



IPCC
30
years
Saving Bogs
& Wildlife

IPCC Annual Report & Financial Accounts 2012



Message From the IPCC Committee of Management

We are delighted to present the Report and Annual Accounts of the Irish Peatland Conservation Council for 2012.

In this year we celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the Irish Peatland Conservation Council. A public event was held on International Bog Day and our guest of honour was the Mayor of Kildare. The IPCC strives through its work to make a difference for peatlands and wildlife in Ireland and we are very proud of what we have achieved not just in 2012 but in every year since our foundation.

Critical to the success of the IPCC has been the unwavering support of both our volunteers who have given their time to our work and our supporters and sponsors who have donated to our fundraising appeals and projects during the year. Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.

Committee of Management, IPCC: Martin Kelly, Ruth Mc Grath, Miles, Newman, Catherine O'Connell, Sean O'Farrell and Jennifer Roche

Highlights of 2012

IPCC's 30 year anniversary * Curlew present on Lodge Bog * Website makeover www.ipcc.ie * Visitor Care Programme * *Sphagnum* moss restoration programme roll out * Pedal for Peat's Sake *

Contents

Message from IPCC Committee of Management	2
Highlights of 2012	2
Activity Report 2012	2
Thanks	9
Financial Statements	10

The Irish Peatland Conservation Council's (IPCC) mission is to conserve a representative portion of the peatlands of Ireland for future generations to enjoy. we run the national Save the Bogs Campaign, we own three peatland nature reserves in Kildare and Waterford and we manage the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, which is open to visitors and school groups. We provide an extensive information service on our web site at www.ipcc.ie. IPCC have five members of staff and is supported by 100 volunteers. Four thousand individuals subscribe to our campaign.

2



The Curlew was found to be breeding on Lodge Bog during an IPCC research study.

Peatland Sites

IPCC work nationally to ensure that sites of conservation importance are protected from unsustainable development. We also work to protect three peatland reserves which are in our ownership. This work is carried out by IPCC's Conservation Officer and a team of reserve volunteers.

Curlew Survey at Lodge Bog, Co. Kildare

A key project for 2012 focused on the Curlew on Lodge Bog. The survey discovered a population of three curlew on Lodge Bog. Breeding was undertaken but the eggs were predated. The suitability of the habitat for Curlew was assessed and recommendations were made to help ensure future successful breeding of this rare bird. IPCC were assisted in this work by scientific staff from University College Dublin in particular David Dwyer and Dr Heather Lally. We are grateful to our supporters who donated to the project and to Kildare County Council and Bord na Móna for financial assistance.

Conservation Staff continued to monitor water levels on Lodge Bog and to set up trials for the restoration of peat forming vegetation using the *Sphagnum* transfer technique developed by Canadian peatland scientists. The visitor boardwalk on the site was covered with wire mesh to prevent slips and falls during damp weather.

Butterfly Project on Lullymore West Bog, Co. Kildare

This site is one of the top butterfly biodiversity sites in Ireland with 21 different species recorded. In 2012 butterfly numbers were down due to poor weather, but IPCC volunteers undertook 26 visits to the site to record the 1km long butterfly transect. A total of 869 butterflies were recorded and 19 different species. Scrub removal from the forest walk area of the transect was undertaken.



Participants on a field visit to Fenor Bog, Co. Waterford in October as part of the Waterford Wetlands Conference.



Dr Catherine O'Connell with Duncan Stewart filming the *Sphagnum* Moss Restoration method on Girley Bog.

Site Name, County	Issue	IPCC Action/Outcome
Shragh, Clare	Wind Farm	Objection to An Bord Pleanala. Surrounded by designated sites
Bandon, Cork	Flood Relief	Response to scoping study: Information sent
Sraboy, Donegal	Wind Farm	Objection to An Bord Pleanala after accepted by Donegal County Council
Inches, Cork	Drainage	Letter to Cork County Council Enforcement re drainage of 60-70 acres
Tullagher Lough, Clare	Turf Cutting	Letter to NPWS with maps and info on the site
Lough Cuill, Donegal	Wind Farm	Letter objecting to Donegal County Council Development Plan contravention
Knockranny, Galway	Wind Farm	Response to Further Information sent to An Bord Pleanala
Derrinoghran, Sligo	Wind Farm	Response to scoping request, information sent
Milestone, Tipperary	Wind Farm	Response to scoping request, information sent
Oweninny, Mayo	Wind Farm	Letter sent to developer detailing IPCC stance on the wind farm
Shragh, Clare	Wind Farm	Response to Further Information sent to An Bord Pleanala
Dunmanway, Cork	Wind Farm	Response to scoping request, information sent
Ballydermot Bogs, Kildare	Wind Farm	Response to scoping request seeking information on bird life in the area prior to Wind Farm proposals.

