholders, has committed in the 4th NBAP to enhance its knowledge and capacity with regards to Nature-based solutions for Catchment	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	management and should include whole of catchment area hydromorphology planning and restoration.	Management (MBS-CM) as part of the development of future flood relief schemes.	
102	The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), supported by Inland Fisheries Ireland and an expert group, must conduct a complete analysis and survey of all catchment areas to develop a National Hydromorphology Plan.	A National Hydromorphology Programme is being established with the long-term vision of mitigating the negative impact of past construction on rivers. The programme will be supported by a Hydromorphology Expert Group, with representation from all relevant stakeholders. The Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) National Barriers Programme (NBP), funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and launched in 2018, assesses the environmental impacts of river barriers within the context of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). During the first cycle, the NBP delivered a national geo-database of potential river barriers to fish passage, resulting in an inventory of over 73,000 structures. Following an assessment by IFI, it	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		was determined that approximately 5-10% of these structures were 'problem barriers' obstructing fish passage and would require either removal or mitigation. Following receipt of Government approval in early-2024, IFI will now lead a new National Barrier Mitigation Programme to deliver either removal or mitigation of all 'problem barriers' identified by the NBP. The programme, to be managed by IFI, will initially require new capital and non-capital funding. DHLGH and DECC will develop a funding proposal in collaboration with IFI for future consideration by the new Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund (ICNF). The supporting legislation for this fund was passed by the Oireachtas in June 2024.	
103	Motorway attenuation pools must be more widely used and incorporate the use of biodiverse wetlands. The forestry and extractive industries must have the	The specifications for attenuation pond designs are described in *the Road Drainage and the Water Environment* TII publication. Extractive industries and extractive waste facilities are licensed	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	highest standards of attenuation pools and sediment traps applied to their drainage activities.	by the EPA on the basis of the requirements of Best Available Techniques and the requirements set out in the EPA Act 1992 as amended and, where relevant, the Extractive Waste Directive and Regulations. Licence conditions will assure the control and treatment of emissions and prevention of environmental pollution. S83(5) of the EPA Act 1992 as amended requires inter alia that the Agency shall not grant a licence for an activity unless it is satisfied that any emissions for the activity will comply with relevant quality standards for waters.	
104	Soil sealing poses a growing threat to our waterways and hydromorphology through surface water run-off. New regulations must be developed to limit the permissible area of soil sealing around all new buildings and other developments that are subject to planning. All other surface finishes	Ireland is engaging directly with the Commission on an EU Directive on Soil Monitoring and Resilience, the ultimate objective of which is to have all soils in healthy condition by 2050. The Commission recognises soil sealing as being one of the main drivers of unsustainable management of land, alongside contamination and overexploitation combined with impact from climate change and extreme weather events. Ireland continues to engage with the Commission and other	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	must be made of permeable surfaces.	member states to come to agreed definitions and metrics in this area.	
105	The State shall designate and effectively manage an ambitious network of Marine Protection Areas, in line with EU targets of 30% of Ireland's Maritime Area by 2030.	The LIFE MPA Ireland project will identify MPAs and develop associated management plans.	In progress
106	The State shall create a National Marine Biodiversity Coordination Body to have responsibility for the implementation of Marine Protected Areas, the achievement of Good Environmental Status and wider marine conservation and restoration initiatives.	In progress, in the context of the Marine Protected Area Programme for Ireland for 2030.	In progress
107	The State must implement ambitious marine conservation	In progress, in the context of the Marine Protected Area Programme for Ireland for 2030.	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	measures under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to ensure 'Good Environmental Status' for Ireland's seas.		
108	A proportion of funds raised by the State through fines and levies for activity in the marine environment must be used for the protection and restoration of marine biodiversity.	Not being implemented	Not being implemented
109	The State must act to ensure fish stocks in Irish waters are well managed through quotas, monitoring and no fish zones, supporting income transition for fishers who will need to change their way of earning as policies on Marine Protected Areas and	Sustainable fisheries are supported through the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). CFP provides the framework for the long- term conservation of fish stocks around our shores and is designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of fishing in the waters around Ireland and the EU. The Seafood/Offshore Renewable Energy Working Group has developed a *Seafood/ORE Engagement in Ireland – A summary Guide* highlighting the importance of finding a balance in respect of	Implemented

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	offshore energy evolve, for the necessary conservation and restoration of biodiversity.	seafood interests and the global climate emergency. MPAs and fisheries can coexist protecting habitats and species that require protection while allowing sustainable sea fisheries to continue.	
110	As a matter of urgency, the State must increase actions and legislation to considerably reduce single use plastics and microplastics to minimise pollution within its waters and along its shores.	There is research underway relating to microplastics and their impacts.	In progress
111	The siting, development and construction of energy generation at sea (both pylon and floating) must be done in close collaboration with the fishing community and relevant marine biodiversity authorities. (See also recommendation 72).	Ireland has transitioned to a plan-led model for offshore renewable energy (ORE) development, which will ensure that maritime spatial planning for ORE across our shared maritime resource is carried out by the State in a manner that is efficient and sustainable, involving consultation and collaboration with all maritime stakeholders. The Government is developing policy and identifying areas suitable for ORE in consultation with all	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		relevant stakeholders. This is in full compliance with maritime sectoral policies per the National Marine Planning Framework.	
112	All enterprise involved in marine extraction or exploration must have a strict biodiversity net gain clause attached to their development permission and must be responsible for the ongoing and future management and enhancement of the biodiversity of their sites.	The Plan for assessment of applications for Petroleum Exploration and Production Authorisations in Irish Offshore Waters for the Period to 2030 is being considered in the context of both Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA), with the entire project referred to as Irish Offshore Strategic Environmental Assessment 6 ('IOSEA6'). This does not fulfil the recommendation that marine extraction or exploration must have a strict biodiversity net gain clause.	Not being implemented
113	An updated National Peatland Action Plan must be developed with clear, measurable, realistic and timed goals and sufficient funding to protect and restore peatlands.	The 4th NBAP proposes the establishment and implementation of a National Restoration Plan including measures to enhance peatland restoration.	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
114	The cessation of turf-cutting on protected areas must be fully implemented and enforced. To facilitate a true 'just transition', the State must provide adequate financial assistance to offer viable alternatives to people currently predominantly reliant on peat for heating their homes.	The NPWS operate the Turf Cutting Compensation Scheme and the Peatland Engagement Fund. LIFE IP Wild Atlantic Nature provides incentives for improvements to areas previously cut and are piloting a retrofitting scheme. LIFE IP Peatlands and People will develop an Accelerator programme for systemic innovation focused on low-carbon and circular economies.	In progress
115	The State must promote community engagement and wider awareness of the value of peatland restoration for nature and culture.	The NPWS operate the Turf Cutting Compensation Scheme and the Peatland Engagement Fund. LIFE IP Peatlands and People project will establish a Discovery Visitor Centre to engage with the public.	In progress
116	The remits of Bord Na Móna and Coillte must each be reviewed to include a focus on peatland restoration and rehabilitation	Bord na Móna's Biodiversity Action Plan outlines ambition to rehabilitate peatland. The Enhanced Decommissioning Rehabilitation and Restoration Scheme (EDRRS) was developed for the rehabilitation of peatlands by Bord na Móna,	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	projects, with targeted outcomes on biodiversity conservation. The results of these outcomes must be freely available and published annually.	funded under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) through the Climate Action Fund. The investment of €108 million over its duration relates to the enhanced rehabilitation of approximately 33,000 hectares of Bord na Móna peatlands previously used for energy production over a number of decades. Bord na Móna are implementing restoration on peatlands through various contracts on behalf of NPWS. In April 2022, Coillte launched a new and ambitious strategic vision for its future forest estate, which aims to sustainably balance and deliver the multiple benefits of Ireland's state forests across four strategic pillars: Climate, Nature, Wood and People. These four strategic pillars are fully aligned with DAFM's Forest Strategy for Ireland. Coillte Nature, the not-for-profit branch of Coillte founded in 2019, is solely dedicated to managing the delivery of nature and biodiversity initiatives within Coillte forests. Initiatives carried out	

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		by Coillte Nature include the planting of native woodlands, restoring important biodiversity areas, regenerating urban forests for the benefit of people and nature and rehabilitating ecosystem services on sensitive lands such as peatlands. Both Coillte and Bord na Móna are working closely with the NPWS towards the achievement of biodiversity objectives. See also Recommendation 120.	
117	All enterprise involved in the harnessing of renewable energy from or on all peatland must have a strict biodiversity net gain clause attached to their development permission and must be responsible for the ongoing and future management and	Not being implemented	Not being implemented

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	enhancement of the biodiversity of their sites.		
118	The State must develop a cross-agency response team to review practices of prescribed burning and address issues around implementation of guidance and recommendations to stop illegal burning.	In progress at a local scale. Action 2B8 of the 4th NBAP is to establish an Interdepartmental Fire Management Group with all relevant stakeholders and to develop a national fire management strategy.	In progress
119	The State must encourage and incentivise peatland owners to engage in the active protection of peatland biodiversity through appropriate management and restoration activities.	In progress through LIFE IP Wild Atlantic Nature, CAP cooperation projects and various programmes operated by Coillte and Bord na Móna.	In progress
120	There is a conflict of interest between business aims and	The Programme for Government includes commitments to embark on an ambitious programme of afforestation on state-	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	corporate responsibility, particularly for State agencies. The State must fundamentally reassess the constitution, goals and operations of Coillte and the 1988 Forestry Act (as amended). This reassessment must ensure biodiversity protection and positive eco-system services are core objectives for Coillte, alongside providing higher quality timber, meaningful employment and benefits to the community.	owned lands. These commitments were outlined to Coillte in the last Shareholder Letter of Expectation issued by Minister of State Pippa Hackett and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in June 2022. In this letter, Coillte are asked to contribute to the Government's climate change objectives by re-entering afforestation, but it also emphasised Coillte's critical role in helping to meet national biodiversity objectives.	
121	State-owned woodlands should be recognised and managed as a strategic, long-term national asset for the benefit of the common good.	There is ambition for restoration of the woodland estate within NPWS properties. The NPWS published a Woodland Management Strategy for Glenveagh National Park .	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
122	Afforestation requires long-term goals and timelines. The State must legislate and provide funding for long-term investments in forestry, with strategic and ambitious emphasis on native woodlands. In addition, the State must ensure its afforestation strategy is not negatively impacting on biodiversity by establishing an effective monitoring system for the Forestry Programme.	A *Shared National Vision for Trees, Woods and Forests in Ireland* was published in Sept 2022. This informed the Forestry Strategy to 2030 and the Forestry Programme for the immediate term.	In progress
123	A new national strategy for the protection, maintenance, restoration and expansion of Ireland's network of hedgerows must be developed urgently. Existing legislation and regulations regarding hedgerows	DAFM have commenced a review of the EIA regulations. Public consultation ran during Q2-3 2023. Under the CAP Strategic Plan, both Eco-Scheme and ACRES support the planting and maintenance for biodiversity of hedgerows, treelines and copses.	In progress

