

National Parks & Wildlife Service

Lough Corrib SAC (Addergoole Bog) (Site code 000297)



Raised Bog Restoration Plan 9 (Report)

Version 2

October 2022

Contents

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 | PURPOSE OF THE RESTORATION PLAN..... | 1 |
| 1.2 | LOUGH CORRIB SAC..... | 1 |
| 1.3 | SITE-SPECIFIC CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES | 2 |
| 2 | RESTORATION MEASURES AT LOUGH CORRIB SAC (ADDERGOOLE BOG)..... | 2 |
| 2.1 | INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| 2.2 | BLOCKING OF HIGH BOG DRAINS | 3 |
| 2.3 | BLOCKING OF DRAINS ON CUTOVER BOG | 4 |
| 2.4 | CONTOUR BUNDING | 5 |
| 2.5 | CELL BUNDING | 7 |
| 2.6 | GENERAL SITE MANAGEMENT | 8 |
| 3 | DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT PLANS | 8 |
| 4 | COMMUNITY BENEFITS | 8 |
| 5 | RESTORATION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION | 9 |
| 5.1 | PREPARATORY | 9 |
| 5.2 | PROGRESS TO DATE | 10 |
| 5.2.1 | <i>Hydrological characterisation</i> | <i>10</i> |
| 5.2.2 | <i>Review of proposed restoration measures in line with best practice at time of implementation.....</i> | <i>10</i> |
| 5.2.3 | <i>Detailed ecological surveys</i> | <i>11</i> |
| 5.2.4 | <i>Landownership Investigations.....</i> | <i>12</i> |
| 5.2.5 | <i>Stakeholder consultation and community engagement</i> | <i>12</i> |
| 5.2.6 | <i>Compensation/land acquisition</i> | <i>12</i> |
| 5.2.7 | <i>Appropriate Assessment Screening</i> | <i>13</i> |
| 5.2.8 | <i>Compilation of tender/construction documents and Health & Safety file</i> | <i>13</i> |
| 5.2.9 | <i>Surveying setting/out of the Works</i> | <i>13</i> |
| 5.2.10 | <i>Implementation of restoration measures</i> | <i>13</i> |
| 5.2.11 | <i>Post-Works inspections and preparation of as built survey information.....</i> | <i>14</i> |
| 5.2.12 | <i>Update of restoration plan to outline Works completed and remaining Works required in future.</i> | <i>14</i> |
| 6 | REFERENCES | 17 |
| 7 | GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS | 18 |

Maps:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Map 1 - Lough Corrib SAC Boundary..... | 15 |
| Map 2 - Lough Corrib SAC Restoration Proposals | 16 |

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Restoration Plan

This restoration plan has been developed by National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to set out proposals for restoration of raised bog and associated habitats at Addergoole Bog which is located within Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (000297). This plan identifies technically feasible restoration measures for the various zones of the bog including the high bog, cutover bog and surrounding margins and provides details of progress on implementation of their restoration plan.

The restoration measures set out will enable nature conservation targets for Active Raised Bog (ARB) at this SAC to be met. Although the focus of the restoration plan is on ARB habitat, it is anticipated that restoration measures will also benefit other peatland habitats and can contribute to socio-economic benefits for the local community, improvements to biodiversity and reduced carbon emissions. Monitoring of this restoration plan will be undertaken to ensure that the intended restoration measures are successfully contributing to the achievement of the site-specific targets for ARB at Lough Corrib SAC.

Action 1.1: Develop restoration plan further in partnership with stakeholders.

This restoration plan will be developed further in conjunction with stakeholders to ensure that restoration is carried out in such a way that the conservation requirements of the site can be met, whilst minimising any impacts on adjacent land and maximising benefits to the local community. The plan will develop and change over time through input from stakeholders and **will be considered a living document**. The primary aim of which is to ensure site-specific conservation objectives for raised bog habitats within Lough Corrib SAC can be met.

Section 2 of the restoration plan sets out the restoration measures that have been proposed for Addergoole Bog. Section 3 outlines how a drainage management plan for Addergoole Bog has been developed to support the implementation of this restoration plan. Section 4 describes potential for community benefits to be explored through the plan and section 5 outlines progress with implementation of the plan.

Map 1 outlines the location and extent of Addergoole Bog within Lough Corrib SAC. Map 2 illustrates restoration measures that have been implemented to date as well as any proposed/outstanding restoration measures to be implemented at Addergoole Bog.

This document provides an outline of the restoration plan but is supported by detailed datasets that are available on the NPWS Restoration Maps Viewer. This map viewer provides NPWS with an up-to-date view of all restoration plan details and supporting information including status of landowner investigations, landowner consent, progress with construction and details of proposed and remaining restoration measures.

1.2 Lough Corrib SAC

Lough Corrib (SAC) is situated north of Galway City extending westwards circa 35 km. It consists of a shallower lake basin to the south and a larger, deeper basin to the north. The bedrock is mostly limestone, with sandstone to the north. Raised bog is found at Addergoole, between the Cregg and Clare rivers that flow along the northern and southern boundary of the bog respectively. Addergoole bog also includes areas of cutover bog, fen, a bog lake, and a soak system. Addergoole bog is a good example of a western raised bog located on the eastern shores of Lough Corrib approximately 8km north of Galway city. The Galway to Headford road runs by the east of the present extent of the bog.

The SAC has been selected for thirteen Annex I habitats and nine Annex II species. IT has been selected for several Annex I peatland habitats including:

- [7110] Active raised bogs*
- [7120] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration
- [7210] Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae**
- [7230] Alkaline fens
- [91D0] Bog woodland*

*Priority habitats

This Restoration plan has been developed to address restoration measures for the peatland habitats only.

Addergoole Bog represents one of the extreme western examples of raised bog in the country and thus the conservation of priority habitats (ARB habitat and bog woodland) at the site is particularly important to ensure the retention of the natural range of these habitats (Kelly et al. 1995; Fernandez et al. 2005; 2006; 2014a). At Addergoole a substantial soak system occurs which includes *Betula pubescens* bog woodland, active flush and bog lakes. The open water in this area is infilling with large rafts of *Rhynchosporion* vegetation (NPWS, 2017). The bog is located between the River Clare to the south and Cregg River to the North, with the western edge of the bog grading into Lough Corrib.

