



County Donegal Climate Action Plan 2024 -2029

Natura Impact Statement

November 2023

County Donegal Climate Action Plan

Natura Impact Statement

Document Stage	Document Version	Prepared by
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Doherty Environmental Consultants (DEC) Ltd have been appointed by Donegal County Council to prepare a Natura Impact Statement of the draft County Donegal Climate Action Plan (CAP). This NIR has been completed with respect to the requirements outlined in Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act and has been prepared in order to facilitate Donegal County Council's requirement for completing an Appropriate Assessment of the Plan.

The proposed CAP is not directly connected with or necessary for the management of any European Site and hence the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, apply. Section 177U(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a screening for appropriate assessment of, inter alia, a land use plan be carried out by a competent authority to assess, in light of best scientific knowledge, whether the proposed Plan, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. A Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment has been completed and assessed the potential for the CAP to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. A summary of the screening is provided in the Section 2 below.

1.1 STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared by Mr. Pat Doherty BSc., MSc, MCIEEM, of DEC Ltd. Mr. Doherty is a consultant ecologist with over 20 years' experience in completing ecological impact assessments and environmental impact assessments. Pat has been involved in the completion of assessment reports for proposed developments and land use activities under the EIA Directive and Article 6 of the Habitats Directive since 2003 and 2006 respectively. He has extensive experience completing such reporting for projects located in a variety of environments and has a thorough understanding of the biodiversity issues that may arise from proposed land use activities. Pat was responsible for completing one of the first Appropriate Assessment reports for large scale infrastructure developments in Ireland when he prepared the Appropriate Assessment for the N25 New Ross Bypass in 2006/07. Since then Pat has completed multiple examinations of both plans and projects in Ireland. He has completed Natura Impact Statements for national scale plans such as Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan and National Seafood Development Plan and regional and county scale plans including County Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Tourism Strategies

and Climate Action Plans. Pat has completed multiple Natura Impact Statements for a range of development types that include large scale infrastructure developments in sectors such as transport and energy as well as industrial, commercial and residential developments.

Pat has completed focused certified professional development training in Appropriate Assessment as well as in a range of ecological survey techniques and assessment processes. Training has been completed for National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC) surveying, bryophyte survey for habitat assessment and identification, professional bat survey and assessment training, mammal surveying and specific training for bird and bat survey techniques. Ongoing training has been completed by approved training providers such as CIEEM, British Trust for Ornithology, the Botanic Gardens and the Field Studies Council.

1.2 EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE ARTICLE 6(3) ASSESSMENT

Legislative protection for habitats and species is provided within the European Union by the Habitats Directive. The Habitats Directive has been implemented in Ireland and throughout Europe through the establishment of a network of designated conservation areas known as the Natura 2000 (N2K) network. The N2K network includes sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), under the EU Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EU Birds Directive 2009/147/EC (as amended). SACs are designated in areas that support habitats listed on Annex I and/or species listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive. SPAs are designated in areas that support: 1% or more of the all-Ireland population of bird species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive; 1% or more of the population of a migratory species; and more than 20,000 waterfowl.

This Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment is being prepared in order to enable the competent authority to comply with Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive). It is prepared to assess whether or not the project alone or in combination with other plans and projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European Site in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the European Sites and specifically on the habitats and species for which the sites have been designated. Measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the proposed project on European sites (i.e. “mitigation measures”) or best practice measures have not been taken into account in this screening stage appraisal.

1.2.1 Requirement for an Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive

According to section 177U(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the competent authority has a duty to:

- Determine whether the proposed Project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of one of more European Sites; and, if not,
- Determine if the Project, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on the European Site(s) in view of best scientific knowledge and the Conservation Objectives of the site(s).

This report contains information to support a Screening for Appropriate Assessment and is intended to provide information that assists the competent authority when assessing and addressing all issues regarding the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project and to allow the competent authority to comply with the Habitats Directive. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive defines the requirements for assessment of projects and plans for which likely significant effects on European Sites may arise. The Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive together list habitats and species that are of international importance for conservation and require protection. The Habitats Directive requires competent authorities, to carry out a Screening for Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects that are not directly connected to or necessary for the management of a European Site, to assess whether the plan or project alone or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have significant effects on European Sites in view of best scientific knowledge and the Site's conservation objectives. This requirement is transposed into Irish Law by, inter alia, Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Section 177U(4) of Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act states:

"The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or a proposed development, as the case may be, is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the draft Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. "

2.0 SUMMARY OF THE SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

A Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment has been completed for the draft CAP. This Screening was completed in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish law in Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to land use planning.

The Screening represents the first stage of the Article 6(3) Habitats Directive assessment process and was undertaken to identify whether the plan has the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The first step of the Screening was to assess all actions proposed by the CAP for their potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. A total of 14 no. actions were identified as having the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. These actions are listed in full in Table 6.1 of this NIR. During the screening a clear relationship was identified between land use activities, that may arise as a result of the implementation of these actions and European Sites.

For instance, actions that aim to promote/facilitate adaptation measures for existing key infrastructure such as roads and flood defences; the provision of infrastructure to enable modal shifts in transport from private vehicle to active travel and public transport; the implementation of nature-based actions with local authority lands; and the facilitation of community decarbonisation and future proofing initiatives could, in the absence of appropriate design and consideration, contribute to land use effects with potential to result in adverse effects to European Sites.

Given elements of the draft CAP will facilitate land use activities that will have the potential to result in impacts to European Sites, further consideration of the CAP, alone and in-combination with other land use plans is required as part of a Natura Impact Statement.

Accordingly, this NIS has been prepared to inform the Appropriate Assessment of the draft CAP's potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites and their qualifying features of interest occurring within the zone of influence of the plan.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 GUIDANCE

This NIS has been undertaken in accordance with National and European guidance documents: Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities (DEHLG 2010) and *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological Guidance of the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC*. The following guidance documents were also of relevance during this the preparation of this NIS:

- Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites – Methodological Guidance of the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/42/EED. European Commission (2021).
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites – The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC. European commission (2018).

3.2 BACKGROUND TO HABITATS DIRECTIVE ARTICLE 6 ASSESSMENTS

The EC (2021) guidelines outline the stages involved in undertaking an assessment of a project under Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. The assessment process comprises the four stages outlined below. Stage 1 to 3 form part of the Article 6(3) process, while Stage 4 forms part of the Article 6(4) process. This NIR presents the findings of an assessment for Stage 2 of this assessment process.

- Stage 1 – Screening: This stage defines the proposed plan, establishes whether the proposed plan is necessary for the conservation management of the Natura 2000 site and assesses the likelihood of the plan to have a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, upon a Natura 2000 site.
- Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment: If a plan or project is likely to have a significant affect an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken. In this stage the impact of the plan or project to the Conservation Objectives of the Natura 2000 site is assessed. The

outcome of this assessment will establish whether the plan will have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

- Stage 3 – Assessment of Alternative Solutions: If it is concluded that, subsequent to the implementation of mitigation measures, a plan has an adverse impact upon the integrity of a Natura 2000 site it must be objectively concluded that no alternative solutions exist before the plan can proceed.
- Stage 4 – Where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain but imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist for the implementation of a plan or project an assessment of compensatory measures that will effectively offset the damage to the Natura site 2000 will be necessary.

3.3 STAGE 2: APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT STEPS

The EC Guidance Assessment Criteria for Appropriate Assessment seeks the following information:

1. A description of the elements of the project that are likely to give rise to significant effects to European Sites;
2. The Setting out the Conservation Objectives of the Site;
3. A description of how the project will affect key species and key habitats;
4. A description of how the integrity of the site (determined by structure and function and conservation objectives) is likely to be affected by the project (e.g. loss of habitat, disturbance, disruption, chemical changes, hydrological changes etc.);
5. A description of the mitigation measures that are to be introduced to avoid, reduce or remedy the adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites.

3.4 INFLUENCE OF THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT PROCESS ON THE PLAN

The purpose of the Appropriate Assessment of the Plan is not only to assess the implications of this Plan on European Sites and their qualifying features of interest occurring within its zone of influence, but also to provide safeguards that aim to minimise the ecological implications of

the Plan and avoid likely significant effects to European Sites. This was completed by identifying any elements of the Plan and the current Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown CDP that aim to protect the natural environment.

