

Public Consultation

on the Draft Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000 in Ireland pursuant to Article 8 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) for the Multiannual Financial Framework period 2021 – 2027

**24 July 2020**

The Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) is a strategic multiannual planning tool, aimed at providing a comprehensive overview of the measures that are needed to manage the EU-wide Natura 2000 network (which comprises Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) and its associated green infrastructure, specifying the financing needs for these measures and linking them to the relevant EU funding programmes.

The legal basis for the PAF is Article 8 (1) of the Habitats Directive[[1]](#footnote-1), which requires Member States to send, as appropriate, to the Commission their estimates relating to the European Union co-financing which they consider necessary to meet their following obligations in relation to Natura 2000:

* *to establish the necessary conservation measures involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans,*
* *to establish appropriate statutory, administrative or contractual measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types in Annex I and the species in Annex II present on the sites.*

The Prioritised Action Framework focuses on identifying financing needs and priorities that are directly linked to conservation measures required for managing and restoring Natura 2000 sites in Ireland.

The Prioritised Action Framework is also expected to include measures and their financing needs relating to wider green infrastructure (GI)[[2]](#footnote-2) where they contribute to the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

Note that the estimated costs given in the PAF are not commitments to funding, rather they are indications of the level of investment required to manage and restore habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network.

Further information on the PAF is contained here[[3]](#footnote-3).

**Consultation Response Template for the Irish PAF 2021-2027**

Ireland has prepared a draft PAF and is now embarking upon a period of public consultation. The purpose of the template provided below is to simplify and streamline the consultation response process for all respondents and to simplify and streamline the evaluation process for the Department. The information provided by respondents will be considered in shaping the content and focus of the Prioritised Action Framework.

Due to the complexity of the document and the process, we can only accept responses which follow the template provided. However, it is not necessary to provide responses to all the questions.

The public consultation period will run until 5pm on Friday 18 September 2020. Please send your completed response template as a word document (not PDF) by email to [paf2020@chg.gov.ie](mailto:paf2020@chg.gov.ie) by 5pm on that date.

Receipt of submissions will be acknowledged but it may not be possible to issue individual responses.

**Acknowledgement**

We would like to thank you for engaging with this important process and for taking the time to provide your feedback.

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| **Section A** | **Respondent Profile** |
| Name |  |
| Organisation |  |
| Email address |  |

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| **Sector** | **(Please place an X in the appropriate box)** | | |
| Government Department |  | Farming Organisation |  |
| Local Authority |  | Individual |  |
| Other Public Sector Body |  | Other (please specify) |  |
| eNGO |  |  |  |

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| **Section B** | **Privacy Statement** |
| We will treat your information in line with data protection laws and policies when we are analysing and publishing the results of this consultation. Overall results that are given by individuals will be anonymous, that is, it will not be possible for you to be identified in the final report.  All submissions and comments submitted to the Department for this purpose are subject to release under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014 and the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007- 2014. Submissions are also subject to Data Protection legislation.  Personal, confidential or commercially sensitive information should not be included in your submission and it will be presumed that all information contained in your submission is releasable under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.  The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy and employs appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect your information from unauthorised access. The Department will not process your personal data for any purpose other than that for which they were collected. Personal data may be exchanged with other Government Departments, local authorities, agencies under the aegis of the Department, or other public bodies, in certain circumstances where this is provided for by law.  The Department will only retain your personal data for as long as it is necessary for the purposes for which they were collected and subsequently processed. When the business need to retain this information has expired, it will be examined with a view to destroying the personal data as soon as possible, and in line with Department policy. Further information on Data Protection can be found on our website at: <https://www.chg.gov.ie/help/legal-notices/data-protection/> | |

Consultation Feedback:

Sections A to D of the PAF document largely contain introductory and background information that informs the main part of the PAF (which is section E). A.1 and A.2 is template text from the European Commission. B is a summary table that reflects information given elsewhere in the document. If you have comments on these sections, please make them in the box below.

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| **A.** | **Introduction** |
| A.3 | Introduction to the specific PAF of Ireland |
| **C.** | **Current state of the Natura 2000 network** |
| **D.** | **EU and national financing of the Natura 2000 network during the period 2014 – 2020** |
| **Your comments on section A.3, C or D** | |
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Section E summarises priority measures and estimated financing needs for 2021- 2027. The tables below follow the format of the PAF document. Please place your comments in the box below the relevant section.

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| E1.1. | Site designation and management planning |
| **Your comments on section E1.1.** | |
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| E1.2. | Site administration and communication with stakeholders |
| **Your comments on section E1.2.** | |
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| E1.3. | Monitoring and reporting |
| **Your comments on section E1.3.** | |
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| E1.4. | Remaining knowledge gaps and research needs |
| **Your comments on section E1.4.** | |
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| E1.5. | Natura 2000-related communication and awareness raising measures, education and visitor access |
| **Your comments on section E1.5.** | |
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| E2.1. | Marine and coastal waters |
| **Your comments on section E2.1.** | |
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| E2.2. | Heathlands and shrubs |
| **Your comments on section E2.2.** | |
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| E2.3. | Bogs, mires, fens and other wetlands |
| **Your comments on section E2.3.** | |
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| E2.4. | Grasslands |
| **Your comments on section E2.4.** | |
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| E2.5. | Other agroecosystems (incl. croplands) |
| **Your comments on section E2.5.** | |
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| E2.6. | Woodlands and forests |
| **Your comments on section E2.7.** | |
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| E2.7. | Rocky habitats, dunes & sparsely vegetated lands |
| **Your comments on section E2.8.** | |
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| E2.8. | Freshwater habitats (rivers and lakes) |
| **Your comments on section E2.8.** | |
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| E3.1 | Species-specific measures and programmes not covered elsewhere |
| **Your comments on section E3.1.** | |
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Section F outlines further added values of the prioritised measures outlined in the previous sections. If you have comments on this section, please make them in the box below.

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| F. | Further added values of the prioritised measures |
| **Your comments on section F.** | |
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If you have any further comments, which are not related to a particular section of the PAF document, please make them in the box below.

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| **Any other comments you wish to make** |
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1. Article 8 (1): "In parallel with their proposals for sites eligible for designation as special areas of conservation, hosting priority natural habitat types and/or priority species, the Member States shall send, as appropriate, to the Commission their estimates relating to the Community co- financing which they consider necessary to allow them to meet their obligations pursuant to Article 6 (1)." [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Green Infrastructure is defined as ‘a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services’. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/index_en.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)