.

Forestry and Wood Update

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# New COFORD climate change and forest energy projects

COFORD has in the past weeks finalised negotiations on five new climate change projects, involving University College Cork, University College Dublin, FERS Limited, PTR Limited and Forest Research UK.

The work will form the basis for the estimation and reporting of the mitigation potentials and roles of Irish forests and forest products over the first commitment period of the Kyoto Period, to the end of 2012. It builds on research successfully completed as part of the COFORD-funded CARBiFOR project, and forest carbon reporting systems and software developed by Dr Gerhardt Gallagher and COFORD. In addition, an important a new phase of work, focusing on how climate change is likely to affect forests and forest ecosystems, and how forestry practice can best adapt to climate change, will also begin. This part of the work will also develop an ecological site classification for Ireland.

All of the climate change projects will be run as part of the COFORD CLI-MIT programme, led by Dr Kevin Black. As well as undertaking vital national research, the programme aims to build long-term scientific competence and depth, through the involvement of experienced full time academic and research staff in the different organisations, and the recruitment of post docs and PhD students. A programme web site is under development and will be announced shortly. In the meantime questions related to the programme and projects should be addressed Dr Black at kevin.black@ucd.ie.

Work on forest energy will focus on the forest thinning/wood chip supply chain, through the Forest Energy 2007 programme, which will be led by Tom Kent of Waterford Institute of Technology, together with Pieter Kofman of Danish Forestry Extension. Work on a series of demonstrations is well underway in close collaboration with Teagasc. Information on the location of demonstration sites is provided in the next article. Further work in the wood energy area is being planned in co-operation with Sustainable Energy Ireland.

COFORD wishes the many researchers now engaged in climate change and energy research every success in their endeavours.

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# Forest Energy 2007 begins!

On Thursday 5 April 2007 the first in the latest series of national demonstrations of thinning systems and machinery for wood energy will take place. The objective of these events is to demonstrate cost effective production of quality wood fuels. Details of these Forest Energy 2007 demonstrations are:

* Thursday 5 April 2007: First thinning of Sitka spruce at Kilconnell, Co Galway. Meet at the Kilconnell Community Centre, Co Galway (on the R348 - Ballinasloe-Athenry road). Buses will depart from the meeting point from 12:00 to 1:30.
* Thursday 12 April 2007: First thinning of Sitka spruce at Abbeyfeale, Co Limerick. Meet at the Abbeyfeale GAA Centre (on the Listowel Road). Buses will depart from the meeting point from 12:00 to 1:30.
* Thursday 19 April 2007: First thinning of Sitka spruce at Bweeng, Co Cork. Meet at the Bweeng Community Centre, Co Cork. Buses will depart from the meeting point from 12:00 to 1:30.
* Friday 4 May 2007: Ballybofey, Co Donegal - meeting point to be announced.
* Further demonstrations will be held in Counties Mayo, Laois and Tipperary. Dates and venues will be announced on the COFORD website ([www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie)) and www.woodenergy.ie.

The COFORD [Forest](http://www.woodenergy.ie/iopen24/defaultarticle.php?cArticlePath=12_2) Energy 2006 programme focussed on first thinning and the production of wood chip fuel. The field phase of the programme has been successfully completed, with the results of the studies undertaken in conjunction with the demonstrations being prepared for publication and dissemination. Forest Energy 2007 will address the core issue of securing marketable wood fuel of acceptable moisture content for sale as wood chip and firewood. The programme will encompass wood chip and firewood harvesting, processing, stacking and storage trials.
Machines and thinning systems to be investigated will prioritise those that lend themselves to Irish sites and conditions. Systems to be investigated will include:

• whole tree harvesting

• crudely delimbed whole stem

• crudely delimbed tree sections

• roundwood (including firewood lengths).

The investigation and costing of thinning and harvesting systems for firewood production will be included.

The work will determine the cost of each thinning, harvesting and processing system investigated, to arrive at delivered-in energy prices, based on different end use requirements (domestic and commercial heating, industrial power generation), species and thinning options (energy assortment only, mixed energy and pallet/stakewood assortments). Costs will include machine depreciation and labour, and will factor in any machinery or other grant aid that may be available. These results will be made available to COFORD in the final project report.

Further investigation of commercial-scale chipping systems will be included in the programme, as well as the use of lower cost chipping machinery (still capable of producing high quality wood chip fuel). Systems for firewood processing will be investigated (bearing in mind downstream automation needs in terms of cross cutting, splitting and bagging). Storage trials will examine the length of time required to dry wood to acceptable moisture contents.

