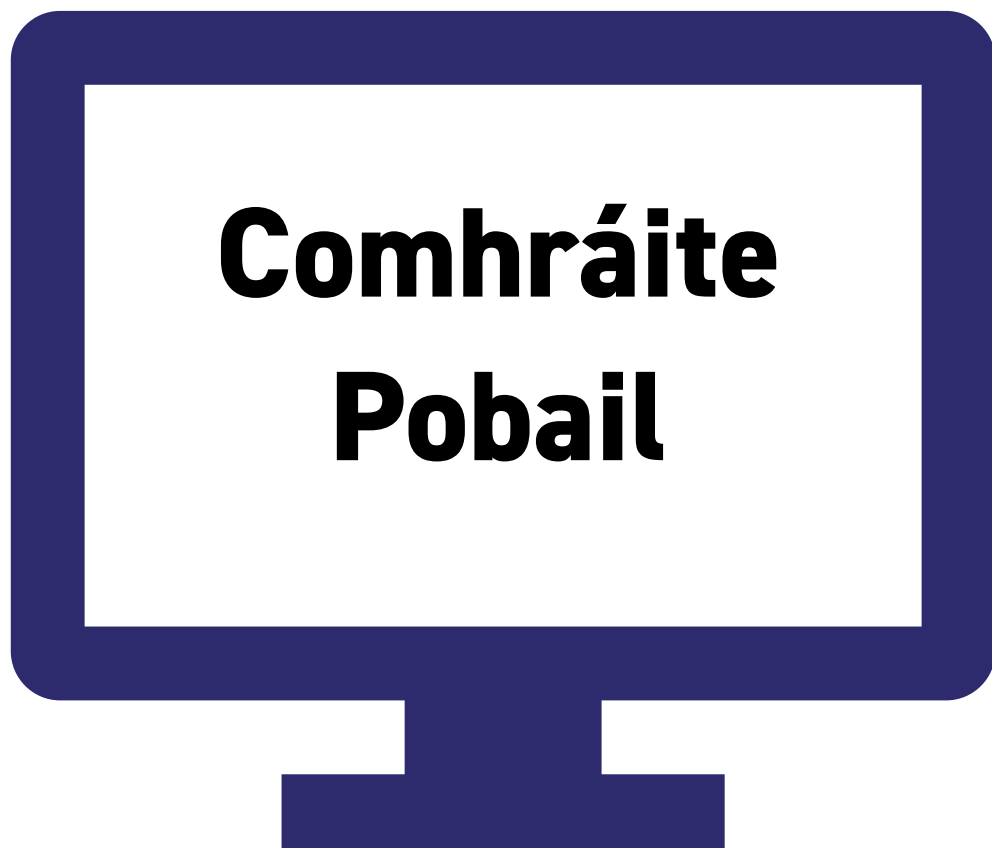


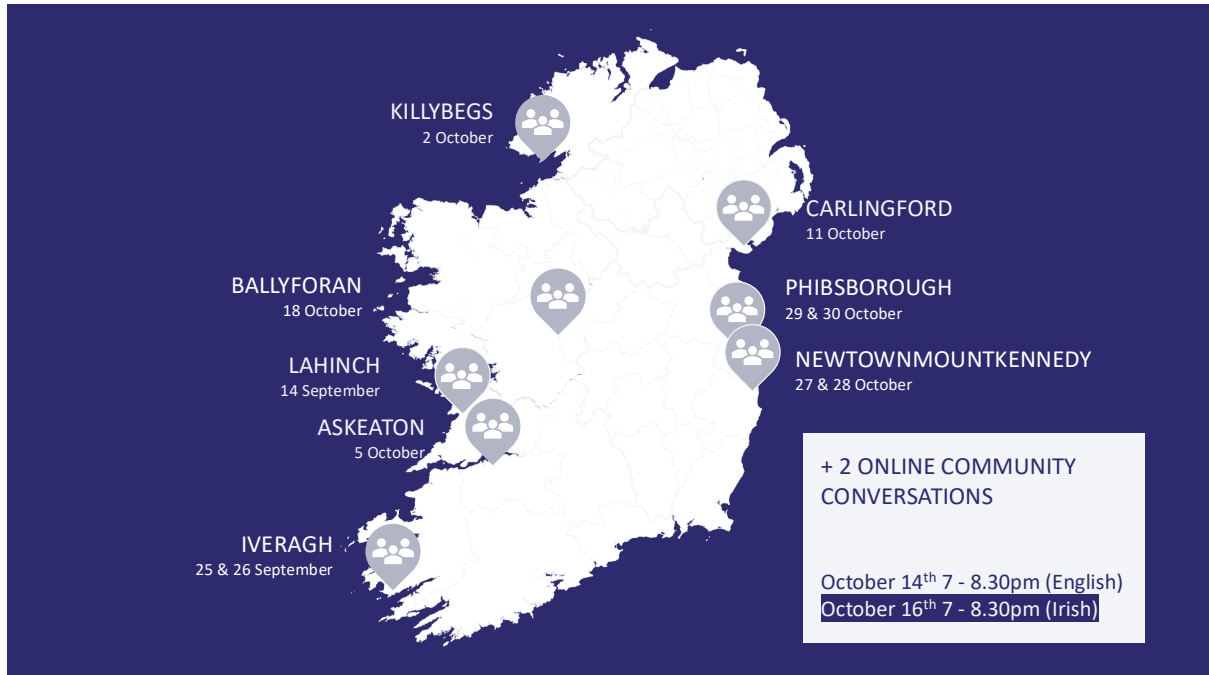
# Community Conversations

WORKSHOP 06 OUTPUT REPORT  
ONLINE (IRISH)



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## WORKSHOP 06 OUTPUT REPORT | ONLINE (IRISH)



<b>Date</b>	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
<b>Workshop Event Venue</b>	Facilitated over Zoom
<b>Facilitators</b>	Robert Fell** Brendán O’Caoimh*
	*ACT, **Hometree
<b>Total Event Participants</b>	6

## FACILITATORS' NOTE

Facilitators answered the following 3 questions post the Community Conversation:

- How did you feel the Community Conversation event went?
- What was the general make-up of the room and the overall mood?
- Were there any key stories that stood out?

### Facilitator 1 - Rob Fell (Hometree)

Braithim go raibh comhrá maith eadrainn. Bhí cúlraí difriúil ag na rannpháirtithe agus bhíodar sásta a bheith ag caint. Bhí eolas mhaith acu ar an ábhar agus ar an staid den dúlra sa tír, agus chuardar díreach i mbun cainte ag baint úsáid as an am ar fad a bhí acu an ábhar a phlé.

Bhí sé beagánín deacair an comhrá a choimeád dírithe ar an gceist amháin a bhí á phlé agus thosiagh beirt ag caint faoin ábhar a bhí oiriúnach do cheist 2 & 3, i rith ceist a haon. Sin ráite, tháinig pointí suimiúla os na comhráite sin agus leis an ngrúpa beag, bhí me sásta ligint dóibh labhairt.