3.5 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Information relied upon included the following information sources, which included maps, ecological and water quality data:

- Online data available on European sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie;
- GIS based ecological datasets held by the NPWS;
- GIS based ecological datasets held by Donegal County Council;
- Donegal County Development Plan 2024 – 2030 Natura Impact Statement

3.6 OVERLAP WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE DRAFT CAP

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the draft CAP was carried out concurrently with the NIS. There were several areas of overlap and in accordance with good practice in terms of the following stages:

- Sharing of baseline data gathering and sharing, data on European sites and potential sensitivities and threats.
- Objectives that will result in land use activities were examined by the NIS team for potential adverse effects on integrity of the European Sites in terms of their Conservation Objectives but also any other ecological impacts outside of the European site scale were highlighted to the SEA team for them to address in the SEA process.
- SEA team was able to highlight potential interactions between other environmental issues such as water quality and infrastructure and the sensitivities of European sites to the NIS team.

3.7 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The purpose of an Appropriate Assessment is to examine the potential for a land use plan to result in land use activities that could compromise the conservation objectives of a European Site. For many conservation objectives that have been given site-specificity, they are themselves broken down into a series of attributes and targets for each Qualifying Interest.

To make the assessment process efficient and manageable without losing quality of analysis, the Conservation Objectives were distilled to four common themes that could then be used as assessment criteria to examine each Objective that has been identified as having the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. Each of the four criteria was quite general in nature which allows an easier assessment but also resulted in a very light “trigger” for the potential for adverse effects on integrity of European Sites to be identified.

The common themes which have become the four assessment criteria for the analysis of zoning parcels are described below:

- **Are there hydrological/hydrogeological linkages between Objectives and European sites and potential for impacts arising to and from surface, ground and coastal water quality?** European sites in County Donegal host a range of freshwater (surface and ground) and marine-dependent QIs and SCIs. These QI’s and special conservation interests are reliant on freshwater, groundwater and/or coastal water quality. Therefore any Objectives that could directly or indirectly affect water quality or supply could potentially affect the European site.
- **Will there be a risk of direct habitat loss or loss of ecological networks supporting European sites?** For example, walking trails and other new development occurring on undeveloped lands within the European sites etc.
- **Will there be a risk of direct or indirect disturbance to European site habitats and/or species?** Even though many of the land use activities that arise from the draft CAP actions may not be directly within European sites, they could affect European Site and their Qualifying Interest (Qis) via indirect disturbance, e.g. recreation at coastal sites, river walkways, noise disturbance due to construction.

- **Will there be a risk of direct or indirect threats to European sites by invasive species?** Many freshwater and terrestrial European sites are vulnerable to the adverse effects of invasive species introductions and land use activities associated with certain Actions will have the potential to result in the spread of such species.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTY DONEGAL CAP

4.1 BACKGROUND TO COUNTY DONEGAL CCAP

Through the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, Ireland is now on a legally binding path to net-Zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of this decade. The Act provides the framework for Ireland to meet its international and EU climate commitments and to become a leader in addressing climate change.

As required by the 2021 Act, Donegal County Council is preparing their first Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LA-CAP) which must be adopted by the Elected Members before 23rd February 2024. This will continue the work undertaken over the first Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 which was non statutory.

4.1.1 Local Authority Climate Action Plans

Local Authorities will have a particularly important role in the delivery of both climate mitigation and adaptation. This is reflected in the provisions of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021, which requires each Local Authority to prepare a CAP specifying the mitigation and the adaptation measures to be adopted by the Local Authority.

Local authorities are key drivers in advancing climate policy at the local level and the Donegal CAP aims to strengthen the alignment between national climate policy and local circumstances with the prioritisation and acceleration of evidence-based measures, to assist in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective for Donegal County Council.

Donegal County Council will use its CAP in planning how it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase climate resilience from across its own assets and infrastructure, whilst

also taking on a broader role to influence, facilitate and co-ordinate the climate actions of communities and other stakeholders and what it will do to advocate for climate action in Donegal. In order to ensure that the CAP is centred around a strong understanding of the role and remit of Donegal County Council on climate action, the Plan is being developed through the following framework.

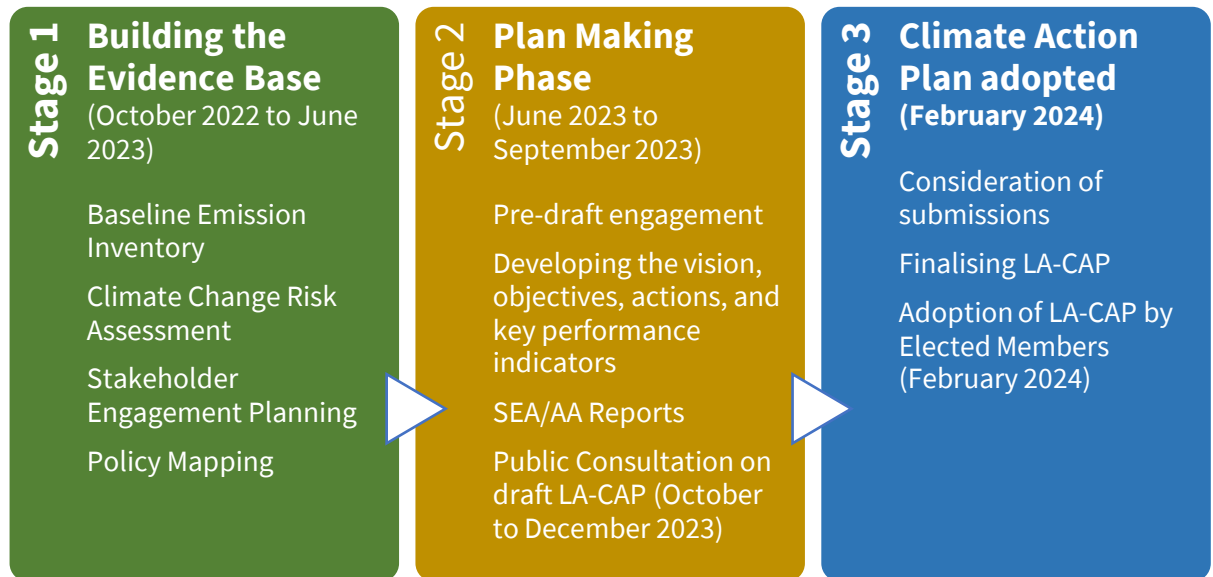
- **Fully accountable:** Targeted actions for areas where Donegal County Council has full accountability for climate action within their own operations.
- **Influence:** Actions for where Donegal County Council can influence businesses, communities, and individuals in the delivery of local climate action through the functions and services they provide.
- **Coordination:** Actions for where Donegal County Council can coordinate and facilitate local and community action bringing together stakeholders in partnership to achieve climate action related projects.
- **Advocate:** Actions aligned to Donegal County Councils role as advocate on climate action through raising awareness, communicating, informing, and engaging in open dialogue on the topic.

While the Climate Action Plan will be ambitious to reflect the leadership role of Donegal County Council on climate action, the Plan will not include actions whereby their implementation and achievement fall outside their role, remit, and governance.

4.1.2 Development of the LA-CAP

The development of the Climate Action Plan will follow a number of stages as explained in the Figure 4.1. below.

Figure 4.1 Stages in the development of the Climate Action Plan



4.2 SCALE, NATURE AND LOCATION OF THE COUNTY DONEGAL CCAP

The plan will cover all of the functional area of County Donegal. Figure 1.2 shows the location of County Donegal, and the Atlantic Seaboard North Climate Action Regional office extent (CARO).

The plan is still being progressed but the following provides preliminary information.

The indicative Vision is:

To be a Climate Resilient, Biodiversity Rich, Environmentally Sustainable and Carbon Neutral Donegal by no later than the end of 2050.

The Vision for the Plan recognises Donegal County Council pivotal position to deliver on national policy at community level, while understanding that climate actions and impacts from climate change will not be the same for all sectors. The Vision is therefore supported by a number of key strategic goals:

1. Achieving carbon emission reduction target for 2030; progressing to the 2050 target for carbon neutrality and reducing climate impacts
2. Enabling a ‘just transition’ ensuring no household, community or business is disadvantaged by decarbonisation measures, paving the way for sustainable economic growth.
3. Cultivating decarbonisation co-benefits across key sectors in the county ensuring alignment with the sustainable development agenda.
4. Providing supports to communities and organisations and foster collaboration; leading the transition to an inclusive net zero economy.