1.3 Site-specific conservation objectives

Detailed site-specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) aim to define the conditions necessary in maintaining or achieving the favourable conservation condition of a habitat or species at site level. The maintenance of habitats and species within sites at favourable condition will contribute to the maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

A conservation objective has been set for Lough Corrib SAC for ARB habitat using attributes and targets based on parameters set out in the Habitats Directive. In summary, one of the key targets is to restore the area of ARB to 64.7 ha. The area of ARB was reported as 39.2 ha during the latest monitoring survey (2012) and it has been determined that there is potential for 17.7 ha of Degraded Raised Bog (DRB) to be restored to ARB on the high bog following restoration measures. There is also long-term potential for 7.8 ha of bog peat-forming habitats (BPFH) to develop if restoration measures are undertaken on cutover areas. Several targets have been set for other attributes relating to the quality and condition of ARB habitat, including a target to restore adequate transitional areas to support/protect the active raised bog and the ecosystem services it provides. The restoration measures proposed by this restoration plan aim to achieve these targets. Further information on the SSCO's can be found in the Addergoole Bog SAC conservation objectives document (NPWS, 2017a) and the conservation objectives supporting document – raised bog habitats (NPWS, 2017b).

2 Restoration measures at Lough Corrib SAC (Addergoole Bog)

2.1 Introduction

Hydrological processes are key drivers of raised bog ecology, as raised bogs are predominately fed by precipitation. For ARB to develop or be maintained, mean water levels need to be near or at the bog's surface for most of the year. Seasonal fluctuations should not exceed 20cm below ground surface, and water levels in the peat should be within 10cm of the surface, except for very short periods of time (Kelly & Schouten 2002). Gentle slopes that limit intermittent lateral losses of water (through surface run-off) and encourage sustained waterlogging are the most favourable to achieve these conditions. These conditions may be maintained on steeper slopes in areas of focused flow (flushes) (Mackin et al., 2017a; Regan et al., 2020). However, it will not be possible to raise the water level to high enough levels across the entire high bog surface, particularly approaching marginal areas, to enable ARB to

develop. Even in high bog areas that do not have potential for ARB to form, water levels should be raised as necessary to support habitat for the areas where ARB can occur.

The main aim of restoration on raised bogs is to maintain or improve the quality of existing areas of ARB or improve the hydrological conditions that will allow ARB to develop in areas with suitable topographic conditions (gentle slopes and/or areas of focused flow). This requires measures to be implemented on both the high bog and cutover areas. Measures implemented on selected areas of cutover will also help to minimise the impact that drainage and cutting has had on the hydrological integrity of the high bog and support a diversity of other transitional wetland habitats (e.g., wet woodland and fen), as well as the species they sustain. Once restored, these transitional cutover zones may provide further ecosystem services through flood attenuation and water supply maintenance and purification, increased carbon sequestration and improvements to the site's overall biodiversity value.

The main restoration measures that may be considered for improving hydrological conditions on raised bogs include:

- Drain blocking (includes drains on both high bog and the margins)
- Removal of forestry/tree clearance
- Installation of marginal dams
- High bog excavation/re-profiling
- Inoculation with *Sphagnum* species
- Bunding on high bog or cutover bog

Further details on each of these measures can be found in Irish Wildlife Manual No. 99 'Best practice in raised bog restoration in Ireland (Mackin et al., 2017b). Additional measures may be considered in particular instances where there are specific problems that are causing damage to an SAC. The most relevant restoration measures for Addergoole Bog are outlined in Section 2.2 – 2.6 below.

2.2 Blocking of high bog drains

Blocking high bog drains slows the flow of water off the surface of the bog and increases the water table in the peat. Drain blocking is a proven and effective restoration measure on Irish raised bogs with minimal maintenance requirements. The approach has been demonstrated at a number of raised bogs in Ireland with very positive results evident in less than 10 years (**Figure 2.1**) as outlined by Fernandez *et al.* (2014b).

Sometimes, there are concerns from local communities living close to raised bogs that drain blocking on the high bog will result in, or exacerbate, flooding. Blocking high bog drains, in fact, slows the flow of water off the bog potentially reducing the frequency and magnitude of flood events by restoring the hydrological function of the bog. To address these concerns NPWS have developed a drainage management plan for Addergoole Bog, with further details of this plan outlined within section 3.



Figure 2.1 Example of a peat dam used to block a typical high bog drain.

Action 2.1: Block high bog drains within Addergoole Bog.

It is proposed that all remaining unblocked drains on the high bog surface of Addergoole are blocked with peat dams. Details of the locations of blocked drains on the high bog can be found in Map 2.

2.3 Blocking of drains on cutover bog

Blocking of cutover drains slows the flow of water off the cutover areas and increases the water table in the surrounding peat. This can help to reduce the rate of infiltration through the high bog and can lead to conditions that allow peat to form on the cutover (**Figure 2.2**).

Drain blocking on cutover areas has been carried out at a number of raised bogs in Ireland to date resulting in the development of peat-forming vegetation on cutover areas. As with blocking of high bog drains, there are sometimes concerns from local communities living close to raised bogs that drain blocking on cutover bog will result in, or exacerbate, flooding. Blocking drains on cutover bog can slow the rate at which water is lost from the bog therefore potentially reducing the frequency and magnitude of downstream flood events. This restoration measure is primarily focused on former spread-grounds and only in very rare occasions, where it is absolutely essential, includes agricultural land. Drains in these areas will only be blocked in agreement with landowners and where there is a suitable hydrological barrier such as a functional drain to prevent impacts outside of the restoration area.



Figure 2.2 Water table at the surface of cutover bog following successful drain blocking resulting in *Sphagnum* development less than 10 years after drain blocking (this was previously an area of bare peat)

Action 2.2: Block functional drains on cutover areas within Addergoole Bog.

The cutover bog at Addergoole is a complex mosaic of conditions associated with historical turf cutting activities, which included the excavation of peat from cutover, leaving pools of open water. There are several cutover areas surrounding the bog where blocking of drains may reduce ongoing subsidence of the high bog. In some areas this will also lead to the development of peat forming habitats. It is proposed that these drains are blocked, primarily with peat dams, with some plastic reinforcements where necessary to prevent erosion. The required conditions are for the water table to be maintained at or close to the surface, therefore large areas of standing water or deep pools are not desired. Details of the locations on the cutover where it is proposed to block drains can be found in Map 2.