Ba é an nasc idir daoine agus an nádúr tríd an Ghaeilge rud a bhí luaite ag an chuid is mó de na rannpháirtithe, agus an baol atá ann go gcaillfear eolas cultúrtha chomh maith le eolas feirmeoireachta. Bhí béim curtha ar an nasc atá ag teastáil idir daoine óga agus an nádúr chomh maith. Cé go raibh an rannpháirtíocht deárfach, bhí frustrachas le braithint ón méid a bhí á rá ag daoine. Bhí an caighdeán uisce ráite ag cúpla duine. Bhí frustrachas ar na feirmeoirí ó thaobh na botúin a bhí déanta sna conic ag an Stáit, agus theastaigh uathu go mbeidís, mar úinéirí, mar pháirt den bpróiseas in aon pleananna eile ar a dtalún.

Thóg gach duine an deis chun labhairt, le beirt ag caint níos mó ná daoine eile. Bhí meas ag gach duine ar na dearcadh éagsúla a bhí roinnte agus braithim go raibh gach duine in ann ad féin a chur in iúil. Bhí na feirmeoirí soléar go gcaithfidh an rialtas éisteacht leo maidir le haon plean faoina dtalamh, mar tá eolas áitiúla acu nach bhfuil ag aon duine eile. Luadh athrú aeráide agus an slí go bhfuil an bháisteach is bhfad níos troime anois.

Labhair feirmeoir faoin slí go bhfuil a shaol oibre athraithe toisc an t-Athrú Aeráide agus na comharthaí a d'úsáid sé chun an aimsir a thomhas nuair a bhí sé óg.

Labhair fear eile faoin slí go raibh difríocht mór idir a shaol trí Ghaeilge agus trí Bhéarla.