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	must be reviewed, strengthened and fully enforced, with due regard to public safety. Sufficient results-based incentives must be made available to support all aspects of their proper management. In particular, the new CAP schemes should recognise and reward good hedgerow quality.		
124	Forests currently planted and those already felled on peatlands are a significant and historic problem. The State should remedy this issue promptly and on a significant scale.	Coillte Nature has a remit to regenerate and restore specified targets in relation to afforested peatland. Ireland's Forest Strategy Implementation Plan (IFSIP) has eight strategic areas of focus and number five deals with legacy issues.	In progress
125	The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Marine must implement incentives for State,	Action 2B11 of the 4th NBAP is for that DAFM to continue to promote and support native tree planting by Local Authorities and other State/semi-state bodies. Further incentives may be	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	Semi State and commercial bodies to establish more nurseries for the cultivation of indigenous hedgerow species and indigenous broadleaf tree species.	required to achieve this. DAFM is encouraging the establishment and development of nurseries in Ireland. The Forestry Programme 23-27 includes innovative forest technology scheme module 2 – investment aid for the development	
126	A significant proportion of profit earned through Coillte's commercial activities should be ring-fenced and re-invested directly back into biodiverse forestry initiatives.	Coillte's Forestry Strategic Vision includes plans to increase the area of its forest estate being primarily managed for nature from 20% to 50%. Also plans to enable the investment of 100 million to create world class visitor destinations by 2030. It also plans to double the number for recreation areas to 500 nationally.	In progress
127	The State must plan for appropriate felling management, including provision for continuous cover to encourage a more biodiverse and sustainable mixed forestry management model.	The Forestry Programme 2023-27 includes measures to encourage management under continuous cover forest.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
128	The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Marine must ensure that licensing requires site-by- site ecological assessments to ensure that biodiversity is not negatively impacted both within and outside protected sites.	DAFM licensing process assesses potential impacts of projects on European sites, nationally designated sites, and the wider environment.	Implemented
129	The use of pesticides in public and private forestry is to be reduced by at least 50%.	Action 2B6 of the 4th NBAP states that DAFM, Teagasc, Local Authorities and other relevant stakeholders will implement existing and new measures to reduce chemical pesticide use in line with EU regulatory framework for pesticides.	In progress
130	Hedge management courses and certification should be reintroduced and it should be a requirement that all hedge cutting contractors and their employees complete such courses, and be licenced.	DAFM regulates the removal of hedgerows under the EIA Regulations which are currently under review. Teagasc provides advice and guidance in relation to the management of hedgerows in Ireland. DAFM support Teagasc's annual hedgerow week, operated in partnership with the Heritage Council, which raises awareness and highlights appropriate	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		management techniques. Events include those focussed on hedgerow management and value for wildlife.	
131	The designated sites and species are among our most important cultural, heritage, and biodiversity resources and their management needs to be sufficiently resourced to meet our EU obligations.	The NPWS Review and subsequent NPWS Strategic Action Plan ensures the NPWS is resourced to deliver on its' mandate.	In progress
132	The National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant agencies must be provided with targeted funding to provide sufficient resources and staff to manage designated sites and protect species, produce and implement management plans, enforce	The NPWS Review and subsequent NPWS Strategic Action Plan ensures the NPWS is resourced to deliver on its' mandate.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	protections for designated sites on land and sea.		
133	Protected sites do not exist in isolation. These ecosystems require connectivity with areas outside these sites, with links between protected sites. These connections and links need to be considered, protected and improved in local authority planning and other activities.	Provision for green infrastructure is built into climate adaptation plans and several Local Authorities have published green infrastructure strategies.	In progress
134	The hunting open season order list must be reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with the endangered species list.	The Open Seasons Order is subject to ongoing review.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
135	The management of invasive species needs to be carried out on an all-Island basis.	The 4th NBAP includes Action 5A2 for delivery of a National Invasive Species Management Plan. The Shared Island Invasive Species project will address cross border issues in relation to invasive alien species.	In progress
136	Biosecurity must be increased at all points of entry to the country, in line with best international practice.	DAFM has invested significantly in both infrastructure and plant health inspectors located at Ireland's main trade entry points at Dublin Port, Rosslare Port and Dublin Airport. These are the only entry points for the trade of regulated plants and plant products. There is a regional presence at other entry points for non-regulated commodities like timber and e-commerce consignments. DAFM has developed a plant health and biosecurity strategy 2020-25. The 4th NBAP states that the NPWS, NBDC and relevant partners will develop dedicated biosecurity protocols and operating procedures for Government Departments by 2026. Shared Island Invasive Species project will address cross border issues in relation to invasive alien species.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
137	The State must provide funding, education and infrastructural supports to engage local community groups in appropriately managing invasive species, which negatively impact native habitats and species.	The Local Biodiversity Action Fund provides support for invasive species projects at a local level.	In progress
138	The State must produce a multi-agency National Invasive Species Plan to manage, monitor and collate information on the distribution of invasive species across the country. This should be used for coordinated control programmes and community awareness campaigns.	Action 5A2 of the 4th NBAP is for delivery of National Invasive Species Management Plan in NBAP. Shared Island Invasive Species project will address cross border issues in relation to invasive alien species.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
139	The State must introduce effective population controls regarding invasive animal species, such as non-native deer and mink.	Action 2H6 of the 4th NBAP for NPWS, NBDC and relevant partners to implement recommended measures arising from the 2021 *EPA Report No. 368 Prevention, Control and Eradication of Invasive Alien Species*. Action 2B9 of the 4th NBAP aims to improve the effectiveness of wild deer management.	In progress
140	The State must act immediately to put a timeline on the phasing out of, and eventual ban of, the sale of invasive species, e.g. Cherry Laurel.	NPWS will pursue the feasibility on the sale, distribution and planting of cherry laurel.	In progress
141	Regulations for the importation of recreational wildlife, classed as invasive species, must be reviewed.	A National Management Plan for Invasive Alien Species under development by the NPWS. This Plan, drafted in collaboration with the NBDC, will be brought to public consultation in 2024. A review of legislation is also ongoing in this context and includes consideration of provisions around the importation of invasive alien species into the country. However, it is unclear what the term 'recreational wildlife' refers to – the legislative and policy	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		framework for invasive alien species (including the EU IAS Regulation) deals with commercial and non-commercial specimens. Furthermore, there are regulations around the importation of certain species that might be restricted under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and/or under DAFM regulations on trade in pets.	
142	Schemes to incentivise people to buy native plants, shrubs and trees, including native fruiting trees and shrubs, to support garden biodiversity over non-native species should be devised and encouraged.	Action 2B11 of the 4th NBAP promotes native tree/shrub planting by LAs and other state/semi-State bodies.	In progress
143	The State must reform and update the planning and building regulations and legislation to better	The Planning and Development Bill was published on 22 November 2023 and completed the Second Stage in the Dáil in December 2023. The Bill is currently undergoing Third Stage	In progress

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No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	consider biodiversity in all new developments, with specific evidence-based and locally relevant biodiversity and environmental measures (e.g. inclusion of nesting bricks, restriction of artificial grass, green planting, corridors, sand and water, etc.).	(Committee) in the Dáil having commenced on 13 February 2024.	
144	Planning policy must be updated to require all new developments to have a significant net-gain for the environment and biodiversity.	The DHLGH are engaging with public authorities and private sector champions in this area who are already testing some of these principles and will review national and international best practice on the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain in strategic planning and development. This will allow us to identify good practice and develop consistent methodologies that can be applied in an Irish context, to simultaneously boost the protection and restoration of habitats and speed up the development process.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
145	In line with international best practice, the State must increase mandatory requirements for a percentage of green spaces that support biodiversity in urban areas.	The recently approved Nature Restoration Law mandates an expansion of urban green spaces.	In progress
146	146 - Local authorities must raise the status of biodiversity to ensure that this is addressed and championed at the highest level in the organisation.	The Heritage Council Biodiversity Officer Programme will ensure each Local Authority employs a Biodiversity Officer to champion biodiversity issues. The Local Biodiversity Action Fund supports projects that achieve NBAP actions. Local Authorities are bound by the 'biodiversity duty' under the Wildlife Amendment Act 2023.	In progress
147	The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), as well as bodies prescribed in legislation with regard to biodiversity and planning, including An Taisce, should be	The role and responsibility of the NPWS continues to grow and the resource profile as set out in the international comparator report will be considered by Government in due course.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	properly funded and resourced to effectively carry out their planning and development roles.		
148	The State must utilise public spaces, such as bus shelters and roofs, to create green corridors, green walls/roofs etc., to support pollinators and promote biodiversity.	The Nature Restoration Plan will include measures to increase urban green spaces under the proposed Nature Restoration Regulation. Local Biodiversity Action Plans and the AIPP have actions supporting pollinators and biodiversity.	In progress
149	Authorities must incorporate ecological expertise in decision-making regarding planning.	DAFM, OPW and An Bord Pleanála have increased the number of ecologists in their staff. Ecological expertise beyond the Biodiversity Officer positions in Local Authorities is warranted.	In progress
150	All Environmental Impact Assessments and Reports, and Appropriate Assessments and Natura Impact Statements must automatically be lodged with the	The NPWS will explore the mandatory regulation of the ecology sector with CIEMM. EIA, NIS and AA reports should be lodged centrally. The feasibility of this system will be explored by the EPA (as per NBAP action 4B1), the biodiversity data arising should be submitted to the NBDC. NPWS should be resourced	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	National Biodiversity Data Centre so the data and information can be stored and made publicly accessible, with sufficient funding provided for such action.	to effectively carry out their planning and development roles, linking to recommendation 147.	
151	151 - Each Local Authority must include a Green Infrastructure Strategy in County/City Development Plans which includes corridors between urban and rural biodiverse habitats, creation of new biodiverse spaces, retrofitting of existing spaces and restoration of degraded biodiversity.	Several local authorities have Green Infrastructure Plans and others are in preparation.	In progress
152	The State must introduce tax incentives and grants for capital investment in retrofitting existing	Not being implemented	Not being implemented

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	buildings with biodiverse initiatives (roof gardens, vertical gardens etc.).		
153	The State must review An Bord Pleanála and local authority legislation and practices to take full cognisance of the Aarhus Convention, create more transparency and grant citizens greater access to information and inclusion in decision-making related to environmental issues in planning.	The relevant requirements of the Public Participation Directive have been integrated into, inter alia, the Planning and Development Act and the Planning and Development Regulations.	Implemented
154	As part of the new National Biodiversity Plan relevant Government Departments and agencies must publish central advice for local authorities on	The 4th NBAP Action 3C2 states that the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) will work to prepare and publish a Case Study Paper examining best practice in integrating green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and ecosystem services into the preparation of land use plans	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	incorporating nature based solutions and ecological features into new developments, ecosystem restoration, green infrastructure and biodiversity, addressing pollution issues (chemical, light, etc.), reinforcement and/or offsetting that can be linked to achieving local and national biodiversity objectives that would be identified in development plans and local area plans.		
155	State and Semi State agencies and bodies responsible for all major state infrastructure should prioritise the protection and restoration of biodiversity in strategic planning, with measurable goals and timelines that are held to account	The 4th NBAP is on statutory footing and mandates a biodiversity duty on relevant public bodies.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	by a newly established, independent, central agency (see recommendation 24).		
156	In addition to actions around the climate crisis, businesses should be required to take biodiversity into account through programmes which promote industry's engagement with biodiversity.	The Business for Biodiversity Ireland platform encourages and incentivises Irish businesses to assess their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity. There will be reporting requirements for many businesses under the EU Taxonomy Regulation and CSRD.	In progress
157	Ireland's tourism industry is dependent on the protection and good status of the environment and important biodiversity sites are often high amenity sites. The promotion of eco-tourism and amenities should therefore be consistent with biodiversity	The NPWS is engaging with Fáilte Ireland in the NPWS tourism Masterplan. Action 3A2 of the 4th NBAP states that the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (DTCAGSM) will incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services in place-making efforts and investment in Culture Regional infrastructure into its capital project appraisal processes.	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	conservation and visitors should be managed to ensure that biodiversity is not damaged. Opportunities to include biodiverse positive areas and projects should be encouraged as an additional tool within the overall promotion of Ireland's tourism industry.		
158	A scheme should be developed, similar to the Farming for Nature initiative, in which businesses can demonstrate real and substantial biodiversity credentials.	Business for Biodiversity Ireland is developing a Community of Practise where businesses can build and share knowledge.	In progress
159	All large businesses and financial organisations must develop a mandatory assessment and disclosure process of harmful	There will be reporting requirements for many businesses under the EU Taxonomy Regulation and the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD).	In progress

Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Recommendation**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	impacts to biodiversity, with a mandated role (similar to a Health and Safety or Well-being Officer).		

