



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 IE0002287
SITENAME Lough Swilly SAC

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Type B	1.2 Site code IE0002287	Back to top
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1.3 Site name

Lough Swilly SAC

1.4 First Compilation date 2000-08	1.5 Update date 2020-10
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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:	2000-08
Date site confirmed as SCI:	No data
Date site designated as SAC:	2018-10
National legal reference of SAC designation:	418/2018

2. SITE LOCATION

2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

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Longitude -7.543991188 Latitude 55.06381172

2.2 Area [ha]:

2.3 Marine area [%]

2.4 Sitelength [km]:

0.0

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code

Region Name

IEZZ	Extra-Regio
IE01	Border, Midland and Western

2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Atlantic (%)

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

3.1 Habitat types present on the site and assessment for them

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Annex I Habitat types						Site assessment			
Code	PF	NP	Cover [ha]	Cave [number]	Data quality	A B C D	A B C		
						Representativity	Relative Surface	Conservation	Global
1130B			6118.3527		M	A	B	B	A
1150B			205.7118		M	B	B	B	A
1320B			92.62		M	D			
1330B			38.983		M	B	C	B	B
6410B			11.6		G	C	C	C	C
91A0B			58.6759		M	B	C	B	B

- **PF:** for the habitat types that can have a non-priority as well as a priority form (6210, 7130, 9430) enter "X" in the column PF to indicate the priority form.
- **NP:** in case that a habitat type no longer exists in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Cover:** decimal values can be entered
- **Caves:** for habitat types 8310, 8330 (caves) enter the number of caves if estimated surface is not available.
- **Data quality:** G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation)

3.2 Species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC and site evaluation for them

Species					Population in the site					Site assessment				
G	Code	Scientific Name	S	NP	T	Size		Unit	Cat.	D. qual.	A B C D	A B C		
						Min	Max				Pop.	Con.	Iso.	Glo.
B	A056	Anas clypeata			w	58	58	i		G	C	A	C	B
B	A052	Anas crecca			w	1381	1381	i		G	B	A	C	B
B	A050	Anas penelope			w	1673	1673	i		G	C	A	C	B
B	A053	Anas platyrhynchos			w	1155	1155	i		G	B	A	C	B
B	A395	Anser albifrons flavirostris			w	657	657	i		G	B	B	C	A
B	A043	Anser anser			w	1542	1542	i		G	A	A	C	A
B	A169	Arenaria interpres			w	56	56	i		G	C	B	C	C
B	A061	Aythya fuligula			w	169	169	i		G	C	B	C	C

R		Lecerta vivipara												X	
I		Lekanesphaera hookeri													X
M		Lepus timidus hibernicus									X				
M		Lepus timidus hibernicus										X			
M		Lepus timidus hibernicus											X		
M		Mustela erminea hibernica											X		
M		Ncytalus leisleri											X		
M		Ncytalus leisleri									X				
I		Neomysis integer													X
I		Palaemonetes varians													X
A		Rana temporaria											X		
A		Rana temporaria									X				
P		Ruppia maritima													X
F		Salmo trutta											X		
I		Sigara concinna													X
I		Sigara stagnalis													X

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, Fu = Fungi, I = Invertebrates, L = Lichens, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **CODE:** for Birds, Annex IV and V species the code as provided in the reference portal should be used in addition to the scientific name
- **S:** in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes
- **NP:** in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Unit:** i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting, (see [reference portal](#))
- **Cat.:** Abundance categories: C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present
- **Motivation categories:** IV, V: Annex Species (Habitats Directive), A: National Red List data; B: Endemics; C: International Conventions; D: other reasons

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 General site character

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Habitat class	% Cover
N02	60.0
N10	1.0
N01	30.0
N05	1.0
N06	1.0
N07	1.0
N08	1.0
N09	1.0
N14	1.0
N04	1.0
N03	1.0
N16	1.0
Total Habitat Cover	100

Other Site Characteristics

Lough Swilly is a long sea inlet situated on the north Donegal coast. The site includes all of the inner part of the lough, extending from below Letterkenny to just north of Bunrana, a distance of c.25 km along a south-west to north-east axis. The lough varies in width, from

approximately 2 km to 5 km. The site is estuarine in character, with shallow water and intertidal sand and mud flats being the dominant habitats. The main rivers flowing into the site are the Swilly, the Leannan and the Crana. Salt marshes occur mainly on the more sheltered western side. Artificial embankments have created brackish lakes at Inch and Blanket Nook. Other habitats which have a minor presence include sand dune, wet grassland, heath, scrub and deciduous woodland.