*As a facilitator I thought the event went well. The participants had a variety of backgrounds and were very willing to speak. They entered the meeting with a good prior knowledge of the subject, and of the state of nature in Ireland in general and they got straight into the discussion, making the most of their time to have their say.*

*Keeping the discussions focused on the questions at hand proved a little difficult, with some speakers veering into topics more suited to questions 2 and 3 while answering question one. That said, there were valuable insights to be gained from the conversations*

*and I was happy to allow them to speak as the smaller group allowed for more time for each person.*

*Connection between people and nature through the medium of the Irish language was heavily focused on by several participants, and the risk that a lot of cultural knowledge could be lost, as well as farming knowledge. Connections to nature for children in school was stressed also. While engagement with the meeting was positive, there was clear frustration to be felt from participants regarding a number of issues including water quality. Another source of frustration was from farmers who wanted it acknowledged that mistakes have been made by the state in the uplands before and any new plans will require consultation with the landowners.*

*All participants took the opportunity to speak. Everyone respected the views of the other participants, and I think everyone felt as if they had a decent opportunity to make themselves heard. The farmers made it clear that the new plan will have to take into account their livelihoods. They also stressed the point that they must be consulted by the state in relation to any plans regarding their land, as they have local knowledge that no-one else has.*

*Climate change was touched on by a number of participants and the increase in severity of rainfall was noted. One farmer spoke about how their life has changed because of climate change and how they could tell when bad weather was on the way.*

*Another farmer spoke about how their daily interactions were very different through the medium of English and Irish.*

## **Facilitator 2 - Breandán O’Caoimh (ACT)**

Bhíos an-sásta leis an gcomhrá. Chlúdaíomar na trí cheist. Bhí réamh-eolas ar an ábhar ag na rannpháirtithe agus bhí tuiscint mhaith acu ar na ceisteanna ábhartha. De bharr sin, bhí siad in ann tabhairt faoi na ceisteanna agus anailís a dhéanamh an ábhar gan mhoill, agus chuidigh sé sin le hidirghníomhú eatarthu. Bhí na rannpháirtithe in ann samplaí a thabhairt agus léargas a chur isteach san áireamh a léirigh na pointí a bhí á dhéanamh acu.

Bhí ionchuir ó ACT oiriúnach; thug se cruth ar an gcomhthéacs agus na paraiméadair, agus chuir siad luach breise leis na díospóireachtaí.

Bhí na rannpháirtithe uile an-urramach dá chéile, agus bhí idirghníomhú dearfach eatarthu. Bhí siad buíoch go bhfuair siad an deis a gcuid tuairimí agus moltaí a nochtadh.

Bhí an giúmar dearfach, ach bhí fonn ar na rannpháirtithe béim a chur ar an *Tuath Bheo* - córas ina mbíonn feirmeoirí agus feirmeoireacht mar chuid den phróiseas. Mhol siad dos no húdaráis cuí éisteacht le feirmeoirí agus urraim a thabhairt d'eolas agus do chórais thraidisiúnta na feirmeoireachta. Dúirt siad gur cheart d'údaráis phoiblí aitheantas a thabhairt do mhearachtaí a rinneadh agus foghlaim astu, agus mhol siad cur chuige cothromaithe i leith athchóiriú an dúlra, áit a mbeadh ról ag gach duine agus cothrom na féinne.

Bhí. Labhair an bheirt fheirmeoirí, agus an fear ón iardheisceart go háirithe, faoin athrú aeráide. Rinne siad tagairt do na patrúin báistí atá ag athrú, agus labhair siad faoin mbáiste 'bog' a thiteadh nuair a bhí siad óg – murab ionann agus na braistí tobanna a tharlaíonn anois. Rinne siad tagairt, chomh maith, do ghnéithe ar an tírdhreach a d'úsáid siad chun patrúin aimsire a mheas tráth, ach nach féidir a úsáid a thuilleadh.

D'inis siad chomh maith conas a bhíothas orthu draeiní a thochailt amach ó am go chéile, agus iad a athsholáthar le draeiní níos mó, chun go mbeadh an talamh in ann déileáil le sreafaí uisce níos mó agus chun sciorradh talún a chosc.