2.4 Contour bunding

Contour bunds on the high bog aim to reduce the rate of lateral flow through the upper layers of the peat. In contrast to some other bunding techniques, contour bunding is not intended as a means of impounding surface water. This method involves excavating a trench 1.5-2.0m deep, re-compacting peat into the trench and building a slightly raised bund 25-30cm above the current ground surface. In

addition, these bunds have 5m long ‘finger bunds’ constructed using the same technique at approximately 25m spacing to prevent flow along the bund which may lead to erosion. After 1-2 years it is anticipated that the bund will have subsided close to current ground level and therefore will not appear as a prominent feature on the bog surface.



Figure 2.3 Contour bund constructed at Knockacoller Bog SAC, Co Laois

Contour bunds are most effective where there is cracking or slumping in the upper layers of the peat as the re-compacted trench assists in sealing up these cracks and slows the flow rate through the peat, supporting a higher water table behind the bund. The key issue with this technique is that the extent of the impact extending back into the bog depends on the hydraulic gradient (which is closely correlated to surface slope). As a result, the extent of impact from such bunds is likely to be extremely limited where the surface slope at the margins is steep. This method is best suited to sites with a relatively gentle slope towards the margins or as a means of effectively blocking a dense network of shallow surface drains on the high bog. Ground conditions will play an important factor in whether the bund can be constructed in such circumstances, therefore this method is most effective on drier sites where machines can operate safely and effectively.

Action 2.3: Assess the feasibility of constructing contour bunds at Addergoole Bog

There may be potential for contour bunding on some areas of the high bog at Addergoole Bog. Given this bog is a western bog, surface slopes are steeper than true midland-type bogs therefore this measure may not be applicable. Further opportunities for implementation of this measure should consider the response of the vegetation to existing restoration measures.

2.5 Cell bunding

Cell bunding involves the creation of individual cells, consisting of a cutoff walls extending into the peat substrate and protruding above the ground surface to create a water table close to or slightly above the ground surface (maximum depth typically 10-20cm). The approach permits the interception of laterally flowing groundwater by low permeability cutoff walls, while the surface bunds prevent lateral discharge of surface water; this also encourages recharge to the underlying water table, helping contribute to the water balance, while also maintaining an elevated water table in those areas up gradient of standing water. Due to topographic variability the depth of water will also vary significantly resulting in enhanced ecological diversity across the banded area.

Cell bunds are typically constructed by excavating a trench 1.0-1.5m deep, recompacting the excavated peat into the trench and constructing a bund 0.5-0.6m high above the ground surface (Figure 2.3). Water level control structures (pipes or overflow weirs) are incorporated into these cells as a means to regulate water levels and evenly distribute water across the site.



Figure 2.4 Example of existing cell bund constructed at Cloncrow Bog NHA (The vegetation in this photo has developed in the 2 years since cell construction)

Action 2.4: Assess the potential to implement cell bunding at Addergoole Bog

There may be potential for cell bunding on some areas of the cutover at Addergoole Bog. However, the bog is subject to frequent inundation from the River Clare and Cregg River. Therefore, bunding is only feasible in areas outside the annual flood extent of these rivers. Opportunities for implementation of this measure should consider the response of the vegetation to existing restoration measures. Details of the locations of existing cell bunding can be found in Map 2.

2.6 General site management

In addition to the proposed measures, it is important that the restoration plan contributes to improving general site management. This includes considering issues such as:

- Fire prevention and response
- Management of littering/fly-tipping

Burning of the high bog can result in significant damage to a raised bog by removing peat-forming vegetation which reduces the capacity of the peat to retain water. This causes much more rapid surface run-off and therefore can result in more widespread drying out and increased peak flows in surrounding streams. Addergoole Bog has been damaged in the past through burning, including a major burn event that occurred in 2021.

Issues such as littering, and fly-tipping are also common problems on raised bogs and are a significant concern at Addergoole Bog, given the presence of the N84 along the eastern boundary of the bog. Depending on the nature of the material dumped this can lead to pollution in surrounding areas.

Action 2.5: Prepare a fire prevention and control plan for Addergoole Bog in consultation with local stakeholders.

It is proposed that a fire prevention plan is developed for Addergoole Bog to identify past occurrences of fires, the likely causes and develop an effective plan to prevent fires in future as well as an appropriate response should a fire occur in the future. Issues such as fire prevention and management of littering/fly-tipping also need to be addressed as part of a wider strategy of raising public awareness on the importance of these habitats.

3 Drainage Management Plans

One issue that can cause concerns, particularly for local stakeholders, relates to whether restoration may result in increased flooding in the surrounding area. In many instances bog restoration has the opposite effect by returning more natural hydrological conditions whereby flow is attenuated and reaches the surrounding watercourses more slowly than when drains were present. This is evident at bogs such as Killyconny Bog SAC (000006) where extensive restoration has been carried out on cutover bog and there have been no adverse impacts on adjoining agricultural land.

Nonetheless, many individuals may remain unconvinced on these issues until several years after restoration has taken place. Therefore, in order to provide reassurance, an integrated drainage management plan for the bog and its surroundings has been developed as part of this restoration plan. The drainage management plan is intended to support the conservation objectives for Addergoole Bog by ensuring the drainage network can be maintained without impacting on the conservation objectives. The plan assesses instances of existing impediments to the effective management of the drainage network (e.g., undersized culverts or channels) and provides recommendations in relation to remedial Works and maintenance Works going forward. Implementation of such measures ensure that the risk of flooding will be significantly reduced.

Action 3.1: Engage with local stakeholders in relation to the implementation of recommendations of the Drainage Management Plan for Addergoole Bog

Implementing the recommendations of this plan will require engagement with local stakeholders to ensure any management actions completed are carried out in line with best practice guidance.

