



# NATURA 2000 - STANDARD DATA FORM

For Special Protection Areas (SPA),  
Proposed Sites for Community Importance (pSCI),  
Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and  
for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

SITE IE0000268  
SITENAME Galway Bay Complex SAC

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## 1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Type B	1.2 Site code IE0000268	<a href="#">Back to top</a>
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### 1.3 Site name

Galway Bay Complex SAC
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1.4 First Compilation date 1999-08	1.5 Update date 2021-12
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### 1.6 Respondent:

Name/Organisation:	National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Address:	90 King Street North, Dublin 7, D07 N7CV, Ireland
Email:	datadelivery@chg.gov.ie

### 1.7 Site indication and designation / classification dates

Date site classified as SPA:	0000-00
National legal reference of SPA designation	No data
Date site proposed as SCI:	1999-08
Date site confirmed as SCI:	No data
Date site designated as SAC:	2021-10
National legal reference of SAC designation:	548/2021

## 2. SITE LOCATION

### 2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

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Longitude	Latitude
-9.0382	53.1998

2.2 Area [ha]:

2.3 Marine area [%]







## 4. SITE DESCRIPTION

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### 4.1 General site character

Habitat class	% Cover
N10	1.0
N09	1.0
N16	1.0
N01	81.0
N04	1.0
N08	1.0
N07	1.0
N05	2.0
N22	1.0
N06	1.0
N02	7.0
N23	1.0
N03	1.0
<b>Total Habitat Cover</b>	<b>100</b>

### Other Site Characteristics

The Galway Bay Complex is a very large, marine-dominated, site situated on the west coast of Ireland. The inner part of the south bay is protected from exposure to Atlantic swells by the Aran Islands and Black Head. Subsidiary bays and inlets (e.g. Poul-na-clough, Auginish and Kinvara Bays) add texture to the patterns of water movement and sediment deposition, which lends variety to the marine habitats and communities. The terraced Carboniferous (Visean) limestone platform of the Burren sweeps down to the shore and into the sublittoral. West of Galway city, the bedrock geology is granite. The long shoreline is noted for its diversity, with complex mixtures of bedrock shore, shingle beach, sandy beach and fringing salt marshes. Other habitats which occur in small amounts include lagoon, fen, turlough, dry grassland, wet grassland and deciduous woodland.

### 4.2 Quality and importance

The site has very important and good quality examples of large shallow inlets and bays, intertidal mud and sandflats, and reefs. The area has the country's only recorded example of the littoral community characterized by *Fucus serratus* with sponges, ascidians and red seaweeds on tide-swept lower eulittoral mixed substrata. Sublittorally, the area has Ireland's only reported piddock bed, an extensive maerl bed of *Phymatolithon calcareum*, an oyster bed, and seagrass beds. A host of rare marine organisms occur, including the sea urchin *Paracentrotus lividus*, the sponge *Mycale contarenii*, the red algae *Phyllophora sicula* and *Rhodomenia delicatula*. Lagoons are particularly well represented and varied in type, size and salinity. Of especial importance are the rare karstic rock lagoons, of which the site holds all but one of the examples known from the mainland of Ireland. Good quality salt marshes of both Atlantic and Mediterranean types are well represented and occur along with perennial vegetation of stony banks. A very good, though limited, example of calcareous grassland rich in orchids occurs, and there are examples of alkaline fen and *Juniperus communis* scrub of moderate quality. Two Red Data Book stoneworts occur, *Chara canescens* and *Lamprothamnium papulosum*, and also two Red Data Book vascular plants - *Crambe maritima* and *Hyoscyamus niger*. The site has one of the largest populations of *Phoca vitulina* in the country, and provides optimum habitat for *Lutra lutra*. Galway Bay is a very important ornithological site, with an internationally important wintering population of *Branta bernicla hrota* and regular nationally important populations of a further 16 species, including *Gavia immer*, *Gavia arctica*, *Pluvialis apricaria* and *Limosa lapponica*. Breeding birds of note are *Phalacrocorax carbo*, *Sterna sandvicensis* and *Sterna hirundo*.

### 4.3 Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the site

The most important impacts and activities with high effect on the site

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and pressures [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
L	D03.01.01		i
L	D03.01.01		i
H	H01.05		b
M	F01		b
M	A04.02.01		i
M	C01.01		i

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
M	J02.05.01		b

L	F02.03.01		i
M	D02.02		i
M	J02.01.02		i
H	H01.08		b
H	D03		i
L	D01.01		i
M	I01		b
L	J02.05.01		b
L	G01.01.02		i
M	A02.01		i
M	A04.02.02		i
L	G02.01		i
L	E03.03		i
M	J02.01.02		i
H	D03.01.04		i
H	J02.12.01		i
M	F06		i
L	J02.02.02		i
M	C01.01.02		i

Rank: H = high, M = medium, L = low

Pollution: N = Nitrogen input, P = Phosphor/Phosphate input, A = Acid input/acidification,

T = toxic inorganic chemicals, O = toxic organic chemicals, X = Mixed pollutions

i = inside, o = outside, b = both

#### 4.4 Ownership (optional)

#### 4.5 Documentation

Booth, D.A. (1974). The Water Structure and Circulation of Killary Harbour and of Galway Bay. Unpublished M.Sc. thesis, National University of Ireland. Costelloe, J., Keegan, B.R. and Konnecker, G.F. (1986). Rocky subtidal assemblages on the west coast of Ireland. *Hydrobiologia* 142: 97-111. Colhoun, K. (1998). I-WeBS Report 1996-97. BirdWatch Ireland, Dublin. Curtis, T.G.F. and Sheehy Skeffington, M.J. (1998). The salt marshes of Ireland: an inventory and account of their geographical variation. *Biology and the Environment, Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 98B: 87-104. De Valera, M., Pybus, C., Casley, B. and Webster, A. (1979). Littoral and benthic investigations on the west coast of Ireland, X. Marine algae of the northern shores of the Burren, County Clare. *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 79B: 259 ? 269. Farrington, A. (1964). Raised beaches in Galway Bay. *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 14: 216-217. Good, J.A. (1999). Irish Coastal Lagoon Survey, 1998. Vol 5. 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## 5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

### 5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

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Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]
IE05	1.0				

### 5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

designated at national or regional level:

Type code	Site name	Type	Cover [%]
IE05	Lough Rusheen Wildfowl Sanctuary	*	1.0

designated at international level:

Type	Site name	Type	Cover [%]
Other	Inner Galway Bay	*	99.0

### 5.3 Site designation (optional)

## 6. SITE MANAGEMENT

### 6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

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### 6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, but in preparation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No

### 6.3 Conservation measures (optional)

## 7. MAP OF THE SITES

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INSPIRE ID:

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

Yes  No

Reference(s) to the original map used for the digitalisation of the electronic boundaries (optional).