*The conversation went very well. We covered all three questions. The participants were familiar with the topic and with relevant issues. Their prior knowledge ensured they engaged well with the material, and it allowed for interactions between them. The participants were able to give examples and to provide insights that illustrated the points they wanted to make.*

*The inputs from ACT were appropriate; they set the context and parameters, and they added value to the discussions.*

*They were all very respectful of one another, and there was positive interaction between them. They appreciated the opportunity to give their views and recommendations.*

*The mood was positive, but participants were keen to emphasise a Living Countryside – in which farmers and farming are part of the process. They spoke about listening to farmers and respecting traditional farming knowledge and systems. They stated that public bodies should acknowledge and learn from past mistakes, and they recommended a balanced approach to nature restoration, whereby everybody would play a part – with fairness and burden-sharing.*

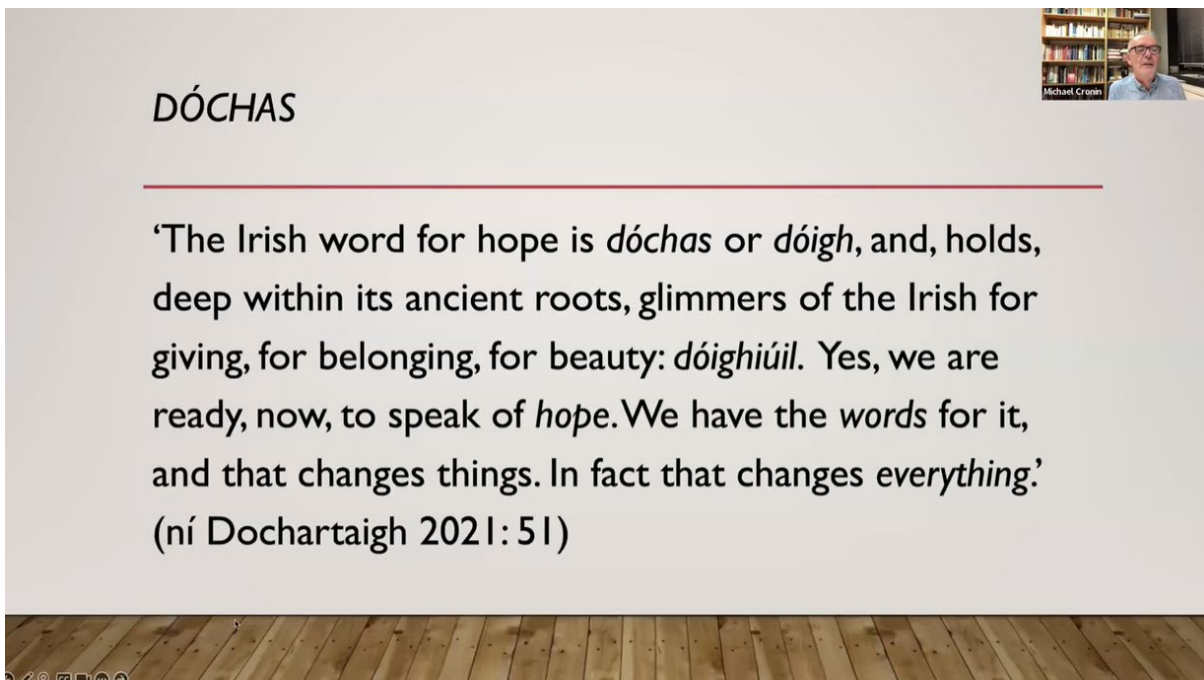
*The two farmers, and particularly the man from the southwest, spoke about climate change. They referred to the changing rainfall patterns, and they spoke about the 'soft' rain that fell when they were young – unlike the more sudden downpours we now experience. They referred to features on the landscape by which they used to be able to determine weather patterns, but which are now no longer possible.*

*They also recounted how drains have had to be dug out at intervals, and replaced by bigger drains, to enable the land to deal larger flows of water and to prevent landslides.*

## REPORT METHODOLOGY

This Summary Output Report has been compiled from the contributions of 6 participants who took part in the Online Irish Workshop Event. During the workshop, participants were asked to reflect on the same three core questions, ensuring consistency in the responses gathered.

Participant contributions were recorded by the two facilitators across three rounds of questions. To support discussion and reflection, facilitators used a condensed power-point presentation showing the relevant questions at each point in the discussion. The Community Conversation event also involved a 'Nature Event' which focused instead on the language of Irish instead of a specific ecosystem. Michael Cronin, author of 'An Ghaeilge agus an Éiceolaíocht / Irish and Ecology' presented for 20 minutes on his work in this area and his insights enabled a more considered discussion in relation to Ireland's future Nature Restoration Plan.



