



# **DRAFTING THE NATURE RESTORATION PLAN: REPORT FROM THE FIRST MEETING OF THE LEADERS' FORUM**

**April 2025**

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Completed by the social research charity consultancy

# 1 Introduction

This report provides a summary of the discussions of the first meeting of the Leaders' Forum to inform the drafting of Ireland's Nature Restoration Plan. The meeting was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025 in The Ashling Hotel Dublin with over 80 attendees from over 60 organisations attending (see Appendix for full list).

Following a welcome by the Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Biodiversity, Christopher O'Sullivan T.D, the Chair of the Independent Advisory Committee Dr Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin and Director of NPWS International and EU Affairs Ainle Ní Bhriain presented on the background of the Nature Restoration Regulation and the process through which Ireland will draft its Nature Restoration Plan. Guiding principles for the day, based on deliberative democracy processes, were also shared (see Appendix). After a 'Questions & Answers' session attendees were invited to share their input with colleagues at their tables over four sessions throughout the day:

1. Principles and actions that should inform the drafting of the Nature Restoration Plan
2. Vision Statement for Ireland's Nature Restoration Plan
3. Obstacles and Risks to the Nature Restoration Plan
4. Enablers to ensure the Nature Restoration Plan is Successful

Attendees were seated at 11 separate tables, with a mix of stakeholders seated at each table. Tables were facilitated through the four separate discussions outlined above, with note-takers recording the discussions. These detailed records form the basis of this report.

The report will be shared with the Independent Advisory Committee and later shared with the Leaders' Forum in an online meeting. Future Leaders' Forum meetings will be held as the drafting of the Nature Restoration Plan progresses. This report includes points that were raised by at least two tables, with some specific outstanding issues raised by only one table included in the 'Car Park' in the Appendix. The sections within this report correspond to the four table discussions and contain composite statements developed from a synthesis of the 11 table notes. Information is provided on the table numbers that contributed content to each point. Also provided is a count to allow readers to assess the prioritisation of issues, all commentary is ordered from the most raised to the least.

The Appendix contains the complete vision statements developed by each table, a list of attending organisations, the car park (as mentioned) and the day's agenda.

## 2 Principles

Principles Informing Drafting and Implementation of the NRP	Tables	No.
<p><b>Co-designed and leveraging lived experience:</b> The plan should be co-designed with stakeholders from all sectors through robust, well-resourced public engagement, focusing on community needs and addressing legitimate fears. It must ensure all voices are heard, particularly those from less-powerful or marginalized groups regardless of socioeconomic status or urban/rural location. This inclusive approach requires diverse and creative engagement formats, comfortable meeting spaces, and representation from all relevant stakeholders—including, but not limited to, farmers, tourism operators, river stewards, local communities, urban green space managers, citizen scientists and youth groups. The plan should guarantee meaningful participation across all stages: consultation, implementation, and evaluation, and be underpinned by a robust communication strategy and support for grassroots action.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11	11
<p><b>Evidence based:</b> Policy must be based on the best science (i.e. timely, accurate, up-to-date and relevant data) and the targets should be evaluated with evidence-based measures. The reporting of science should not be affected by socio-economic or political factors. Sources should not be purely academic, but include opinions and data from farmers, fishermen etc.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11	8
<p><b>Embedding Accountability and Ownership:</b> the plan must establish clear ownership for the delivery of the plan, with clear lines of accountability for all actions. Responsibility should be shared across sectors. Everyone—individuals, agencies, and organisations—must be supported to take responsibility for their role. There must be a genuine and long-term commitment to implementation, with no room for loopholes, vague obligations, or “get out of jail cards.” All actors must be able to demonstrate the actions they have taken in delivering the plan. Informed citizen participation should be incorporated to enhance accountability, supported by accurate and timely information that empowers public engagement and scrutiny.</p> <p>Environmental justice must be accessible to all citizens through localized mechanisms like Land and Environment courts with alternative dispute resolution options. Enforcement of environmental laws should be strengthened at all levels, with particular focus on holding government accountable for existing infringements affecting nature. This requires enhanced enforcement mechanisms, including greater engagement from Gardaí on wildlife crime (such as illegal hare coursing, out-of-season hedge-cutting, and illegal hunting), and improved support for the National Parks and Wildlife Service when responding to illegal activities affecting nature.</p>	1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11	8

<b>Adequate Financial Mechanisms &amp; Rewards:</b> The plan should include adequate financial mechanisms, rewards, and incentives for all contributors, including landowners and those reliant on land or water for their livelihoods, reflecting the value of ecosystem services provided. Priority should be given to those most affected, ensuring that the plan has no unjust economic impact. The NRP must be proportionally resourced with biodiversity valuation integrated into the funding mechanisms to ensure ongoing support.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11	8
<b>Accessible and Transparent:</b> The law and emerging plan must be made accessible to stakeholders through the engagement processes. There needs to be high levels of transparency in how the process operated and who was involved, and inclusive to a range of stakeholders, to build and maintain trust. It should use plain accessible language when publishing or sharing the plan and outcomes.	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10	7
<b>Sustainable, Providing Long-Term Certainty:</b> The plan must be sustainable, addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss to encourage long-term action. It should provide intergenerational certainty and stability, with long-term funding mechanisms that transcend short-term government cycles. This will ensure continuity, political buy-in, and stability for stakeholders such as farmers and fishers, enabling them to plan with confidence. The Nature Restoration Plan should be guided by a vision for 30 to 40 years, with sustainability extending beyond 2050. Achieving its objectives will require generational renewal, with intergenerational capacity building essential for implementation, as the future stewards of the plan are currently in school.	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10	7
<b>Ensuring Voluntary Participation, Fairness, and Upholding Landowners' Rights:</b> As some people work voluntarily on nature restoration, they must be resourced appropriately to participate and their contributions should be seen as valuable. In particular, private landowners' contributions should be voluntary to avoid land being devalued as it has with past schemes. The NRP should ensure justice and fairness, ensuring that landowners' rights are respected and protected, without impinging upon them.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10	7
<b>Collaboration/Connectivity and Breakdown of Siloed Approaches:</b> All administrative and implementing agencies should work together across sectors and communicate effectively to ensure that the plan is not being owned and operated by one agency and that the different agencies responsible for implementation are talking to each to carry out the plan in unison (e.g. encourage collaboration or effective working between landowners and different organisations who support effective land use management). Additionally, the plan should enhance policy alignment between climate, nature, and water, developing a coherent policy framework to support the plan's objectives. The plan should enhance the connectedness of restored areas and existing natural areas.	1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11	6