4 Community benefits

Through consultation with the local community and other stakeholders it will be possible to develop ideas for maximising socio-economic benefits for the local community through restoration. These

might include building or improving existing facilities where appropriate (i.e., tracks, board walks, bog bridges), encouraging the creation of small tourism enterprises, promoting the benefits to human health and well-being, and enhancing the value of the site as an educational resource. There are many cases where local communities, including local businesses, are actively involved in or supporting the conservation and restoration of raised bogs across the country. Examples of this are found at Abbeyleix Bog (Co. Laois), Carrownagappul Bog SAC (Co. Galway), Girley Bog Natural Heritage Area (NHA) (Co. Meath), Lodge Bog (Co. Kildare) and Scohaboy Bog NHA (Co. Tipperary).

Addergoole Bog already has a number of bog tracks and walkways may offer potential for recreation and amenity. Any proposed amenity facilities will need to be implemented in a way that does not impact on the site-specific conservation objectives for the site.

Apart from immediate economic benefits, the restoration of raised bogs can provide many other benefits to the wider community, such as provision of clean water, flood attenuation and water flow regulation, preservation of archaeological artefacts and other sources of historical knowledge and, not least, helping Ireland reduce its national greenhouse gas emissions and, therefore, helping to combat climate change.

Action 4.1: Optimise the community benefits of the restoration plan.

As the restoration plan is further developed and implemented, opportunities to improve the recreation and amenity value of the bog and surrounding areas and promote local initiatives, while protecting and enhancing its natural values, will be explored by and with the local community. Promoting community involvement in the long-term management of the site both during and after restoration measures are carried out, will be encouraged.

5 Restoration Plan Implementation

5.1 Preparatory

Prior to implementation of the restoration plan several preparatory actions are required before construction of restoration measures can commence. A summary of these preparatory actions is outlined below:

- Hydrological characterisation – collation of existing hydrological data, hydrological surveys, instrumentation with monitoring data (where necessary);
- Review of proposed restoration measures in line with best practice at the time of implementation (including exploring opportunities to implement enhanced measures);
- Detailed ecological surveys (primarily comprising surveys of cutover areas, but where necessary also includes high bog areas e.g., if ecotopes have not been surveyed in many years);
- Landownership Investigations (investigations into ownership, turbary rights etc.);
- Stakeholder consultation and community engagement (meeting with stakeholders to outline restoration plans and consider any concerns raised by the local community);
- Compensation/land acquisition (compensation or acquisition of lands required to implement the required restoration measures on private lands);
- Appropriate Assessment Screening;
- Compilation of tender/construction documents including preparation of health and safety file;
- Surveying and setting out of the Works;
- Implementation of restoration measures (including construction supervision and contract

administration);

- Post-Works inspections and preparation of as-built survey information;
- Update of restoration plan to outline Works completed and remaining Works required in future. This includes updating status of all Works within the NPWS GIS-based data viewer.

5.2 Progress to date

Initial progress has been made with preparatory actions ahead of the implementation of restoration measures at Addergoole Bog within Lough Corrib SAC, primarily in relation to hydrological characterisation. As this is a complex site, comprehensive characterisation is required to optimise implementation of these measures. A summary of progress to date is outlined below:

5.2.1 Hydrological characterisation

Status – Ongoing

Detailed hydrological characterisation of Addergoole Bog commenced in 2022. This has comprised detailed surveys of the high bog and cutover to collect data to enable the restoration plan to be refined, as well as identifying opportunities for enhanced restoration measures such as cell bunding. Hydrological monitoring network was established in October 2022, comprising piezometer nests at four key locations on the cutover. These have been instrumented with automated data loggers to record water levels on a continuous basis. The data collected over the Winter of 2022/23 will provide significant insight into the hydrological regime at the bog, particularly in relation to the influence of water levels within Lough Corrib, the River Clare and Cregg River on water levels within the cutover. This data is required to allow enhanced measures for the bog to be developed. A map showing the four piezometer locations is not available at this time but will be provided in the near future.

5.2.2 Review of proposed restoration measures in line with best practice at time of implementation

Status – Ongoing

Based on the ongoing detailed hydrological characterisation of Addergoole Bog, a comprehensive review of proposed restoration measures is currently being carried out to identify the potential to implement bunding measures across cutover areas. The restoration plan will be updated with these details in early 2023.



Figure 5.1 Example of site walkover discussion



Figure 5.2 Example of Hydrologist checking conductivity of water within drains

5.2.3 Detailed ecological surveys

Status – Complete

The most recent ecotope survey Addergoole Bog was completed in October 2012 which determined that at that time active raised bog (7110) covered 39.22 ha (25.07%) of the high bog area. A large, very wet active flush is situated in the centre of the site. Central ecotope with *Sphagnum* cover in excess of 75% is found at two locations in the north-eastern part of the bog, surrounded by high quality sub-central ecotope. Additional sub-central ecotope areas, most of which support good quality *S. cuspidatum* bog pools, are found across the bog, particularly south of the central flush. Western raised bog indicator species, as well as indicators of flushed conditions, were found throughout Active Raised Bog. (Fernandez et al, 2014b).

In addition to the high bog survey, a cutover habitat survey was carried out in 2021 in accordance with Irish Wildlife Manual No. 128 'The Habitats of Cutover Raised Bog' (Smith & Crowley, 2020). This survey involved detailed mapping of the various vegetation communities occurring on the cutover bog and also classified these in terms of sensitivity to damage from restoration activities. Most areas were found to be of lower sensitivity; however, there are some small pockets of medium and high sensitivity vegetation. This mapping together with mapping of the high bog ensures the restoration plan takes into account the existing sensitive habitats present on site to minimize potential impacts and provides a baseline status that can be used to monitor the results of restoration measures in future.