Community Conversations Nature Event (Image credit: Michael Cronin)

[Link to the 20 minute 'Irish and Ecology' presentation](#)

To support the work of the Independent Advisory Committee, this report aims to collate and summarise the general responses while also reflecting the weighting participants placed on the sentiments and stories shared during the workshop. Participant responses are presented in bullet-point format to support ease of reading. As participants occasionally addressed topics beyond the specific questions, our team has reallocated their responses to the most appropriate question (1, 2, or 3).

In addition to the three core questions, participants were invited to share personal or local stories about nature. Our team has transcribed these stories as verbatim as possible, with

only light edits for clarity and legibility while preserving the original meaning. They are included in the Appendix.

Finally, as a disclaimer, ACT and Hometree are acting solely as facilitators for the Community Conversations. The contents of this report, including any statements that may be inaccurate or non-evidence-based reflect participants' views, and should not be interpreted as endorsed positions of either organisation.

## Q1. What nature in your community matters most to you and why?

*By 'nature' we mean places, spaces, plants and animals.*

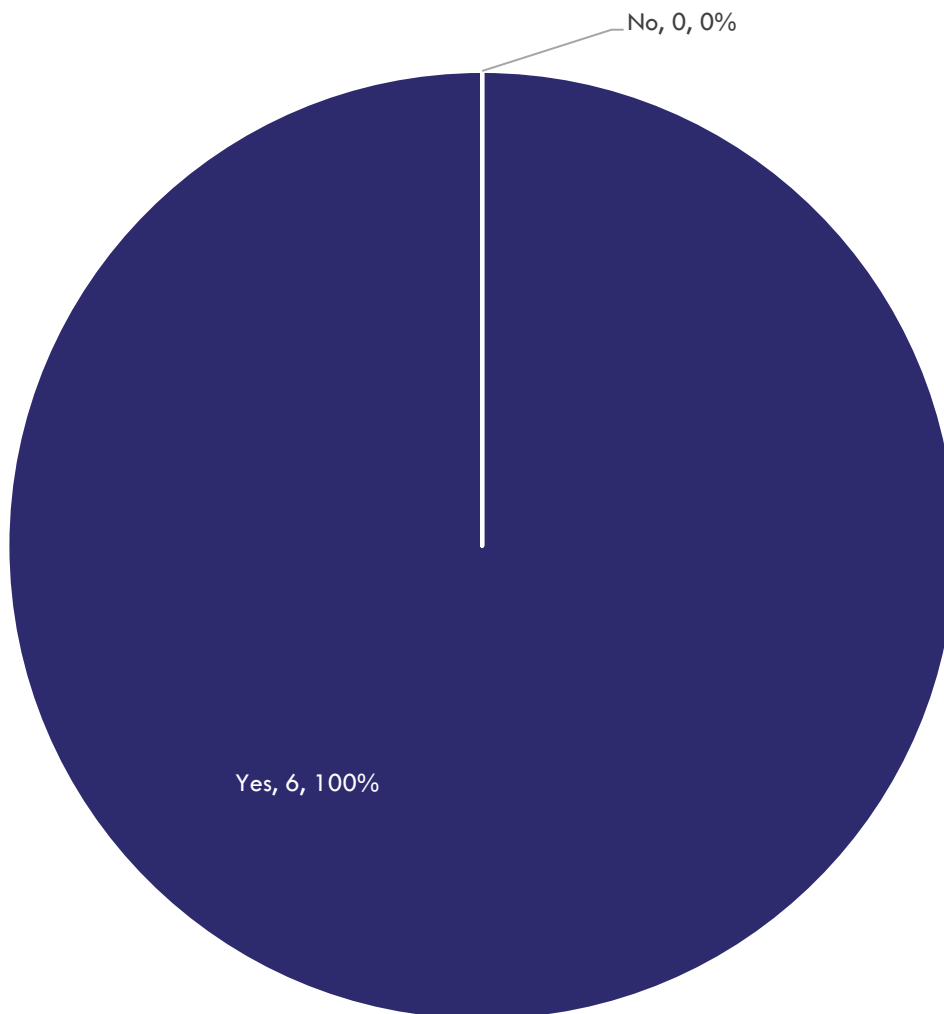
- Feirmeoirí cnoc agus caorach, agus an ról atá acu agus an dúlra / an éiceolaíocht á chosaint acu – an geilleagar agus an comhshaol ag braith ar a chéile.  
*Hill and sheep farmers, and the role they play in protecting nature and ecology – the economy and environment depending on each other.*
- Córais feirmeoireachta mínintensive (éadrom) agus measctha agus a gcuid ról maidir le tacú le héiceachórais.  
*Low-intensity and mixed farming systems and their role in supporting ecosystems.*
- An bhaint atá ag an nGaeilge leis an dúlra – le feiceáil in logainmneacha, lena n-áirítear páirceanna, carraigeacha, ceanntíopaí.  
*The connection between the Irish language and nature – visible in place names, including fields, rocks, and headlands.*
- Daoine óga agus páistí a bheith (ath-)pháirteach sa dúlra arís.  
*Young people and children being (re-)engaged with nature again.*
- A chinntiú go mbíonn comharbas idir-ghlúineach ann sa bhfeirmeoireacht agus sa chaomhnú.  
*Ensuring intergenerational succession in farming and conservation.*
- Cáilíocht an uisce – a chinntiú go mbeidh ról ag gach duine, feirmeoirí i gceantair nach NÁE/CPC iad san áireamh, agus cosaint á déanamh acu ar fad ar chúrsaí uisce.  
*Water quality – ensuring that everyone has a role, including farmers in areas outside SACs/SPAs, and that all are protecting water resources.*
- Uisce, aibhneacha, an fharraige.  
*Water, rivers, the sea.*
- An cré.  
*The soil / the earth.*
- An bithéagsúlacht  
*Biodiversity.*
- An slí go bhfuil gach rud nasctha.  
*The way everything is connected.*
- An dúlra.  
*Nature*
- Na daoine a maireann sna cnoic.  
*The people who live in the hills.*