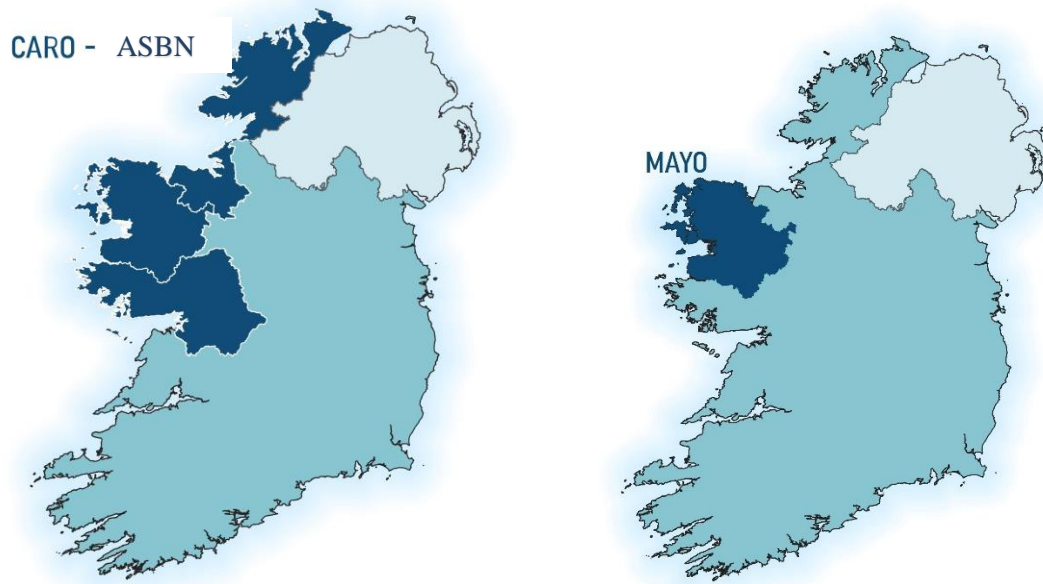
The indicative Vision Statement defines where we would like to lead the County, the Mission Statement takes an action-oriented focus, speaking to the grounded purpose of Donegal County Council in delivering and mainstreaming effective climate action across all services and functions.

Our indicative Mission Statement is:

To deliver transformative change and measurable climate action across Donegal County Council within our own organisation and services, through leadership, example and mobilising action at a local level.

The Plan will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Ecological Impact Assessment and requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent granting. Actions arising from the plan will demonstrate compliance with the environmental protection measures in the Donegal County Development Plan 2017-2023, as varied, and SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Report that accompanies same. The draft Donegal County Development Plan 2023-2029 and SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Report will replace the current CDP once adopted by Donegal County Council.

Figure 4.2: County Donegal and the Atlantic Seaboard North CARO



5.0 EUROPEAN SITES

5.1 OVERVIEW OF EUROPEAN SITES

County Donegal is situated in the west coast of Ireland, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west and north and the Counties of Sligo, Fermanagh, Tyrone and Derry to the south and east.

The County has a diverse topography varying from wide and open expanses of peatland and moorland, limestone pavement, extensive forested areas, estuarial mudflats, high Atlantic cliffs, inland lakes and waterways and fertile plains.

The Plan area is rich in biodiversity, containing many important, and protected, habitats and species such as, coastal habitats from cliffs to estuaries, reefs, machairs, mudflats, sandy beaches, and terrestrial habitats such as lakes, turloughs, fens, wetlands, woodlands, bogs, wildfowl (duck and geese), waders, salmon, lamprey and otters. However, it also contains

many other habitats which are not protected such as scrub, parks, streams, hedgerows, tree lines, roadside verges, housing estate open spaces and gardens.

There are a total of 73 European Sites; 47 Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) and 26 Special Protection Areas (SPA), occurring within Donegal. Collectively referred to as the Natura 2000 network, SACs and SPAs are designated in consideration of Habitats Directive Annex I habitats and Annex II species and classified in consideration of Birds Directive Annex I bird species. The 73 European Sites make up a large percentage of the land cover within the county. This high percentage reflects the international and national significance of Donegal's wealth of natural heritage. Few Natura 2000 sites are exclusively designated or classified in consideration of terrestrial or aquatic qualifying interests; many consist of a combination of terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats and species. In the natural environment also there is considerable overlap between terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora, with each co-existing and co-reliant in many cases.

As well as within Co. Donegal there are a high number of European Site bordering the county. In order to identify these sites the spatial boundary data for the European site network, as published by the NPWS in July 2023 was used. All European Sites which were deemed to be within the zone of influence of the potential implications of the draft CAP are listed in Table A1.1 in Appendix 1.

5.2 ZONE OF INFLUENCE OF THE PLAN

The approach to defining the zone of influence of the County Donegal CAP follows the approach used during for the Donegal County Development Plan. The land use effects of the CAP, be they direct or indirect effects, will be primarily restricted to County Donegal only. However a wider zone of influence is used for impacts relating to noise disturbance, air pollution, surface water and supporting habitats for SAC Annex 2 qualifying species and SPA special conservation interest bird species.

For the purposes of this plan the establishment of the zone of influence follows that used for the recently published Donegal County Development Plan. The zone of influence for the County Development Plan was established by a 15km buffer zone surrounding Donegal.

5.3 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES

In line with the approach to defining the zone of influence as set out above, the screening of the draft CAP identified 73 European Sites, comprised of 47 SACs and 26 SPAs as occurring within County Donegal.

A further 10 European Sites, comprised of 8 SACs and 2 SPAs occur within the 15km area buffering the county within Counties Sligo and Leitrim, whilst a further 15 SACs and 2 SPAs occur within the 15km within Counties Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh.

As such a total of 100 sites comprised for 70 SACs and 30 SPAs fall within the zone of influence of the draft CAP. These 100 European Sites are listed in Appendix 1.

5.4 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

The function of this NIS is to examine the potential adverse effects of the draft CAP on European Sites and the conservation objectives set out for the features of interest for which these sites are designated as SACs and SPAs. Generic Conservation Objectives have been published for all European Sites occurring in Ireland. The generic Conservation Objectives for SACs and their qualifying habitats and qualifying species are:

- To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the SAC has been selected at favourable conservation status;
- To maintain the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected at favourable conservation status;
- To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site; and
- To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.

The generic Conservation Objectives for SPAs and their special conservation interests are:

To maintain the bird species of special conservation interest, for which the SPA has been designated, at favourable conservation status.

Favourable Conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing;
- 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”. Favourable Conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- Population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long term basis.

In addition to the published generic Conservation Objectives for all European Sites, Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) have been published for individual European Sites. These SSCOs identify the attributes that underpin the conservation status of qualifying features of interest/special conservation interests and provide targets for ensuring that their favourable status is maintained and/or restored. As outlined in Section 3.7 above five assessment criteria have been used during this NIS that aim to capture the attributes and targets that underpin the site-specific conservation objectives for European Site. These five criteria are used to examine the potential for land use activities associated with Objectives to result in adverse effects to European Sites.

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE DRAFT CAP

6.1 ELEMENTS OF THE DRAFT CAP WITH POTENTIAL TO RESULT IN ADVERSE EFFECTS

The actions of the draft CAP have been examined for their potential to result in land use effects, which in turn could contribute, in the absence appropriate safeguards and consideration, to adverse effects to European Sites. A total of 14 no. actions have been identified as having the potential to support future land use activities that could in turn result in adverse effects to European Sites.

It is noted that actions of the draft CAP are strategic in nature and lack specificity with regard to the nature and location of future land use activities that may be supported by the 14 no. action listed in Table 6.1 below. As such the identification of potential adverse effects is based on a consideration of conceivable land use activities that could arise as a result of the supporting policy framework established by the draft CAP. The consideration of such adverse effects is set out in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Draft CAP Actions Identified as Having Potential to Contribute to Adverse Effects to European Sites

Action No.	Action	Adverse Effects
<i>Strategic Goals</i>		
TR2	Promote and deliver active travel policies and projects within the County to facilitate greater walking and cycling.	The implementation of this action could conceivably result in the support of new infrastructure that in turn could have potential to result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.
TR3	Support the delivery of rail connectivity and the enhancement of other public transport options to encourage modal shift from private car transport.	The implementation of this action could conceivably result in the support of new rail or other public transport infrastructure that in turn could have potential to result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.
BE4	Support the delivery of renewable electricity generation and transmission infrastructure within the County	The harnessing of renewable natural resources and the delivery of connections to the electrical grid generally requires infrastructural development. In many instances new infrastructure developments can have the potential to influence the status of European Sites. In general, the majority of past examples of such developments have been situated