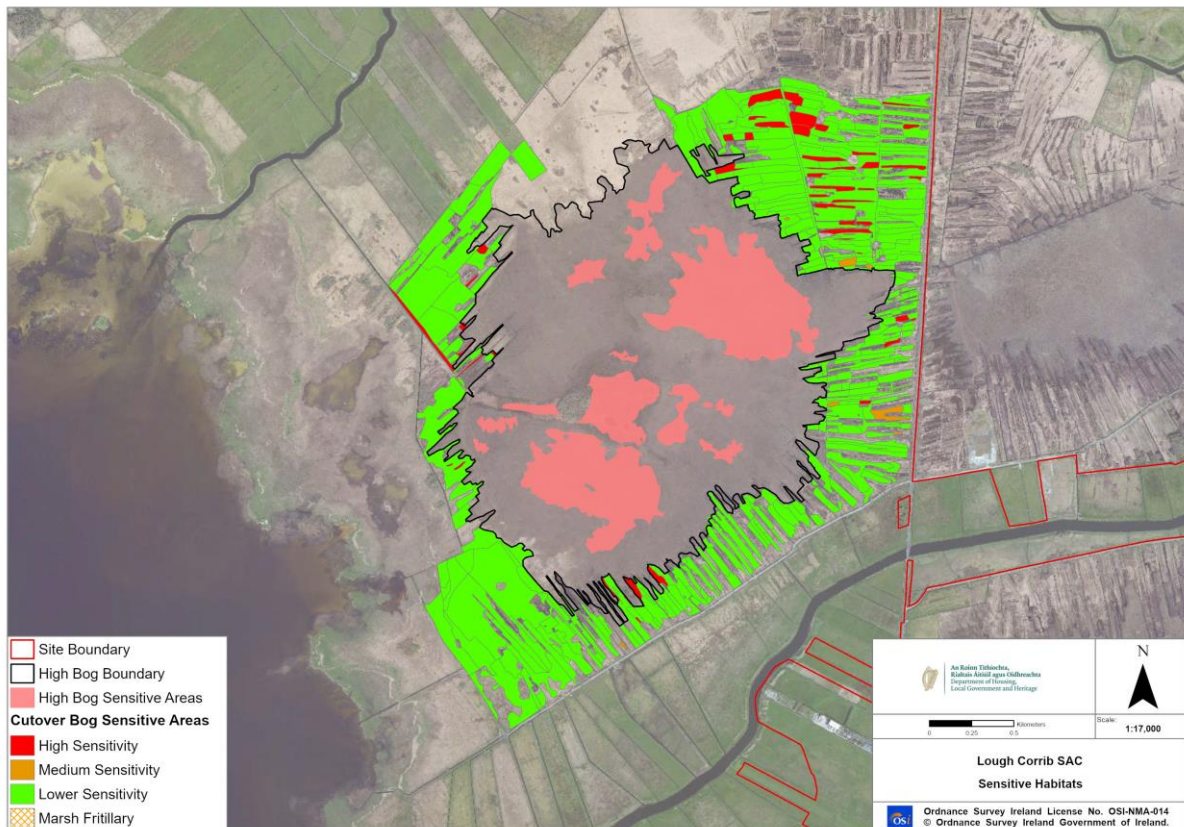


Figure 5.3 Sensitive habitats mapped at Addergoole Bog

5.2.4 Landownership Investigations

Status – Ongoing

Comprehensive landownership investigations are ongoing at Addergoole Bog. To date these have identified that there is a mixture of public and private ownership, with significant areas of unregistered land. These investigations have identified individuals to be consulted at the next stage in the restoration plan implementation process.

5.2.5 Stakeholder consultation and community engagement

Status – Not commenced

Stakeholder consultation and community engagement has not yet commenced at Addergoole Bog. This will commence in 2023 when further details of the proposed restoration measures are available. This will include meeting with all private individuals owning the freehold or having a turbary right at the bog.

5.2.6 Compensation/land acquisition

Status – Not Commenced

Compensation will be offered to all qualifying landowners and turbary right holders within the bog. All qualifying turf cutters ceased peat extraction at this site and accepted compensation.

5.2.7 Appropriate Assessment Screening

Status – Ongoing

An Appropriate Assessment Screening report to consider the potential for significant effects on any European Sites from the implementation of the restoration plan at Addergoole Bog has not been prepared to date. As the bog has been selected as a Special Area of Conservation for the presence of raised bog habitats, the proposal to allow restoration measures to take place in Addergoole Bog within Lough Corrib SAC **is directly connected with and necessary to the management of this site as a European site**. The proposed restoration measures are essential to support the reestablishment of appropriate hydrological conditions within the SAC to enable nature conservation targets for Active Raised Bog (ARB) at this SAC to be met.

However, following a precautionary approach and to inform a risk assessment, screening for Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of those European sites considered, whether or not the project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on any European site.

5.2.8 Compilation of tender/construction documents and Health & Safety file

Status – Not commenced

A work package comprising details of restoration measures that could be implemented (where landowner permissions were in place) will be compiled together with detailed specifications for the proposed measures. In addition, a health and safety file will be compiled to ensure the Works could be carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations. Generally, this work involves the following activities:

- Identify hazards arising from the design of the various schemes.
- Eliminate these hazards, or where not practicable to do so, reduce the risk of these hazards.

5.2.9 Surveying setting/out of the Works

Status – Not commenced

The surveying and staking out of drains and dams can be difficult due to the nature of the bog environment. Vegetation and soft ground conditions can make identification of features and surveying of same difficult and potentially dangerous. The setting out of the Works is generally done using bamboo stakes to mark the locations of the restoration measures that are to be constructed such as the dams or bunds. Setting out for Phase 1 restoration Works has not commenced yet; however, this is due to commence in 2023. This activity provides an additional opportunity to review the restoration measures in detail on the ground and where necessary minor modifications can be made (e.g., adjusting the placement of particular dams due to dense vegetation coverage or alignment of bunds due to ground conditions). This ensures that the risk of damage to the raised bog is minimized as inadequate planning can increase the risk of machines entering unsuitable areas.

5.2.10 Implementation of restoration measures

Status – Not commenced

It is envisaged that the implementation phase of the proposed restoration measures will commence in 2023. The planned restoration area is 379ha. It is envisaged that 1,434 dams will be installed along with areas of cell bunding which will be determined following hydrological characterisation.