## Q2a. Have you noticed any changes in your local nature over your lifetime? (Yes or No)

*By 'changes' we mean positive and or negative changes in your area.*

Bhí gach rannpháirtí (100%) den tuairim céanna; chreid siad go léir go bhfaca siad athruithe ar a gcomhshaol áitiúil. Bhí duine amháin de na rannpháirtithe beagán núíosásta ná na daoine eile, ó tharla nach bhfuil sé lonnaithe ina áit chónaithe reatha ach ó 2017 i leith, ach bhí sé ar aon intinn leis an méid a dúirt na daoine eile.

*All participants (100%) shared the same opinion; they all believed that they had seen changes in their local environment. One participant was slightly less certain than the others, as he has only been living in his current place of residence since 2017, but he agreed with what the others said.*



## Q2b. If yes, can you tell us about these changes and how they made you feel?

*This could be in relation to a particular story or place in your community. What made this particular change come to mind?*

- Ábhair imní agus roinnt neirbhíse, go háirithe nuair a bhíonn an chuma ar an scéal nach bhfuil baint na ndaoine óga leis an talamh nó leis an dúlra mar a bhíodh.  
*Worry and some nervousness, especially when it seems that young people are no longer connected to the land or to nature as they once were.*
- Brú – ag déileáil le héifeachtaí patrún aimsí atá ag athrú, sceachra ag dul i méid agus easpa measa ar ról na bhfeirmeoirí agus iad ag tacú leis an dúlra.  
*Pressure – dealing with the effects of changing weather patterns, the spread of scrub, and a lack of appreciation for the role of farmers in supporting nature.*
- An Ghaeilge ag laghdú ar na feirmeacha. An dainséar go gcaillimid feirmeoirí cnoic.  
*The Irish language is declining on farms. There's a danger we will lose hill farmers.*
- Ní bheidh daoine ag múineadh teanga a bhaineann leis an bhfeirmeoireacht don nglúin óg. Ní bheidh siad ag múineadh an t-eolas áitiúil mar ní bheidh feirmeoirí óga ann.  
*People will no longer teach the language connected to farming to the younger generation. They won't pass on local knowledge because there will be no young farmers.*
- Beidh ainmneacha plandaí, logainmneacha agus an cultúr ar fad i mbaol.  
*Plant names, place names, and the entire culture will be at risk.*
- Brú mór ar fheirmeoirí agus níl aon fheabhas ag teacht air sin.  
*Great pressure on farmers, and it's not improving.*
- Bhí spás ann i gcónaí don dtalamh gharbh le neantóga, driseacha, agus don nádúr agus sa chóras nua níl an spás céanna ann. Tá an talamh ar fad ag teastáil chun teacht isteach le dealramh a thuilleadh.  
*There was always space for rough land with nettles, brambles, and for nature, but in the new system that space no longer exists. All the land is needed now just to make ends meet.*
- Athrú aeráide - draein níos mó ag teastáil – scéal

*Climate change – more drainage is needed – an ongoing issue.*

- Níos mó stoirm agus báisteac níos troime.