6 Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss

Key Messages		Government Response	Status
1	**We must treat the Earth like a member of the family or a friend.**	The 4th NBAP commits to explore the ways in which the rights of nature could be formally recognised.	In progress
2	**Future generations must live in a world where there isn't a biodiversity crisis and where children don't have to take Action because of the incapability of past generations.**	The vision of the 4th NBAP encapsulates this sentiment.	In progress
3	**Every decision must take biodiversity into account.**	The 4th NBAP is the first National Biodiversity Action Plan to be on a statutory footing. Relevant public bodies are bound by a Biodiversity Duty which requires them to report on how they have given due consideration to biodiversity in their programmes of work. Other legislation requires biodiversity to be taken into account - EIA, SEA and Habitat Regulations among others.	In progress

4	**Children and young people must be included in decisions being made about biodiversity.**	The establishment of a Children and Young People's Biodiversity Forum is a commitment of the 4th NBAP.	In progress
5	**Biodiversity protection must be a shared responsibility and a global, collaborative effort.**	The 4th NBAP adopts a 'Whole-of-Government, whole-of-society' approach to biodiversity. Biodiversity protection is a shared responsibility through the implementation of the 4th NBAP and the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).	In progress
6	**We must consume resources in a sustainable, moderate way that neither diminishes the environment/biodiversity or our rights, wellbeing and livelihoods.**	The National Food Waste Prevention Roadmap sets out information on the context of food waste and the components of the food supply chain that are included in the roadmap (primary production, manufacturing and processing, retail and distribution, restaurants and food services, and households). There are also proposed targets to achieve a food waste reduction of 50% by 2030. This will feed into the Circular Economy Strategy and the Waste Action Plan for the Circular Economy.	In progress

Theme 1: Education and Raising Awareness: To provide education for children, young people and adults that raises awareness and helps them to understand biodiversity loss, the consequences of our Actions, and the things we can do to address this issue

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
1	Make biodiversity and climate education mandatory for children and young people at every level. This would include learning about: - Biodiversity loss and climate change - Invasive species - Habitat loss - Economics and politics e.g. circular economy, doughnut economics - Skills such as sewing (to repair clothes) and growing vegetables - Overpopulation, overconsumption and overexploitation - Species protection	Action 3A10 of the 4th NBAP allows for DOE, DFHERIS and NPWS to work together to align the aims of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development - ESD to 2030 and the NBAP and to develop and progress mutual actions. The Heritage in Schools Scheme provides a panel of Heritage Specialists who visit primary schools (in-person or virtually) to help children and their teachers learn about and appreciate their local heritage. The Scheme supports the stated aims and objectives of the Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (SESE) curriculum and provides an additional educational tool and resource for teachers. A pilot programme for heritage training (including biodiversity) in secondary schools is in preparation by the Heritage	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		Council. The DOE recently announced a planned reform of senior cycle education, one of the aims of which is to 'empower students to meet the challenges of the 21st century'. Climate Action and Sustainable Development will be a new subject on the curriculum and ready for fifth-year students in certain secondary schools starting in 2024.	
2	Provide biodiversity education outside of schools (i.e. community learning, on TV, social media, cartoons, comedy, podcasts) for people of all ages.	Public Libraries provide information and educational initiatives focused on sustainable development (including biodiversity loss) which aim to raise awareness, provide information and engage the community in conservation efforts. These initiatives often include workshops, talks, exhibitions and resources that promote understanding of biodiversity and the importance of preserving it. Coimisiún na Meán has, as one of its functions under the Broadcasting Act 2009 (as amended), an obligation to	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		promote and stimulate the development of programmes relating to climate change and environmental sustainability (which encompasses biodiversity). Sustainable Media Ireland network is being broadened out to include a wider and more diverse range of media members. Regular networking events will be held to inform future policy in the pursuit of a greater focus on environmental sustainability presented in the media and the portrayal of those issues. As part of its work, Coimisiún na Meán could ensure that biodiversity issues are appropriately reflected in the work of the Network. Awareness campaigns are supported through the NPWS Education Officers, the Local Biodiversity Action Fund and through LIFE projects, in particular through LIFE IP Wild Atlantic Nature, with an action in that project dedicated to raising awareness of the Natura 2000 network.	

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
		Engagement with citizens and community awareness will be a key objective of all Local Authority biodiversity action plans. Work on these has commenced at local level in areas where Biodiversity Officers are in place.	
3	Fund local community Action groups for biodiversity so people can learn, share ideas and inspire and encourage others to take Action.	Action 1D4 of the 4th NBAP commits to build support for community biodiversity initiatives.	In progress
4	Provide education to farmers on how to farm in a way that protects and restores biodiversity, including encouraging a variety of methods for farming (e.g. diversified farming, no monocultures).	There are initiatives in place to ensure delivery of this objective including Knowledge Transfer programme under the CAP. The EIP and LIFE programmes have incorporated elements of environmental education and awareness. Many Actions under Outcome 2B of the 4th NBAP include support for farmers.	In progress
5	Help farmers to become community leaders to inform and inspire other farmers	Action 2B3 of the 4th NBAP supports the Farming for Nature initiative, which includes farming champions. DAFM deliver	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	to make changes needed to value, protect and restore biodiversity.	the Knowledge Transfer programme, which includes information on sustainable agricultural practices. The EIPs support farming practices with environmental and climate benefits and empowers participants. DAFM and the NPWS provide funding to LIFE projects for the delivery of Knowledge Exchange Groups, supporting support farmers to act as leaders in their communities through farming in a way that supports positive impacts for biodiversity and climate.	
6	Make sure the media gives the same amount of coverage to biodiversity news as to economic and business news. Media coverage should include details and numbers (in a similar way to the COVID-19 pandemic reporting) and less negative portrayals of animals (e.g. sharks).	While broadcasters have editorial independence in terms of the content they choose to provide, Coimisiún na Meán has, as one of its functions under the Broadcasting Act 2009 (as amended), an obligation to promote and stimulate the development of programmes relating to climate change and environmental sustainability (which encompasses biodiversity). See Call to Action 2.	In progress

Theme 2: Governance: To put biodiversity and the rights of nature at the heart of the decisions that we make

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
7	Every decision being made must consider biodiversity and the rights of nature.	Action 1C2 of the 4th NBAP commits to explore the ways in which the rights of nature could be formally recognised. Relevant public bodies are bound by a Biodiversity Duty which requires them to report on how they have given due consideration to biodiversity in their programmes of work. Other legislation requires biodiversity to be taken into account through SEA, EIA and Habitat Regulations among others.	In progress
8	Involve children and young people in decision-making so that more children and young people are given the chance to	The 4th NBAP provides for the establishment of a Children and Young People's Biodiversity Forum.	In progress

	speak about climate change and biodiversity.		
9	Enforce existing environmental protection laws by putting more money into enforcement (as existing incentives haven't been successful).	Action 1E3 of the 4th NBAP commits to increase compliance with wildlife legislation. There is an ongoing review and revision of the Environmental Crime Directive underway. DECC is coordinating across Government in relation to Ireland's input to this process.	In progress
10	Make sure businesses and industries have regulations so they work in green ways.	Under the 4th NBAP Action 3B11, the Business for Biodiversity Ireland platform will support Irish businesses to assess their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity. There will be reporting requirements for many businesses under the EU Taxonomy Regulation and CSRD (NBAP Action 3B2).	In progress
11	Give incentives to people to persuade them to make changes, especially farmers, business people, and companies.	See response above for Call to Action 10 for businesses. Actions 2B1, 2B2 and 2B5 in the 4th NBAP address incentives to the farmers to support biodiversity action.	In progress
12	Put lower prices on stuff we really need and put higher prices on stuff we want but don't necessarily need.	Ireland and the EU have been implementing Carbon Tax rates and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) to nudge consumer behaviour away from CO_2	In progress

		emitting fuel sources and towards carbon-neutral alternatives. CBAM was introduced as policy in 2019, and as of October 2023, had begun its transitional phase to start implementing carbon taxes on certain goods coming into the EU bloc from outside trading partners. These two taxes will alter domestic consumption trends and the types of goods from foreign imports and will reduce the amount of co2 emissions damaging ecosystems and habitats.	
13	Put a tax on expansion into biodiversity rich areas (i.e. it should be more expensive to carry out development work/building in biodiversity rich areas).	Not being implemented	Not being implemented
14	Invest in conservation efforts, species protection and environmental causes, and give funding to environmental charities.	The 4th NBAP commits to implementing conservation measures in protected sites (Action 2A3) and supporting species and habitat specific conservation programmes (Action 2A6). Government provide limited core funding for eNGOs.	In progress

15	Set up a permanent Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss, and make sure this Assembly's Calls to Action are carried out and not just forgotten.	The establishment of a Children and Young People's Biodiversity Forum is a commitment of the 4th NBAP.	In progress

Theme 3: Energy and Transport: To create energy and transport systems which limit our impact on the environment and biodiversity, and make the most of opportunities for protecting and restoring biodiversity

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
16	Turn Ireland's energy green by: - Cutting out non-renewable forms of energy (i.e. ban coal, peat and oil) - Investing in research into new green energy sources, technologies and generators	Ireland is committed to achieving climate neutrality no later than 2050 with a 51% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030. These legally binding objectives are set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. The Climate Act supports Ireland's transition to net-zero and the achievement of a climate neutral economy no	In progress

	- Increasing wind turbines - every house should have a wind turbine! - Using kinetic energy in busy places to power electrical needs nearby e.g. kinetic energy generated from both people walking and vehicles driving in towns and cities could provide electricity to homes and businesses - Providing support and funding for people to install solar panels in their house.	later than 2050. Climate Action Plan 2024 sets out the roadmap to deliver on Ireland's climate ambition. It aligns with the legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings that were agreed by Government in July 2022. Small-Scale Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (SRESS): Small-Scale Generation is defined as renewable electricity generation technologies with an electricity output greater than 50kW, but smaller than typical commercial generators. Microgeneration Support Scheme: Domestic applicants can apply to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) for a grant towards the cost of installing Solar PV equipment. The EPA have a fund for research and innovation in environmental technologies.	