4.2 Quality and importance

The site is important as a fine example of a large, natural sea inlet which is estuarine in character. Extensive intertidal sand and mud flats are exposed at low tide. Salt marshes of the Atlantic salt meadow type are well represented. The estuarine habitats are generally of good quality, though areas along the south-eastern shore have been embanked in the past to create polders. Although the lagoon habitat is artificial in origin, it is one of the largest and best examples of a shallow, low salinity lagoon in the country. It supports what is probably the largest population in the country of *Chara canescens*, a Red Data Book species. The fauna is rich and diverse and contains 8 lagoonal specialists, and is of significant conservation value for ecotonal Coleoptera. Prospects for maintenance of the conservation structure of the habitat are good. The site includes several areas of old oak woodland, mostly of good quality and with natural regeneration. One of these woods is a Statutory Nature Reserve. Lough Swilly supports important populations of wintering and staging waterfowl. Of particular significance is that the site provides roosting and limited feeding areas for the internationally important populations of *Cygnus cygnus*, *Anser anser* and *Anser albifrons flavirostris* which feed mainly on the polders adjacent to the site. In addition, there are at least 16 species occurring in numbers of national importance, while *Pluvialis apricaria* and *Limosa lapponica*, both listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, also occur regularly. Has breeding *Lutra lutra*.

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]
H	E01.01		b
M	F02		i
H	F01		i
L	I01		b
H	G01		i
H	J02		i
M	F02.02.05		i
H	H01		i

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside /outside [i o b]
L	X		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

Bowman, J.J., Clabby, K.J., Lucey, J., McGarrigle, M.L. and Toner, P.H. (1996). Water Quality in Ireland 1991-1994. Environmental Protection Agency, Wexford. 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. Curtis, T.G.F. (1991a). A site inventory of the sandy coasts of Ireland. In Quigley, M.B. (ed.) *A Guide to the Sand Dunes of Ireland*. E.U.C.C. Dublin. Fox, A.D., Norriss, D.W., Stroud, D.A. & Wilson, H.J. (1994). Greenland White-fronted Geese in Ireland and Britain 1982/83 - 1993/94. Greenland White-fronted Goose Study research report no. 8. Greenland White-fronted Goose Study, Wales and National Parks & Wildlife Service, Dublin. Good, J.A. (1999). Irish Coastal Lagoon Survey, 1998. Vol V. Unpublished Report, Dúchas the Heritage Service, Dublin. Hart, H.C. (1898). *Flora of County Donegal*. Dublin. Healy, B. (1999). *A Survey of Irish Coastal Lagoons. Vol I. Background, Description and Summary*. Unpublished Report, Dúchas the Heritage Service, Dublin. Healy, B., Oliver, G.A., Hatch, P. and Good, J.A. (1997). *Coastal lagoons in the Republic of Ireland. Vol. I. Background, Outline and Summary of Survey*. Report to the National Parks & Wildlife Service, Dublin. Hunt, J., Derwin, J., Coveney, J. & Newton, S. (2000). Republic of Ireland. Pp.365-416 in M.F. Heath & M.I. Evans (eds) *Important Bird Areas in Europe: priority sites for conservation 1: Northern Europe*. Cambridge, U.K.: BirdLife International. (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 8). McElwaine, J.G., Wells, J.H. & Bowler, J.M. (1995). Winter movements of Whooper Swans visiting Ireland: preliminary results. *Irish Birds* 5: 265-278. Merne, O.J. (1989). Important bird areas in the Republic of Ireland. In: Grimmett, R.F.A. and Jones, T. A. (eds) *Important Bird Areas in Europe*. ICBP Technical Publication No. 9. Cambridge. Nelson, B., Foster, G., Weyl, R. and Anderson, R. (1997). The distribution of aquatic Coleoptera in Northern Ireland. Part 1: Families Haliplidae, Hygrobiidae, Noteridae, Dytiscidae and Gyrinidae. *Bulletin of the Irish Biogeographical Society* 20: 179-296. Oliver, G.A. (1999). Irish Coastal Lagoon Survey. 1998. Vol. IV. Aquatic Fauna. Unpublished Report, Dúchas the Heritage Service, Dublin. Praeger, R.L (1934). *The Botanist in Ireland*. Hodges and Figgis, Dublin. Roden, C. (1999). Irish Coastal Lagoon Survey, 1998. Vol III. Flora. Unpublished Report, Dúchas the Heritage Service, Dublin. Sheppard, R. (1993). *Ireland's Wetland Wealth*. IWC, Dublin. Young, R. (1973). *Report on Areas of Ecological and Geological Interest in County Donegal*. An Foras Forbartha, Dublin.

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

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5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]
IE05	1.0	IE01	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	Blanket Nook Wildfowl Sanctuary	*	1.0
IE01	Rathmullen Wood Nature Reserve	+	1.0

5.3 Site designation (optional)

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

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6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

- Yes
 No, but in preparation
 No

6.3 Conservation measures (optional)

7. MAP OF THE SITES

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INSPIRE ID:

IE.NPWS.PS.NATURA2000.SAC.IE0002287

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).

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