*More storms and heavier rain.*

- Ní bhíonn seans ag páistí feirmeacha a fheiscint.

*Children no longer get the chance to see farms.*

- Ní fhásann aon duine bia

*Nobody grows food anymore.*

- Tá caighdeán an uisce imithe in olcas le blianta anuas. Abhainn agus farraige. Níl aon iasc (breac agus bradán) a thuilleadh.

*Water quality has worsened over the years. Rivers and the sea. There are no fish (trout and salmon) anymore.*

- Tá sé níos deacra obair leis an dtalamh toisc rialacha.

*It's harder to work with the land because of regulations.*

### **Q3a. What opportunities to experience local nature would you like your community to have in the future? How can we make this possible?**

*Think about how your community could enjoy and connect with its local nature in the future.*

- A admháil gur tearmainn iad pobal na Gaeltachta – ní hamháin don teanga, ach do go leor speiceas chomh maith; an Ghaeilge agus na pobail a labhraíonn í a chosaint agus a chur chun cinn.

*Acknowledge that Gaeltacht communities are sanctuaries – not only for the language, but for many species as well; protect and promote the Irish language and the communities who speak it.*

- Daoine óga a chur san áireamh – an t-eolas agus na scileanna a thabhairt dóibh maidir le plandaí agus ainmhithe a fhás agus a chothabháil.

*Include young people – give them the knowledge and skills to grow and care for plants and animals.*

- Dul i ngleic le díghrádú cháilíochta an uisce ar fud na hÉireann.

*Address the degradation of water quality across Ireland.*

- Comhpháirtíocht agus comhoibriú: Ní mór dóibh siúd atá bainteach le cur i bhfeidhm an phlean oibriú leo siúd a mbíonn tionchar ag an bplean orthu; ní mór dóibh comhoibriú le daoine áitiúla. Ní mór dóibh éisteacht go fírinneach le pobail áitiúla.

*Partnership and collaboration: Those implementing the plan must work with those affected by it; they must cooperate with local people and truly listen to local communities.*

- Ní mór acmhainní an Bheartais Talmhaíochta Comónta (CAP) a bheith sainithe, agus ní mór na feirmeoirí a bheith díolta go ceart as na seirbhísí éiceolaíochta a sholáthraíonn siad.

*The resources of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) must be clearly defined, and farmers must be properly paid for the ecological services they provide.*

- Ba cheart don dlí nua tacú leis na feirmeoirí sin a bhíodh ag tacú leis an dúlra le roinnt glúnta anuas.

*The new law should support those farmers who have been supporting nature for generations.*

- Ba cheart an dlí a bheith comhoiriúnach le dlíthe / straitéisí maidir le talmhaíocht/feirmeoireacht; ní féidir linn a bheith ag súil go n-éireoidh le dlíthe nádúr athbheochan a chur chun cinn má tá sé sin chun imeacht (níos tapúla) ón bhfeirmeoireacht a dhíriú.

*The law should align with agricultural/farming laws and strategies; we cannot expect nature restoration laws to succeed if they further drive people away from farming.*

- A chinntiú go dtógtar cur chuige idir-ghlúineach, ionas go n-aistrítear scileanna agus eolas ó dhaoine scothaosta go páistí agus déagóirí – ionas go mbeidh a fhios acu cén túsceacht a bhaineann le bia agus an tábhacht a bhaineann le héiceachóras sláintiúil.

*Ensure an inter-generational approach so that skills and knowledge are passed from older people to children and teenagers – so they understand where food comes from and the importance of a healthy ecosystem.*

- Dul i ngleic le ról an Stáit, agus na heasnaimh atá ann a thaobh sin, m.sh., na plandálacha Spruis Sitka (atá ag Coillte). A admháil go ndearnadh botúin ag beartais phoiblí a chur deireadh le cleachtais áitiúla a bhí inbhuanaithe ó thaobh na héiceolaíochta de.

*Address the role of the State and its shortcomings, e.g., the Sitka spruce plantations (run by Coillte). Acknowledge that public policies made mistakes in ending traditional local practices that were ecologically sustainable.*

- Dul i ngleic leis an damáiste (d'éiceachórais) atá á dhéanamh ag fia fiáin.