<b>Legislative Foundation and Policy Alignment:</b> Decisions should be underpinned by legislation that meets regulatory requirements across government departments, avoids contradictions with EU laws, and addresses challenges such as limited data sharing due to GDPR constraints. The Nature Restoration Law must align with current and future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) payments for farmers, ensuring compliance and a just transition.	1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 11	6
<b>State Leadership and Whole-of-Government Commitment:</b> State agencies, particularly landowning ones, must lead by example and be compulsory participants in the Nature Restoration Plan, ensuring that responsibilities are shared among all stakeholders, not just farmers. The focus should be on maximising the use of public land for restoration efforts. As some state and semi-state bodies control large areas of land, they must actively engage in the restoration process. A cohesive, whole-of-government approach should be adopted, integrating the Nature Restoration Plan across relevant plans, institutions, and organisations.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 11	6
<b>Ambitious and Inspirational:</b> The plan should be as ambitious as possible, inspiring and motivating collective action across all sectors while committing to no further deterioration of nature. It must achieve 100% implementation with full commitment and without avoiding derogations.	3, 5, 7, 9, 11	5
<b>Clear Targets, Actions, and Measures:</b> The plan should be underpinned by SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound), supported by objective targets and defined pathways for delivery. Actions and measures must be spatially defined, with guaranteed deliverables and clear expectations. A credible, up-to-date baseline data set of quantitative and qualitative data should be established at the outset, agreed by all stakeholders, and must integrate scientific, indigenous, and local knowledge, drawing from all relevant departments. Gaps in data should be identified and addressed early in the process. Monitoring and governance structures must be built in from the beginning to track progress, manage data, and ensure transparency and accountability throughout implementation. While incremental gains may indicate movement in the right direction, absolute improvements are required to achieve full ecosystem restoration. Consider real-life impacts, such as “What would that mean to Mary down the road?”— ensuring that restoration delivers meaningful outcomes for people and places.	3, 6, 7, 8, 10	5
<b>Appreciation of/Connection to Nature and Heritage:</b> The plan must be underpinned by a deep appreciation of nature's value and beauty, alongside respect for Ireland's heritage and traditions, particularly for communities with generational ties to land and resources. It should recognise the power of culture and the role people, especially farmers and fishers, as stewards of the natural environment. The plan should reflect nature's intrinsic value and ensure that those implementing the plan view nature as an asset, not a liability.	3, 5, 6, 10, 11	5

<b>Adaptability, Innovation, and Opportunity:</b> The plan should be agile and adaptive, able to respond to changing circumstances and evolving data. A robust decision and review process, based on ongoing consultations with communities and stakeholders, should be built in to ensure the plan remains responsive and effective. Time for reflection should be incorporated into the process to evaluate what is working and where improvements are needed. Rather than focusing solely on compliance, the plan should prioritise the opportunities that nature restoration presents, encouraging innovation and openness to new approaches that may not have been tried before.	2, 3, 6, 8, 10	5
<b>Education, Awareness, and Capacity Building:</b> The plan should promote education and raise awareness about the value of nature, its beauty, and the NRL/P itself. It should also highlight the importance of rural environments to urban populations through a nationwide awareness campaign. Additionally, the plan must build capacity within the public, engaging communities in the process and creating usable spaces that serve multiple needs, ensuring participation and understanding.	3, 4, 5, 8, 11	5
<b>Rights of Nature:</b> Nature/the environment needs to be given legal rights for protection, with the plan asking, 'what would nature say?'. An example is extending current legislation to protect all hedgerows.	3, 4, 5, 9	4
<b>Shared Responsibilities and Costs:</b> The costs and responsibilities of implementing the Nature Restoration Plan should be shared fairly among all parties involved. The financial burden should be distributed equally across Irish society, ensuring no single community or group bears a disproportionate share of the costs. Both the burdens and benefits of the plan must be equitably shared.	3, 4, 5, 7	4
<b>Include all Habitats/Land Uses:</b> Ensure all types of habitats are considered and covered in the plan i.e. built environment, forestry, fisheries, mountain habitats, wetlands, urban, rural etc, and that various land uses are represented by stakeholders including policymakers, environmental groups, farmers, and businesses.	1, 5, 10	3
<b>Consider Different Scales:</b> The plan should adopt a holistic approach that integrates multiple scales - from broad ecosystem perspectives (food, water, climate, fibre and nature) to specific land use frameworks and bioregional catchment systems, down to specific habitats and species. This multi-scale approach will aid coherence in nature restoration planning and implementation.	1, 4, 11	3
<b>Build on Successes and Existing Efforts:</b> The plan should recognise, promote, and capitalise on the positive work and successes already achieved in Ireland, including initiatives such as the European Innovation Projects (EIPs) and LIFE Programmes. This approach acknowledges progress made while creating a foundation for future advancement.	1, 2, 4	3

<b>Right to the Benefits of Nature:</b> The co-benefits for society, the economy, and the environment should be emphasised. The NRP should recognise the right of all Irish people to be near nature and to benefit from it, regardless of their location. Both the implementation and responsibilities of the NRP must be shared proportionally, ensuring that burdens and benefits are not placed solely on one community.	2, 3, 7	3
<b>Specialised Expertise and Employment Opportunities:</b> The plan must ensure the involvement of specialised expertise to drive restoration efforts for species or habitat-specific actions. Equipping people with the necessary skills and knowledge is essential to achieve the targets. From the outset, the plan should consider how to create employment opportunities and recruit the right individuals to carry out the work, ensuring that the necessary workforce is in place to support nature restoration.	1, 7, 11	3
<b>Consider a Whole of Ireland Approach and EU Integration:</b> Efforts need to be integrated across the whole island of Ireland, geographically spread and not just linked to certain regions. While there is a potential disconnect with EU legislation, there are existing principles from the UK that could be leveraged. The plan must outline how transboundary issues between countries will be managed (i.e. freshwater and maritime matters).	4, 8, 11	2
<b>Underpinned by Local Decision-Making and Empowerment:</b> Decision-making should occur at the smallest scale to ensure effective ecosystem restoration, with action starting at the local level. Empowering stakeholders is key; they must feel valued and supported in the process. People are less likely to engage if they feel shamed, so the plan should foster an environment that uplifts participants and enables all groups to make informed decisions regarding nature. A method for tracking participation in restoration should be established, similar to a herd number system.	1, 3, 5	3
<b>Practical and Pragmatic:</b> Whatever is in the plan needs to reflect the most practical approach that has the greatest benefit to the environment. For example, using species that are not necessarily native but have been growing here for hundreds of years and provide significant benefits (suitable and non-invasive).	4, 8	2
<b>Speed and Urgency of Need:</b> The plan must prioritise speed and recognise the urgent need for action, there is no time for the "perfect plan." A proportionate response is required, one that matches the scale of the problem, and the impact needed.	4, 7	2
<b>Passive vs Active Restoration:</b> The plan should account for passive restoration by recognising and rewarding both active and passive management approaches. It must also consider geographical heterogeneity, acknowledging that the consequences of abandonment versus active management vary across different regions. Nature's natural restoration processes should be factored into the plan, ensuring this is recognised alongside human-driven restoration efforts.	1, 7	2
<b>Ensure Food Security:</b> The Nature Restoration Plan should ensure a just transition that secures food production in Ireland, balancing the interests of food producers with the goals of nature restoration and sustainable land use.	1, 3	2

### 3 Vision Statement

A full list of the vision statements is contained within the Appendix; the frequency table below outlines the most common wording or clauses.