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# GROWFOR Workshops

The next workshop on the latest dynamic yield models – GROWFOR – will take place on 21 June 2007, at the Teagasc Head office in Athenry, Co Galway. These are full day workshops incorporating a short outdoor field exercise in the morning and a classroom session in the afternoon. The cost of becoming a registered GROWFOR user is €100. Limited spaces are available - please email growfor@coford.ie if you wish to attend. For more information about GROWFOR, visit the COFORD website and click on the GROWFOR tab (<http://www.coford.ie/iopen24/pub/defaultarticle.php?cArticlePath=328>).

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# BioEnergy 2007 : Fueling Ireland’s Future

COFORD, Teageasc, SEI REIO and WIT are joining forces to host BioEnergy 2007 on 30 August 2007, at Oak Park, Carlow. This one-day event will offer practical demonstrations of the solid biofuel supply chain and will be of particular interest to farmers and growers, agri-community, policy makers, energy users (hoteliers, nursing homes, local authorities), commercial sector and trade (installers, engineers, heat suppliers, boiler suppliers), and the general public.

The objective of the event is to demonstrate the importance, cost-effectiveness and utility of land-derived bioenergy. The event will achieve this by focusing on the production, processing and use of renewable biofuels, particularly solid biomass such as firewood, chip and pellets, and efficient and environmentally sound ways to combust biofuels for heat generation.

The event will include:

* Display and exhibition areas with product suppliers and manufacturers showcasing products.
* Field displays with on site visits to see forestry, miscanthus, and willow growing and harvesting for energy. The demonstrations will show various elements of the supply chain, from growing the crop, through to transport and storage, and will take place at designated times during the day.
* Practical demonstrations of forest thinning, willow harvesting, chipping, pelleting, firewood processing.
* Seminars – half hour seminars on:
	+ Biofuel quality
	+ Boiler installation
	+ Benefits of using solid biomass for energy in large installations
* On-site boiler demonstration outlining practical considerations when installing a boiler

If you wish to find out about trade exhibition opportunities or to express interest in participating in this event, please contact the programme co-ordinator, Paul Dykes (pauld@reio.ie).

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# National Forestry Conference

Presentations made at the National Forestry Conference held on 9 March 2007 can be downloaded from the COFORD website – see <http://www.coford.ie/iopen24/pub/defaultarticle.php?cArticlePath=129_389_390>. The theme of the event was *Technologies to Improve Forest Management,* and it was co-hosted by COFORD, the Society of Irish Foresters, the Irish Forest Industry Chain and the Irish Timber Growers’ Association.

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# Carbon Corner

## Climate change and energy policy

Since the last issue of Carbon Corner much has been happening on the climate change and energy policy fronts. At their 10 March meeting, the EU environment ministers set a target to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 20% by 2020, with cuts of up to 30% possible, depending on the caveat – “provided that other developed countries commit themselves to comparable emission reductions and economically more advanced developing countries adequately contribute according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities”. A fortnight later, the EU Heads of State at their spring summit agreed a package on how the 20% cut would be achieved.

On the domestic front the much-heralded Energy White Paper was launched by the Government on 12 March. Included in the actions under Strategic Goal 4: Delivering an Integrated Approach to the Sustainable Use of Bioenergy Resources is a proposed action:

*We will accelerate progress in developing a reliable supply chain in the wood energy sector for the private as well as the national forest estate.*

COFORD is directly addressing this action through its Forest Energy 2007 programme, being run by Waterford Institute of Technology in co-operation with Danish Forestry Extension. In particular, costs in the supply chain are being addressed through designing wood harvesting and storage systems geared to Irish conditions. However, while supply chain efficiency can deliver cost reductions, recent price offers of €3.50 per GJ for delivered-in wood fuel (equivalent to a price of just over €20 per green tonne) will fail to secure interest among growers, given harvesting and transport costs. Focus will rightly switch to the heat market, where the price paying potential is higher.

The full policy framework on energy and climate change will be addressed when the revised National Climate Change Strategy is launched. It is also likely to point to the role that forests and wood energy can play in reducing dependence on fossil fuels and in removing and storing carbon. But afforestation is suffering badly at the moment as a direct consequence of REPS. Farmers are joining REPS in greater numbers than ever before – the policy is seen as a success – which is undoubtedly is in terms of take-up. And while the new FEPS scheme is trying to entice farmers into forestry as well as REPS it remains to be seen how successful it will be. Even if it is successful, does it make sense to have a policy such as REPS that effectively reduces the potential for wood biomass production, at a time when a higher rate of afforestation than ever before is needed, to even begin to address a 20% renewables target by 2020? REPS is a direct response to the over production of subsidised food within the EU, but the issue has moved on, and land use for biofuel supply has now moved centre-stage. It is an issue that needs fuller debate at a national level.

