



DRAFT NORTHERN IRELAND PEATLAND STRATEGY 2021-2040

Summary of Consultation Responses December 2021

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Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

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Further copies of this report can be obtained as follows:

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This document can also be accessed via the Department's Website at:

<http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk>

1. Introduction

Between 9th June 2021 and 1st September 2021, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs consulted on a Draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040. The consultation exercise was authorised at Ministerial level.

The results of the consultation have been analysed and collated in this document and will inform the final published version of the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy. This summary report is being published on the Department's website and will be made available in other formats on request.

2. Background

In Northern Ireland, our peatlands are of enormous importance to the stability and general well-being of our environment. In addition to the ecosystem services they provide, peatlands can provide a nature-based solution to climate change – they can store and sequester carbon, with implications for the regulation of our climate. There is now an increasing focus on peatland conservation and restoration and an appreciation of the ecosystem services that they provide.

To provide these services however, they need to be in a healthy state. Currently, most of our peatlands have been degraded or in poor condition. As such they are acting as carbon sources and releasing greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, contributing to biodiversity loss, and have reduced capacity in water quality and regulation.

It is this context that DAERA are developing a Peatland Strategy for Northern Ireland, reflecting the commitments in the UK Peatland Strategy and New Decade, New Approach document; the latter recognising the need for a coordinated and strategic approach to the challenge of Climate Change across government. The Strategy will set the direction of travel over the next 2 decades and beyond, and will provide a framework for both conserving our intact peatlands and a peatland restoration programme.

3. Consultation

The Department launched the consultation on the draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040 on 9 June 2021. It was open for comment for twelve weeks, closing on 1st September 2021.

The consultation was hosted on Citizen Space with access via the Department's website, with copies of the Consultee Letter, the Draft Peatland Strategy Consultation Document, the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Screening Document, the Rural Needs Impact Assessment and the Habitat Regulations Assessment made available.

The consultation consisted of a series of questions on the Scope, Vision and Aim of the strategy, in addition to questions on the Strategic Objectives and Actions.

4. Responses to the Consultation

In total, 67 substantive responses were received before the consultation deadline. One response (Local Government Organisation) was received after the consultation closed. Respondents to the consultation are listed in Appendix 1.

- 15 responses from Individuals
- 14 responses from representatives of the Environmental Sector
- 10 responses from the Horticultural Industry
- 5 responses from Local Government
- 4 responses from Community Organisations
- 4 responses from Businesses
- 4 responses from the Agricultural Industry
- 3 responses from the Renewables Industry
- 3 responses from Professional/Chartered Institutes
- 2 responses from Academia
- 1 response from Forestry Organisations
- 1 response from Utility Companies
- 1 response from Elected Representatives

5. Overview of Responses to the Draft NI Peatland Strategy 2021-2040

Responses to the Draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040 were largely positive, with the majority of respondents affirming that they were content with the Scope, Vision and Aim of the Strategy. The majority of respondents were supportive of the Strategic Objectives and Actions proposed. The Department has taken on board all comments made in the consultation responses and in light of these, will amend the final Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy, where appropriate.

5.1 Scope of the Strategy

The consultation sought views on the following:

“The scope of this strategy includes peatland with semi-natural vegetation and peat soils that can be prioritised for restoration to peatland with semi-natural vegetation, whether publicly or privately owned”. Do you agree with the Scope of the Strategy?

- 68% of respondents agreed and 32% disagreed with the Scope of the Strategy.

Comments received indicated that the scope of the Strategy should include all peatland and peatland soils that could be potentially restored and that the word prioritised should be removed. Alternatively, concern was raised over the inclusion of peat soils within the scope of the strategy, given that some peat soils may be highly productive land and as such, are commercially important.

5.2 Vision of the Strategy

The consultation sought views on the following:

“The vision of this Strategy is to ensure that all semi-natural peatlands are protected, managed and where possible, prioritised for restoration, so that they can maintain their natural functions, biodiversity and ecosystem services”. Do you agree with the Vision of the Strategy?

- 60% of respondents agreed and 40% disagreed with the Vision of the Strategy.

Comments received reflected the view that the vision should be aspirational, and that there should be a strong commitment to the conservation and restoration of all peatlands in Northern Ireland, given the climate and biodiversity crises. A number of respondents stated that the vision was unrealistic in that there may potentially be areas of peatland where restoration would be neither feasible nor cost effective.