Phrases within vision statements	Tables	N.
Future generations/ All generations to come	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10,11	9
Thriving relationship with nature/Value the natural world	2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11	8
Protect and restore nature/Nature conservation and stewardship	2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11	7
Benefits to all living things, society, economy/ Benefits now/ Wellbeing benefit/ Access to benefits to all	1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11	7
Collectively work together	4, 6, 8, 10, 11	5
Thriving biodiverse environment	6, 8, 10, 11	4
Supported by all/Shared vision	1, 4, 10	3
Inspire all citizens/Nature sparking joy and happiness	4, 6, 10	3
Implementable plan/ Effective roadmap	1, 4, 8	3
Ecosystem with richness and health/ Fully functioning and self-sustaining	1, 3,11	3
Ecosystems/communities resilient to climate change and other challenges	2, 3, 11	3
Sustainable society, ways of life and business	5, 7, 8	3
Halt and reverse biodiversity loss	4, 6	2
Nature restoration front and centre/ Nature underpins all decision-making	3, 4	2
Financial support for transition/ Incentivise those most involved in actions and affected by its impact	3, 4	2
Promoting ecological knowledge and appreciation	5, 8	2
Shared responsibility	8	1
Individuals, communities, and society are empowered	5	1
Recognise the needs of all stakeholders	9	1
Fast paced	4	1
Ambitious plan	8	1
Inclusive plan	8	1
Science-based approach	9	1
Equitable	9	1
Healthy cities with low pollution	3	1
Food security	3	1
Healthy pollinator population	3	1
Enhancement of liveability	6	1
Cultural paradigms shift from extractive to restorative	3	1
Government is a driver for change	3	1
Transforming Ireland	11	1
Across all parts of the land, coasts, and waters	8	1

## 4 Obstacles

Obstacles	Tables	N.
<p><b>Limited and Uneven Stakeholder Engagement:</b> There is limited exposure of the NRP to certain sectors, with much of the conversation only reaching specific groups or organisations. Smaller organisations, disenfranchised stakeholders, and underrepresented groups, such as marginalised landowners, youth, or future generations of landowners often lack a voice, risking alienation and disengagement. Farmers and fishers may feel a lack of agency around their own land. Public buy-in is at risk due to a lack of community-level engagement and meaningful participation, which can make the process feel like a box-ticking exercise. Disagreement and disengagement across and between key stakeholders, can also contribute as well as challenges in ensuring proportional representation of those most impacted, can further undermine inclusion. The absence of sufficient academic input and concerns about the integrity of who contributes to the drafting and implementation process also can present obstacles. Finally, while a fully co-created plan is ideal, the urgency of timelines, such as the 5-year milestone, makes deep participatory processes difficult to achieve within available time and resources.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11	10
<p><b>Data Issues:</b> No adequate baseline of knowledge for certain information and a resulting lack of a scientific data driven approach to setting targets. There may be heavy reliance on incomplete data, and vague information or information which applies to only certain sectors. Potential gaps in the availability of specific types of data include but are not limited to: ecological status and the value of nature, marine data, species and habitats in Ireland. There are also issues related to a data processing lag or poor access to data, with important and useful data sometimes not being available to the public or civil society groups. Additional expertise needs to be sought from experts to bulk out the data basis for the plan, however this may cause delays.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11	8
<p><b>Conflicting Policy and Legislation:</b> There is a risk of writing a plan that is going to conflict with or overlap with existing national or EU policies, strategies and legislation (e.g., arterial drainage act or Coillte and Bord na Mona not facilitating restoration of public lands). Delays may occur due to legal advice that may be required, and processes being held up in the courts, as the plan disrupts the legal status quo. Current regulations may also be restrictive or misaligned with the objectives of the NRP. If there is overlap with other environmental policies, there is also a risk for scope creep. There is potential for siloed thinking at agency level, if intra-policy concerns and interests are not managed.</p>	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11	7

<p><b>Conflicting Agendas, Interests and Priorities:</b> Competing agendas and policies may compromise the plan, with danger that existing policies and regulations may take precedence over Nature Restoration (e.g. CAP) as the funding behind other policy areas is likely to be greater. For example, the plan might not address climate change adequately, or how to balance competing demands between climate needs and biodiversity needs. There may be dilution of impact due to the diversity and inclusivity of views/opinions, and lack of consensus between key stakeholders without a mechanism to reconcile opposing views. Deprioritising of the NRP may occur due to other political agendas or when other issues, crises, or societal challenges become a greater priority. Conflicts of interest could also arise between certain stakeholders and the basic concept of nature restoration (e.g. market demand). It should also be noted that corporate interests have historically resisted responsibility for nature restoration.</p>	<p>2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11</p>	<p>7</p>
<p><b>Lack of Funding/Resources:</b> A significant risk is inadequate resources (time, money, opportunities for reflection) for the NRP, affecting both its development and implementation. The writing stage needs sufficient resources for consultation, drafting, and communications, while implementation requires investment and skilled labour on the ground. The plan faces resource constraints across finances, capacities, expertise, delivery mechanisms, and oversight. Resourcing conflicts exist within agencies and sectors (e.g., urban greening), while rigid approaches focused solely on state funding could fail to leverage private finance or develop effective funding models. Without clear incentives, stakeholder accessibility, participation, and engagement may be compromised. Fear of financial market implications may result in a watered-down plan or implementation. A risk is limited appreciation for long-term financial gain.</p>	<p>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11</p>	<p>7</p>
<p><b>Inappropriate Ambition:</b> There is a risk of the plan being too ambitious or not ambitious enough, not setting the right balance between genuine ambition and practical implementation. The plan's ambition might be diluted or the process derailed due to pressure from some interest groups who may wish to undermine it, due to a rushed process or due to a drive for consensus. The plan may be carried out just to comply with EU requirements instead of using it as an opportunity to improve Irish biodiversity. Short sightedness could further undermine the plan's effectiveness.</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10</p>	<p>6</p>
<p><b>Lack of Trust:</b> This could be caused by stakeholder consultation perceived as not being meaningful, or being tokenistic, with power lying elsewhere. A lack of transparency results in lower trust, "who is who and who does what" needs to be explicit. The NRL faces potential perceptions by farmers that the law is a "land grab" and should not be trusted as there is a legacy of mistrust between farmers and government, with landowners likely resistant to change or restrictions on the use of their lands. This lack of engagement could apply to state landowners as well. Risk of failure to address previous breakdowns of communication and trust between all stakeholders,</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11</p>	<p>6</p>