In addition Lullymore West Bog is a refuge for the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly. IPCC monitor the population of the butterfly in Spring and Autumn by counting webs of larvae. Nest numbers were down due to bad weather. Eight nests were recorded in spring having over-wintered from 2011 and six nests in autumn.

Fenor Bog, Co. Waterford

Fenor Bog was included as part of a field visit with the Irish Wildlife Trust/Waterford County Council conference on wetlands which was held in Dunhill, Co. Waterford. Catherine O'Connell from IPCC and Rita Byrne from the Moin Fhionnurach Development Association (MFDA) guided participants to the features of the site. Water monitoring of the site was undertaken monthly by the MFDA.

Monitoring Peatlands of Conservation Importance Nationally

During the year IPCC responded to 14 site enquiries

and planning appeals as documented in the table inset.

Sphagnum moss Restoration Workshops

Four workshops demonstrating the technique of *Sphagnum* moss restoration on raised bogs were organised throughout the year. The first course was held on Lodge Bog and was well attended by peatland managers and consultants. The course was supported by the Environmental Protection Agency under the STRIVE programme. Three further courses were held at Clara Bog, Girley Bog and Shannon Bog during the year. These were supported by the Heritage Council. IPCC's pioneering trials of *Sphagnum* moss restoration in Ireland work was filmed by Duncan Stewart for broadcast in Spring 2013 in the ECOEYE series.

Girley Bog, Co. Meath Restoration Plan

IPCC in conjunction with James Keegan and Dr Heather Lally from University College Dublin IPCC organised for a Restoration Plan to be drawn up for Girley Bog, Co. Meath.

The location of windfarms in sensitive peatland habitats is opposed by the IPCC



IPCC made submissions to the following Policies and Surveys in 2012

- * Irish Environmental Common Agriculture Reform Policy document (WEB)
- * International Peat Society Database of peatlands where restoration has been carried out
- * Climate Change Bill
- * Peatlands Council National Raised Bog Management Approach
- * Kerry Wind Energy Strategy
- * Monaghan County Development Plan
- * Draft Guidelines for carrying out EIAs
- * National Peatlands Strategy
- * EPA Strategic Plan

policy issues: gas fracking, environmental law, genetically modified organisms and preparations for the Irish EU Presidency 2013.

Irish Peat Society (IrPS)/International Peat Society (IPS)

Dr Catherine O'Connell continues in her role as the Chair of the Irish Peat Society, which is the Irish National Committee of the International Peat Society.

Dr O'Connell attended the meeting of the National Committees of the International Peat Society in Stockholm, Sweden in June. This co-incided with the 14th International Peat Society Symposium which had the theme of Peatlands in Balance. Dr O'Connell presented an oral paper entitled *Irish Raised Bog Conservation* while Mr Tadhg O'Corcora presented a poster paper entitled: *The Lodge Bog Management Plan*. Both papers were published in the Symposium proceedings. During the symposium field excursions were organised to peatlands in Sweden and this provided the IPCC representatives with the opportunity to see pristine raised bogs in Sweden, to study peatland formation and to see how peatlands are interpreted for visitors.

In October the IrPS held its annual workshop and AGM meeting in Mayo. The theme of the two day event was *Managing Western Peatlands*. There were study tours of Srahduggan, an area of intact blanket bog within the Ballycroy National Park, the process of rehabilitation of former industrial peatland at Oweninny by Bord na Móna following the completion of peat extraction in 2003 and the establishment of the first wilderness park in Ireland in North Mayo by Coillte and the NPWS. Discussions were held in the field about the development of wind farms on industrial cutaway bogs. The seminar the following day continued with related themes.

Campaigning

Peatlands Council

IPCC continue to work with other stakeholders on the Peatlands Council. The Council is helping to find a solution to the issue of turf cutting on Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation and is also heavily involved in devising a Peatland Strategy for Ireland. Progress is being made on both fronts. By the year end 1763 farmers had signed up for financial compensation, 747 opted for relocation and 108 deliveries of turf were made. The Council received 430 submissions on the National Peatland Strategy. During the year a new chairman was appointed by Minister Jimmy Deenihan. Mr Seamus Boland of Irish Rural Link took up office in November and will guide the work of the Council going forward.