17	Improve public transport so that it is good enough to be the preferred option for people. This would include: - Making it cheaper - Expanding tram and train networks outside of Dublin - Replacing parts of the existing road network with trams and trains, and rewilding redundant roads - Encouraging one car per household - Encouraging car sharing	Over 60 new bus routes were launched across rural Ireland in 2023, under the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Programme, adding 2.3 million annual kilometres to the public transport network. Over the past 2 years, there has been, on average, a new or enhanced bus route added to the public transport network every week. Government has also cut public transport fares for adults by 20% and by an additional 50% for young adults up to the age of 26. In 2023, the Department of Transport also launched its 'Your Journey Counts' national advertising campaign (gov.ie/yourjourneycounts), to help highlight how by choosing to walk, cycle or take public transport, we can all be part of the national effort to reduce transport emissions by 50% by 2030. Almost 190km of walking and cycling infrastructure, 54km of Greenways and 4 new pedestrian and cycle bridges were delivered in 2023 and €290 million has been allocated by the Department of Transport to the NTA in 2024 for 'Active Travel' measures around the country. The NTA will disperse	In progress

		this funding to all Local Authorities and work with them to identify walking and cycling projects to support the decarbonisation of the transport sector. Over 800+ projects will be progressed under the NTA's Active Travel Infrastructure Programme in 2024. Major progress is being made in the delivery of public transport infrastructure, with BusConnects, DART+ and Metrolink all progressing through major milestones in our planning systems, and an implementation plan to support the All Island Strategic Rail Review is being developed, which will guide the further development of our rail network and services over the coming years.	
18	Reduce use of fossil fuels and CO2 emissions by: - Stopping production of new diesel and petrol cars and making the sale of existing diesel and petrol cars more expensive - Encouraging the sale and use of affordable electric cars - Creating more bike lanes and footpaths	The SEAI provides grants for private and commercial electric vehicles and additional supports for electrical infrastructure. Almost 190km of walking and cycling infrastructure, 54km of Greenways and 4 new pedestrian and cycle bridges were delivered in 2023. See Call to Action 17.	In progress

	- Lowering the number of petrol stations and factories that use fossil fuels		
19	Reduce the need for mining through improved recycling and reusing materials (e.g. electric car batteries) so that environments and habitats are protected from being destroyed.	Compatible with national Circular Economy policy. Measures are set out in the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025.	In progress

Theme 4: Waste and Consumption: To limit the impact of things we buy and use on the environment and biodiversity; To support sustainable ways of living which do not contribute to biodiversity loss, and help to promote biodiversity

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
20	Ban single-use plastic.	Compatible with national Circular Economy policy – measures are set out in the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025 (see Chapter on Single Use Plastics)	In progress

21	Make shops and businesses take back and correctly dispose of their waste by law.	Compatible with national Circular Economy policy – measures are set out in the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025 (see Chapter on Extended Producer Responsibility)	In progress
22	Create refill stations across Ireland (i.e. refilleries/eco-shops for food and other products).	Compatible with national Circular Economy policy – measures are set out in the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025 (See Chapter on Plastic and Packaging waste)	In progress
23	Reduce clothes waste and fast-fashion.	Compatible with national Circular Economy policy – measures are set out in the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025 (See Chapter on Textiles)	In progress
24	Create more specified recycling systems.	Compatible with national Circular Economy policy – measures are set out in the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025. (See Chapter - Supporting Indigenous Treatment Capacity (Waste Management Infrastructure)	In progress
25	Stop sewage pollution.	The EPA is the key statutory body for investigating complaints of pollution and for the enforcement, both directly and through oversight of Uisce Éireann (UÉ) and local authorities, of environmental legislation in Ireland, including	In progress

		compliance in relation to licensed urban wastewater discharges. The Government is providing UÉ with a sustained investment. UÉ has statutory responsibility for all aspects of water services planning, delivery and operation at national, regional and local level, including investment in waste water treatment plants and returning treated waste water safely to the environment in an efficient and sustainable manner. Direct discharge of raw sewage into our seas and rivers every day is not tenable. Plans are in place to address the remaining locations where this situation exists. Further detail including specific measures to address urban and domestic waste water pressures will be available in the Third Cycle River Basin Management Plan (2022-2027), which will be published in 2024.	
26	Stop pollution of all waters (i.e. rivers, lakes, oceans).	Under the Water Framework Directive (WFD), each Member State is required to produce River Basin Management Plans (RBMP), which cover 6-year periods. The Government is	In progress

		committed to protecting and restoring Ireland's natural waters by complying fully with the requirements of the WFD, and the RBMP is the tool for achieving this. The 3rd Cycle RBMP will be published in Q2 2024 and includes a Programme of Measures to protect and restore water bodies to at least good status by 2027. See also Call to Action 25.	
27	Reduce meat consumption by: - Introducing a meat tax - Stopping the slaughtering of animals unless we really need it - Creating more farms for producing vegetables rather than for feeding animals	DAFM is addressing the challenges to and supporting the growth of the horticulture industry through the National Strategy for Horticulture 2023-2027. Rising global population and income levels means continuing increased demand for animal proteins. Due to its grass-based production system, whereby drystock can be grazed outdoors for most of the year, Ireland has a competitive advantage in sustainable beef and sheep meat production. Most of Ireland's meat production is exported because of the relatively small size of the domestic market	In progress

		and demand for such product in destination markets. These production and consumption imbalances drive global trade.	
28	Encourage people to grow more vegetables for themselves.	DAFM published a National Strategy for Horticulture in June 2023. Key Strategic Action 2.3 is to increase demand for local, in season, fresh, quality fruit and vegetables by educating consumers of all ages on the benefits of eating more and local fresh fruit and vegetables. Bord Bia is leading on this action in conjunction with DAFM and other stakeholders including relevant government departments. Sub actions include rolling out consumer facing fresh produce promotional campaigns that are focused on quality in-season produce with messaging around availability, nutrition and use and work with local authorities to support the development of allotments and community gardens. Minister Hackett wrote to all Chief Executives of Local Authorities in March 2024 asking them to complete a survey from DAFM which is designed to elicit a better understanding of the challenges and issues around this. All this with a view to encouraging enthusiasm for gardening and growing fresh produce.	In progress

29	Encourage plant-based food / vegetarian diets.	The Department of Health has commissioned a review of *Scientific Evidence to support Healthy Eating Guidelines in Teenagers*, which compliments the suite of healthy eating guidelines across the lifespan. The Public Health Nutrition Sub-Committee in The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) commenced the review in 2023 and it is expected to be complete by 2025. These new guidelines will examine evidence to support healthy eating with a particular focus on food sustainability. Subsequently, resources to educate the public on sustainable healthy eating will be made available on the DOH website.	In progress
30	Reduce food waste by educating people and companies about how they can do this, and repurposing food waste into sources of energy.	Compatible with the Bioeconomy Action Plan.	In progress
31	If building new homes, build upwards, not outwards. Otherwise, use current housing stock and fix derelict, abandoned buildings for people to live in.	It is Government policy to achieve a model of compact growth in order to avoid sprawl of our built environment. This is an objective of our National Planning Framework. Pathway Four of Housing for All is 'Pathway to Addressing	In progress

		Vacancy and Efficient use of Housing Stock' and offers a range of incentives and other measures that existing housing stock is utilised, including a vacant property and refurbishment grant.	
32	Make sustainable living more affordable and therefore more achievable.	There a number of initiatives to encourage sustainable living, including lower mortgage rates for energy efficient homes, grants for retrofitting and electric cars.	In progress

Theme 5: Restoring and Rewilding: To restore and rewild environments which support our biodiversity, including urban and rural places, and develop national parks with the people who might work in these places

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
33	To restore and rewild environments which support our biodiversity, including urban and rural places, and develop national parks with the people who might work in these places.	There are a number of supporting actions in the 4th NBAP. Action 2A11 supports the establishment, expansion and enhancement of National Parks. Outcome 2F commits to the preparation and implementation of a National Restoration Plan. There is a commitment to protect, restore and create	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	- Make more national parks, nature reserves, protected areas and safe spaces (a mix of private and public spaces) for animals and different habitats by: - Creating more policies for protecting and restoring biodiversity - Giving more land to biodiversity - Offering to pay people money to encourage them to turn private land into national parks - Giving benefits to landowners and farmers to take Action on their land to encourage biodiversity - Making biodiversity the main focus of all tidy towns groups instead of tidiness	biodiversity rich landscape features in Action 2B5. Coillte have committed to increase the area of the Coillte estate to be managed for nature in Actions 2B18 and 2B19. The Tidy Towns programmes has a Biodiversity strand. CFI and the NPWS are encouraging community groups to produce local biodiversity plans with ecologists. Many applicants are Tidy Town groups. See Call to Action 11.	

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
34	Restore and reintroduce native species including trees, plants, flowers and predators (e.g. wolves).	Action 2B11 in the 4th NBAP encourages Local Authorities and other state/semi state bodies to support native tree planting. The NPWS operate several Birds of Prey reintroduction programmes.	In progress
35	Make more green spaces in cities and urban areas.	Supported by Action 3C1 in the 4th NBAP and the commitment that all Public Authorities and private sector bodies move towards no net loss of biodiversity, including through investment in Blue-Green infrastructure. Further supported by the Nature Restoration Regulation (pending adoption), which provides for the restoration of urban ecosystems and no net loss of urban green space.	In progress
36	Fund more rangers, forest keepers and other green jobs.	The NPWS Strategic Action Plan has prioritised the filling of additional conservation ranger posts. The Heritage Council Biodiversity Officer Programme will ensure each Local Authority employs a Biodiversity Officer to champion biodiversity issues. Further employment is being created in the Forest sector.	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
37	Give money and support to people who might lose their jobs so they can find green jobs.	Ireland's Just Transition Programme will provide for investments of up to €169 million, which will be targeted at the economic transition of the Midlands region for the period to 2027	In progress
38	When developing new buildings, don't disturb rivers - protect their natural movement.	Rivers protected as Special Areas of Conservation would require Appropriate Assessment to be carried out to ensure no impact by development. Further addressed by the forthcoming Water and Planning Guidelines, which will undergo public consultation this year. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide practical advice to planning authorities on how environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) are to be fully integrated into the planning system, thereby protecting water bodies from development.	In progress
39	Reforest Ireland! Every time someone is born, a tree should be planted so over time	Ireland's Shared National Vision for Trees, Woods and Forests until 2050 calls for the right trees in the right places for the right reasons with the right management. Ireland's	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	we will have forests full and protected for nature.	Forest Strategy to 2030 describes how the 2050 Vision will be made a reality, and the Forestry Programme 2023 – 2027 is the first step in implementing the Vision. The Programme has been designed to make a significant contribution to Ireland's biodiversity objectives. The Programme will facilitate the creation of new forest habitats at scale. Each Member State, pending adoption of the Nature Restoration Regulation, will contribute to the EU wide commitment to plant three billion trees.	
40	Cut down fewer trees and find new materials to replace paper.	Tree felling in Ireland is regulated and most felling requires the replanting of trees.	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
41	Increase the number of deciduous plantations in Ireland.	The Forest Programme 2023-2027 has a range of options for planting trees and all plantations planted in Ireland are mixed forests (minimum of 20% broadleaves). Ireland has committed under this programme to plant 50% broadleaves and this target is being achieved. The Nature Restoration Regulation (pending adoption) requires Member States to achieve favourable reference area targets for Annex I woodland habitats.	In progress
42	Prevent deliberate and accidental forest fires.	Action 2B8 of the 4th NBAP commits to the development of a National Fire Management Strategy.	In progress

Theme 6: Habitat and Species Protection: To protect our habitats and native species from the impact of invasive species and land use change