government, organisations, and individuals, which may result from historic let downs and other legacy issues (e.g. issues with land designations). Mistrust in indigenous forms of knowledge could also result in missed opportunities to gain from that pool of knowledge. Mistrust will grow further if mistakes made implementing former environmental policies are replicated with the NRL, such as issues with the implementation of the "ACRES" (Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme), or if confusion originating at European Union level translates to the National level.		
<b>Lack of Political Commitment by the Government:</b> There is a risk of lack of political will, buy-in or engagement. The Government, at both high levels and within departments, may lack commitment, accountability or ownership of the plan/law, leading to poor leadership.	1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 11	6
<b>Poor Communication:</b> A lack of communication and shared language (e.g. "Rewetting") between stakeholders, combined with ineffective marketing, communication and messaging about the plan, will create misunderstandings, reduce engagement, and hinder successful implementation. For example, non-accessible language could alienate the public and other stakeholders, and a polarisation of the NRP narrative in the media could damage the context of implementation. The message could also be framed incorrectly or unhelpfully as a moral obligation, therefore putting people off. In the worst instance, an ineffective plan could lead to greenwashing by focusing on communications more than action.	2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11	6
<b>Insufficient Capacity:</b> There is a risk that a lack of skills or expertise to participate meaningfully in the process or to action things which the NRP makes people/organisations responsible for, hampers success. For example, there is likely a lack of knowledge and capacity in the public sector to write the plan and skill shortages for restoration jobs. The plan may fail to make use of existing local networks/public participation networks. There is risk of insufficient manpower and other resources in the National Parks and Wildlife Service to deliver the NRP.	1, 2, 3, 4, 6	5
<b>Tracking Success:</b> There is danger that the plan is unclear as to how to measure success, and who will measure it. Use of unclear or wrong indicators/actions could undermine evaluation efforts. Risks increase if objectives aren't SMART or the process for target setting and priority setting is unclear.	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	5
<b>Competing Land Uses:</b> Pressure to meet increasing needs for land use such as wind farms and designated land use among others may complicate the goals of the NRL. There could be tension between food security and nature protection/restoration.	3, 6, 8, 11	4

<b>Timings:</b> Lack of time to develop the plan could lead to a lack of preparedness. Also, a change in perspective and information may occur if there is a time lag between development of the plan and implementation. Issues with target dates including insufficient time for marine space restoration and multiple target dates complicate logistics. However, moving too slowly poses a greater risk than moving too fast as 2030 goals won't be met unless there will be timely action.	1, 7, 10, 11	4
<b>Vagueness / Wiggle Room:</b> The plan may lack a coherent vision or be too vague, both in its targets and in how success is defined. This could delay the plan (E.g., Climate action plan). The plan should not allow participants to do the minimum to achieve target by having things open to interpretation. On the other hand, targets can be too specific at times.	1, 7, 10, 11	4
<b>Adapting to Change and Unforeseen Circumstances:</b> Shock events (e.g., COVID, recessions, the Ukraine war) change national priorities and demands. Additionally, our ecological, socio-economic, and political systems are continuously evolving, consequently, the targets for the NRP could be continuously moving or shifting depending on contextual changes or new knowledge becoming apparent. There is also a risk of missing opportunities as they arise.	2, 6, 7, 9	4
<b>Lack of Ownership and Accountability:</b> A lack of ownership or accountability for actions in the NRP at higher levels and from implementing bodies. There may be a bystander effect whereby if this is everyone's responsibility, it becomes no one's responsibility.	3, 10, 11	3
<b>Too Bureaucratic:</b> Risk of the plan creation, implementation and resourcing being overly bureaucratic/complex and getting buried in paperwork, especially if people are risk averse and have only a short-term focus. The NRP could become "just another" plan/legislation and be forgotten or set aside.	3, 4, 11	3
<b>Disconnect from Leaders Forum:</b> Dept and independent bodies disconnected from or unwilling to work together and take direction from Leaders Forum in the consultation process, design and implementation of plan. Therefore, points from group discussions/Leaders Group are not included in the NRP.	5, 10	2
<b>Transboundary Risks:</b> Our neighbour, Northern Ireland, does not have to abide by the NRL as it is outside the EU, i.e., What happens in one jurisdiction of the Isle of Ireland impacts the other. Comparisons with third countries (internationally) may allow for scapegoating behaviour or reduction in ambition.	7, 11	2

## 5 Enablers / Mitigation Measures

Enablers/ Mitigation Measures	Tables	N.
<p><b>Positive and Clear Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a comprehensive, inclusive communication strategy for the NRP that uses accessible, plain language to explain technical terms like "re-wetting" and "biodiversity", ensuring clarity across all audience types.</li> <li>• Frame the NRP as a positive initiative focusing on opportunities, belonging, and wellbeing, highlighting benefits and supports rather than restrictions or obligations.</li> <li>• Implement a coordinated government public relations approach that leverages social media, trusted community leaders, digital dialogue, and established public-facing organisations to promote the NRP.</li> <li>• Provide transparent, easily accessible information through multiple channels, including online platforms and in-person engagement, with materials available in multiple languages to maximise accessibility.</li> <li>• Create compelling visual branding and promotional materials that help communicate the NRP's goals and opportunities effectively.</li> <li>• Address potential misinformation proactively, drawing insights from successful public communication campaigns and providing clear explanations for the reasoning behind policies to generate community buy-in.</li> <li>• Empower environmental groups and the Leaders' Forum to promote the NRP through their networks, increasing cross-organisational communication and engagement.</li> <li>• Ensure communications are tailored to different audiences, using a mix of technical and simple language to reach diverse stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• Increase connectivity between organisations involved in the Leaders Forum and Working Groups by facilitating easier communication and information sharing.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11	11
<p><b>Finance and Resourcing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop accessible, consistent, and long-term funding mechanisms that are well-communicated, and ensure adequate, ring-fenced, and sustained financial support across all key phases of the NRP, including public consultation, target setting, implementation, and evaluation.</li> <li>• Provide clear, fair, and long-term financial incentives to stakeholders such as landowners, farmers, and fishers, learning from successful schemes like ACRES where payments for delivery proved more effective than penalties for inaction.</li> <li>• Explore innovative funding models, including private equity investment in nature restoration, and create markets for environmental goods that are competitive and reflective of stakeholder interests.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11	10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct comprehensive financial planning that considers both the cost of implementation and the cost of inaction, incorporating natural capital accounting to demonstrate the value of nature restoration efforts.</li> <li>• Build capacity within key agencies, by allocating sufficient resources for human resources, skills development, and knowledge enhancement.</li> <li>• Broaden financial resources beyond the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), seeking diverse funding streams that can support the NRP's ambitions.</li> <li>• Balance incentives and enforcement strategies, applying supportive approaches at the local level while maintaining stronger regulatory oversight at the state level, particularly for public authorities.</li> <li>• Ensure robust communication and awareness efforts are generously resourced to build stakeholder buy-in and understanding of the NRP.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Meaningful and Inclusive Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan that ensures continuous, structured participation across all phases of the NRP, from design and consultation to implementation and review.</li> <li>• Create an inclusive engagement approach that prioritises diverse and traditionally marginalised groups, providing funding and facilitation to level the playing field and ensure meaningful participation from landowners, farmers, fishers, young people, churches, and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Employ creative and context-sensitive engagement methods, demonstration sites, youth platforms, and professional-facilitated consultation events to inspire participation across different societal segments.</li> <li>• Integrate bottom-up listening with expert input, valuing traditional knowledge alongside scientific expertise, and ensuring that engagement is intersectional, representative, and pragmatically scoped.</li> <li>• Establish clear points of contact, including regular touch points with the Leaders Forum (quarterly meetings) and bilateral meetings to address specific stakeholder concerns, creating transparent and responsive communication channels.</li> <li>• Leverage the Leaders Forum to raise awareness by encouraging members to invite their networks and communities to participate through written submissions and active engagement.</li> <li>• Create regular bulletins and updates on the NRP's status to drive public engagement and maintain motivation throughout the long-term process.</li> <li>• Form targeted subgroups with diverse opinions to tackle specific challenges, ensuring that the level of stakeholder input is proportionate to their potential impact.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11	10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure high-level political support, including the Taoiseach, to build trust and demonstrate genuine commitment across government departments, organisations, and communities.</li> <li>Use media and arts to keep society motivated and engaged, recognising the importance of maintaining public buy-in throughout the NRP's implementation.</li> <li>Empower volunteer organisations and support their participation in the restoration process, creating pathways for contribution from grassroots networks.</li> </ul>		
<b>Policy and Legal Coherence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a comprehensive legal framework for the NRL that provides a clear, binding basis for restoration actions, ensuring that the law's terms and requirements supersede other existing legislation when addressing conservation and natural habitat restoration.</li> <li>Promote coherence between nature restoration, agricultural, marine, and environmental policies to ensure mutual reinforcement and eliminate potential contradictions across different governmental domains.</li> <li>Review and revise outdated or conflicting legislation (such as arterial drainage acts) that may hinder restoration efforts, and develop an integrated framework for national land use policies.</li> <li>Create a robust decision-making framework to map policy conflicts, trade-offs, and potential synergies, breaking down silos across departments, landowners, and agencies.</li> <li>Align land-use laws to embed nature restoration planning within broader national systems, with special attention to integrating conservation efforts across different sectors.</li> <li>Conduct a comprehensive review of regulations for potential inter-agency and inter-sectoral conflicts, including Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and exempted development categories.</li> <li>Establish clear communication that the NRL has direct legal effect in Ireland, distinguishing it from suggestions or EU-level recommendations.</li> <li>Develop mechanisms to mitigate the influence of lobbying and ensure that previous environmental commitments are respected and implemented.</li> <li>Address the intersection of climate and biodiversity needs through a cross-compliance approach, creating a holistic framework for environmental protection and restoration.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11	9
<b>Upskilling and Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build capacity across all restoration sectors by addressing skill gaps and providing upskilling opportunities.</li> </ul>	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,	8