Policy Development

During the year IPCC made 10 policy submissions to Government and non Governmental bodies as shown in the table inset above.



Environmental Pillar of Social Partnership

IPCC are participating on the Environmental Pillar of Social Partnership together with most of the leading non governmental organisations in Ireland. Our representative attended five meetings during the year. We made submissions and voted on the following key

A Peatland Strategy for Ireland must have conservation and wise use of all peatland resources as its vision

IPCC 30 Years - International Bog Day

The Mayor of Kildare - Mr Michael 'Spike' Nolan officially launched the 30th birthday celebrations for IPCC on International Bog Day. A crowd of 200 friends of the bog from all over Ireland gathered to take part in the days events. The Dublin Falconry and Hawking Club displayed and flew a selection of beautiful birds of prey including Barn Owls, European Eagle Owl, Bengal Eagle Owl, Peregrine/Saker Falcon, Saker Falcon and Harris Hawk. Many friends of the bog got the opportunity to feed and handle the birds which was wonderful. There were talks from IPCC staff about the work we do in education,

conservation and research. The pond dipping activity for children was also a highlight of the day. Oliver Carney from Rathangan played the accordion while friends enjoyed picnics in the grounds. The day ended with a walk on Lodge Bog. Below is a selection of photographs taken by guests who joined IPCC at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and Lodge Bog to celebrate 30 years saving bogs.



Awareness, Education & Training

The Bog of Allen Nature Centre is a portal for IPCC's awareness, education and training programmes. IPCC's strength lies in the variety of educational programmes we offer in house and as part of our national outreach educational programme.

Visitor Attraction Experience

The Bog of Allen Nature Centre was invited to take part in a mentoring programme by Fáilte Ireland with a view to improving the visitor experience of peatlands with IPCC. A 72 hour programme resulted in an action plan being drawn up of short to long term goals to achieve. Staff developed four key messages to impart to visitors and undertook numerous changes to help orientate visitors on arrival and to encourage them to take action for bogs when they go home. We employed an Information Guide - Miss Kate Macnamara - to work with visitors at the centre and to ensure they get a unique experience of bogs.

Visitor research is being undertaken on an on-going basis which will help to guide future developments at the centre. On our web site we developed special visitor attraction pages and a "what to expect" movie to help guests get the most out of their visit. The bog of Allen Nature Centre has also been included on the Dublin Wicklow driving route which was launched by Fáilte Ireland towards the year end. In addition the nature centre is also included in the Network of Wetland Link International Centres. We undertook construction work developing a new exit to the gardens at the centre from the Nature Shop. This integrates the peat free gardens with the centre and provides for a more logical route for the visitor to take during their stay with us.

Group Visits to the Bog of Allen Nature Centre

41 groups visited the centre during the year involving 1310 visitors.

IPCC's Key Messages for Visitors to the Bog of Allen Nature Centre

- A: The bogs of Ireland are amazingly beautiful and exciting places to visit
- B: For centuries Irish people have developed a deep connection with peatlands
- C: The IPCC take action for Irish peatlands and their wildlife so as to ensure they are safeguarded in the future
- D: Irish bogs are important in a world context because of their unique biodiversity, their carbon and water stores, their heritage and inspiration and for human health and well-being.



A school group exploring the Bog Museum at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre led by Nuala Madigan





Nuala Madigan spent the day exchanging ideas with a group of educators from a Danish raised bog.



Young visitors made frog masks on summer camp.



Almost 300 records of frogs in Ireland were submitted to the IPCC database in 2013.

Children's Camps

The Nature Fun Summer Camp organised at the Nature Centre was attended by 8 children.

Schools Energy Workshops

IPCC delivered 20 Sustainable Energy Association of Ireland (SEAI) energy workshop days to primary schools as an outreach activity in 2012.

Heritage in Schools

As an outreach activity IPCC undertook 11 Heritage in Schools visits to schools in Kildare, Meath and Dublin. As part of this programme IPCC also delivered a workshop and field study course to trainee teachers in Marino College of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education in Rathmines, Dublin.

Information Stands

IPCC mounted information stands at the Irish Science Teachers Association AGM in Dublin, the Native Species Weekend in Dublin Zoo, the Harvest Festival in Wolfe Tone Quay, Dublin and the Family fun Day in Kildare County Council.