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
43	Control and manage invasive species by: - Not bringing them into Ireland - Inspecting goods being shipped to Ireland - Paying people to locate invasive species - Trapping and releasing to a 'new habitat' (i.e. an animal sanctuary). - Introducing and enforcing fines for bringing them in (*fines proportional to wealth). - Using camera traps to detect invasive species - Raising awareness/telling people about them (through multiple channels - podcasts, social media, comedy) - Making them illegal	Outcome 2H of the 4th NBAP includes a list of Actions relating to the implementation of the regulatory framework that will control invasive species.	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	- Telling people not to release them - Telling people if you see them		
44	Prevent people from disturbing bogs, wildlife and animals in their natural habitat.	Legal protections are in place for habitats, flora and fauna under the Wildlife Act (as amended) and the Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011.	In progress
45	Create more hedgerows and ditches by providing incentives/rewards for reducing	Actions 2B1 and 2B5 of the 4th commits to the support of farmers to protect, restore and create biodiversity rich	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
	hedge/grass cutting and rewilding hedgerows.	landscape features. The CAP Strategic Plan introduces increased protections for hedgerows in the agricultural landscape and incentives, including Ecoscheme and ACRES, to encourage planting of new hedgerows and appropriate management of existing hedgerows.	
46	Create a network of wildlife corridors, paths, tunnels and bridges across Ireland.	54km of Greenways were delivered in 2023.TII developed a Biodiversity Plan and an accompanying Landscape Plan to ensure that biodiversity is an integral part of landscape treatments of major transport infrastructure. Many Local Authorities are implementing green infrastructure strategies. Farmers are incentivised to create biodiversity landscape features.	In progress
47	Make cats wear bells (to alert birds to their presence).	This recommendation (with associated safety instructions) will be included on a leaflet for responsible cat ownership that is currently being developed within DAFM.	In progress
48	Stop hunting endangered species and birds in the wild.	Selected species are covered by the Open Seasons Order and other licensing mechanisms.	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
No	**Call to Action**	**Government Response**	**Status**
49	Create a penalty point system to stop further destruction of habitat loss. The more points you get, the more severe the penalties become e.g. if a company is illegally dumping, some of their assets (like properties) should be seized.	To be considered as part of the review of the Wildlife Act.	In progress

Theme 7: Overexploitation: To address biodiversity loss caused by overexploitation. To make sure places where we grow and gather our food are places where biodiversity can thrive, and the people who work in these places are helped to tackle biodiversity loss

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
Status	**Status**	**Status**	**Status**
50	Stop the use of harmful chemicals and pesticides. This would include: - Preventing people from spraying plants with pesticides and chemicals - Making sure farmers do not spread chemicals on the roads	DAFM regulates the sale and use of pesticides in accordance with the existing rigorous EU regulatory framework.	Not being implemented
51	Support farmers to grow organic because they are better for the environment and our health.	The 4th NBAP (Action 2B4) supports farmers to transition to organic farming.	In progress
52	Provide greater incentives to reduce methane.	Climate Action Plan 24 outlines how Ireland will realise methane emissions reductions by ensuring our agriculture sector operates as efficiently as possible. This includes improving the genetic quality of our herd, adopting more	In progress

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
Status	**Status**	**Status**	**Status**
		sustainable practices to fertilise land, and adoption of new technologies to mitigate emissions. We will also diversify how we use our land and promote less greenhouse gas-intensive forms of farming. Within the Climate Action Plan 2023, there was an action to mobilize the recommendations of the Food Vision 2030 process regarding voluntary reduction measures for livestock farmers. The plan also sets out ambitious targets for forestry, organic farming, tillage, the production of biomethane and all biobased products. In order to realise the scale of diversification required across the agriculture sector, all opportunities must be explored including new, emerging markets for biobased products. In support of this, the Government published Ireland's first Bioeconomy Action Plan 2023-2025 in October 2023.	

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
Status	**Status**	**Status**	**Status**
53	Enforce regulations and quotas on hunting/exploitation of certain types of species (endangered/protected species). Fine people if they break the quota.	There are legal protections in place for species under the Wildlife Act.	Implemented
54	Reduce overgrazing to limit impacts on grassland habitats. Provide schemes, subsidies and support to farmers so they don't have to overexploit in the first place.	Action 2B2 of the 4th NBAP incentivises farmers through a results-based scheme that benefits biodiversity. The CAP Strategic Plan includes legislative protection for grassland habitats including GAEC 9 and incentives, including Ecoscheme and ACRES, to encourage environmentally beneficial grassland, and other habitat type, management practices.	In progress
55	Give farmers money to support them to make the changes needed.	Action 2B1 of the 4th NBAP incentivises farmers to create and maintain habitats on farms.	In progress
56	Place limits on people for doing different things during different seasons e.g. hunting, farming, fishing.	There are licenses, with associated rules, in place for certain key species.	Implemented

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
Status	**Status**	**Status**	**Status**
57	Halve the size of the national cow herd.	For the present, no decision has been taken by Government to proceed with a livestock reduction scheme.	Not being implemented
58	Stop overfishing through having restrictions, quotas and regulations on fishing practices (only ethically-caught fish).	Sustainable fisheries are supported through the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). CFP provides the framework for the long- term conservation of fish stocks around our shores and is designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of fishing in the waters around Ireland and the EU. The Seafood/Offshore Renewable Energy Working Group has developed a *Seafood/ORE Engagement in Ireland – A Summary Guide* highlighting the importance of finding a balance in respect of seafood interests and the global climate emergency. MPAs and fisheries can coexist protecting habitats and species that require protection while allowing sustainable sea fisheries to continue. Actions 2D13 and 2D14 in the 4th NBAP commit to long	Implemented

Calls to Action of the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss			
Status	**Status**	**Status**	**Status**
		term conservation of stocks and measures for vulnerable stocks.	

Appendix I – Joint Oireachtas Committee on Environment and Climate Action Recommendations