Action No.	Action	Adverse Effects
		<p>outside of European Sites. Notwithstanding this such developments can be connected to European Sites via impact pathways. Most commonly such impact pathways are mediated by hydrological pathways and the potential for new renewable natural resource developments to result in the emission of poor quality and inadequately treated surface water runoff and/or foul waters. These developments can also, if sited inappropriately, result in disturbance, habitat loss or fatalities to mobile species e.g. birds that are representative of features of interest of European Sites.</p>
NE3	<p>Increase coastal resilience to the changing climate</p>	<p>Increasing coastal resilience could conceivably include the provision of coastal defence infrastructure. A large proportion of the Donegal coastline occurs within the boundary of European Sites. The provision of infrastructure to increase coastal resilience could in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status of coastal habitats such as erosions and deposition rates etc.</p>
Transport		
TR2.3	<p>Deliver and maintain multiple Active Travel projects in the County.</p>	<p>The delivery of active travel projects could conceivably result in the support of new infrastructure that in turn could have potential to result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.</p>
TR2.4	<p>Design a network of segregated, attractive and safe Active Travel paths as part of the TEN-T Public Road Improvement Project (Donegal) to encourage a greater uptake of walking and cycling.</p>	<p>The design and subsequent provision of a segregated active travel projects could conceivably result in the support of new infrastructure that in turn could have potential to result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts</p>

Action No.	Action	Adverse Effects
		such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.
TR2.5	Expand the greenway network in the County establishing linkages with towns and villages in line with the strategic national cycle network.	The expansion of the greenway network in the County could conceivably result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.
TR3.4	Support the delivery of enhanced public transport and transport infrastructure in rural areas including the projects listed for Donegal under the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan (Carndonagh to Buncrana).	The delivery of enhanced public transport could conceivably result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.
<i>Built Environment</i>		
BE7.2	Collaborate with the OPW and lead delivery of viable Flood Relief Schemes already launched for development.	European Sites occur in all surface water catchments within Donegal. The SACs and SPAs occurring in these catchments support freshwater and/coastal habitats and species that are dependent on or sensitive to freshwater hydrological processes and any changes to them. The delivery of flood relief schemes will have the potential to result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation, should the occur within European Sites or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality and hydrological regimes.
<i>Carndonagh DZ</i>		
DZ BE	To support the initiatives of the North West Regional Energy Agency to improve energy efficiency,	The support of local community-based renewable energy will have the potential to result in impact to

Action No.	Action	Adverse Effects
	retrofitting, renewable energy technologies, local community-based renewable energy, and circular economy projects for homes, businesses, public buildings and communities	European Sites. European Sites occurring within the area surrounding and downstream of Carndonagh include North Inishowen Coast SAC and Trawbreaga Bay SPA. The provision of local community-based renewable energy projects in the DZ could be connected to these European Sites via pathways such as hydrological pathways, with potential emission of poor quality and inadequately treated surface water runoff and/or foul waters. Local community-based renewable energy developments can also, if sited inappropriately, result in disturbance, habitat loss or fatalities to mobile species e.g. birds that are representative of features of interest of European Sites.
<i>DZ TR</i>	To support the delivery of enhanced public transport and transport infrastructure in rural areas including the projects listed for Donegal under the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan (Carndonagh to Buncrana).	The delivery of enhanced public transport could conceivably result in emissions via pathways to the European Sites occurring within and surrounding the DZ. Such emissions could result in habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.
<i>DZ TR</i>	To support sustainable travel initiatives in the DZ.	The support sustainable travel initiatives delivery of active travel projects could conceivably result in the support of new infrastructure that in turn could have potential to result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.
<i>Falcarragh DZ</i>		
<i>DZ BE</i>	To support the initiatives of the North West Regional Energy Agency to improve energy efficiency, retrofitting, renewable energy technologies, local community-based	The support of local community-based renewable energy will have the potential to result in impact to European Sites. European Sites occurring within the area surrounding

Action No.	Action	Adverse Effects
	renewable energy, and circular economy projects for homes, businesses, public buildings and communities.	and downstream of Falcarragh include Falcarragh to Meenlaragh SPA, Ballyness Bay SAC, Gweedore Bay and Islands SAC, Inishbofin, Inishdooley and Inishbeg SPA, Horn Head and Rinclevan SAC, Horn Head to Fanad Head SPA, Cloghernagore Bog and Glenveagh National Park SAC, Derryveagh and Glendowan Mountains SPA, Muckish Mountains SAC, Fawnboy Bog/Lough Nacung SAC, and Trawbreaga Bay SPA. The provision of local community-based renewable energy projects in the DZ could be connected to these European Sites via pathways such as hydrological pathways, with potential emission of poor quality and inadequately treated surface water runoff and/or foul waters. Local community-based renewable energy developments can also, if sited inappropriately, result in disturbance, habitat loss or fatalities to mobile species e.g. birds that are representative of features of interest of European Sites.
DZ TR	To support sustainable travel initiatives in the DZ.	The support sustainable travel initiatives delivery of active travel projects could conceivably result in the support of new infrastructure that in turn could have potential to result in direct impacts such as habitat loss or habitat degradation or indirect impacts such as habitat and species disturbance and changes in key indicators of conservation status such as water quality.

6.2 IDENTIFICATION OF THE NATURE OF ADVERSE EFFECTS

The potential impacts of the implementation of the draft CAP Actions listed in Table 6.1 to European Site is examined in Table 6.2 below by evaluating the potential for each of these Action to result in adverse effects to the 4 assessment criteria.

Table 6.2: Identification of adverse effects to the Qualifying Features/Special Conservation Interests of European Sites

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
<i>Strategic Goals</i>				
TR2	Yes. County Donegal supports a high number of European Sites that support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water quality and the provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.
TR3	Yes. County Donegal supports a high number of European Sites that support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water quality and the provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
	potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.			
BE4	Yes. County Donegal supports a high number of European Sites that support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water quality and new development, that could be supported by this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	Development associated with the provision of infrastructure for renewable energy could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by the action will have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.
NE3	Yes. A large proportion of the Donegal coastline occurs within the boundary of European Sites and the provision of infrastructure to enhance coastal resilience could be connected to European Sites via coastal hydrological pathways. Changes in coastal water quality or the hydrological regime of coastal waters could result in disturbance to coastal qualifying habitats and the habitats	The provision of infrastructure to enhance coastal resilience along the Donegal coast could overlap with European Site designations given that large stretches of the Donegal coastline are located within such designations. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	The implementation of this action, could in the absence of appropriate design safeguards, result in indirect habitat loss and/or loss of habitat for qualifying species.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
	relied upon by coastal qualifying species.			
<i>Transport</i>				
TR2.3	Yes. County Donegal supports a high number of European Sites that support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water quality and the provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.
TR2.4	Yes. County Donegal supports a high number of European Sites that support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
	quality and the provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	potential will exist for their spread.
TR2.5	Yes. County Donegal supports a high number of European Sites that support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water quality and the provision of new groundwater infrastructure under the support of this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.
TR3.4	Yes. County Donegal supports a high number of European Sites that support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water quality and the provision of new	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
	infrastructure development supported by this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	
<i>Built Environment</i>				
BE7.2	Yes. European Sites occur in all surface water catchments within Donegal and the majority of these sites support freshwater and coastal dependent qualifying habitat and species. These qualifying habitat and species are reliant on good water quality and the provision of new flood relief infrastructure supported by this action could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
<i>Carndonagh DZ</i>				
<i>DZ BE</i>	Yes. The Carndonagh area is located upstream of two no. coastal European Sites, the North Inishowen Coast SAC and Trawbreaga Bay SPA. The habitats and species of both sites can be influenced by hydrological processes upstream in the freshwater environment. The provision of new infrastructure such as local renewable energy infrastructure could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.
<i>DZ TR</i>	Yes. The Carndonagh area is located upstream of two no. coastal European Sites, the North Inishowen Coast SAC and Trawbreaga Bay SPA. The habitats and species of both sites can be influenced by hydrological processes upstream in the freshwater environment. The provision of infrastructure works to enhance transport infrastructure in the DZ	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
	could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.			
<i>DZ TR</i>	Yes. The Carndonagh area is located upstream of two no. coastal European Sites, the North Inishowen Coast SAC and Trawbreaga Bay SPA. The habitats and species of both sites can be influenced by hydrological processes upstream in the freshwater environment. The provision of infrastructure works that may be required to support future sustainable transport initiatives could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.
<i>Falcarragh DZ</i>				

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
<i>DZ BE</i>	Yes. The Falcarragh area is surrounded by a number of European Sites. With up to 11 occurring in the wider area (see Table 6.1 above). The majority of these support qualifying habitat and species that are depending on good water quality and hydrological processes and are sensitive to changes in these parameters. The provision of new infrastructure such as local renewable energy infrastructure could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.
<i>DZ TR</i>	Yes. The Falcarragh area is surrounded by a number of European Sites. With up to 11 occurring in the wider area (see Table 6.1 above). The majority of these support qualifying habitat and species that are depending on good water quality and hydrological processes and are sensitive to changes in these parameters. The provision of infrastructure works that may be required to support future sustainable	The provision of new infrastructure development supported by this action could overlap with European Sites. In the event of such overlap the potential could arise for the loss of qualifying habitat under circumstances where due consideration and safeguards do not inform such developments.	Yes. The provision of developments supported by this action could have the potential to result in direct and indirect disturbance to qualifying habitat or species where the development site is connected to such habitats or the habitats relied upon by such species via impact pathways such watercourse etc.	Yes. In the event that developments supported by the action result are located in areas that are already infested by non-native invasive species, the potential will exist for their spread.