Lectures

IPCC staff made presentations during the year to visiting research groups from Trinity College, University College, Tralee Institute of Technology and to the Education team from the Lille Vildemose in Denmark.

Stop Food Waste

IPCC continued our work on the Stop Food Waste Initiative of the EPA as a sub-contractor. Further demonstration sites were opened in Mayo, Dublin, Wexford. IPCC manned stands at the Volvo Ocean Race, the Taste of Monaghan and the Feed 5000 in Dublin. Some of this work was filmed by Duncan Stewart for ECOEYE.

Guided Walks

Guided Walks and talks were given in Gaelscoil Carrick-on-Shannon, during Kiltrush Biodiversity Week, in liaison with Kildare Development Association, for the Féile Bhríde celebrations in Kildare Town, for Ecotourism in Kerry, with the Biodiversity bus in liaison with Kildare Town Fáilte and Cork Print Makers

Art Project. In addition a number of biodiversity walks were undertaken in liaison with Tidy Towns Groups in North Tipperary.

Open Days - Féile an Dulra

Open Days for the public included a Biodiversity Show in May, Environment Day in June, International Bog Day in July, Heritage Week Open Day in August and Culture Night in September.

Local Agenda Environmental Partnership Fund (LAEPF) Talks

The following local authorities supported IPCC through the LAEPF in 2012 Carlow County Council, Clare County Council, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Dun Laoire Rathdown County Council, Kildare County Council, Kilkenny County Council, Leitrim County Council, Limerick City Council, Limerick County Council, Louth County Council, Mayo County Council, Meath County Council, Monaghan County Council, North Tipperary County Council, Offaly County Council, Roscommon County Council, South Dublin County Council and Westmeath County Council.

Travelling Exhibition

IPCC's Bogland Exhibition was displayed in Edenderry Library for Heritage Week and in Athy Library for Christmas.

Weather Station

IPCC provided Met Éireann with temperature, humidity and rainfall measurements from our station in Lullymore throughout 2012. Our recording skills were increased during the year to include ground temperatures.

Garden Biodiversity Monitoring

IPCC submitted butterfly, breeding bird data and garden bird data recorded during the year to the National Biodiversity Data Centre, the Dublin Naturalists' Field Club and BirdWatch Ireland.

Hop To It Frog Survey 2012

IPCC received 278 frog records during the year. The database now holds 4372 records for the 32 counties of Ireland.

Communications & Publicity

Two issues of Peatland News were printed and circulated to supporters. One issue of Action for Bogs was published on the IPCC website for visitors to download.

The cessation of turf cutting issue created a lot of media locally and nationally. IPCC was included in a number of articles outlining differences of opinion. We featured a number of times on the RTE Drivetime programme regarding this issue.

IPCC rolled out a series of workshops during the year on the *Sphagnum* moss transfer method of raised bog restoration. These attracted media attention and IPCC were interviewed on RTE's *Mooney Goes Wild* Programme about this work.

Local Press gave good coverage to IPCC events in particular IPCC's thirty year anniversary.

Press releases issued during the year are listed in the table inset.

Website: www.ipcc.ie

IPCC's Chief Executive attended a training course on the development of web sites using Wordpress. With additional mentoring from the Communications Officer in the Irish Environmental Network we launched a brand new web site in July. The website is designed to meet the needs of intending visitors to the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and those seeking information about peatlands in Ireland or about the Save the Bogs Campaign.

What's So Special About Peat?

IPCC printed, published and circulated a leaflet on the value of peatlands to Ireland. This was part of an information campaign targeted at stakeholders in Irish peatlands.



Supporters & Volunteers

IPCC retained and recruited new volunteers to the organisation in 2012. Volunteers from our nature reserves team were involved in the *Sphagnum* moss trials, research projects on Lodge Bog and in the butterfly surveys on Lullymore West Bog. In addition volunteers continue to play a vital role in IPCC's collectors appeal which saw them sorting through over 100 kg of used stamps during the year.

8

- * Hop to It - Join the 2012 Irish Frog Watch 1/2012
- * IPCC celebrates 30 years saving bogs 2/2012
- * IPCC Says Get Tough on Turf Cutting Minister 4/2012
- * IPCC Celebrating the Importance of Peat to Ireland and the World 5/2012
- * Five steps that have the potential to restore living bogs in Ireland 6/2012
- * IPCC welcomes new information guide 6/2012
- * Celebrating 30 years of the IPCC on International Bog Day 7/2012
- * New Technique will Help to Restore Damaged Raised Bog in Ireland 8/2012
- * Pedal for Peat's Sake 9/2012
- * *Sphagnum* moss bog restoration comes to Roscommon 9/2012
- * Giving Girley Bog, Co. Meath A Helping Hand 10/2012
- * Choose a Good Natured Gift this Christmas 11/2012
- * Bogs in the Kitchen: Festive Bog Cranberry Recipes 12/2012

IPCC's voluntary committee of management attended seven meetings throughout the year.