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
1	The Committee notes and commends the considerable and robust examination of the issues by the Citizens' Assembly by diverse members from across the country including the expert advice given throughout the process.		Noted
2	The recommendations in this Joint Oireachtas Report represent our conclusions following a careful and thorough consideration of the Citizens' Assembly report on Biodiversity Loss. In addition, the Committee recommends that all Recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly report on Biodiversity Loss be examined and considered for implementation by Government.		Noted
3	The Committee recommends that the Calls to Action as set out in the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss should be examined and considered for implementation by the relevant government departments.	Responses to Recommendations received from relevant departments and presented to the Senior Officials Group on the	Implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		Environment and Climate Change.	
4	The Committee recommends that the Calls to Action set out in the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss should be reflected in the National Biodiversity Action Plan and superseding plans and other relevant policies and decision-making processes.	Some are reflected in the 4th NBAP - i.e. action to explore the rights of nature (NABP 1B3), establishment of Young People's Forum (NBAP 1D10), supports the Farming for Nature initiative, including farming champions (NBAP 2B3)	Implemented
5	The Committee recommends that this Departmental input, including timelines for implementation of measures, be collated and the resulting report be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas within 6 months.	Departmental input was received in the drafting of this Report.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
6	The Committee recommends that the Recommendations and Calls to Action as set out in both Assembly reports should be accounted for within the National Biodiversity Action Plan and superseding plans.	Some are reflected in the NBAP - i.e. action to explore the rights of nature (NABP 1B3), NBDC, in partnership with NPWS will examine the integration of habitat mapping with landcover mapping and assess data gaps (NBAP 4B8). The review of the 4th NBAP in 2027 will capture new and emerging policies, including the National Restoration Plan to be developed under the Nature Restoration Regulation.	In progress
7	The Committee recommends that, as a complement to the NBAP, the Government, led by the Department of An Taoiseach, sets out and oversees, communicates and implements a strategic vision for the	Progress continues to be made on developing, monitoring and embedding	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	well-being of the people of Ireland, and the future of rural communities, farmer livelihood, and rural development.	Ireland's well-being framework into the policy-making system.	
8	The Committee recommends that the State play a leading and supportive role in the adoption and implementation of an ambitious EU Nature Restoration Law.	Ireland played a leadership role in stewarding the of the NRL and the NBAP commits to delivery of a National Restoration Plan.	In progress
9	The Committee acknowledges the important work of community organisations, and non-governmental organisations in the protection of biodiversity and our natural heritage, and in the potential for these groups to play an important role in the restoration of nature and biodiversity across Ireland. The Committee recommends that funding and support through targeted results-based schemes with measurable outcomes and accountability is maintained and increased where practicable.	The evolution towards results based schemes has built on the work of LIFE projects, EIPs and the NPWS Farm Plan Scheme resulting in a broader uptake of Results-based schemes as part of the CAP SP. Other grants could be considered as results-based if provided as seed funding to	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		grow organisations or to engage local communities.	
10	The Committee recommends the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science develops a strategy to support the national and EU ambition on biodiversity, soil, forestry and water, involving all agencies, higher education institutes and other organisations.	The 4th NBAP commits to assess research priorities and knowledge gaps relating to biodiversity conservation and restoration. Government bodies responsible for funding biodiversity research will evaluate opportunities to incorporate relevant biodiversity research priorities into research calls as appropriate. Action 4A2 of the NBAP commits to research priorities	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		to be assessed by relevant bodies.	
11	The Committee recommends the commencement of a robust public awareness campaign on the crisis in biodiversity.	A Head of Engagement and Communications has recently been appointed to NPWS. Awareness campaigns are supported through the NPWS Education Officers, the Local Biodiversity Action Fund and through the work of LIFE projects, especially LIFE IP Wild Atlantic Nature, with project actions dedicated to	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		raising awareness of the Natura 2000 network. Engagement with citizens and community awareness will be a key objective of all Local Authority Biodiversity Action Plans. Work on these has commenced at local level in areas where Biodiversity Officers are in place.	
12	The Committee recommends the implementation of measures to promote biodiversity literacy in the public sector.	Local Authority Biodiversity Officers will provide biodiversity training for Local Authority staff and elected members, with the support of the Heritage Council. Action 1D11 in the NBAP commits to the roll out of the	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		Nature Skills Training Programmes, however this is not mandatory (See also CABL 59).	
13	The Committee recommends increased provision of biodiversity education in formal (e.g. primary and secondary curriculums), non-formal and informal education sectors.	The 4th NBAP has an action for DOE, DFHERIS and NPWS to work together to align the aims of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development - ESD to 2030 with the NBAP and to develop and progress mutual actions. The Heritage in Schools Scheme provides a panel of Heritage Specialists who visit primary schools (in-person or virtually) to help children and their teachers learn about and	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		appreciate their local heritage. The Scheme supports the stated aims and objectives of the Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (SESE) curriculum and provides an additional educational tool and resource for teachers. A pilot programme for heritage training (including biodiversity) in secondary schools is in preparation by the Heritage Council (CABL 62)	
14	The Committee recommends increased resourcing for farmers to enhance their biodiversity literacy, including particular supports for peer-to-peer training initiatives for nature restoration.	DAFM operate a Knowledge Transfer Programme for farmers that aims to increase participant's understanding of topics such as biodiversity,	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		water quality, air quality, climate change and soil health. (See also CABL 80).	
	Environmental law and enforcement		
15	The concern that fragmentation of responsibility and conflicting objectives are an obstacle to an effective strategy and the Assembly's call for new structures, such as a dedicated Oireachtas Committee on Biodiversity and a Cabinet Minister responsible for Biodiversity, should be reviewed as a matter of urgency, and proposals from government should be presented to the Oireachtas before October 2024.	It is a matter for the Oireachtas to give further consideration to the establishment of dedicated Oireachtas Committees and the relevant portfolios of Ministers.	Not being implemented
16	The Committee recommends a fundamental change in approach to environmental governance across government departments and that implementation and enforcement of existing environmental law be given priority. An immediate independent audit of enforcement across different legislation and agencies should be immediately commissioned, to report within six months, on: - Clarity of goals, responsibilities and of Key Performance Indicators - Effectiveness of	Action 1B2 of the 4th NBAP commits NPWS to conduct a review of nature governance, including the roles and responsibilities of Government Departments, Bodies and Agencies as they relate to the	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	deployment and adequacy of resources - Use of collaborative opportunities with other enforcement bodies - Powers and Penalties.	achievement of biodiversity actions and commitments. (See also CABL44)	
17	The Committee further recommends that relevant existing and any new national legislation be examined for compliance with EU environmental law.	The 4th NBAP commits to a review of Wildlife legislation (NBAP 1E1), DAFM to review EIA (Agriculture) Regulations (NBAP 1E3)	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
18	The Committee notes the assembly's recommendation that the State would examine the development of an environmental court at Circuit and District Court levels. The Committee recommends that further examination of specialised environmental courts should be undertaken with a view to implementing specialised model that fits appropriately into Ireland's existing court structure.	The planning system is the most appropriate and effective place to deal with planning concerns and there are established processes in place already (that are subject to ongoing review). Furthermore, it would not appear that there is a sufficient volume of work at Circuit or District level to justify a separate environmental court. The major litigation in the environmental and planning area is in the area of Judicial Review, where the High Court has exclusive first instance jurisdiction under the Constitution. To that end, a	Not being implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		dedicated Planning and Environmental Court has recently been established in the High Court. (See also CABL27)	
19	The Committee also recommends a review of the affordability of accessing such courts in order to ensure their efficacy with regard to the enforcement of law.	See Recommendation 18 above.	Not being implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
20	The Committee recommends that the forthcoming National Biodiversity Action Plan and all superseding Plans be placed on a statutory footing to better ensure the implementation of measures. The new Plan must be strengthened through: - The establishment of clear targets with priority rating and timelines - The publication of a set of actions which have been evolved through consultation, shown capable of delivering on the targets in the most cost-effective manner, and have a clear line of responsibility - A clear system of annual monitoring of the delivery of actions and progress towards targets, with proper accountability - A system of feedback and adaptation of the Plan in the face of experience. The Plan should have clearly defined ecological targets, with appropriate monitoring and timelines, to which all parties at national, regional and local levels are fully committed.	The 4th NBAP is on a statutory footing, with annual reporting obligations for public bodies and SMART targets.	Implemented
21	The Committee recommends that the State establish a National Biodiversity Data Centre on a statutory footing.	The governance of the NBDC has been reviewed and it is now established as a Company Limited by	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		Guarantee (CLG) subject to oversight by Heritage Council.	
22	The Committee recommends that a wildlife crime unit be established within the NPWS.	A Wildlife Enforcement and Protection Unit established in NPWS.	Implemented
23	The Committee recommends that action be taken to strengthen enforcement in relation to biodiversity and environmental issues across State bodies. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a wildlife crime unit within relevant bodies that is specifically focussed on enforcement. Collaboration across all enforcement bodies should be a priority when addressing environmental crime. The potential for a Memorandum of Understanding between an Garda Síochána and the NPWS to ensure greater enforcement in relation to wildlife crime should be explored.	A Wildlife Enforcement and Protection Unit established in NPWS and MOU signed with Garda Síochána.	Implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
24	The Committee recommends that a review of enforcement resources and practises be undertaken to identify possible collaboration opportunities between relevant state agencies.	Action 1E3 of the 4th NBAP commits the NPWS to work with relevant groups such as An Garda Síochána, Revenue's Customs Service and the judiciary to ensure adequate training and resourcing to enforce environmental and wildlife legislation.	In progress
25	The Committee recommends that all Departments review the enforcement powers and resourcing of environmental enforcement officers under their remit, including but not limited to the Environmental Protection Agency, the National parks and Wildlife Service, and Inland Fisheries. This review should identify where there are opportunities to provide additional powers to enforcement officers across various agencies and create efficiencies in the States enforcement capabilities, and to increase the number of officers on	As above. There is an ongoing review and revision of the Environmental Crime Directive underway. DECC is coordinating across Government in relation to Ireland's input to this process. Revisions being considered include an updated list of	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	the ground who can respond to both wildlife crime, fisheries crime, and pollution incidents for example.	environmental crime offences, harmonised sanction types and levels, measures to strengthen international investigation and prosecution, improvements to the collection of statistical data and measures to improve national enforcement chains.	
26	The Committee recommends that sanctions and penalties, financial or otherwise, for breaking environmental laws, wildlife crime and pollution incidents should be reviewed to ensure punishments are proportionate to the offence, so they adequately discourage negative behaviour.	As above, there is an ongoing review and revision of the Environmental Crime Directive underway. DECC is coordinating across Government in relation to Ireland's input to this process. Revisions being considered include an updated list of environmental crime offences,	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		harmonised sanction types and levels, measures to strengthen international investigation and prosecution, improvements to the collection of statistical data and measures to improve national enforcement chains.	
27	The Committee recommends that further consideration is given to biodiversity in planning policy including an exploration of the concept of Net Gain.	The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are engaging with public authorities and private sector champions in this area who are already testing some of these principles and will review national and international best practice on the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain in	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		strategic planning and development. This will allow us to identify good practice and develop consistent methodologies that can be applied in an Irish context. (CABL 144, 112, 117)	
28	The Committee recommends an independent review of access to justice for all citizens to ensure that those seeking to uphold environmental law and challenge decisions on environmental grounds and/or hold the State to account have the ability to do so, including that cost or the lack of financial means are not a barrier to accessing justice.	The financial barrier to justice aspect of this Recommendation is not being implemented. There is some progress in relation to other judiciary matters - See CABL 27.	Not being implemented
29	The Committee recommends that regulations should be introduced to require the re-use and recycling of precious metals and materials and that enforcement of such regulations should be prioritised over the use or extraction of new materials in order to protect biodiversity.	The Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022 incentivises the use of recycled and reusable alternatives to single-use	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		disposable packaging and other items.	
30	The Committee recommends that increased resourcing is provided to Environmental NGOs to uphold environmental law and / or to hold the State to account, enhancing their ability to protect and enhance habitats and the environment and to advocate for their protection.	See CABL 53. Government provides limited core funding to eNGOs.	In progress
	Rights of nature and the right to a clean, healthy, sustainable environment		
31	The Committee accepts, in principle, the recommendation of the Citizen's Assembly that the people of Ireland be afforded an opportunity, in a referendum or referenda, to protect our biodiversity through the incorporation of the rights of nature and/or the right to a healthy environment into Bunreacht na hÉireann (the Irish Constitution).	See CABL 31. There is a commitment in Action 1C2 of the 4th NBAP to explore the ways in which the rights of nature could be formally recognised.	In progress
32	The Committee recommends the Government begin the preparatory steps to consider a referendum or referenda within the lifetime of the current Dáil, which includes the establishment of an expert group with resources to design and draft the potential question or questions. The	See CABL 31. There is a commitment in Action 1C2 of the 4th NBAP to explore the ways in which the rights of	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	expert group should have broad expertise both on a national and international basis and should work to ensure that any questions provide a balance of rights and are appropriate to Ireland's constitutional context.	nature could be formally recognised. Convening this group is part of that process.	
33	The Committee recommends the expert group review the international experience including the experience of other jurisdictions that have included environmental rights and / or the rights of nature in their constitutions and give these experiences due consideration to the issues that arose.	See CABL 31. There is a commitment in Action 1C2 of the 4th NBAP to explore the ways in which the rights of nature could be formally recognised. Convening this group is part of that process.	In progress
34	The Committee recommends the frontloading of a robust public awareness campaign in advance of any change to environmental rights/referendum on environmental rights to prevent the spread of misinformation and to encourage public debate on biodiversity.	See CABL 31. Public awareness campaign does not fall within the NBAP commitment. This would prejudge the outcome of any exploratory work at this stage.	Not being implemented
	Funding Nature Restoration		