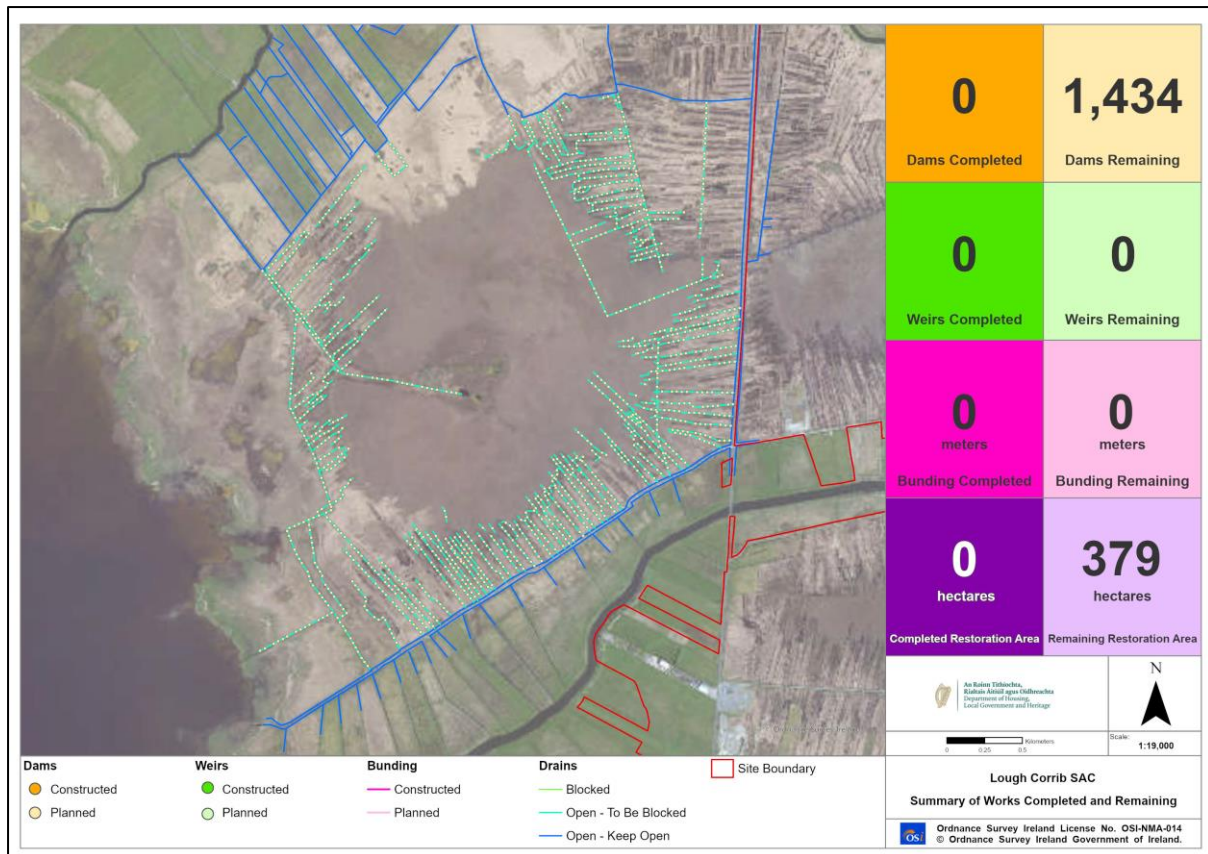


Figure 5.4 Summary of Works completed to date and Works remaining

5.2.11 Post-Works inspections and preparation of as built survey information.

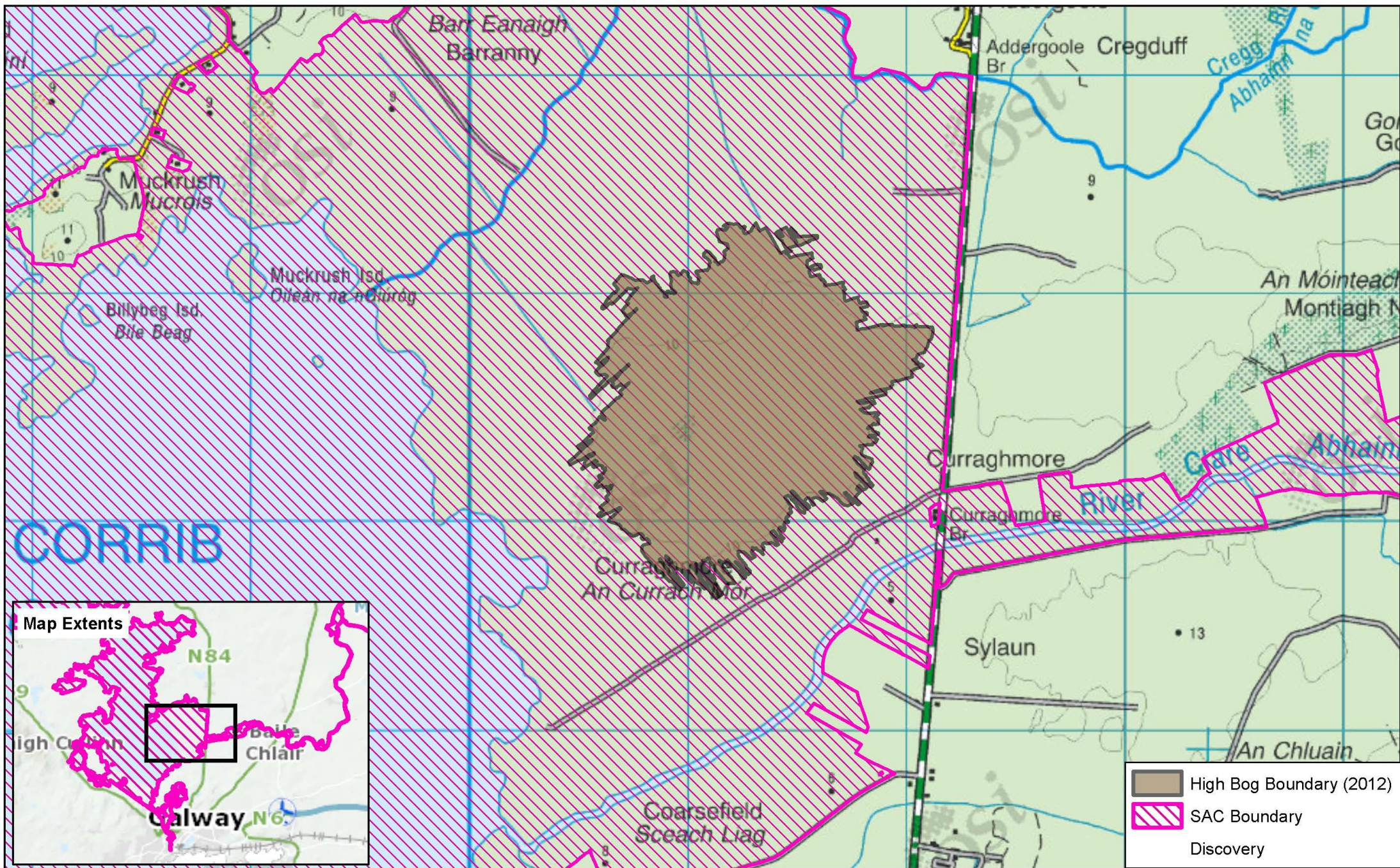
Status – Not commenced

Following implementation of restoration measures post-Works inspections will be carried out and an as-built drawing prepared. This will include detailed aerial surveys of the bog to collect high-resolution ortho-imagery and oblique images to ensure a detailed as-built drawing can be prepared.