5.3 Aim of the Strategy

The consultation sought views on the following:

“The overarching aim of this Strategy will be to ensure that, where possible, all semi-natural peatlands in Northern Ireland are conserved or restored to healthy, functioning ecosystems by 2040 and that the ecosystem services that they provide are acknowledged and appreciated”.

- 60% of respondents agreed and 40% disagreed with the Aim of the Strategy.

Comments received reflected that there was general agreement on the aim of the strategy, although a number of respondents stated that it needed to be strengthened, particularly through the removal of the qualification of “where possible” and that the date suggested of having peatlands restored to functioning ecosystems by 2040 was too distant and needed to be brought forward. An alternative view was put forward that it was too ambitious and excessively burdensome to return all peatland to functioning ecosystem by 2040 and that there was the potential for conflicting land use choices.

5.4 Strategic Objective 1 - Conserve peatlands & prevent degradation

Target: By 2040, all peatlands supporting semi-natural vegetation are being managed for their peatland biodiversity and ecosystem function.

The consultation sought views on agreement with Strategic Objective 1 and whether the priority actions listed would ensure that Objective 1 is achieved.

- 64% of respondents agreed and 36% disagreed with the Strategic Objective 1.
- 48% of respondents agreed and 52% of respondents disagreed that the priority actions listed would ensure that Strategic Objective 1 is achieved.

In general, respondents expressed support for restoration of all degraded areas peatland, not just sites with semi-natural vegetation. In addition, respondents viewed this objective as urgent and that the timescales should reflect that urgency.

Priority Action 1: Peatland Register

The majority of respondents agreed that the compilation of a peatland asset register was an urgent and necessary action to enable implementation of the peatland strategy. A number of respondents stated that it would be important to include all semi-natural peatland, afforested peatland and peat soils in the asset register.

Priority Action 2: Management Plans for Designated Sites

Respondents were generally supportive of the development of Management Plans for SACs and ASSIs but reiterated the necessity for rapid and well-resourced implementation of the plans, resulting in significant and demonstrable improvement in the state of peatland habitats and the biodiversity which they support. A number of respondents stated that there would need to be an increased focus on conserving and restoring peatland sites outside the Designated Site Network. Since most of the upland areas in Northern Ireland are farmed, the point was made that adequate funding that rewards farmers for nature friendly farming practices was essential.

Priority Action 3: Site Designation - Peatland ASSIs

There were opposing views on the proposed designation of additional peatland ASSIs with a number of respondents supportive of further ASSI designation, with the proviso that any new sites are managed effectively and adequately resourced. An organisation representing the Agricultural Industry was not supportive of further site designation. A number of respondents emphasised the necessity for engagement and a partnership approach (Co-design) with landowners and rural communities prior to any further site designation programme.

Priority Action 4: Peat Extraction & Use in Horticulture

Respondents were supportive of the need to carry out a comprehensive review of peat extraction in Northern Ireland (both commercial and turbary) and the use of peat in the horticulture industry but cautioned that the review would need to be carried out promptly, take into account the views of key stakeholders and that any

recommendations proposed are acted upon without delay. A number of respondents questioned the need for a review of peat extraction given that the Climate Change Committee has already recommended that a ban on peat extraction and sale be enacted by 2023.

In addition, it was suggested that the issue of turbarry rights and commercial extraction should be considered separately in order to allow any actions proposed around commercial extraction and peat use in horticulture to be progressed in line with other jurisdictions. Submissions from the Horticulture Industry indicated that while they were supportive of a planned and manageable transition from the use of peat, this needed to be carried out on a realistic timescale and with support from government.

Priority Action 5: Cultural Heritage

Respondents welcomed and encouraged increased focus on the cultural and heritage value of peatlands. A number of respondents stated that working in partnership and empowering local communities would be a necessary step in achieving a positive outcome for peatlands.

Priority Action 6: Upland Management

Respondents welcomed the production of a Position Statement on Upland Management. Given the complexity of issues in the uplands, early engagement with key stakeholders was seen as essential. A number of organisations volunteered their time and experience in order to ensure an evidence-led Upland Management Position Statement.

Priority Action 7: Wildfires

It was agreed that wildfires can be catastrophic for nature and have a severe impact on communities. Respondents welcomed the proposal to develop a co-ordinated strategic approach to the issue of wildfires and also the creation of a more resilient landscape, given the increasing risk due to climate change.