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
35	The Committee recommends a review of fiscal policy to identify biodiversity harmful subsidies and outline a pathway to end them.	See CABL 35. The Department of Finance have committed to Action 3B5 in the 4th NBAP to include biodiversity in its work on fiscal policymaking, which will include a high-level assessment of certain fiscal measures in the context of Green Budgeting. In NBAP Action 1B5, DPENDR committed to develop and implement systems to track and report expenditure allocations on measures that may adversely affect biodiversity.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
36	The Committee recommends a review of fiscal policy to identify biodiversity harmful government spending and recommends measures are implemented to consider appropriate alternatives and to outline a pathway to end harmful government spending.	See CABL 35. The Department of Finance have committed to Action 3B5 in the 4th NBAP to include biodiversity in its work on fiscal policymaking, which will include a high-level assessment of certain fiscal measures in the context of Green Budgeting. NBAP Action 1B5 states that DPENDR will develop and implement systems to track and report expenditure allocations on measures that may adversely affect biodiversity.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
37	The Committee recommends a review of fiscal policy to consider measures that could be used to finance nature restoration.	The Department of Finance have committed to NBAP action 3B5 to include biodiversity in its work on fiscal policymaking, which will include a high-level assessment of certain fiscal measures in the context of Green Budgeting. (See CABL 35),	In progress
38	The government should immediately establish a Biodiversity and Nature Restoration Fund that could be drawn down without delay, from which calls would be made for innovative initiatives from collaborative efforts across the community.	The 4th NBAP allows access for actions in support of the Plan to access the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund (Action 1B10) from 2026.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
39	The Committee further recommends that public procurement should move from a price-only approach to the use of price-quality ratio and lifecycle approach including environmental and biodiversity criteria.	The 2016 Procurement Regulations provide that a contract shall be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT). There is Green Public Procurement Guidance that supports the inclusion of sustainable and green practices into public sector procurement procedures. They are aimed primarily at public sector procurers in central and local government, state agencies and other public bodies such as universities, hospitals and schools. Contracting authorities, to the extent	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		relevant, should take into account not just the acquisition costs but the whole life-cycle costs.	
40	The Committee supports the development of a land use map to better understand current habitats and species to better inform reward schemes for farmers. However, the Committee recommends that the development of a land use map should not delay the implementation of measures that could improve and restore biodiversity with current available data.	Action 4B8 of the 4th NBAP requires NBDC, in partnership with NPWS to examine the integration of habitat mapping with landcover mapping and assess data gaps. Under Phase 1 of the National Land Use Review, recommendations 18 and 19 relate specifically to Land use mapping and habitat mapping.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		These recommendations are being advanced through the Land Evidence Forum which is a cross governmental grouping, chaired by the Environmental Protection Agency. A first important step in this area is the agreement of an appropriate land use classification scheme.	
41	The Committee recommends that the Department of Finance undertake a comprehensive review of current and future taxation and levies with respect to their impact on biodiversity and act to amend taxation and levies which result in perverse incentives to damage nature.	The Department of Finance have committed to NBAP action 3B5 to include biodiversity in its work on fiscal policymaking, which will include a high-level assessment of certain fiscal measures in the context of Green Budgeting. (See CABL	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		35). NBAP Action 1B5 states that DPENDR will develop and implement systems to track and report expenditure allocations on measures that may adversely affect biodiversity.	
42	The Committee recommends that when developing a model for ecosystem accounts and reward schemes, the Government should take a more nature positive approach whereby financial or commercial value of measures should not be the main or only priority. Nature should be protected in a similar way to heritage buildings.	Reward schemes under ACRES links payments to improved quality of habitat. The NPWS are exploring the pathways to remuneration for the conservation and restoration of nature.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
43	The Committee recommends a review of cost-benefit analysis models for assessing how public money is invested and to ensure all values are captured including environmental and social benefits and not just financial values. This will ensure a strategic approach to projects that values longer-term benefits. Nature-based solutions should be examined and the environmental, community and long-term benefits taken into account for addressing issues such as flooding.	Action 3C2 of the 4th NBAP states that the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) will work to prepare and publish a Case Study Paper examining best practice in integrating green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and ecosystem services into the preparation of land use plans. A cost benefit analysis is outside the scope of this work, but such models will be considered as part of the guidance for key sectors on the use of Natural Capital Accounting (NBAP 4D3) which will inform the high level	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		assessment of fiscal measures.	
44	The Committee recommends the Department of Finance review the opportunities to support the State's biodiversity goals through its plans, programmes and projects with mechanisms such as ecosystem services, ecological care and natural capital accounting.	The NESC publication *Natural Capital Accounting: A Guide for Action* outlines the role of natural capital accounting in valuing, recognising and integrating nature into Irish policy decision-making using a UN-standardised approach. The Department of Finance have committed to include biodiversity in its work on fiscal policymaking, which will include a high-level assessment of certain fiscal measures in the context of	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		Green Budgeting (See CABL 35).	
45	The Committee recommends that the Department of Finance review the Green bond to ensure it is 100% compliant with the EU taxonomy and also reflects other climate and biodiversity obligations.	The Department of Finance is considering how best to address this recommendation which will require engagement with other concerned parties such as the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the NTMA.	Not being implemented
46	The Committee recommends that the Department of Finance be resourced with experts to ensure the taxation system and policy measures provide benefits to biodiversity.	1B3 of the 4th NBAP commits relevant Departments to explore the biodiversity expertise and training requirements to ensure	Not being implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		appropriate expertise is available.	
47	The Committee notes the considerable sums of money on deposit in Ireland and recommends that the State investigate the establishment of a citizens Green Bond to support investment in nature restoration, conservation and climate related projects. This would have a dual purpose of an educational element about projects being undertaken and a sense of contributing to the funding of nature restoration.	The State, through the National Treasury Management Agency, currently operates a sovereign green programme. Since it was launched in 2018 the programme has allocated some €10.8bn to eligible green projects. Given their scale, price exposure to changes in market interest rates and technical reporting features, ISGBs are traded on wholesale debt capital markets. However, it is possible for a private citizen to	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		purchase them through a Primary Dealer in Irish government bonds. The NTMA constantly reviews the optimal mix of instruments for the better management of the national debt with respect to the funding requirement and, at this point, ISGBs are considered to fulfil the environment and climate-related dimensions.	
48	The Committee recommends farmers and non-farming landowners are financially rewarded for the provision of ecosystem services and ecological care and the restoration and protection of nature through results-based payments. Those working the land must be shown how there can be prosperous family farms in the years ahead deriving	The ACRES programme has increased ambition and focuses on results and outcomes. Action 2B2 of the	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	income from both quality food production and from environmental services.	4th NBAP supports incentives under results-based schemes.	
49	The Committee acknowledges that our country's progress should not be based solely on the narrow lens of economic growth, but instead should capture overall quality of life across health, environmental, social and economic areas. To this end, the Committee recommends the establishment of a new Ombudsman for Future Generations with the resources of an office, or a Future Generations Commission to protect the long-term interests of human and ecological well-being for current and future generations.	The Well-being Framework '*Understanding Life in Ireland*' is underpinned by 11 dimensions, including *Environment, Climate and Biodiversity* in conjunction with *Income and Wealth*. It reviews performance across economic, environmental and social issues simultaneously, rather than in isolation. The establishment of an Ombudsman for Future Generations or a Future	Not being implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		Generations Commission is a matter for future consideration.	
	Land use and water quality		
50	The Committee recommends that policy and targets should be made clearer to ensure that there are no conflicting demands being made on farmers and landowners. Better engagement with farmers would also encourage better understanding of what is expected.	DAFM operate a Knowledge Transfer Programme for farmers that aims to increase participant's understanding of topics such as biodiversity, water quality, air quality, climate change and soil health (See CABL 84). Knowledge transfer programmes are also in place through various LIFE projects.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
51	The Committee recommends that agri-schemes be streamlined to ensure applications are straightforward. Farmers should be supported at a local level to remove barriers and encourage farmers to participate in schemes to benefit the environment. A clear definition of what is to be delivered should be provided to farmers.	DAFM operate a Knowledge Transfer Programme for farmers that aims to increase participant's understanding of topics such as biodiversity, water quality, air quality, climate change and soil health (See CABL 84). Farmers participating in ACRES cooperation projects benefit from the assistance of a Local Cooperation Project Team to support implementation of the scheme at local level.	In progress
52	The Committee recommends that further funding/support schemes which align with the principles of a just transition and incentivise environmental protection, nature restoration and the enhancement of biodiversity, should be made available to farmers in addition to those	This is being realised through pilot and demonstration projects under LIFE/Horizon/EIPs and	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	provided for by the CAP. The Committee also recommends that longer-term support schemes should be considered.	through the Wetlands Restoration Scheme under the National Just Transition Fund.	
53	The Committee recommends that Government agricultural policy be comprehensively reviewed for compliance with the protection of biodiversity and the environment.	DAFM commenced a review of the EIA regulations (See CABL75). All agricultural policy would be subject to SEA as appropriate. Potential negative impacts are avoided under the CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) and a comprehensive Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment process was carried out to ensure each intervention had no significant impacts. Any amendments under the CSP are also screened for potential	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		impacts and also consider cumulative impacts with other prevailing plans/programmes. Further consideration to be given to minimise the Government expenditure harmful to biodiversity as identified in the Green Budgeting REV.	
54	The Committee notes with concern the impact the intensification and industrialisation of agriculture has had on biodiversity, particularly in the last decade, and recommends that policies that promote this intensification be reviewed.	The second phase of the Land Use Review will seek to identify the key demands on land (both public and private) to inform policies for land use across key government objectives, improving socioeconomic, climate, biodiversity, water, and air quality outcomes.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
55	The Committee is extremely concerned about water quality in Ireland, in particular following the EPA's report that Ireland only has 32 pristine rivers out of what was 500, and in that context notes the decision of the European Commission to lower the maximum nitrate allowance for Ireland. The Committee recommends that all appropriate steps be taken to significantly improve water quality in line with the EU Water Framework Directive.	The River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027 will aim to achieve the objective of at least good water status for surface waterbodies by defining and implementing the necessary measures within integrated programmes of measures. Measures have been put in place for all waterbodies and a process has been initiated to put in place additional targeted mid-cycle measures, where necessary (See CABL 91)	In progress
56	The Committee recommends that agricultural subsidy schemes must not restrict farmers in their ambition to make changes for the benefit of biodiversity, and to the greatest extent possible payments should be results based over the whole farm rather, than area-based payment.	The ACRES programme has increased ambition and focuses on results and outcomes.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	Farmers who protect and enhance biodiversity should be financially rewarded for the ecosystem services they provide.	Action 2B2 of the 4th NBAP supports incentives under results-based schemes.	
57	The Committee recommends additional resources are invested in streamlining and simplifying the measuring and monitoring of key biodiversity indicators on farms, and upskilling and training is increased for farm assessors and advisors.	A contract has been awarded by DAFM that will undertake long-term biodiversity monitoring to evaluate related measures under the CAP strategic Plan (See CABL 9). DAFM operate a Knowledge Transfer Programme for farmers that aims to increase participant's understanding of topics such as biodiversity, water quality, air quality, climate change and soil health (See CABL 80 and 84).	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
58	The Committee recommends the full implementation and compliance with existing environmental legislation with regard to land use and water quality particularly in relation to local authorities and public bodies such as Uisce Éireann. The Committee further recommends increased intensity in the programme of works to prevent the unacceptable discharge of raw or partially treated sewage into any fresh or marine waters is prevented and the frequency of any untreated water discharge events is reduced to zero.	The Government is providing Uisce Éireann with a sustained investment. Budget 2024 has provided €1.6bn to Uisce Éireann to meet the cost of domestic water services. The National Development Plan commits to almost €6bn capital investment to be undertaken by Uisce Éireann in the period from 2021-2025 of which over €4.5 billion will be Voted Exchequer funded in respect of domestic water services (See CABL 93).	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
59	The Committee recommends the immediate increase of inspections by local authorities, and LAWPRO to include farm inspections and septic tank inspections, in particular for compliance with the Nitrates Action Programme. Such inspections should be targeted in areas where water quality is at risk. Local authorities should be equipped with the resources necessary.	Local Authorities will strengthen the inspection and enforcement relating to agricultural diffuse pollution. A total of 57 new Inspectors in Local Authorities have been allocated for the National Agricultural Inspection Programme (NAIP) and five new staff have been allocated to the EPA to oversee the programme. An additional four staff have been allocated to LAWPRO to help in co-ordinating the activity and avoiding duplication where possible. Inspections will be targeted and risk-based using all the available evidence,	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		including water quality data, the EPA's PIP Maps and the Targeting Agricultural Measures Map on up to 4,500 farms per annum during the lifetime of the Nitrate Action Programme. DAFM will undertake 500-1,000 inspections per year under the GAP Regulations focused in Q1 where risk of nutrient impact on water quality is high. DAFM has increased their derogation inspections from 5% to 10% of all derogation farms per year and will undertake approximately 700 inspections per annum within	

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		the timeframe 2022 – 2024. (See CABL 97).	
60	The Committee recommends better uptake of enforcement tools including sanctions at local authority level in accordance with the findings of the EPA's local authority performance reports.	Linked with Recommendation 59 above.	In progress
61	The Committee recommends better coordination on a cross-sectoral basis to address water quality issues on a more targeted local level.	Water policy and Local Government functions reside	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		within DHLGH which facilitates a more integrated approach.	
62	The Committee recommends nature-based solutions are adopted to tackle flood management and should include whole of catchment area hydromorphology, planning and restoration.	The 4th NBAP commits the OPW, in coordination with other stakeholders, to enhance its knowledge and capacity with regards to Nature-based solutions for Catchment Management (MBS-CM) as part of the development of future flood relief schemes. A National Hydromorphology Programme is being established with the long-term vision of mitigating the negative impact of historical construction on rivers.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
63	The Committee recommends the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage update and publish final guidance on 'Nature based solutions to the management of rainwater and surface water runoff in urban areas' for use by both planning and design professionals, and for planning authorities to guide considerations on planning applications of all scales.	This has been published.	Implemented
64	The Committee recommends the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage publish guidance on nature-based solutions for flooding in rural areas in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Office of Public Works, Inland Fisheries Ireland, ESB, Bord na Mona, Coillte and any other agencies with responsibilities for river water management or activities which have a significant influence on land drainage and flooding.	NBAP Action 2D7 commits the OPW in coordination with other stakeholders, to enhance its knowledge and capacity with regards to Nature-based solutions for Catchment Management (MBS-CM) as part of the development of future flood relief schemes.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
65	The Committee recognises the importance of organic farming and locally grown produce for food production, biodiversity, and water quality and recommends supports for this industry are reviewed to ensure they align with 'Ireland's Strategy for the Development of the Organic Sector 2019 – 2025' and for the medium to long term growth of this sector.	DAFM has committed to increasing organic farmer land area to 330,000ha from 110,000ha before 2027. This will be achieved through the Organic Farming Scheme, increased promotion and developing market demand (See CABL 81). Supported through the CAP and through commitments in the 4th NBAP, organic farming will increase to 10%.	In progress
66	The Committee recommends the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine prepare guidance on restoring soil heath.	The EU Soil Strategy proposed the introduction of a Soil Monitoring Law to monitor and report on soil health within member states. This proposed law is currently under	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		discussion at Working Party of the Environment in the EU Council. National action on soil health will be guided by the outcome of negotiations on the EU Directive (CABL 86)	
	Mandates of semi-State bodies		
67	The Committee recommends that the legislation governing Coillte and Bord na Mona (namely, the Forestry Act 1988, and the Turf Development Acts 1946-1988) is urgently reviewed and amended to align with national and EU laws and biodiversity objectives. Amendments must ensure that the mandates and functions of those organisations include the protection, promotion and enhancement biodiversity and do not conflict with or hinder progress in relation to biodiversity restoration, and that the narrow commercial functions of these organisations are also expanded to include community and public benefit as core objectives, with a focus on peatland restoration	See CABL 116. It is important to note that both Bord na Móna and Coillte are working with the NPWS in contributing to biodiversity objectives. Bord na Móna's Biodiversity Action Plan outlines ambition to rehabilitate peatland. The Enhanced Decommissioning Rehabilitation and Restoration Scheme (EDRRS) was	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	and rehabilitation, native woodland and ecosystem services, as appropriate.	developed for the rehabilitation of peatlands by Bord na Móna, funded under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) through the Climate Action Fund. The investment of €108 million over its duration relates to the enhanced rehabilitation of approximately 33,000 hectares of Bord na Móna peatlands previously used for energy production over a number of decades. Bord na Móna are implementing restoration on peatlands through various contracts on behalf of NPWS. In April 2022, Coillte launched a new and ambitious strategic	

