



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 IE0004075
SITENAME Lough Swilly SPA

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Type	1.2 Site code	Back to top
A	IE0004075	

1.3 Site name

Lough Swilly SPA

1.4 First Compilation date	1.5 Update date
2004-06	2020-10

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:	1995-11
National legal reference of SPA designation	No data

2. SITE LOCATION

2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

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Longitude	Latitude
-7.546333455	55.0406311

2.2 Area [ha]:	2.3 Marine area [%]
8559.561854	77.085

2.4 Sitelength [km]:

0.0

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code	Region Name
IE01	Border, Midland and Western
IEZZ	Extra-Regio

2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Atlantic (%)

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

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3.1 Habitat types present on the site and assessment for them

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

[illegible]

B	A193	Sterna hirundo			r	89	89	p		G	B	A	C	B
B	A191	Sterna sandvicensis			r	222	222	p		G	B	A	C	A
B	A048	Tadorna tadorna			w	772	772	i		G	A	A	C	A
B	A164	Tringa nebularia			w	48	48	i		G	B	C	C	B
B	A162	Tringa totanus			w	1404	1404	i		G	B	A	C	B
B	A142	Vanellus vanellus			w	1408	1408	i		G	C	C	C	C

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, I = Invertebrates, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **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)
- **Type:** p = permanent, r = reproducing, c = concentration, w = wintering (for plant and non-migratory species use permanent)
- **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](#))
- **Abundance categories (Cat.):** C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present - to fill if data are deficient (DD) or in addition to population size information
- **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); VP = 'Very poor' (use this category only, if not even a rough estimation of the population size can be made, in this case the fields for population size can remain empty, but the field "Abundance categories" has to be filled in)

3.3 Other important species of flora and fauna (optional)

Species					Population in the site				Motivation					
Group	CODE	Scientific Name	S	NP	Size		Unit	Cat.	Species Annex		Other categories			
					Min	Max		C R V P	IV	V	A	B	C	D
P		Chara canescens									X			
B		Cygnus olor			265	265	i						X	
B		Larus argentatus			71	71	i							X
M		Lepus timidus hibernicus											X	
M		Lepus timidus hibernicus									X			
M		Lepus timidus hibernicus										X		
B		Tachybaptus ruficollis			38	38	i						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	78.0
N12	10.0
N14	10.0
N05	1.0
N03	1.0

Total Habitat Cover	100
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Other Site Characteristics

Lough Swilly is a long sea inlet cut through a variety of metamorphic rocks, situated on the west side of the Inishowen Peninsula in north Co. Donegal. The SPA comprises the inner part of Lough Swilly from just east of Letterkenny northwards to Killygarvan (c. 2 km north of Rathmullan) on the west side and to c. 2 km south of Buncrana on the east side; it includes the adjacent Inch Lough. Also forming part of the site is a series of improved pasture and arable fields on the south side of Lough Swilly between Farsetmore and Inch Levels - these are of importance to geese and swans. It includes sections of the estuaries of the River Swilly, the River Leannan and the Isle Burn and the predominant habitat is a series of extensive sand and mud flats which are exposed at low tide.

4.2 Quality and importance

Lough Swilly is a fine example of a large, natural sea inlet which is estuarine in character. The site supports an excellent diversity of wintering waterfowl for which it is the most important site in the north-west. It is of international importance because total numbers easily exceed 20,000 birds but it also has internationally important populations of *Cygnus cygnus*, *Anser anser* and *Anser albifrons flavirostris*. The *Anser anser* population represents over 27% of the All-Ireland total, whilst the flock of *Anser albifrons flavirostris* is the largest in the country outside of the Wexford Slob. In addition, there are at least 18 species which occur in numbers of national importance. Of particular note are the populations of *Tadorna tadorna* (5.3% of the All - Ireland total), *Calidris alpina* (6.1% of total) and *Tringa totanus* (4.8% of total). The site also supports regionally important numbers of *Pluvialis apricaria* and *Limosa lapponica*. The wintering birds of Lough Swilly have been well-monitored since the early 1980s.

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	A08		i
M	F02.03		i
M	G01.01		i
H	A08		o
M	E01		o
H	A01		i
H	A04		i
H	F01		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

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside /outside [i o b]
H	A04		i
M	G01.01		i
H	F01		i
H	A08		i
H	A01		i
H	E01		o

4.4 Ownership (optional)

4.5 Documentation

Colhoun, K. (2001). I-WeBS Report 1998-99. 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 Environment, Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy 98B: 87-104. Crowe, O. (2005). Ireland's Wetlands and their Waterbirds: Status and Distribution. BirdWatch Ireland, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow. Crowe, O., Austin, G.A., Colhoun, K., Cranswick, P.A., Kershaw, M. and Musgrove, A.J. (2008). Estimates and trends of waterbird numbers wintering in Ireland 1994/95 to 2003/04. Bird Study 55: 66-77. Fox, A.D., Norriss, D.W., Stroud, D.A. and 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 and Wildlife Service, Dublin. Hunt, J., Derwin, J., Coveney, J. and Newton, S. (2000). Republic of Ireland. Pp. 365-416 in Heath, M.F. and Evans, M.I. (eds.). Important Bird Areas in Europe: Priority Sites for Conservation 1: Northern Europe. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 8). Irish Wetland Birds Survey (I-WeBS) Database, 1994/95-2006/07. BirdWatch Ireland, Dublin. McElwaine, J.G., Wells, J.H. and Bowler, J.M. (1995). Winter movements of Whooper Swans visiting Ireland: preliminary results. Irish Birds 5: 265-278. Crowe, O. (2005). Ireland's Wetlands and their Waterbirds: Status and Distribution. BirdWatch Ireland, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow. McGarrigle, M.L., Bowman, J.J., Clabby, K.J., Lucey, J., Cunningham, P., MacCarthaigh, M., Keegan, M., Cantrell, B., Lehane, M., Clenaghan, C. and Toner P.F. (2002). Water Quality in Ireland 1998-2000. Environmental Protection Agency, Wexford. 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. Mitchell, P.I., Newton, S.F., Ratcliffe, N. and Dunn, T.E. (2004). Seabird Populations of Britain and Ireland. Poyser, London. Robinson, J.A., Colhoun, K., Gudmundsson, G.A., Boertmann, D., Merne, O.J., O'Briain, M., Portig, A.A., Mackie, K. and Boyd, H. (2004). Light-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota* (East Canadian High Arctic Population) in Canada, Ireland, Iceland, France, Greenland, Scotland, Wales, England, the Channel Islands and Spain 1960/61 - 1999/2000. Waterbird Review Series, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust/Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Slimbridge. Robinson, J.A., Colhoun, K., McElwaine, J.G. and Rees, E.C. (2004). Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* (Iceland population) in Britain and Ireland 1960/61 - 1999/2000. Waterbird Review Series, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust/Joint Nature

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	Blanket Nook Wildfowl Sanctuary	+	1.0

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:

☐ 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.SPA.IE0004075

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).