Annie Capell from the Patagonia Store in San Francisco undertook to cycle around the bogs of Ireland raising awareness and funds for the IPCC. Her Pedal for Peat Sake trip was a great success.

IPCC's volunteer contribution is valued at the level of five additional full time staff. We are very appreciative of all that they do.

Fundraising

IPCC' loyal supporters were very generous during the year supporting our Spring Appeal focusing on projects to strengthen our knowledge of raised bog conservation and management. During the year they renewed their subscriptions to the Save the Bogs Campaign, supported our Raffle and Gift Catalogue and actively engaged in donating stamps to our collectors appeal. At the year end supporters gave generously to IPCC's ongoing work through its membership of the Peatlands Council on the development National Peatland Strategy for Ireland. IPCC are grateful to James and Marilyn Flack who donated a beautiful painting which featured as our Christmas Card and to Eoin O'Flynn of Flogas who sponsored the printing of the Wild Ireland Calendar 2013.



Annie Capell visited Fenor Bog as part of her Pedal for Peat's Sake Challenge.

Thanks

Companies, Agencies & Organisations

Ballymaloe Country
Relish
Bog Standard
Bord na Móna
Carlow County Council
Clare County Council
Coda Wildlife Trust
Comex McKinnon Ltd
Cork City Council
Cork County Council
Don Conroy
CRH plc
Department of
Environment,
Community & Local
Government
Drehid
Dublin Zoo
Dun Laoire Rathdown
County Council
EPA
European Union
Commission
Fáilte Ireland
FH Wetland Systems
Ltd
Flogas
Fota Wildlife Park
Fruit Hill Farms
Green Heat Ltd
Heritage Council
Irish National
Teachers
Organisation
Irish Environmental
Network
Irish Peat Society
Irish Science
Teachers
Association
Jackie & Ed Keilthy
Jewellery
Kildare County Council
Kildare Leader
Partnership
Kilkenny County
Council
KPMG
Leitrim County Council
Limerick City Council
Limerick County
Council
Louth County Council
Marsh Christian Trust
Mayo County Council
Meath County Council
Met Éireann
Monaghan County
Council

National Biodiversity
Data Centre
Nightpark Nursery
Kildare
NPWS
Oakdale Trust
Offaly County Council
Paddy Power
Peatlands Council
Roscommon County
Council
Sanaura
SEAI
Smurfit Kappa Group
South Dublin County
Council
Sperrins Tourism
Sustainable Energy
Authority of
Ireland
Tipperary North
County Council
University College
Dublin
Walker Books

Individuals

Ruth Blackith
Daniel Bevans
Susan Scott
Catherine O'Connell
Rosemary Fennell
Susan Minet
Roger & Olivia
Goodwillie
Sean Ó Fearghail &
Gwynn Grace
Peter Hunt
John Walsh &
Margaret Francis
Miriam Tarbett
Michael Bradley
Wendy Millington
Mr & Mrs M.J.
Murphy
Clare Horan
Niall Mac Coitir
Luke O'Brien
Michael Tubridy
Michael O'Connell
Philip O'Reilly
Christine Walker
Bernadette Power
Jenni Roche

Legacies and In Memoriam Gifts

Mary J. Carey
Margaret Hamilton
Reid
David Humphreys

Guy Millington
Ken Young

Volunteers

Pat Bell
Rita Byrne
Annie Capell
Oliver Carney
Kieran Connolly
Tom Doyle
David Dwyer
John Fearn
James & Marilyn
Flack
Michael Galvin
Wilbert Gelens
Gwynn Grace
Jesmond Harding
Martin Kelly
James Keegan
John Kiernan
Heather Lally
Ann MacCaulay
John Madigan
Ruth McGrath
Martin Middleton
Hugh McMahan
Leslie Jo Meyerhoff
Ruth Murphy
Miles Newman
Mary O'Connell
Seán O'Farrell
Sean Ó Fearghail
Pierce O'Flynn
Michael O'Leary
Ann Reynolds
Jenni Roche
Stephen Sheridan

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Bernie Scanlon