5.2.12 Update of restoration plan to outline Works completed and remaining Works required in future.

Status – Ongoing

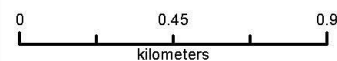
This restoration plan will be updated with the details of the Works completed and details of the restoration measures remaining to be implemented. It is anticipated that the majority of the restoration Works will be implemented in 2023, with any outstanding actions completed over the coming years when consent from landowners is received. As this restoration plan is a live document, restoration measures will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as experience and best-practice evolves nationally and internationally.



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

Map 1
Lough Corrib SAC

Site Name: Lough Corrib SAC
Site Code: 000297; Version 3.01
County: Galway



The mapped boundaries are of an indicative and general nature only.
Boundaries of designated areas are subject to revision.
Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No OSI_NMA_014
© Ordnance Survey Ireland / Government of Ireland





Site Boundary

Dams

● Constructed (0)

○ Planned (1,434)

Weirs

● Constructed (0)

○ Planned (0)

Bunding

— Constructed (0 km)

— Planned (0 km)

Drains

— Blocked (0 km)

— Open - To Be Blocked (36.7 km)

— Open - Keep Open



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

N



0 0.25 0.5 Kilometers

Scale: 1:17,000

**Lough Corrib SAC
Restoration Progress**



Ordnance Survey Ireland License No. OSI-NMA-014
© Ordnance Survey Ireland Government of Ireland.

6 References

- Fernandez Valverde, F., Fanning, M., McCorry, M. & Crowley, W. (2005) Raised bog monitoring project 2004-2005. Document 3: Site Reports and Maps Volume 1-5. Unpublished Report. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.
- Fernandez Valverde, F., MacGowan, F., Crowley, W., Farrell, M., Croal, Y., Fanning, M. & McKee, A. (2006) Assessments of impacts of turf cutting on designated raised bogs 2003-2006. A Report to the Research Section of National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.
- Fernandez, F., Connolly, K., Crowley, W., Denyer, J., Duff, K. & Smith, G. (2014a) Raised Bog Monitoring and Assessment Survey 2013 - Addergoole Bog – Site Report. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland.
- Fernandez, F., Connolly, K., Crowley, W., Denyer, J., Duff, K. & Smith, G. (2014b) Raised bog monitoring and assessment survey 2013. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 81. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland.
- Fossitt, J. (2000) A Guide to Habitats in Ireland. The Heritage Council, Ireland.
- Kelly, L. & Schouten, M.G.C. (2002) Vegetation. In: Schouten, M.G.C. (ed.), Conservation and restoration of raised bogs: geological, hydrological and ecological Studies. Dúchas – The Heritage Service of the Department of the Environment and Local Government, Ireland; Staatsbosbeheer, the Netherlands; Geological Survey of Ireland, Dublin. pp. 110-169.
- Kelly, L., Doak, M. & Dromey, M. (1995) Raised Bog Restoration Project: An Investigation into the Conservation and Restoration of Selected Raised Bog Sites in Ireland. Part 1 Summary Reports. National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.
- Mackin, F., Barr, A., Rath, P., Eakin, M., Ryan, J., Jeffrey, R. & Fernandez Valverde, F. (2017a) Best practice in raised bog restoration in Ireland. *Irish Wildlife Manuals*, No. 99. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Ireland.
- Mackin, F., Flynn, R., Barr, A & Fernandez-Valverde, F. (2017b) Use of geographical information system-based hydrological modelling for development of a raised bog conservation and restoration programme. *Ecological Engineering*, 106(Part A); pp. 242-252.
- NPWS (2017a) Lough Corrib SAC (site code 000297) Conservation objectives. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Ireland.
- NPWS (2017b) Lough Corrib SAC (site code 000297) Conservation objectives supporting document - raised bog habitats. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Ireland.
- Regan, S., Swenson, M., O'Connor, M. & Gill, L. (2020). Ecohydrology, Greenhouse Gas Dynamics and Restoration Guidelines for Degraded Raised Bogs. A report prepared for the Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland.
- Smith, G.F. & Crowley, W. (2020) The habitats of cutover raised bog. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 128. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland.

7 Glossary & Acronyms

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ACTIVE RAISED BOG (ARB) | Areas of uncut raised bog where the conditions are right for peat to continue to form, and where species of plants and animals typical to intact bogs can thrive. ARB is listed as a priority habitat in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. |
| ANNEX I | Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive lists natural habitats types of Community interest whose conservation requires the designation of SACs. |
| ANNEX II | Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive lists animal and plant species of Community interest whose conservation requires the designation of SACs. |
| BIODIVERSITY | A general term used to describe all aspects of biological diversity including the number of species present in a given environment, the genetic diversity present within a species and the number of different ecosystems present within a given environment. |
| BOG WOODLAND | Woodland formed on a wet peaty substrate, with permanently high groundwater level. The water is poor in nutrients (ombrotrophic) and the ground surface has high cover of bog moss species, with active peat accumulation taking place. Bog Woodland is listed as a priority habitat in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. It differs from dry woodland on bog where peat accumulation is not taking place. |
| BUNDING | An impervious embankment of material (peat or other) that provides a barrier to retain water behind it. |
| CARBON SEQUESTRATION | The capture and long-term storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide, including that accumulated by a bog or fen. |
| CATCHMENT | An area of land contributing water that drains to a defined point. The term river catchment refers to the area of land that drains into a particular river system and is synonymous with the term drainage basin or watershed. |
| CUTOVER | Areas of bog that have been previously cut (by hand or by mechanical means), although not down to the underlying inorganic substrate. Cutover areas normally consist of a mosaic of cut areas, face banks, pools, drainage ditches, uncut areas of peat, scrub, grassland etc. |
| DEGRADED RAISED BOG (DRB) | The area of high, uncut bog which has been damaged by human activities but which could be restored to active raised bog again through restoration measures within a period of 30 years. It is listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. |
| ECOLOGY | The study of the interactions between organisms, and their physical, chemical and biological environment. |
| ECOSYSTEM SERVICES | Humankind benefits from a multitude of resources and processes that are supplied by ecosystems. Collectively, these benefits are known as ecosystem services and include products like clean drinking water and processes such as the decomposition of wastes. |
| EROSION | The processes whereby the materials of the earth's crust are dissolved, or worn away and simultaneously moved from one place to another by natural processes which include weathering, solution, corrosion and transportation. |