Priority Action 8: Ammonia Strategy

Since the majority of Northern Ireland's protected sites and priority habitats outside the designated site network currently exceed critical levels of nitrogen deposition and ammonia emissions, there was broad agreement on the need for an ambitious Ammonia Strategy and comments received supported its urgent publication and well-resourced implementation.

Priority Action 9: Policy Integration

The majority of respondents agreed that, given the wide range of land uses that impact on peatland habitats, policy integration across local and central government was essential. In relation to peat extraction and siting of energy infrastructure it was highlighted that strategic and local planning policy needed to be reviewed and reformed if necessary. A number of respondents encouraged agriculture policy reform to reward farmers for managing peatland habitats for the provision of ecosystem services that they can deliver.

5.5 Strategic Objective 2 - Restoration of degraded areas to functioning peatland ecosystems (designated & non-designated sites)

Target: By 2030, degraded peatland habitats are prioritised for restoration to favourable conservation status. By 2040, all high priority degraded peatlands will be under restoration management.

The consultation sought views on agreement with Strategic Objective 2 and whether the priority actions listed would ensure that Objective 2 is achieved.

- 78% of respondents agreed and 22% disagreed with the Strategic Objective 2.
- 52% of respondents agreed and 48% of respondents disagreed that the priority actions listed would ensure that Strategic Objective 2 is achieved.

A number of respondents stated that although they agreed in principle with the Objective and Target, it was necessary for all degraded peatland habitat to be restored and that more ambition in terms of timescale was required.

Priority Action 10: Peatland Restoration Sites & Framework for Investment

This action was supported although a number of respondents commented that sites to be restored should include all degraded peatland sites, including afforested sites. It was suggested that prioritisation of sites for restoration should be based on a clear decision making framework, delivering maximum benefit and that prioritisation be completed by the end of 2022, with restoration activity commencing as soon as possible after that. It was highlighted that the Climate Change Committee has recommended that all upland peatland ASSIs should be under restoration management by 2023 at the latest.

Priority Action 11: Restoration Plans for Sites outside Designated Site Network

This action was supported with a number of respondents commenting that restoration plans should be prepared for all degraded peatland habitat outside the designated site network and provided with sufficient resources to ensure successful implementation. It was stated that the advice and input from local communities, landowners and relevant stakeholders was crucial to the success of restoration plan development and implementation.

Priority Action 12: Funding for Peatland Restoration Projects

This action was supported by respondents who welcomed securing funding for peatland restoration activities and suggested that a mix of public and private funding would be the most sustainable model. There was support for increased funding allocation from the Northern Ireland Executive, on a par with other Devolved Administrations, given the public benefits that result from healthy peatlands. A number of respondents indicated that peatland restoration is a capital-intensive operation and that a substantial amount of sustained, multi-annual funding would be required, including funding for capacity building among contractors.

Priority Action 13: Planning approvals for peatland extraction sites

Respondents welcomed the proposal to review existing planning approvals for peat extraction sites to ensure conditions are discharged correctly or incentivise restoration

where planning conditions are absent. There was support for revision of strategic and local planning policy to enable a presumption against granting planning permission for peat extraction and inclusion of a Net Gain Assessment. There was also support for adequate resourcing within local authorities and Department of Infrastructure to ensure this action was achieved. To ensure a Just Transition for employees in the peat extraction industry, respondents stated that it would be necessary for Government to support retraining and redeployment to work in peatland restoration or reskilling to avail of alternative employment opportunities.

Priority Action 14: Restoration of Afforested Peatland

Respondents supported the development and implementation of an ambitious plan for removal of forestry from deep peat (particularly from water catchments) and re-wetting, although there was acknowledgement that this would need to take place over a period of time and utilise existing research and evidence. It was highlighted that since a significant proportion of the state forest is on peat soils, there was a major opportunity for DAERA to demonstrate leadership in restoring afforested peatland, with associated benefits for biodiversity and carbon storage and sequestration. It was also suggested that the removal of forestry from peatland should be the subject of its own strategy.

There was also support for the cessation of replanting on previously afforested peatland with a focus instead on tree planting on mineral soils and the use of native broadleaved trees. Respondents highlighted that a number of bird species had been disadvantaged by afforestation of the uplands and that restoring afforested peatlands would be essential for improving these species' prospects. The detrimental impact of conifer plantations on the unique scenery and landscape of upland areas such as the Sperrins was raised with support expressed for removal of forestry and further development of a high value tourism industry.