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key skills needed include Ecologists, Hydrologists, GIS technicians, Skilled practitioners, Foresters</li> <li>• Adopt a multi-level approach to skills development, balancing classroom-based learning with experiential learning.</li> <li>• Ensure advisory committee members have relevant expertise to provide informed guidance.</li> <li>• Increase education opportunities for sector-specific skills.</li> <li>• Embed nature restoration education in schools, promoting 'place-based' learning to connect students with local nature.</li> <li>• Raise public awareness about the value of nature restoration and the importance of these efforts.</li> <li>• Create a public awareness campaign to promote nature restoration topics and boost public engagement.</li> <li>• Focus on landowner /farmer education, ensuring clear communication, demystification and support to help farmers understand and engage with the restoration process</li> </ul>	8, 11	
<b>Transparency &amp; Trust</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain complete transparency throughout the NRP process to build and maintain stakeholder trust.</li> <li>• Create a register of lobbyists and compile a transparent log of stakeholder concerns and potential conflicts of interest.</li> <li>• Declare interests of all stakeholders and map spending for full accountability.</li> <li>• Establish an independent advisory committee to ensure accurate representation of stakeholder voices.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to stakeholders on the rationale behind inclusion or exclusion of their input.</li> <li>• Acknowledge past environmental plan shortcomings and demonstrate willingness to address challenging issues.</li> <li>• Ensure all decision-making processes are transparent and open to scrutiny.</li> <li>• Build trust by maintaining a clear vision and scope that can guide discussions during disagreements.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11	8
<b>Clear and Measurable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a specific plan with clear actions, timelines, and expectations that are transparent from the outset.</li> <li>• Narrow down goals to be specific, achievable, and measurable, using simple landscape-scale indicators.</li> <li>• Implement annual reporting to track progress using a scoring system for biogeographic and socioeconomic goals.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	7

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a phased approach with weighted targets: short-term, mid-term, and long-term objectives.</li> <li>• Prioritise must-do actions first, with long-term objectives to be achieved later.</li> <li>• Use the Leaders Forum to validate goal achievability and vote on key issues.</li> <li>• Avoid conflicting actions that might negatively impact different species or habitats.</li> <li>• Ensure pragmatic and realistic implementation with tangible, ground-level examples.</li> <li>• Enable accessibility to expert monitoring equipment and develop clear processes for ongoing evaluation.</li> </ul>		
<b>Political Commitment and Governance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure strong political will to engage all government departments and prioritise the NRP across sectors.</li> <li>• Implement a cross-party, multi-year governance approach that transcends political cycles and prevents the plan from becoming a political lever.</li> <li>• Create an interdepartmental steering group with representation from key departments like Agriculture and Finance.</li> <li>• Require state and semi-state bodies (Coillte, NPWS, OPW, Waterways Ireland) to use state-owned land as restoration examples.</li> <li>• Develop a decision-making framework to identify conflicts, opportunities, trade-offs, and synergies across policy areas.</li> <li>• Design the plan to be centrist and 'benign' to ensure buy-in from across the political spectrum.</li> </ul>	2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10	7
<b>Oversight and Accountability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a comprehensive monitoring and oversight system with accurate record-keeping.</li> <li>• Create an oversight committee to ensure good practice, manage lobbying, and monitor NRP implementation.</li> <li>• Implement a quarterly reporting process, drawing inspiration from successful models like Comhairle na Tuatha.</li> <li>• Assign clear responsibilities, achievable KPIs, and specific timelines to different stakeholders.</li> <li>• Develop robust Measuring, Reporting, and Validation (M.R.V.) systems to ensure transparency.</li> <li>• Maintain the Leaders Forum during implementation to facilitate communication and feedback.</li> <li>• Hold government accountable for legal obligations with strong enforcement mechanisms.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11	7