Actions	Hydrological pathway to European Site whose conservation objectives are reliant on surface, ground and coastal water quality	Direct habitat loss of European Site	Direct or indirect disturbance to European Site habitat and/or species	Direct or indirect impacts to European Site from invasive species
	transport initiatives could, in the absence of suitable safeguards, have the potential to result in perturbations to water quality with downstream impacts to qualifying habitats and species.			

6.3 IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS

This Section provides an outline of the potential cumulative effects on the European Sites within the zone of influence of the Plan. There is potential for a wide range of plans and project to combine with the draft CAP and documented threats and pressures to these European Sites. Table 6.3 below provides a non-exhaustive list of the Plans that represent those most likely to combine with the draft CAP to result in potential cumulative effects. An assessment for potential cumulative effects to arise is provided for each of the Plans listed in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: In-Combination Assessment with Other Plans

Principal Plans	Comment	Statement
National Planning Framework (under revision)	This plan was subject to full SEA and AA and concluded that subject to full adherence and implementation of measures likely significant effects were not identified	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plan, the revised NPF will be subject to full SEA and AA.
CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027 / FoodVision 2030 /	The CAP Strategic Plan is the key mechanism for agriculture and needs to comply with all environmental legislation and the mitigation measures for interventions as detailed in the SEA ER and NIS	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plan, the revised NPF will be subject to full SEA and AA
Northern and Western Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy 2020-2032;	These plans were subject to full SEA and AA and concluded that subject to full adherence and implementation of measures likely significant effects were not identified.	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.
Third Cycle River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 draft	The third and current cycle aims to build particularly on the initiatives of the second cycle,	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans

Principal Plans	Comment	Statement
	<p>particularly the governance and implementation structures, and to improve the establishment of Irish Water, An Forum Uisce, the Local Authority Waters Programme and the Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme.</p> <p>These actions support the policies in the LAP. However, any developments that may arise as a result of this plan will be required to have a project level AA and EIA which will assess these in detail and provide suitable mitigation measures where appropriate.</p> <p>The Third Cycle RMP is subject to full SEA And AA.</p>	
<p>Donegal County Development Plan 2024 2030</p>	<p>The Donegal County Development Plan for 2024 to 2023 is currently in preparation</p> <p>The plan sets out the overall strategy for planning and sustainable development for the county. The CDP outlines the aims of the Donegal County Council to protect and enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity of designated and non-designated ecological sites</p>	<p>No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.</p>

Principal Plans	Comment	Statement
	and sets out the policies and objectives for this.	
Donegal County Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2017 -2022; new LECP in prep.	These plans were subject to SEA and AA screening and concluded that subject to full adherence and implementation of measures likely significant effects were not identified.	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.
County Donegal Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024	Donegal Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019-2024 and any subsequent versions). This Plan has been subject to SEA/AA screening and is being replaced by the CAP 2024 - 2029	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.

7.0 MITIGATION MEASURES

Given that the draft CAP is required to align with and sit alongside the Donegal County Development Plan 2024 -2030 in terms of planning hierarchy applicable to the county it follows that all environmental safeguards set out in the County Development Plan will be applicable to the safeguarding European Sites from potential adverse effects identified for the draft CAP.

The following subsections below sets out the suite of mitigation measures to ensure the draft CAP does not give rise to significant environmental effects.

All mitigation measures included in the following section are relevant to the protection of European Sites and their qualifying features of interest/special conservation interests. All general mitigation measures that provide safeguards to biodiversity in general are also included in the list of mitigation measures outlined in the following section.

Section 7.1 sets out the relevant policies and objectives of the Donegal CDP 2024 – 2030 that aim to protect the environment. These policies and objectives will act as safeguards to the

potential adverse effects associated with the 14 no. actions of the draft CAP listed in Section 6.1 above.

Section 7.2 set out the results of the SEA and AA process review of the draft CAP actions that has culminated with the provision of additional wording to selected actions. The additional wording provides clarity and focus with respect to environment protection as well as providing for the opportunity for positive environmental effects across a variety of actions set out in the draft CAP.

7.1 MITIGATION MEASURES FROM DRAFT DONEGAL CDP 2023-2029

The policies and objectives set out in the current CDP 2018-2024 and Draft Donegal County Development Plan (2024 - 2030) that will provide safeguards for the potential adverse impacts that could arise out of land use activities supported by the draft CAP are outlined in Table 7.1 below.

Figure 7.1: Donegal CDP 2018 -20234 and Draft Donegal CDP 2024 -2030 Policies & Objectives that provide Environmental Safeguards

CDP Ref	Text
NH01:	To protect, sustainably manage and enhance the rich biodiversity of County Donegal for present and future generations.
NH-O-2:	To comply with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and have regard to the relevant conservation objectives, management plans, qualifying interests and threats to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites
NH-O-3	To maintain the conservation value of all existing and/or proposed SACs, SPAs, NHAs and RAMSAR sites including those plant and animal species that have been identified for protection under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC as amended by 2009/147/EC), the Wildlife Acts (1976-2014) and the Flora Protection Order (2015).
NH-0-4:	To ensure the protection and management of the landscape in accordance with current legislation, ministerial and regional guidelines and having regard to the European Landscape Convention 2000
NH-0-5:	To protect, manage and conserve the character, quality and value of the landscape having regard to the proper planning and development of the area, including consideration of the

CDP Ref	Text
	scenic amenity designations of this plan, the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural, cultural, social or historic interest
NH-P-1	It is a policy of the Council to ensure that development proposals do not damage or destroy any sites of international or national importance, designated for their wildlife/habitat significance in accordance with European and National legislation including: SACs, Special SPAs, NHAs, Ramsar Sites and Statutory Nature Reserves
NH-P-2:	It is the policy of the Council to protect the habitats of species listed for protection through the prevention and management of the spread of invasive plant and animal species in the County in accordance with European and National legislation
NH-P-3:	It is a policy of the Council to require the consideration of Designated Shellfish Waters and their Shellfish Pollution Reduction Programmes in all development proposals that fall within their catchment..
NH-P-4	It is a policy of the Council to require the consideration of Freshwater Pearl Mussel and any relevant Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sub-basin Plans in all development proposals that fall within their basin of catchment
NH-P-5:	It is a policy of the Council to require consideration of the impact of potential development on habitats of natural value that are key features of the County's ecological network and to incorporate appropriate mitigating biodiversity measures into development proposals.
NHP-18	It is the policy of the Council to ensure that an ecological assessment (including where necessary EIA) is carried out at the appropriate level in relation to proposals for drainage or reclamation of wetlands.
MRCM-02	To safeguard and improve and the health of our Marine ecosystem by: ♣ Protecting the qualifying habitat and species of Natura 2000 sites through Appropriate Assessment of development proposals. ♣ Maintaining and improving water quality in our estuaries and seas by implementing River Basin Management Plan and any future programmes under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. ♣ Ensuring that there is; sufficient sewage treatment capacity to serve development in urban areas, adequate on-site effluent treatment to EPA standards for developments in rural/unserviced areas, and adequate pollution control measures for commercial/industrial development. County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 Part B: Objectives and Policies of the Plan Chapter 10: The Marine Resource and Coastal Management Page 167 ♣ Seeking best practice measures in relation to the carrying out of site preparation and construction works for developments in close proximity to rivers and the sea
WES-O-4:.	To implement the EU Water Framework Directive through the implementation of the appropriate River Basin Management Plan and Programme of Measures as it affects Donegal