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# COFORD-funded research yields important information

## about factor influencing carbon loss from forest ecosystems.

Ireland is committed to report greenhouse gas emissions and removals by forest biomass, litter, deadwood and soil pools to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Estimation of the extent to which forests sequester (store) carbon in the mid to long term is hindered by a high degree of spatial heterogeneity and temporal variability in these different forest carbon pools. New research information on the rate at which litter and soil carbon is stored in Sitka spruce stands has been published in an international journal (doi:10.1016/j.geoderma.2006.12.005) entitled ‘*Assessment of soil CO2 efflux and its components using a process-based model in a young temperate forest site*’ by Gustavo Saiz et al. from the CARBiFOR project. These litter emission factors are required for developing the national forest carbon reporting system (CARBWARE) to an international standard. The authors suggest that the mean residence time for litter and root organic matter in mineral soils is ~ 45 years. This information confirms that wet mineral gley soils in particular can be a significant sink (storage) of carbon. Information and insights into the processes underlying soil respiration are also described. The paper identifies soil temperature as moisture content as the most important factors influencing soil carbon losses in a particular soil type. Therefore, the rate at which soils can store carbon will be influenced by climate change in the future.

For further information, contact Kevin Black (email: Kevin.Black@ucd.ie)

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# Using natural enemies to reduce pine weevil populations

Following on from successful small-scale trials, biological control of the large pine weevil, *Hylobius abietis*, will be investigated on over 100 ha this summer. Pine weevil is the most serious insect pest in Irish forestry. Young weevils develop in the stumps of recently felled conifers. When the adults emerge, they feed on the bark of recently planted seedlings, and can kill up to 100% of seedlings on a site if they are not protected. Current practice is to use the chemical insecticide cypermethrin. In a COFORD-funded project (ABATE), researchers from Galway-Mayo IT and NUI Maynooth have been investigating the ability of natural enemies, including parasitic wasps and nematodes, to reduce the number of weevils emerging from spruce stumps. Small-scale trials have shown that insect parasitic nematodes can reduce the number of adult weevils emerging from spruce stumps by 45% (87% reduction in pine). Now, in collaboration with Coillte and the Forestry Commission UK, the ABATE team will test whether nematodes can reduce weevil populations on a whole site sufficiently to prevent plant losses. For further information, contact Aoife Dillon (email: aoife.dillon@nuim.ie).

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# European research: FP7 call deadlines approaching

A number of call deadlines for the 7th Framework programme are approaching. Many of them are in the first week of May, others not until the Autumn this year. The Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) bundles all research-related EU initiatives together under a common roof playing a crucial role in reaching the goals of growth, competitiveness and employment; along with a new Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), Education and Training programmes, and Structural and Cohesion Funds for regional convergence and competitiveness. It is also a key pillar for the European Research Area (ERA).

The broad objectives of FP7 have been grouped into four categories: Cooperation, Ideas, People and Capacities. For each type of objective, there is a specific programme corresponding to the main areas of EU research policy. All specific programmes work together to promote and encourage the creation of European poles of (scientific) excellence.

The **Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)** is aimed at supporting companies. The three specific programmes in the CIP framework are:

* Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme
* ICT Policy Support Programme
* Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme

Another theme “Eco-innovation” will be a transversal theme of the whole programme.

CIP will complement other major programmes covering cohesion activities, research, technological development and demonstration activities and lifelong learning.

Click [here](http://www.coford.ie/iopen24/pub/pub/newsletter/Volume7/FP7_April07.pdf) to read more about the CIP and also the FP7 deadlines.

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# Annual forum on invasive species in Ireland

The first annual Invasive Species Forum took place in Belfast at the Wellington Park Hotel on Thursday 22 March 2007. It was organised by the Environment and Heritage Service, Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Ireland.

Preventing the spread of invasive species on this island is now acknowledged as an issue of shared responsibility and there is a need for national initiatives to be inclusive of all stakeholder groups and facilitate effective communication between relevant government agencies, academia as well as the private and voluntary sectors. The invasive species forum is a key element in a programme of work to implement the recommendations of the *Invasive Species in Ireland*[[1]](#footnote-1) report.

It is proposed that the Forum will meet once a year to exchange information, agree priorities and allow stakeholder participation. The agenda for the first annual meeting included presentations by some of Ireland’s leading invasive species experts and presented an opportunity for input into the development of codes of good practice for industry.