*Address the damage (to ecosystems) being caused by wild deer.*

- Coillte ar fheirm (le speicis dhúchasacha) a chur chun cinn, ach a chinntiú go bhfuil na feirmeoirí á n-íoc go ceart astu siúd agus as obair eile a dhéanann siad.

*Promote on-farm woodlands (with native species) but ensure that farmers are fairly paid for these and for other environmental work they do.*

- Filleadh ar na príomhphrionsabail – an Ghaeilge, an dúlra, an óige.

*Return to the core principles – the Irish language, nature, and youth.*

- Nasc idir leanaí agus an nádúr trí Ghaeilge – Scoileanna foraoise taistil.

*A connection between children and nature through Irish – mobile forest schools.*

- Ciollte dúchasacha in Uíbh Ráthach

*Native woodlands in Iveragh.*

- Crainn a chur agus an taithí sin a bheith ag leanaí.

*Plant trees and give children that experience.*

- Níos mó spáis don nádúr.

*More space for nature.*

- Feirmeoireacht nádúrtha

*Natural farming.*

- Múineadh do leanaí conas bia a fhás - úsáid a bhaint as idirbhlian chun an nasc a chruthú

*Teach children how to grow food – use transition year to create that connection.*

- Go mbeadh tuiscint ag an nglúin óg ar an dtimpeallacht trí Ghaeilge.

*That the younger generation would understand the environment through Irish.*

- Go mbeadh níos mó béime ar ár mbia féinig.

*That there would be more emphasis on our own food.*

- Go mbeadh tuiscint ag an ngnáth-duine ar conas a chuireann a ngníomhachtaí féin isteach ar fheirmeoireacht.

*That ordinary people would understand how their own actions impact farming.*

- An teanga a cheangail leis an ndúlra don nglúin óg

*Reconnect the language with nature for the younger generation.*

- Caithfidh an rialtas éisteacht leis na feirmeoirí. Tá tuiscint doimhin acu faoina a bpaistí féin.

*The government must listen to farmers. They have a deep understanding of their own land.*

- Scéimeanna ina mbeadh feirmeoirí díolta as an rud ceart a dhéanamh.

*Schemes where farmers are paid for doing the right thing.*

- Bia áitiúil a cheannach

*Buy local food.*

- Barraí difriúla a chur go bliantiúil - prátaí, ansan coirce, srl.

*Plant different crops each year – potatoes, then oats, etc.*

- Aithint a bheith ann gur dhein na seana scéimeanna damáiste in áiteanna.

*Recognition that old schemes caused damage in some areas.*

- Daoine ag siúil le madraí a stopadh.

*Stop people walking with dogs.*

- Clár/polasaí a chruthú don seomra ranga conas an Ghaeilge agus an dúlra a nascadh.

*Create a classroom programme/policy on how to connect the Irish language and nature.*

## Appendix: Scéal *Stories*

Fiche bliain de dhraenáil

Labhair fear amháin faoin athrú aeráide agus an slí go bhfuil athrú mór tagtha ar a shaol oibre dá bharr. Dúirt sé nuair a bhí sé óg, dá gcífidís scamall ag teacht thar Ard na Caithne, bhí fiche nóiméad acu chun an obair a chur i gcrích. Bhí sean-comharthaí mar sin acu. Anois, ní mar sin atá sé. Tagann an bháisteach aniar aduaidh orthu gan aon rabhadh.

*One man spoke about climate change and how it has greatly changed his working life. He said that when he was young, if they saw a cloud coming over Ard na Caithne, they had twenty minutes to finish their work. They had old signs like that. Now, it's not like that anymore. The rain comes on them suddenly, without any warning.*

Nuair a Chaill an Bháisteach a Foighne

Labhair sé faoin draein a thóg a shean-athair nuair a fuair sé an talamh an chéad lá agus draein 6 orlach a bhí ann. Roinnt blianta ó shin, ní raibh an draein ag déanamh an bheart agus cuireadh píopa 12 orlach isteach chun an t-uisce a bhaint ón dtalamh. Leis an athrú aeráide, agus an méidiú sa bháisteach, bhí air píopa 18 orlach a chur isteach anuraidh.

*One man spoke about the drain his grandfather built when he first got the land — it was a six-inch drain. A few years ago, the drain wasn't doing the job anymore, so a twelve-inch pipe was put in to take the water off the land. With climate change and the increase in rainfall, he had to put in an eighteen-inch pipe last year.*