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure department heads are fully committed to the process's integrity.</li> <li>• Use DEFRA (UK) as a reference model for effective oversight.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Baseline Data &amp; Agreements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage existing National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) data and natural capital accounting as foundational tools for establishing comprehensive baseline information for the NRP.</li> <li>• Develop clear, sector-specific baseline definitions, years, and parameters for key environmental indicators (such as soil and water quality), ensuring robust scientific data underpins all measurements.</li> <li>• Establish flexible data collection systems that acknowledge potential data gaps, using proxy indicators when precise data is unavailable, and prioritising useful information over perfect data.</li> <li>• Conduct sector-specific stakeholder meetings to secure agreement on baseline data and metrics, creating a collaborative approach to data validation and target setting.</li> <li>• Foster a shared understanding of key terms like "nature" and "restoration," recognising the complexity of defining these concepts while working towards a common interpretative framework.</li> <li>• Develop clear, adaptable metrics and targets for nature restoration that cover all involved sectors, drawing inspiration from successful models like the blue flag environmental standards.</li> <li>• Explicitly acknowledge and plan for data gaps within the NRP, creating a clear roadmap for future data collection and refinement of baseline information.</li> <li>• Ensure all stakeholders agree on the data used, providing transparency and building trust in the baseline measurements and subsequent restoration efforts</li> </ul>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	6
<p><b>Data Sharing, Availability, and Integration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support nature restoration, data sharing and integration across agencies and sectors must be improved. Establish proper data-sharing agreements (legislation if necessary) between agencies, ensuring data is accessible, clear, and GDPR-compliant.</li> <li>• Implement an open data principle to combat data gatekeepers, encouraging collective, mutually beneficial data sharing.</li> <li>• Form a high-level expert group to address data-sharing barriers, with academic and legal support for fast-tracked solutions.</li> <li>• Use the National Biodiversity Data Centre as a central hub for accessible biodiversity data.</li> <li>• Improve the accessibility and use of data collected on land use, scoring, and biodiversity, ensuring it is readily available to stakeholders such as farmers.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 11	6

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate biodiversity-related data across government agencies, using technologies like AI and location intelligence.</li> <li>• Leverage citizen science data to support nature restoration planning.</li> </ul>		
<b>Public Impact and Participation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design clear frameworks to demonstrate how the NRP will impact everyday people, particularly farmers, anglers, and those concerned about potential livelihood changes.</li> <li>• Develop passive restoration approaches supported by citizen science, providing citizens access to expert knowledge and involvement.</li> <li>• Promote eco-tourism as a means to raise awareness, encourage public engagement, cultivate outdoor lifestyles, and potentially create jobs.</li> <li>• Link with creative organisations like Creative Ireland to broaden public understanding and participation.</li> <li>• Showcase the fair distribution of benefits across society and the environment.</li> <li>• Create accessible public service frameworks that enable participation in the NRP.</li> </ul>	1, 5, 7, 10, 11	5
<b>Private Sector Investment and Corporate Responsibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage corporations and banks to invest in nature restoration through innovative mechanisms such as impact-focused funds, public-private partnerships (e.g., "Nature Fund for Ireland"), and leveraging frameworks like the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive to prioritise biodiversity net gain.</li> <li>• Develop tax incentives and financial breaks to encourage private sector investment in the NRP, framing nature restoration as a strategic investment with tangible long-term returns.</li> <li>• Ensure corporate engagement is genuine and substantive, implementing robust mechanisms to prevent greenwashing and ensure responsible use of biodiversity credits.</li> <li>• Advocate for changes in corporate mandates of key state-owned entities (such as Bord na Móna, Coillte, and ESB) to prioritise nature restoration alongside financial considerations.</li> <li>• Strengthen industry engagement by requiring businesses to adapt their practices to support the NRP, actively avoiding harmful environmental practices and integrating nature restoration into core business strategies.</li> <li>• Establish a Leaders Forum that includes major companies to foster collaborative approaches to nature restoration and ensure meaningful private sector participation.</li> <li>• Encourage co-financing models between the state and private sector to create sustainable and innovative funding streams for nature restoration efforts.</li> </ul>	1, 4, 5, 7, 9	5

<p><b>Locally Led and Regionally Specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a framework that balances overarching objectives with regionally tailored goals, recognising the spatial variability of environments and the critical importance of local knowledge and context.</li> <li>• Implement locally driven approaches that facilitate community participation, including easily accessible administrative processes, like the NPWS Farm Plan Scheme and European Innovation Projects, as models for effective engagement.</li> <li>• Create frameworks that enable localised measurement, reporting, and validation of nature restoration efforts, with location-specific targets developed to reflect unique regional characteristics.</li> <li>• Support marginalised communities to participate in nature-positive actions that directly benefit their local areas, ensuring just transitions and building local ownership.</li> <li>• Establish regional 'listeners' or 'weavers' in each bioregion to support connection building and facilitate grassroots involvement in the NRP.</li> <li>• Utilise tools like the Community Benefit Fund to support locally led initiatives and provide funding that enables local delivery of restoration goals.</li> <li>• Devolve decision-making processes to local levels, ensuring that solutions are developed and implemented with direct community input and context-specific understanding.</li> <li>• Recognise that increased regional specificity will require additional resources, but will ultimately lead to more effective and meaningful nature restoration efforts.</li> </ul>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 9,</p>	<p>5</p>
<p><b>Build on Success and Good Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan should draw on proven examples of success to guide and inspire implementation. This includes learning from community-level projects, existing reports, state land demonstrations, and international best practices.</li> <li>• Showcase sector-specific good practices (e.g., farming, fishing, forestry) to demonstrate what restoration looks like in action — e.g., Teagasc's Signpost Farms.</li> <li>• Identify and utilise state-owned land as pioneer sites for restoration.</li> <li>• Reference successful Irish models like Tidy Towns and build on existing maritime and environmental strategies.</li> <li>• Learn from international examples, such as Iceland and EU initiatives like the European Innovation Partnership (EIP).</li> <li>• Use case studies and real-life success stories to engage stakeholders and share learning: "seeing is believing."</li> </ul>	<p>1, 2, 5, 7, 8</p>	<p>5</p>