Further information on invasive species can be found at [www.habitas.org.uk/invasive/](http://www.habitas.org.uk/invasive/)

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# EUFORGEN Steering Committee meeting

The fifth meeting of the EUFORGEN Steering Committee, made up of the national co-ordinators from all of the member countries, will take place in Novo Mesto, Slovenia from 22 to 24 May 2007. The EUFORGEN programme in Ireland is funded by the Forest Service, with COFORD providing the scientific input. The May meeting will review progress of the first half of EUFORGEN Phase III, which covers the period from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2009, and will adjust national and pan-European programmes accordingly. It will also review technical developments including progress in the establishment of a European information system on forest genetic resources and up-to-date information on common action plans. A separate meeting of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the EUFORGEN Networks will take place on 25 May. This will be an Inter-Network meeting to co-ordinate the work of the various committees and to discuss the recommendations of the Steering Committee.

Further information on EUFORGEN and its activities can be found at: [www.bioversityinternational.org](http://www.bioversityinternational.org)

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# BIHIP Annual Spring Meeting

The next meeting of the British and Irish Hardwood Improvement Programme (BIHIP) Management Committee will take place at the Northmoor Trust offices in Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire on 23 and 24 April. The Management Committee is made up of species group Chairman and Secretaries and monitors the progress of each species group and provides direction and co-ordination to BIHIP. The Finance Committee will also meet to consider requests for financial support from the various groups and to allocate BIHIP funds for 2007. The Ash, Oak and Sycamore Groups will also hold meetings. The Oak Group is currently working on a new business plan, the final draft of which is expected to be concluded at the meeting.

For further information on BIHIP activities visit <http://www.bihip.com>

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# Hardwood Matters

The most recent issue (Issue No 5 – January 2007) of “*Hardwood Matters*” has now been distributed. If you have not received a copy contact COFORD or log on to [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie). The deadline for the next issue No 6 (July 2007) is fast approaching. If you have hardwoods for sale or wish to purchase hardwood timber then “*Hardwood Matters*” is the ideal medium for such information. It is an entirely free service which is widely distributed.

For further information, contact John Fennessy (email: john.fennessy@coford.ie)

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# timbersales.ie

[www.timbersales.ie](http://www.timbersales.ie/) is a new and free web-based roundwood timber marketing service for private timber sales in Ireland. The aim of timbersales.ie is to provide a much needed link between the timber seller (forester or forest owner) and buyer (sawmill, board mill or contractor) and serve as a one-stop-shop for those involved in timber marketing, sales and purchasing in Ireland. This site provides a facility for timber sellers to advertise their timber sales on an on-line catalogue and timber buyers to view this catalogue. Any time a new timber sale is posted to the website, an email is automatically issued to all registered timber buyers. Using the timbersales.ie service is easy. Simply register as a user to post your timber sales information or view the latest sales from the on-line sales catalogue. Timber sellers can advertise parcels of standing or felled timber by using the on-line sales data entry form. Timber buyers can review information about the latest available sales posted to the on-line sales catalogue. The timber sales catalogue is updated on a daily basis.

This is a free service designed to facilitate timber sales in Ireland and it is hoped that the website will become widely used by the forest industry as a notice board for timber sales. Additional services based around this website are planned and will be announced at a later date. The site is being promoted by Purser Tarleton Russell Ltd. and has been developed with the technical assistance of forester Daniel McInerney.

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# The 2007 Energy Show

Ireland’s national showcase for energy, the Energy Show 2007, takes place in the RDS Industries Hall on Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th April.

The event is a forum for professionals, suppliers and business customers of sustainable energy technologies and services to meet, share views and transact business.  The show will include a two-day comprehensive trade exhibition with over 100 exhibitors showcasing the latest products and innovation.  The exhibition is coupled with a comprehensive and varied professional seminar programme.  The seminars cover all aspects of energy efficiency and renewable energy relevant to all sectors of Irish business.

This event is organised annually by Sustainable Energy Ireland and showcases the latest developments in sustainable and renewable energy technologies and innovation practices.

As part of this year’s event, SEI will host a number of special seminars over the two days on important sustainable energy related issues including:

* Effective Energy Management
* Renewable Energy in Buildings
* Innovative Commercial & Public Buildings
* Renewable Electricity
* Energy Pricing and Trends
* Liquid Biofuels
* Energy Saving Opportunities
* Solid Biomass – including presentations on Biomass Heat & Power and Wood Pellet Production – the Irish experience

The seminars are designed to showcase the very latest in technology development, innovation and policy with home and international speakers sharing their expertise and experiences. With limited availability early booking is highly recommended to avoid disappointment.

