



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Greater focus needed on biodiversity conservation and restoration in the fight against climate change**

The Climate Change Advisory Council has said that funding and action on biodiversity conservation and restoration is totally inadequate and underestimates the role of biodiversity in limiting both climate change impacts and the grave risk that ecosystem collapse poses to Ireland's food security, health and well-being and economic development.

The Council, in its Annual Review on biodiversity welcomed some progress with increased legal obligations and targets, however, additional financial supports with accelerated action and implementation are urgently needed.

The Council has also said that a holistic approach is required to tackle climate change. This must be done with aligned policies, targets, practical actions and common timeframes across mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity conservation actions.

Recommendations that the Council have made include setting ambitious targets and costed measures under the National Nature Restoration Plan, an urgent increase in funding for the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan and the development of a credible plan to protect at least of 30% of land and sea by 2030.

Commenting the Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Council Marie Donnelly said, "Financial support needs to be stepped up, now, so that we can halt and reverse biodiversity loss through the successful implementation of the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan and the pending National Restoration Plan.

"The adoption of nature-based approaches must be scaled up to deliver co-benefits for biodiversity and climate. To deliver on this Government needs to create an integrated land use strategy to support climate, biodiversity and water goals, based on comprehensive spatial data.

"This will require a collaborative approach across multiple departments and agencies to oversee the implementation of nature-based solutions within a range of sectors including urban development and regeneration, flood prevention, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and marine and coastal management.

Professor Yvonne Buckley, Climate Change Advisory Council member, added "We need to optimise the role of ecosystem restoration in reducing emissions, sequestering carbon and improving resilience to climate change. Peatland restoration is an obvious example but many other ecosystems need to be protected and restored, particularly in coastal and upland areas.

“It is crucially important that we understand and adapt to the impacts of climate change on ecosystems and the Government in collaboration with the broader research community should develop a dedicated research programme to deliver this.”

The Climate Change Advisory Council has also said that Government needs to support farmers with the long-term and results-based financial support necessary to enable them to adopt nature-friendly practices and enhance the condition of biodiversity on their farms.

ENDS

If you have any questions or are seeking further comment, please do not hesitate to contact:

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NOTE TO EDITOR:

This year, the Climate Change Advisory Council has published Sectoral Reviews throughout the year, culminating in October to complete the Annual Review 2024. The final publications are due to be released as follows (and may be subject to change):

- Assessment of Inventories and Projections 2024 – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024
- Cross Sectoral Review 2024 – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024