<b>Choice and Voluntary Participation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the NRP remains a voluntary plan for private landowners, with flexible land-use alternatives to traditional replanting.</li> <li>• Provide multiple options for nature restoration that respect individual choice and property rights.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 4, 8, 9	5
<b>Leadership and Ownership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all stakeholders have access to leadership and can engage with decision-makers.</li> <li>• Establish an independent chair committee with members chosen by stakeholders to ensure impartiality.</li> <li>• Fill advisory roles with independent experts to provide fact-checking and credibility.</li> <li>• Designate sector champions (public and private) to advocate for the NRP at all levels.</li> <li>• Encourage collective ownership through grassroots leadership, good communication, and transparency.</li> <li>• Ensure the Department of Agriculture takes primary ownership while collaborating with key departments like Housing.</li> <li>• Integrate management across governing bodies, incorporating local traditional knowledge and avoiding conflicts.</li> <li>• Ensure private landowners have a clear stake in the plan, using successful models like Greenways.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 4, 6, 10	5
<b>Evidence Based</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ground the NRP in robust evidence and best practices in restoration ecology.</li> <li>• Implement a reflexive approach that integrates lessons learned throughout the process.</li> <li>• Use the most recent and available data to ensure restoration plans are rooted in reality.</li> <li>• Maintain a commitment to evidence-based decision-making and implementation.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 8, 9, 10	5
<b>Adaptability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the NRP is agile and adaptive to both predicted and unpredicted events affecting climate and environmental conditions.</li> <li>• Implement regular reviews of the plan to maintain flexibility.</li> <li>• Develop decision-making processes that can quickly respond to emerging challenges.</li> <li>• Allow for extreme weather events in target setting and implementation.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 9, 10	4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address significant issues proactively and early in the process.</li> </ul>		
<b>Time Frame</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a long-term approach with a 50-year timeline that recognises the complexity of site-specific restoration challenges.</li> <li>Respond proportionately to the scale and urgency of nature restoration, learning from slow implementation following the 2019 Dáil Climate Emergency declaration.</li> <li>Allow sufficient time to address nuanced, location-specific factors (e.g., rhododendron in Kerry vs. native woodlands in Kilkenny).</li> <li>Consider deploying emergency response teams like the navy or army for urgent implementation needs.</li> <li>Create clear time limits for specific actions within the NRP to ensure consistent progress.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 7, 9	4
<b>Recruitment &amp; Resourcing of People</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit skilled professionals and experts into departments overseeing the NRP.</li> <li>Make key implementation roles more financially attractive and permanent.</li> <li>Conduct targeted recruitment drives at university level to build workforce in ecology and sustainable development.</li> <li>Advertise public sector benefits like flexible working and job security for roles.</li> <li>Start recruiting staff for government departments, implementing bodies, and agencies involved in the NRP.</li> <li>Build social and cultural capital to make nature restoration an attractive career path.</li> <li>Resource skilled staff to collect and manage data effectively.</li> </ul>	5, 8, 10, 11	4
<b>Environmental Justice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a local-level Land and Environment Court with alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to effectively enforce breaches of environmental laws and ensure meaningful accountability.</li> <li>Create an enabling regulatory and policy landscape that transforms businesses from profit-driven entities to nature stewards, providing a collaborative framework that allows all businesses to move in the same direction.</li> <li>Ensure the NRL is recognised, upheld, and enforced with the full weight of legal obligation, addressing the current challenge of existing environmental laws being inadequately implemented.</li> <li>Resource agencies appropriately to enable effective enforcement of environmental regulations, recognising that current underfunding undermines legal protections.</li> </ul>	1, 3, 7	3

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore and implement legal rights for nature itself, establishing a novel approach to environmental protection that recognises the intrinsic value of natural systems.</li> <li>• Develop comprehensive enforcement mechanisms that go beyond existing approaches, creating a robust system for holding entities accountable for environmental breaches and restoration commitments.</li> </ul>		
<b>Technology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise technology's potential as an enabler for nature restoration, while maintaining a cautious approach.</li> <li>• Use technology primarily to measure and track restoration results.</li> <li>• Remain open to emerging technologies like AI, while avoiding premature commitments.</li> </ul>	2, 4	2
<b>Independent Facilitation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure an independent chair for the NRP, similar to the climate council model.</li> <li>• Engage expert facilitators throughout the entire process, including community conversations.</li> <li>• Ensure impartiality and objectivity in plan development and implementation.</li> </ul>	4, 11	2

## 6 Appendix

### Full Vision Statements

Table 1

- A Nature Restoration Plan supported by all and ensures we hand an ecosystem with richness and health to future generations.
- A plan that serves as an effective roadmap to deliver for nature and society, which is supported by all.

Table 2

Our vision is that the Nature Restoration Plan will protect and restore nature for the benefit of current and future generations and all living things, where people are aware of, value and feel connected to nature with resilient communities and ecosystems.

Table 3

By 2050 and beyond Ireland values nature, and there is a cultural paradigm shift to a vision of Ireland from extractive to restorative. Nature underpins all decision-making in government departments, and the government is a driver for that change. That we have fully functioning and self-sustaining ecosystems - terrestrial, freshwater, and marine that are resilient to climate change and other challenges. That everyone, regardless of location or socioeconomic status, has access to the benefits and well-being that nature confers. That we recognise that there is a financial cost for that transition and adequate supports have been provided to facilitate that transition. That we recognise that people are part of nature and that we have healthy cities with low pollution including noise pollution. Where:

- Food security is ensured for the country.
- A robust healthy pollinator population is ensured into the future.

Table 4

The Nature Restoration Plan presents a shared vision for nature conservation and stewardship of the natural environment for future generations.

By placing nature restoration front and centre, it will halt and reverse biodiversity loss through a collaborative, fast-paced and implementable plan that incentivises those most involved in actions and affected by its impact, so that everyone can experience the joy that can be sparked by nature.

Table 5

We envision a future where individuals, communities, and society are empowered to thrive in harmony with nature so that wildlife and habitats are restored and protected. Through sustainable ways of life and business, and promoting ecological knowledge, we will restore our lands and seas to ensure they flourish for generations to come.

#### Table 6

Our vision is that the Nature Restoration Plan is for all citizens to collectively work together to address the biodiversity crisis and to restore nature, beyond conservation, so nature thrives for the benefit of people, environment and economy.

To also restore nature, for the enhancement of liveability, incorporating social, economic, health and agricultural interactions where nature and people can thrive. This plan aims to inspire all citizens to collectively work together for nature restoration.

#### Table 7

A Thriving Relationship with Nature: People and Nature thrive in harmony, living sustainably as one community for the benefit of all generations to come.

#### Table 8

Ireland's Nature Restoration Plan belongs to current and future generations across all parts of the land, coasts, and waters. It will embed nature as part of a sustainable society supporting local communities to value the tangible and intangible qualities of nature, where all take responsibility working in partnership. The plan is ambitious, implementable, and inclusive, leading to the creation of a thriving biodiverse environment and a greater appreciation of the natural world.

#### Table 9

Our vision is that the Nature Restoration Plan will create an equitable, long-term, and science-based approach to nature recovery that recognises the needs of all stakeholders and promotes and supports the value of nature - social, economic and intrinsic.

#### Table 10

A vision where everyone is involved and works together to protect, restore and enhance Ireland's natural environment, and for the benefit of the wellbeing and happiness of future generations.

#### Table 11

By working together, we will restore and protect nature, transforming Ireland into a place where people live in balance with and value the natural world. Our vision is for thriving, connected, and resilient ecosystems and communities, ensuring healthy environments that are fundamental to all life and our wellbeing, both now and for future generations.

## Specific Points Raised by One Table

This is a list of specific points raised by tables that have not been addressed within other sections of the report.

