SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BANDON VALLEY ABOVE INISHANNON

SITE CODE: 001740

The Bandon River flows almost due east for much of its course, following a natural synclinal valley that itself extends to Cloyne. At Inishannon however, the river turns abruptly to the south, crossing several ridges before reaching the sea at Kinsale. The interest of the valley lies partly in its aquatic habitats since the river has not been deepened artificially as is so often the case. Four areas of scientific interest are located along the river. This site covers a section of the river 3km east of Bandon running approximately a further 4km downstream to Inishannon.

The recent survey of this area reports it to be very scenic. Woodlands occur where the meanders of the valley approach the valley's edge and create steep slopes. The woodlands are semi-natural, mostly planted with species such as Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) mixed in with the native oaks (*Quercus* spp.). Some areas of commercial plantation occur near the railway tunnel and at Drumkeen Wood. The spread of Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) is limited to small areas of the site.

Lower down in the Bandon Valley birdlife is more associated with woodland and involves characteristic species like owls, Sparrowhawk, Woodcock and Jay.

Cormorant and Heron fish throughout the river.

The valley is reported to have Otter in many places, a species listed in Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive as it is threatened within the E.U.

This area is important as it contains an example of oak woodland on steep valley sides. The Bandon Valley is especially valuable for its woodlands and unmodified river bed, which are a rare habitat in a European context.

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