CDP Ref	Text
WES-O-5:	To maintain, protect, improve and enhance the quality of surface waters and ground waters in accordance with the Programme of Measures contained within the relevant River Basin Management Plan..
WES-O-6:	To provide for environmental protection, through: ♣ The protection of surface water and ground water from pollution in accordance with the relevant River Basin Management Plan, Groundwater Protection Scheme and Source Protection Plans for public water supplies; ♣ The protection against soil contamination; ♣ Minimising air and noise pollution; ♣ Supporting remediation of all existing pollution; and ♣ Ensuring full compliance with relevant EU Directives, and National and European Policies and Regulations and through monitoring and control of relevant activities
DRAFT Donegal CDP 2024 -2030	
CAO 01	To promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to— a. reduce energy demand in response to the likelihood of increases in energy and other costs due to long-term decline in non-renewable resources, b. reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions; and c. address the necessity of adaptation to climate change, taking account of Donegal County Council’s Climate Action Plan (within the meaning of section 14B of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015). in particular, having regard to location, layout and design of new development
CAO 02	To support and implement: the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the relevant National Planning Framework climate change National Policy Objectives (NPOs); the national climate change objectives contained in the Climate Action Plan 2023; and the Overarching Environmental Regional Policy Objectives and relevant Regional Policy Objectives of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy; and the actions contained within Donegal County Council’s Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 (or any updates of any of the foregoing).
BIO P1	To require all developments to comply with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and EU Bird Directive, including ensuring that development proposals: a. Do not adversely affect the integrity of any European/Natura 2000 site (i.e. Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) including effects on ex-situ but functionally linked habitats, and species (e.g. Pearl Mussel) save where a plan must be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI). b. Provide for the protection of animal and plant species listed in Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive. c. Manage features of the landscape (such as rivers, riverbanks, field boundaries, ponds and small woods) which are of major

CDP Ref	Text
	importance for wild fauna and flora and the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network.
BIO P3	Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal, it is the policy of the Council to: a. Protect, where justified, features of local biodiversity value (e.g. hedgerows/field boundaries, trees, woodlands, wetlands, water bodies, riverbanks and peatlands) which make a significant contribution to the biodiversity, ecological connectivity, and associated visual amenity and/or rural character of the area. b. Require, where justified, that developments otherwise maximise the retention of and suitably integrate such features. In this regard proposals for the removal of existing roadside hedgerows/field boundaries for new developments in rural areas will only be permitted in so far as is necessary to safeguard public safety and any remaining portion of those features identified above not so required shall be retained. c. Require that development proposals provide biodiversity enhancement measures (e.g. native tree and hedgerow planting, and nature-based water management solutions). d. Require that large-scale developments result in no net biodiversity loss.
BIO P4	Ensure that any development proposals do not lead to the introduction or spread of invasive species. Where invasive species are present, development proposals may be required to be submit an appropriate control and management programme.
BIO-P-5	a. Ensure that new developments do not have a significant adverse impact on pollinator habitat and species, including protecting rare pollinators listed under the Wildlife Act and maximizing the retention of pollinator friendly habitats within development proposal where feasible. b. Require pollinator friendly planting and management regimes as part of planting/landscaping schemes for new public development including green infrastructure, large scale residential and transport development.
L 01	To protect, manage and conserve the character, quality and value of the Donegal landscape
WE P9	To ensure that the assessment of Wind Energy Development Proposals have regard to the following Specific Biodiversity Related Requirement: a. Loss of functionally linked habitat: Developers of wind energy proposals on greenfield sites shall undertake a preconstruction appraisal of habitats. Should habitats suitable for supporting Special Conservation Interest bird species be present, developers will be required to undertake pre-construction bird surveys to confirm whether the site supports a significant proportion of bird populations (typically taken to be 1% of the population of a SPA, at time of designation). Depending on whether qualifying birds represent breeding or overwintering species, surveys will need to be undertaken in the breeding season or overwintering period (October to March). If a site represents functionally linked habitat,

CDP Ref	Text
	<p>avoidance / mitigation measures will be required and the proposal will need to be supported by a bespoke Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>b. Mortality due to collision with operational wind turbines: Wind energy development proposals shall demonstrate that they can be delivered without resulting in adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. Vantage point surveys will be required to establish:</p> <p>(i) the overall use of the development site by Special Conservation Interest birds and</p> <p>(ii) more detailed usage by Special Conservation Interest birds of the turbine swept area taking account of specifications such as turbine height, blade length, nacelle (blade hub) rotation speed and the number of turbines. Mitigation measures may need to be delivered to ensure that any residual risks are appropriately avoided or reduced.</p> <p>c. Disturbance displacement: To avoid potential permanent disturbance displacement impacts on Special Conservation Interest bird species, Donegal County Council will generally not support wind energy proposals within 1km of Special Protection Areas unless clear evidence from the applicant or scheme promoter can demonstrate no adverse effect on site integrity will arise.</p> <p>d. Water Quality: Any wind energy developments within 1 km of sensitive SPAs / SACs shall ensure that potential adverse impacts on the European sites due to water quality impacts are assessed and, where required, mitigated. Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, water quality and ecological baseline studies, run-off / leachate modelling, delivery of Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) and Water Management Plans (WMPs) and compliance with industry good practice.</p>
AH 02	<p>Promote the sustainable and sensitive re-use of the existing built heritage as a positive response to climate change, and promote the circular economy and climate mitigation and adaptation through proper maintenance, repair and appropriate retrofitting, adaptative re-use and regeneration employing best conservation practice</p>
WW P10	<p>In general, development proposals shall only be permitted where it is demonstrated that:</p> <p>a. They would not negatively impact on existing or proposed water and wastewater infrastructure including the overbuilding of network infrastructure.</p> <p>b. The location takes into account, and is compatible with, the operation/use or expansion of existing or proposed new wastewater treatment plants. In this regard a setback/buffer of 100m will normally be required between existing or proposed wastewater treatment facilities with a PE >50 and any sensitive developments which have a continuous or frequent public usage (e.g. residential, retail, community, educational).</p> <p>c. Save in exceptional circumstances: i. all new development shall provide separate foul and surface water drainage systems and the discharge of additional surface waters to combined (foul and surface water) sewers shall not be permitted;</p>

CDP Ref	Text
	ii. the use of Water Sensitive Urban Design/Nature Based Solutions in surface water management systems within public and private developments and within the public realm shall be required to minimise the extent of hard surfacing and paving, thereby reducing flood risk and improving water quality; d. Water conservation measures (e.g. rainwater harvesting) shall be required as an integral part of developments, save in exceptional circumstances and where appropriate to do so.

7.2 SEA & APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT MITIGATION MEASURES INCORPORATED IN THE DRAFT CAP

Table 7.2 set out the additional wording for listed actions that aims to clarity and focus environment protection as well as providing for the opportunity for positive environmental effects across the actions listed in the table. The additional wording provided for the actions listed in Table 7.2 below is shown as bold blue text.

Figure 7.2: Mitigation Measures to Donegal Climate Action Plan

Action	Text
NE3	Increase coastal resilience to the changing climate and support nature based solutions to avoid coastal squeeze and make space for nature.
CR2	Increase climate literacy across the community through education and raising awareness on climate action and nature based solutions that provide co benefits for human health, water and wildlife
CR4	Ensure that all Council funding mechanisms are underpinned by strong carbon proofing requirements.
New action	In implementing this County Donegal Climate Action Plan, ensure compliance with Donegal County Development Plan 2017-2023 and superseding plans, local area plan objectives and policies relating to environmental management, the protection of statutory Conservation Areas and ensure compliance with specific environmental management measures relating to this plan. Landuse plans and projects arising from this Climate Action Plan will be underpinned by Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, and Ecological Impact Assessments as relevant.
New action	Donegal County Council will take account of any relevant recommendations in the EPA State of Our Environment Report 2024, once published, in implementing the Plan over its lifetime.
New action	Donegal County Council will consider any relevant updated actions, measures or recommendations that may arise in updates to the National Climate Action Plan over the lifetime of the Plan.
BE1.2	Deliver the ongoing public lighting LED Retrofit and Energy Reduction Programme, while having due regard to impact of light used on biodiversity.