For further information on The Energy Show 2007, including details on how to register for the exhibition and seminars, log onto [www.sei.ie/energyshow](http://www.sei.ie/index.asp?locID=96&docID=-1) or email energyshow@registrationdesk.ie

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# Donegal school tops the class in energy innovation

A Donegal school is the first in the country to use woodchip for heating.  The new renewable energy heating system at the 800-student Abbey Vocational School in Donegal Town was turned on by the Minister for Agriculture and Food, Mary Coughlan.  The school, which had been using an oil-fired heating system, will now use woodchip from local forests to meet its entire heating needs.

A unique feature of the project is that the new heating system was installed at no cost to the school.  Funding for the boiler and fuel store was provided by Imperative Energy and Donegal Local Development Company, under the LEADER + programme.

 The school has signed an energy supply contract with Imperative Energy under which heat will be supplied at an agreed fixed price for the next seven years.  Joe O’Carroll, of Imperative Energy, said the energy supply contract is the first of its kind in the country and is set to become an increasing feature of the Irish energy market. “It means that our company takes and manages all of the risks associated with biomass energy” said Joe O’Carroll of Imperative Energy, a subsidiary of Green Belt, the country’s largest private forest management company. The woodchip for the Abbey school heating system is being supplied by Green Belt from forests it manages within a 30- km radius of Donegal town. The installation of the renewable energy heating system will mean an immediate reduction of at least 10% in the school’s heating bill.

Seán Ó’Longáin, Chief Executive of Donegal Vocational Education Committee, said that in addition to the economic and environmental benefits, the new heating system will also be used to educate students on renewable energy and how businesses and communities can become more self-sufficient in energy requirements.

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# Employment opportunity

An announcement was made recently on several open posts in a newly started Action 'Support to EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Process in Developing Countries', which the European Forest Institute (EFI) is conducting under the European Commission EuropeAid programme.

In its efforts to combat illegal logging, the European Commission has made a partnership agreement with EFI under the auspices of the EU FLEGT Action Plan. EFI, as a neutral international organization, will have the task of facilitating the negotiations between wood-producing countries and the EU to achieve the goal that only legal timber enters the EU. For more info, visit www.efi .int.

For this challenging four-year Action, EFI is now looking for an experienced action co-ordinator and a team of key experts. These experts will have various profiles within the following fields: Governance and natural resources, Social development, Technical forestry, Communication. The Co-ordinator will lead the Expert Team, outline the strategic directions of the Action, prepare and supervise the implementation of the work plan and budget, and report to the Steering Committee. Key selection criteria for all Experts are having relevant experience in developing countries as well as language skills. The team must be able to operate in English, French and Spanish and knowledge of other relevant languages would be an asset. The key focus regions of the FLEGT Action are Southeast Asia, West and Central Africa and Latin America. For more details regarding the specific requirements, visit www.mercuriurval.com

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# COST E42 website

The website of COST action E42 is now available at [www.valbro.de](http://www.valbro.de). COST E42 *Growing Valuable Broadleaved Tree Species* (ValBro) was established within the [COST](http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php) framework as a Network of scientists from different countries all over Europe working on ecological, economical and social aspects of valuable broadleaved tree species. The action was launched in November 2004 and is due for completion in October 2008.

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# Conference on hardwood processing

Forintek (Canada), CTBA (France) and IVALSA (Italy) is organising the First International Scientific Conference on Hardwood Processing (ISCHP) to be held in Québec City, Canada, on September 24-25-26, 2007. The main objective of this conference is to bring together the scientific and research communities involved in hardwood processing and products to share knowledge and ideas. International experts, scientists and hardwood industry representatives are invited to discuss recent progress and innovative work in this valuable area. The conference will cover subjects on temperate as well as on tropical hardwood processing. This first edition of the ISCHP will cover product development, process optimisation, finishing practices, supply chain management, market review, and sustainable business practices. For additional information, please visit [www.ischp.ca](http://www.ischp.ca).

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# Small-scale Forestry Journal special offer

From the beginning of 2007 the journal of Small-scale Forestry (formerly *Small-scale Forest Economics Management and Policy*) will be published jointly by IUFRO 3.08 and Springer. As part of the arrangements with Springer, a special subscription rate of 35 Euro has been negotiated for IUFRO 3.08 members.   In order to take up this offer you will need to quote your IUFRO 3.08 membership number.  See [www.springer.com](http://www.springer.com) for details of the special offer from Springer, along with details about free access for one month to the journal.

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1. Stokes, K., O’Neill, K. and McDonald, R.A. (2006) *Invasive species in Ireland*. Report to Environment & Heritage Service and National Parks & Wildlife Service by Quercus, Queens University. Environment & Heritage Service, Belfast and National Parks & Wildlife Service, Dublin. The document can be downloaded from [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie).

 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)