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		vision for its future forest estate, which aims to sustainably balance and deliver the multiple benefits of Ireland's state forests across four strategic pillars: Climate, Nature, Wood and People. These four strategic pillars are fully aligned with the DAFM's Forest Strategy for Ireland. Coillte Nature, the not-for-profit branch of Coillte founded in 2019, is solely dedicated to managing the delivery of nature and biodiversity initiatives within Coillte forests. Initiatives carried out by Coillte Nature include the planting of native woodlands, restoring	

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		important biodiversity areas, regenerating urban forests for the benefit of people and nature and rehabilitating ecosystem services on sensitive lands such as peatlands.	
68	The Committee recommends that the Arterial Drainage Act 1945 be urgently reviewed and amended to align with national and EU laws and objectives to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity. The Committee recommends the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform undertake a review of all functioning of the Act and prepare a report within 6 months outlining potential amendments to the Act to ensure it is aligned with national and EU laws and objectives to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity.	A review of arterial drainage requirements and the underpinning Arterial Drainage Act will be undertaken as part of the 3rd RBMP (CABL 100)	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
69	The Committee recommends that a far larger proportion of the land owned by Bord na Mona and Coillte should be specifically designated for biodiversity protection, enhancement and promotion.	There is ongoing and constructive engagement with both companies regarding the management of High Value Nature areas for nature.	In progress
70	The Committee strongly recommends that targets be incorporated into the NBAP, and that reporting mechanisms be established that follow the governance structures for the CAP.	Targets are incorporated into the NBAP. Reports will be provided to Cabinet on an annual basis. Public bodies listed in the Wildlife Amendment Act (2023) are bound by a biodiversity duty to report on progress in considering biodiversity in their work programmes.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
71	The new plan should include geographic targets, for example for a specific river catchment. It should also consider sectoral agreements embracing all stakeholders pledged to remove environmental damage throughout the supply chain from initial design to final disposal, starting with the Food Sector, and our Planning Development and Construction of Buildings and Infrastructure.	The interim update to the 4th NBAP will include the National Restoration Plan which will be underpinned by more geographically targeted action. Business for Biodiversity Ireland will engage with sectors to support addressing biodiversity impacts in their supply chains.	In progress
72	The delivery of the National Biodiversity Action Plan should be aligned with the Climate Action Plan and overseen in the same way from the Taoiseach's office.	There is alignment between the 4th NBAP and the CAP. The NPWS have responsibility for the oversight of the NBAP, with statutory responsibility assigned to the Minister.	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
	National Biodiversity Action Plan and designated sites		
73	The Committee noted the planned action to place the NBAP on a statutory footing. However, the Committee recommends that clear and specific targets be set out and integrated with the Climate Action Plan to provide a clear pathway to implementation to ensure effective and efficient progress is made in relation to biodiversity measures.	SMART targets are incorporated into the 4th NBAP. There are alignments with the CAP, particularly relating to peatland restoration. An action tracker will be developed alongside statutory reporting.	Implemented
74	The Committee recommends that National Biodiversity Action Plan should set out a whole-of-government approach to the implementation of actions and measures to encourage greater collaboration at national, regional and local levels.	The 4th NBAP sets out a whole-of-Government approach and is implemented by a cross departmental Biodiversity Working Group.	Implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
75	The Committee recommends that a network of wildlife corridors, paths, tunnels and bridges be created in both urban and rural areas across Ireland.	Under the CSP green architecture measures and Local Biodiversity and Climate Adaptation Plans, there are actions related to the incorporation of green infrastructure.	In progress
76	The Committee recommends that more land be given to national parks, protected areas, more special areas of conservation be designated, to include a number of areas with the highest level of protection are created.	The NPWS are expanding the network of National Parks and Nature Reserves across the country, including establishing new ones, and increasing investment in the ones we already have. The area of Natura sites continues to increase.	In progress
77	The Committee recommends that national parks incorporate ‘highly protected’ areas to facilitate full protection of nature in some spaces.	A Framework for National Park Management Plans is being	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		developed and various options will be considered	
78	The Committee recommends that certain areas of national parks be made inaccessible to the public to allow for the full protection of nature in some spaces in line with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) protected area management category 1a - strict nature reserve. The NPWS should review its land holdings and where discrepancies exist between the protected area management categories and the existing land uses, the NPWS should endeavour to bring those lands in line with the IUCN definition of a National Park.	A Framework for National Park Management Plans is being developed and various options will be considered	In progress
79	The Committee recommends that measures are introduced to expand national parks for the benefit of the public and nature and that increased resources are made available to restore them. NPWS should develop a work plan to ensure the most valuable woodlands in the national parks are free from Rhododendron and invasive species.	A Framework for National Park Management Plans is being developed and various options will be considered. The NPWS implement a rolling conservation measures programme that includes	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		control of Rhododendron in National Parks.	
80	The Committee recommends that measures are introduced to expand native woodlands and that increased resources are made available to restore them.	The Forestry Programme has been designed to make a significant contribution to Ireland's biodiversity objectives. The Programme will facilitate the creation of new forest habitats at scale, with generous incentives for farmers and public bodies to plant mixed native woodlands on suitable land, as well as 20-year payments for farmers to retain and promote emergent woodland on their land. The NPWS published a Woodland Management	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		Strategy for Glenveagh National Park.	
81	The Committee recommends that measures are introduced to expand urban green spaces and increased resources are made available to restore them.	The recently approved Nature Restoration Law mandates an expansion of urban green spaces. The National Planning Framework calls for the integrated planning for green infrastructure and ecosystem services to be incorporated into the preparation of statutory land use plans. Following on from this, the	In progress

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		2022 Development Plans Guidelines of the Planning and Development Act 2000 sets out national policies and objectives for the preparation, making, variation and implementation of development plans and calls for local authorities to produce detailed open space audits. In addition, the recently published Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024 emphasise the importance of the protection of natural assets and biodiversity and open	

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		space networks. These National Guidelines state that "all statutory development plans should include a strategy for the provision of an integrated hierarchy of public open spaces and corridors across the plan area to meet the needs of the planned population….This should include a hierarchy of multifunctional public open spaces and corridors that are accessible and provide for the recreational needs of the planned population, while also creating space for nature and ecosystem services."	

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		Local Authorities are required to be consistent with legislation and national policy and all Development Plans include objective for green/blue infrastructure and ecosystem services. Several Local Authorities have prepared Green Infrastructure Strategies The Local Biodiversity Action Fund provides funding to Local Authorities for local biodiversity action, including restoration of urban green spaces.	
82	The Committee recommends that this report should be debated in both Houses of the Oireachtas.	Noted	Noted

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
83	The Committee recommends that new legislation is introduced for the protection of trees, hedgerows, and native woodlands, to ensure these important elements of our natural heritage are sufficiently protected and managed and legislation is fit for purpose.	Existing laws prescribe for the timing of hedgerow cutting and also facilitates the protection of selected native woodland habitats.	Not being implemented
84	The Committee recommends that legislation to designate Marine Protected Areas is progressed through the Oireachtas with urgency in line with EU targets to designate 30% of our waters (with 10% having the strictest protection) by 2030 and that appropriate resources are given for enforcement of such protection.	The Marine Protected Areas Bill is progressing.	In progress
85	The Committee recommends that local authorities are empowered, subject to appropriate protections, to designate sites that are considered locally important for biodiversity and ecosystem services and put in place measures to manage and conserve these sites in a nature positive manner for the public interest. Such sites would not preclude development from taking place, but any development would need to be planned to ensure the special natural features of the site are protected as far as practicable.	The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) sets out the content to be included within Development Plans. In this regard, a Development Plan needs to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable	Not being implemented

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
		development of the area of the development plan consisting of a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the development objectives for the area in question. A Development Plan needs to include objectives for “the conservation and protection of the environment including, in particular, the archaeological and natural heritage and the conservation and protection of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed for the purposes of this paragraph” .	

JOC recommendations		NPWS Comment	Status
86	The Committee recommends that certain areas of national parks be made inaccessible to the public to allow for the full protection of nature in some spaces.	A Framework for National Park Management Plans is being developed and various options will be considered	In progress

Glossary

Acronym	Description
AA	Appropriate Assessment
ACRES	Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme
AIPP	All-Island Pollinator Plan
BWG	Biodiversity Working Group
BF	Biodiversity Forum
CAF	Climate Action Fund
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBAM	Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism
CFI	Community Foundation Ireland
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSRD	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland)

DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DECC	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
DFIN	Department of Finance
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DOE	Department of Education
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOT	Department of Transport
DPENDR	Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
DTCAGSM	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media
EDRRS	Enhanced Decommissioning Rehabilitation and Restoration Scheme

EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIP	European Innovation Partnership
eNGO	Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
EU IAS	EU Invasive Alien Species
EU LIFE	The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument supporting environmental, nature conservation and climate action projects through the EU.
FES	Farm Environmental Study
FNA	Biodiversity Financial Needs Assessment
FSAI	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
GBIF	Global Biodiversity Information Facility
GBUE	Green and Blue Urban Environments
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLAS	Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-Environment Scheme
GNDOCB	Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau

GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
GSLS	Growth and Sustainability Loan Scheme
HNV	High Nature Value
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IDA	Industrial Development Agency
INTERREG	EU initiative to bring people together to share innovative and sustainable solutions to regional development challenges. IFI - Inland Fisheries Ireland
LAWPRO	Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO)
LBAF	Local Biodiversity Action Fund
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LEADER	Government financial supports for private enterprises and community groups who improve quality of life and economic activity in rural areas.
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
NBAP	National Biodiversity Action Plan (Ireland)
NBDC	National Biodiversity Data Centre
NBS	Nature-based Solutions (UNEA Definition)1

NDP	National Development Plan
NECD	National Emission Reduction Commitments Directive
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NMI	National Museum of Ireland
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NRP	National Restoration Plan
NTA	National Transport Authority
OPR	Office of the Planning Regulator
OPW	Office of Public Works
ORE	Offshore Renewable Energy
OREDP	Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan
OSPAR	Mechanism by which 15 Governments & the EU cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic.

PAF	Prioritised Action Framework
PEACEPLUS	European Union funding programme designed to support peace and prosperity across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland, building upon the work of the previous PEACE and INTERREG Programmes.
PV	Photovoltaic
RAMSAR	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat
RBMPs	River Basin Management Plans
SACs	Special Areas of Conservation
SBCI	Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SOLAS	SOLAS is the State agency tasked with building a world-class Further Education and Training sector to fuel Ireland's future.
SPAs	Special Protection Areas

SRESS	Small-Scale Renewable Electricity Support Scheme
STEM	Science Technology Engineering Mathematics
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
UÉ	Uisce Éireann
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WI	Waterways Ireland

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An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
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