Action	Text
BE5.1	Be proactive in providing flood resilience to municipal infrastructure by conducting flood risk assessments and seeking OPW Funding through their Minor Works programme where necessary and applying nature based solutions where possible
BE5.3	Ensure that the design of future municipal infrastructure considers flood resilience applying nature based solutions where necessary and that they do not increase flood risk elsewhere.
NE1.8	Reduce the extent of grass cutting carried out in public spaces, to preserve biodiversity and encourage growth of native plants to be undertaken in line with guidance from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan
NE2.1	Forestry - Work with Coillte to promote and implement appropriate water protection and integration of biodiversity measures in forestry catchments where potential for impact on waterbody (e.g. Sediment, pesticides , colour, organic matter and high rainfall events in line with Water Framework Directive objectives.
NE 4.1	Develop a protocol for the application of NBS to Council projects and provide training on same
Carndonagh DZ BE	To support the initiatives of the North West Regional Energy Agency to improve energy efficiency, retrofitting, renewable energy technologies, local community-based renewable energy, wildlife and space for nature and circular economy projects for homes, businesses, public buildings and communities .
New Action	With respect to DZ actions, ensure that they are aligned with the conservation objectives for the Trawbreaga Bay SPA
New Action	Protect and maintain our freshwater and transitional water systems, in order to achieve the highest possible water quality and achieving Water Framework Directive objectives.
Falcarragh DZ BE	To support the initiatives of the North West Regional Energy Agency to improve energy efficiency, retrofitting, renewable energy technologies, local community-based renewable energy, wildlife and space for nature and circular economy projects for homes, businesses, public buildings and communities
New Action	With respect to DZ actions, ensure that they are aligned with the conservation objectives of European Sites in the wider area surrounding Falcarragh

7.3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTING MITIGATION MEASURES

The responsibility for implementing land use actions proposed by the draft CAP lies with the relevant departments of Donegal County Council. Departments seeking to carry out land use activities, under the aegis of the support provided by the draft CAP action are obliged to ensure that the implementation of these objectives are consistent with the environmental safeguards as listed in Section 7.1 and Section 7.2 above. It is a statutory requirement for a competent

authority (e.g. Donegal County Council) to carry out screening for appropriate assessment for all land use projects and all land use activities implemented under/facilitated by the draft CAP will be assessed for their potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

8.0 CONCLUSION

This NIS has reviewed the potential impacts arising from the draft CAP and found that, without the implementation of mitigation measures, the Plan will have the potential to impact upon the Conservation Objectives of European Sites and their relevant qualifying features that occur within the zone of influence of the Plan. Given the undefined spatial nature of the Actions and conceivable land use activities arising from the draft CAP actions it has not been possible to identify the specific European Site and associated features of interest that may be at risk of adverse impacts from the Plan. For such actions with potential to generate land use activities a precautionary approach has been taken and it has been found in this NIS that in the absence of appropriate safeguards adverse impacts to European Site could arise. These adverse impacts are detailed in Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 of this NIS.

The mitigation measures outlined in Section 7 of this NIS will protect European Sites from potential adverse impacts. These measures have been implemented for previously adopted plans in County Donegal and are known to provide effective safeguards at the Plan level for the protection of European Site from potentially adverse land use activities.

With the proper implementation of all mitigation measures detailed in this NIS the draft CAP is not considered to have the potential to result in adverse impacts to European Sites occurring within County Donegal or the surrounding area.

REFERENCES

DEHLG (2010) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities. Rev Feb 2010. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

European Commission (2021) Assessment of Plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General)

European Commission (2019) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 2/43/EEC. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

APPENDIX 1: EUROPEAN SITES SCREENED IN

Table A1.1 below provides a list of the European Sites occurring within the zone of influence of the draft CAP and screened in for further examination as part of an Natura Impact Statement of the draft Plan. The list of European Sites screened in follows that identified for the Donegal County Development Plan.

Table A1.1: SACs & SPA Identified as occurring within the zone of influence of the draft CAP

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
Donegal	
Aran Island (Donegal) Cliffs SAC [000111]	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heaths Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Submerged or partially submerged sea caves
Ballintra SAC [000115]	European dry heaths Limestone pavements*
Ballyarr Wood SAC [000116]	Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles
Ballyhoorisky Point to Fanad Head SAC [001975]	Perennial vegetation of stony banks Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coast Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. Narrow-mouthed whorl snail Slender naiad
Ballyness Bay SAC [001090]	Estuaries Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Humid dune slacks Geyer's whorl snail

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
Cloghernagore Bog and Glenveagh National Park SAC [002047]	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heaths Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) Blanket bogs (* if active) Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles Freshwater pearl mussel; Atlantic salmon Otter Killarney Fern
Coolvoy Bog SAC [001107]	Blanket bogs (* if active)
Croaghonagh Bog SAC [000129]	Blanket bogs (* if active)
Derryveagh and Glendowan Mountains SPA [004039]	Red-throated diver Merlin Peregrine Golden plover Dunlin
Donegal Bay SPA [004151]	Great northern diver Light-bellied Brent goose Common scoter Sanderling Wetland and waterbirds
Donegal Bay (Murvagh) SAC [000133]	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Dunes with Salix repens ssp. Argentea (Salicion arenariae) Humid dune slacks Harbour Seal
Dunmuckrum Turloughs SAC [002303]	Turloughs*

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
Dunragh Loughs / Pettigo Plateau SAC [001125]	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix Blanket bogs (*if active)
Durnesh Lough SAC [000138]	Coastal lagoons* Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)
Durnesh Lough SPA [004145]	Whooper swan Greenland white-fronted goose
Falcarragh to Meenlaragh SPA [004149]	Corncrake
Fanad Head SPA [004148]	Corncrake
Fawnboy Bog / Lough Nacung SAC [000140]	Northern Atlantic wet heaths Blanket bogs (* if active) Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion Freshwater pearl mussel
Gannivegil Bog SAC [000142]	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix Blanket bogs (* if active)
Greers Isle SPA [004082]	Black-headed gull Common gull Sandwich tern
Gweedore Bay and Islands SAC [001141]	Coastal lagoons Reefs Perennial vegetation of stony banks Atlantic salt meadows (Gluco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia 45aritime) Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Decalcified fixed dunes with Empetrum nigrum Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (Calluno-Ulicetea) Dunes with Salix repens ssp. Argentea (Salicion arenariae) Humid dune slacks Machairs (* in Ireland)

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heath Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Marsh fritillary Otter Petalwort Slender naiad
Hempton's Turbot Bank SAC [002999]	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time
Horn Head and Ringlevan SAC [000147]	Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Dunes with Salix repens ssp. Argentea (Salicion arenariae) Humid dune slacks Machairs (* in Ireland) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Geyer's Whorl Snail Grey Seal Petalwort Slender Naiad
Horn Head to Fanad Head SPA [004194]	Fulmar Cormorant Shag Barnacle goose Peregrine Kittiwake Guillemot Razorbill Chough Greenland white-fronted goose
Illancrone and Inishkeeragh SPA [004132]	Barnacle goose Common tern

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Arctic tern Little tern
Inishbofin, Inishdooley and Inishbeg SPA [004083]	Barnacle goose Corncrake Common gull Lesser black-backed gull Arctic tern
Inishduff SPA [004115]	Shag
Inishkeel SPA [004116]	Barnacle goose
Inishtrahull SAC [000154]	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
Inishtrahull SPA [004100]	Shag Barnacle goose Common gull
Kindrum Lough SAC [001151]	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Slender naiad
Leannan River SAC [002176]	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Freshwater pearl mussel Atlantic salmon Otter Slender naiad
Lough Derg (Donegal) SPA [004057]	Lesser black-backed gull Herring gull
Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC [000163]	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles Freshwater pearl mussel Atlantic salmon Killarney fern
Lough Fern SPA [004060]	Pochard Wetland and waterbirds
Lough Foyle SPA [004087]1	Red-throated diver

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Great crested grebe Bewick's swan Whooper swan Greylag goose Light-bellied Brent goose Shelduck Wigeon Teal Mallard Eider Red-breasted merganser Oystercatcher Golden plover Lapwing Knot Dunlin Bar-tailed godwit Curlew Redshank Black-headed gull Common gull Herring gull Wetland and waterbirds
Lough Golagh and Breesy Hill SAC [002164]	Blanket bogs (* if active)
Lough Melvin SAC [000428]1	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) Atlantic salmon Otter
Lough Nageage SAC [002135]	White-clawed crayfish
Lough Nagreany Dunes SAC [000164]	Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)*

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (Calluno-Ulicetea) Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>Argentea</i> (Salicion arenariae) Humid dune slacks Machairs (* in Ireland) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Slender naiad
Lough Nillan Bog (Carrickatlieve) SAC [000165]	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Blanket bogs (* if active)
Lough Nillan Bog SPA [004110]	Merlin Golden plover Greenland white-fronted goose Dunlin
Lough Swilly SAC [002287]	Estuaries Coastal lagoons Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles Otter
Lough Swilly SPA [004075]	Great crested grebe Grey heron Whooper swan Greylag goose Shelduck Wigeon Teal Mallard Shoveler Scaup Goldeneye Red-breasted merganser Coot Oystercatcher