### PRINCIPLES

- Consider maintenance and operational requirements (more difficult or costlier) – factor in when doing habitat interventions (4)
- Invest in an investigation into systemic root causes of actions which lead to biodiversity loss. For instance, rather than condemn farmer for polluting rivers, investigate why a farmer would choose to pollute the river (i.e., economic or cultural reasons) (5)
- Studies should be carried out to determine what else is contributing to nature decline outside of agriculture (8)
- “24hr wildlife” Heighten temporal awareness within planning rules and regulations. Regulations for artificial nighttime lights. Introduce safety of wildlife to local planning rules. (1)
- Too many bodies involved in coastal zones, designate and clarify who is accountable in coastal areas (1)
- Utilise a three phases system: Policy, practice and place. (1)

### OBSTACLES

- Effect of political influence and dialogue with stakeholders outside due process. (10)
- In the draft framework, there was a lack of space to incorporate the scientific evidence behind site selection and its protection or restoration measures. How do we include all the relevant information? (7)
- Invasive species and ecological diseases, such as ash dieback and the soon-to-be arriving bark beetle, have and will cause major issues. (7)
- Habitats that geographically overlap could end up with different thresholds. Consequently, easy ways out might be taken (7)
- Danger of missing threats to some species/habitats due to a lack of legislation/policy on light pollution (2)

### ENABLERS

- Establishment of volunteer wildlife networks with high scientific literacy. (1)
- Payments from CAP in future will be made for ‘environmental services’, CAP review underway currently (4)
- Process for recognising legacy issues over environmental conservation. (10)
- Reduce overlapping and duplication of forums across (water, climate, biodiversity, etc.), note there was no consensus on this as some people maintained this was not workable) (11)
- Recognise the risks related to nature breakdown (fish stock collapse, soil health, pollination etc. (9)
- Hedgerows to be maintained and managed. (9)
- Consider night spaces protection with light pollution mitigation (2)
- Simplify systems and minimise paperwork. (3)

## Attendance List

1. An Bord Iascadh Mhara
2. An Taisce
3. Bat Conservation Ireland
4. Bioregional Weaving Lab
5. Birdwatch
6. Bórd na Móna
7. Breeding Waders EIP
8. Business for Biodiversity
9. CCMA
10. CIEEM
11. Coastwatch
12. Coillte
13. Common Purpose
14. Community Wetlands Forum
15. Corncrake life
16. Dark Skies Ireland
17. Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine
18. department of the Taoiseach
19. Dept Rural and Community Development
20. Eastern and Midland Regional assembly
21. ESB Networks for Nature
22. FACE Ireland
23. Fair Seas Ireland
24. Hedge layers association of Ireland
25. Hedgerows Ireland
26. law library
27. Heritage Council of Ireland
28. Hometree Development
29. IBEC
30. Inland Fisheries Ireland
31. Inland Waterways Association of Ireland
32. Irish Cattle and Sheep Farmers Association
33. Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA)
34. Irish Farmers Association
35. Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO)
36. Irish Forest Owners
37. Irish Grain Growers Association
38. Irish Green Building Council
39. Irish Landscape Institute
40. Irish lights
41. Irish Natura and Hill Farmers Association (INHFA)
42. Irish Organic Association
43. Irish Peatland Conservation Council
44. Irish Planning Institute
45. Irish Uplands Forum
46. Irish Wildlife Trust
47. Killybegs Fisherman Organisation (KFO)
48. KPMG Ireland
49. Land use, Tenure & Agrarian change
50. law library
51. Leave No Trace Ireland
52. MACRA
53. National Association of Regional Game Councils
54. National Biodiversity Data Centre
55. National Economic and Social Development Council
56. Natural Capital Ireland (NCI)
57. Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR)
58. Peatlands Finance Ireland
59. RTE
60. SDCC Dept Environment, Water & Climate Change
61. SEEFA
62. Southern Regional Assembly
63. Sustainable Water Network (SWAN Ireland)
64. Talamh Beo
65. Teagasc
66. The Water Forum (An Fóram Uisce)
67. Tochar just transition
68. Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)
69. VOICE
70. Waters of LIFE
71. Waterways Ireland
72. Wild Atlantic life
73. Wild Ireland defence

## Day Agenda

### Objectives for the Session

At the end of the session attendees will:

1. Understand how the Nature Restoration Law (NRL) was drafted and what this means for Ireland
2. Understand the next steps and timeline for drafting the subsequent National Restoration Plan (NRP), which will outline how Ireland will achieve the NRL targets, and how the Leaders' Forum can contribute to the drafting.
3. Provide input on the principles to inform the development of the NRP, what its vision should be, and suggestions for how to maximize its impact and address challenges/risks

Following the day, a report will be developed which outlines all points raised by at least two tables. The report will be considered by the committee who are advising the Minister on the NRPs development.

### Session Plan

Time	Mins	Session
10.00 –10.15	15	<b>Welcome from the Minister of State with responsibility for Nature, Heritage &amp; Biodiversity, Christopher O'Sullivan T.D.</b>  Introduction to the Day – Dr Aoibhinn Ni Shuilleabhain
10.15 –10.45	30	<b>The NRL and the drafting of the NRP</b> An introductory presentation from Ainle Ni Bhriain (Department of Housing) & Aoibhinn Ni Shuilleabhain (independent chair) to introduce the NRL and how outline how the NRP will be drafted.
10.45 –11.00	15	Q&A
11.00 –11.15 Coffee break		
11.15 – 12.00	45	<b>Session 1 - What principles and actions should inform drafting of the NRP?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Table introductions (10 mins)</li> <li>- Develop principles and related indicators or actions, using the template (35 mins)</li> </ul>
	15	Feedback – four to six tables highlight one key principle and any related actions
12.00 – 1.00	40	<b>Session 2 – Vision Statement / Hopes</b> Tables develop vision statements which will be shared with the groups
	20	Feedback - four to six tables highlight read their vision, which will be shared on the main screen
1.00 – 2.00 Lunch		
2.00 – 3.00	45	<b>Session 3 – Concerns and Risks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In what way could the NRP miss it's potential or not achieve the vision</li> <li>- Suggestions – how to avoid or mitigate these concerns/risks</li> </ul>
	15	Feedback – four to six tables raise two concerns and mitigation measures

3.00 – 3.15 Coffee break		
3.15	45	<b>Session 4 – Measures needed to ensure the National Nature Restoration Plan is successful</b> Tables identify specific measures required to ensure success (measures can address any factors, i.e. leadership, co-ordination, resources, community engagement, data use etc)
	15	Feedback – four to six tables raise discuss three measures
4.15 – 4.30		<b>Close and next steps</b>

## Guiding Principles

### Fairness

It is important that we allow the full spectrum of views to be heard on each issue discussed.

### Equality of Voice

Each member of a table will have opportunity to voice their opinions and allow other members to voice theirs, with no-one dominating the discussion.

### Respect

Members will respect each other's opinions by ensuring that everyone can make contributions and express their views freely without fear of criticism or personal attacks.

### Efficiency

The meetings will make best use of members' limited time together.

### Collegiality

Members will recognise that this is a diverse group and will endeavour to work together in a spirit of collaboration and community.

### Openness

Outputs from the day will be shared back to the group at the next meeting, with further opportunity to feedback and contribute to the drafting of the Nature Restoration Plan.