| | |
|---|--|
| EVAPOTRANSPIRATION | Water loss to the atmosphere from soil and other surfaces (evaporation) and vegetation (transpiration). |
| FACEBANK | Areas at the edge of the high bog where peat cutting has taken place. This is an ecotope that is highly degraded and absent of typical <i>Sphagnum</i> species. |
| FAUNA | Animal life. |
| FAVOURABLE CONSERVATION CONDITION | This is the condition of a habitat or species considered to be favourable at site level. Favourable conservation condition is defined by site-specific conservation objectives (SSCOs). The maintenance of habitats and species within sites at favourable condition will contribute to the maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level. |
| FAVOURABLE CONSERVATION STATUS | According to the Habitats Directive the conservation status of a natural habitat will be taken as “favourable” when: its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable. |
| FLORA | Plant life. |
| FLOW ATTENUATION | Slowing flow of water out of an area. This is a common method for reducing risk of flood in urban areas whereby diversion channels store water in attenuation ponds. Intact peatlands typically offer natural flow attenuation through slowing flow as a result of higher storage capacity and increased hydraulic roughness, while degraded peatlands are much less effective at attenuating flow as the peat is dried out encouraging overland flow. |
| HABITAT | Refers to the environment defined by specific abiotic and biotic factors, in which a species lives at any stage of its biological cycle. In general terms it is a species’ home. |
| HABITATS DIRECTIVE | Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. |
| HEAD | Hydrological term which is a measure of the height to which water can raise itself above an arbitrary given level or datum. |
| HIGH BOG | The area of bog which has not previously been cut. |
| HYDROLOGICAL PROCESSES | The movement of water through a catchment area including freshwater and seawater inputs, water level changes and drainage mechanisms which are all influenced by the underlying geology. |
| LAGG | A term used to describe the natural habitat that occurs in the transitional zone between the bog and the mineral soil around a raised bog. Few intact lagg |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | zones remain around raised bogs in Ireland as they are typically the first location to be damaged by drainage. |
| LIDAR | A remote sensing technology that measures vertical surface elevation by illuminating a target with a laser and analysing the reflected light usually obtained using a low-flying aeroplane. This provides detailed information on the surface elevations across an area. |
| LIFE | An EU financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU. |
| MARGINAL DRAIN | Drains on the margins of a raised bog typically on cutover for the purpose of draining spread-grounds to facilitate turf-cutting. |
| MICROTOPOGRAPHY | Variations in elevation at a relatively small scale. Generally the higher points are no more than a metre higher than the low points, and only a couple of metres across. On a high bog this consists of hummocks, hollows, pools, flats and lawns. |
| MINEROTROPHIC | Refers to soils and vegetation whose water supply comes mainly from streams or springs. This water has flowed over or through rocks or other minerals, often acquiring dissolved chemicals which raise the nutrient levels and reduce the acidity. |
| NATURAL HERITAGE AREA (NHA) | These are conservation areas designated for protection under The Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. NHAs are considered important for the habitats present or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. |
| NPWS | National Parks and Wildlife Service. |
| OMBROTROPHIC | Refers to a type of peatland that receives all of its water and nutrient from precipitation falling directly on its surface. |
| PIEZOMETER | A piezometer is a device used to measure head. In the case of groundwater a piezometer will provide head at a given point. |
| PEAT-FORMING HABITAT | These are habitats where peat is actively forming. It includes typical ombrotrophic raised bog vegetation as well as lagg or fen vegetation that indicate that peat is actively forming. |
| PRIORITY HABITAT | A subset of the habitats listed in Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. These consist of habitats which are in danger of disappearance and whose natural range mainly falls within the territory of the European Union. These habitats are of the highest conservation status and require measures to ensure that their favourable conservation status is maintained. |
| RAISED BOG | Rain-fed peatland ecosystems that develop primarily in areas with topographic depressions, where drainage may be impeded by a high groundwater table, or by low permeability of the underlying substrata such as clay. Peat accumulation, over time, elevates the ground surface above surrounding areas to form a raised dome. |
| RESTORATION ZONE | A specified area within a site where restoration measures have been proposed. Restoration zones have been defined for each raised bog SAC based on factors including hydrological conditions, existing and expected habitats following restoration. This allows restoration measures for each raised bog SAC to be split into manageable units. |
| SITE-SPECIFIC | |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE | A site-specific conservation objective aims to define the favourable conservation condition of a habitat or species at site level. The maintenance of habitats and species within sites at favourable condition will contribute to the maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level. |
| SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION | Area designated for the conservation of habitats and/or species under the Habitats Directive. |
| SPREAD-GROUNDS | Area where turf is spread after cutting to dry out, typically drained cutover bog or agricultural areas adjacent to the high bog. |
| STATUTORY NATURE RESERVE | A Statutory Nature Reserve is an area of nature conservation interest that has been designated by Ministerial Order under the Wildlife Act, 1976. |
| SUBSIDENCE | Term referring to the sinking of land resulting from natural activity or human activity. Within peat subsidence occurs due to loss of water for example as a result of drainage. |
| TILL | Geological term referring to unsorted material deposited by glacial ice and showing no stratification. It is often referred to as boulder clay. |
| TOPOGRAPHY | The arrangement of the physical features of an area. |