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Knot Dunlin Curlew Redshank Greenshank Black-headed gull Common gull Sandwich tern Common tern Greenland white-fronted goose Wetland and waterbirds
Magheradrumman Bog SAC [000168]	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix Blanket bogs (* if active bog)
Malin Head SPA [004146]	Corncrake
Meenaguse Scragh SAC [001880]	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix
Meenaguse / Ardbane Bog SAC [000172]	Blanket bogs (* if active)
Meentygrannagh Bog SAC [000173]	Blanket bogs (* if active) Transition mires and quaking bogs Alkaline fens Slender green feather-moss
Muckish Mountain SAC [001179]	Alpine and Boreal heaths Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation
Mulroy Bay SAC [002159]	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Large shallow inlets and bays Reefs Otter
North Inishowen Coast SAC [002012]	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Perennial vegetation of stony banks Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Machairs (* in Ireland) European dry heaths Narrow-mouthed whorl snail Otter

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA [004099]	Greenland white-fronted goose
Rathlin O’Birne Island SAC [000181]	Reefs
Rathlin O’Birne Island SPA [004120]	Barnacle goose
River Finn SAC [002301]	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix Blanket bogs (* if active) Transition mires and quaking bogs Atlantic salmon Otter
Roaninish SPA [004121]	Barnacle goose Herring gull
Rutland Island and Sound SAC [002283]	Coastal lagoons Large shallow inlets and bays Reefs Annual vegetation of drift lines Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Humid dune slacks Harbour Seal
Sessiagh Lough SAC [000185]	oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Slender naiad
Sheephaven SAC [001190]	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Annual vegetation of drift lines Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia 51aritime) Embryonic shifting dunes

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Humid dune slacks Machairs (* in Ireland) Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles Marsh fritillary Petalwort
Sheskinmore Lough SPA [004090]	Greenland white-fronted goose
Slieve League SAC [000189]	Reefs Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heaths Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels Blanket bogs (* if active) Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation
Slieve Tooley / Tormore Island / Loughros Beg Bay SAC [000190]	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) Alpine and Boreal heaths Blanket bogs (* if active) Narrow-mouthed whorl snail Otter Grey seal
St. John's Point SAC [000191]	Large shallow inlets and bays Reefs

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) Alkaline fens Limestone pavements* Submerged or partially submerged sea caves Marsh fritillary
Tamur Bog SAC [001992]	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix Blanket bogs (* if active) Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion
Termon Strand SAC [001195]	Coastal lagoons
Tory Island SPA [004073]	Fulmar Corncrake Razorbill Puffin
Tory Island Coast SAC [002259]	Coastal lagoons Reefs Perennial vegetation of stony banks Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Submerged or partially submerged sea caves
Tranarossan and Melmore Lough SAC [000194]	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Annual vegetation of drift lines Perennial vegetation of stony banks Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Decalcified fixed dunes with Empetrum nigrum Dunes with Salix repens ssp. Argentea (Salicion arenariae) Humid dune slacks Machairs (* in Ireland) Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. European dry heaths

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Alpine and Boreal heaths Petalwort
Trawbreaga Bay SPA [004034]	Barnacle goose Light-bellied Brent goose Chough Wetland and waterbirds
West Donegal Coast SPA [004150]	Fulmar Cormorant Shag Peregrine Herring gull Kittiwake Razorbill Chough
West Donegal Islands SPA [004230]	Shag Barnacle goose Corncrake Common gull Herring gull
West of Ardara / Maas Road SAC [000197]	Estuaries Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Large shallow inlets and bays Annual vegetation of drift lines Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia 54aritime) Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (Calluno-Ulicetea) Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>Argentea</i> (Salicion <i>arenariae</i>) Humid dune slacks Machairs (* in Ireland) Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia <i>uniflorae</i>)

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	<p>Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</p> <p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix</p> <p>European dry heaths</p> <p>Alpine and Boreal heaths</p> <p>Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> <p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)</p> <p>Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)</p> <p>Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis)</p> <p>Blanket bogs (* if active)</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion</p> <p>Alkaline fens</p> <p>Geyer's whorl snail</p> <p>Freshwater pearl mussel</p> <p>Marsh fritillary</p> <p>Atlantic salmon</p> <p>Otter</p> <p>Harbour seal</p> <p>Petalwort</p> <p>Slender naiad</p>
Leitrim	
Arroo Mountain SAC [001403]	<p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix</p> <p>European dry heaths</p> <p>Alpine and Boreal heaths</p> <p>Blanket bogs (* if active)</p> <p>Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*</p> <p>Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (Thlaspietea rotundifolii)</p> <p>Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation</p>
Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC [000623]1	<p>Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation</p> <p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix</p> <p>European dry heaths</p> <p>Alpine and Boreal heaths</p>

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	<p>Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> <p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)</p> <p>Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)</p> <p>Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels</p> <p>Blanket bogs (* if active)</p> <p>Transition mires and quaking bogs</p> <p>Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*</p> <p>Alkaline fens</p> <p>Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani)</p> <p>Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (Thlaspietea rotundifolii)</p> <p>Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation</p> <p>Geyer's whorl snail</p> <p>Otter</p>
<p>Bunduff Lough And Machair / Trawalua / Mullaghmore SAC [000625]1</p>	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>Large shallow inlets and bays</p> <p>Reefs</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes)</p> <p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)*</p> <p>Humid dune slacks</p> <p>Machairs (* in Ireland)</p> <p>Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> <p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)</p> <p>Alkaline fens</p> <p>Marsh fritillary</p> <p>Petalwort</p>
<p>Glenade Lough SAC [001919]</p>	<p>Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition – type vegetation</p> <p>White-clawed crayfish</p> <p>Slender naiad</p>

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
Lough Gill SAC [001976]1	Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition – type vegetation Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) White-clawed crayfish Sea lamprey Brook lamprey River lamprey Atlantic salmon Otter
Lough Melvin SAC [000428]1	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) Atlantic salmon Otter
Sligo / Leitrim Uplands SPA [004187]1	Peregrine Chough
Sligo	
Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC [000623]1	Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heaths Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels Blanket bogs (* if active) Transition mires and quaking bogs

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* Alkaline fens Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (Thlaspietea rotundifolii) Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Geyer's whorl snail Otter
Bunduff Lough And Machair / Trawalua / Mullaghmore SAC [000625]1	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Large shallow inlets and bays Reefs Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Humid dune slacks Machairs (* in Ireland) Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) Alkaline fens Marsh fritillary Petalwort
Inishmurray SPA [004068]	Shag Barnacle goose Herring gull Arctic tern
Sligo / Leitrim Uplands SPA [004187]1	Peregrine Chough
Streedagh Point Dunes SAC [001680]	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Perennial vegetation of stony banks Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia 58aritime) Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)*

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
	Narrow-mouthed whorl snail
Derry	
Bann Estuary SAC	Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)
Binevenagh SAC	Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on silicious substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas in Continental Europe)* Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>)
Lough Foyle SPA	Red-throated diver Great crested grebe Bewick's swan Whooper swan Greylag goose Light-bellied Brent goose Shelduck Wigeon Teal Mallard Eider Red-breasted merganser Oystercatcher Golden plover Lapwing Knot Dunlin Bar-tailed godwit Curlew Redshank Black-headed gull Common gull Herring gull Wetlands and waterbirds

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
Magilligan SAC	Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>Argentea</i> Humid dune slacks Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Marsh fritillary Petalwort
River Faughan and Tributaries SAC	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles Atlantic salmon Otter
River Roe and Tributaries SAC	Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles Atlantic salmon Otter
Skerries and Causeway SAC	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time Reefs Submerged or partially submerged sea caves Harbour porpoise
Tyrone	
Fairy Water Bogs SAC	Active raised bogs
Moneygal Bog SAC	Active raised bogs
Owenkillew River SAC	Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles Bog woodland* Freshwater pearl mussel Atlantic salmon Otter
River Foyle and Tributaries SAC	Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation Atlantic salmon Otter
Fermanagh	
Largalunny SAC	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles

Site name [Site Code]	Qualifying Interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s)
Lough Melvin SAC [000428]1	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) Atlantic salmon Otter
Monawilkin SAC	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles
Pettigoe Plateau SAC	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds Blanket bogs (* if active) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or of the Isoëto-Nanojuncetea Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix European dry heaths
Pettigoe Plateau SPA	Greenland white-fronted goose
West Fermanagh Scarplands SAC	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) Limestone pavements* Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines * Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition – type vegetation Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix Blanket bogs (* if active) Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* Alkaline fens
* Indicates a priority habitat under Annex I of the Habitats Directive. 1 European site lies within multiple counties.	