Priority Action 15: Peatland Demonstration Sites

There was support for the establishment of peatland restoration demonstration sites, resulting in better engagement with local communities and with results used to influence local decision making. It was also suggested that providing examples of successfully restored sites can help farmers and other stakeholders understand the

wide range of benefits that healthy, restored peatlands can provide and inspire them to take similar action on their own land.

5.6 Strategic Objective 3 - Supporting Sustainable Peatland Management

Target: By 2040 – High Priority degraded peatlands in Northern Ireland are under sustainable management.

The consultation sought views on agreement with Strategic Objective 3 and whether the priority actions listed would ensure that Objective 3 is achieved.

- 68% of respondents agreed and 32% disagreed with the Strategic Objective 3.
- 38% of respondents agreed and 62% of respondents disagreed that the priority actions listed would ensure that Strategic Objective 3 is achieved.

A number of respondents commented that the timescales for this objective were not ambitious enough and suggested that the target would need to be revised.

Priority Action 16: Land Management schemes

Respondents were in favour of the development of future agricultural policy which supported and rewarded landowners for restoring peatland, delivering nature friendly but economically viable farming practices and providing public goods such as carbon sequestration, improved water and air quality and flood risk mitigation. In addition, it was seen as essential that any such support must have long-term commitment from Government.

Priority Action 17: Practical infrastructure for delivery of peatland restoration

Respondents acknowledged that considerable expertise currently exists to deliver peatland restoration in Northern Ireland but supported the ambition to increase capacity and highlighted the need to harness landowner expertise and ensure a Just Transition, particularly for those currently employed in the peat extraction industry.

Priority Actions 18 & 19: Funding for peatland restoration

Respondents stated that since peatland restoration has relevance across the Northern Ireland Executive, clarity on funding mechanisms and the provision of adequate funding would be vital in ensuring progress. Concern was raised about an over-reliance on non-governmental funding as this introduces an element of uncertainty. It was acknowledged that funding landscape-scale projects with multiple owners offered an excellent return in terms of carbon storage, flooding prevention and improving habitat condition.

Priority Action 20: Sustainable Land Use

Respondents supported the delivery of sustainable, integrated approach to land use and encouraged the development of outcome-based, flexible management options in partnership with landowners and the development of long-term management plans.

Priority Actions 21, 22 & 23: Reduction and cessation of the extraction and use of peat

There were conflicting responses to Actions 21-23 around the issue of peat extraction and the use of peat products. A number of respondents supported the swift introduction of a comprehensive ban on the use, sale and import of peat (in line with Climate Change Committee recommendations). There were also strong views on the need for an immediate ban on the use of peat by public bodies and peat extraction on publicly-owned land.

Responses from the Horticulture Industry stated that the industry's use of peat is on a downward trend and there was support for the ambition to phase out the use of peat within a feasible timescale. Concerns were raised with regard to the economic impact of the cessation of the use of peat, supply and sustainability of peat replacements, the changes in infrastructure required, the need for innovation and knowledge transfer in developing peat alternatives, the urgent need for government support in transitioning the industry away from the use of peat and the provision of consumer education to encourage the use of responsibly sourced growing media.

5.7 Strategic Objective 4 – Knowledge Sharing & Research

Target: By 2025, stakeholders understand the need for peatland conservation and restoration and have the capacity to deliver the Strategic Objectives and Actions contained within the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy.

The consultation sought views on agreement with Strategic Objective 4 and whether the priority actions listed would ensure that Objective 4 is achieved.

- 80% of respondents agreed and 20% disagreed with the Strategic Objective 4.
- 64% of respondents agreed and 36% of respondents disagreed that the priority actions listed would ensure that Strategic Objective 4 is achieved.

There was support in general for building stakeholder understanding and capacity but comments received indicated that the need for this was urgent and immediate and should build on the knowledge and skills already available.

Priority Action 24: Knowledge Exchange Network

Respondents supported the establishment of a platform for sharing ideas, best practice and the latest research between peatland stakeholders, both on a Northern Ireland, all-island and further afield basis as it was suggested that it would help to foster collaboration between practitioners and landowners.

Priority Actions 25 and 26: Training

These actions were strongly supported as it was recognised that upskilling and building capacity in peatland conservation and restoration techniques was critical to delivering on an ambitious peatland restoration programme. To ensure a Just Transition, respondents stated that re-training employees involved in peat extraction and the development of “green jobs” in rural areas should be prioritised. There was also support for increased knowledge transfer within the horticulture industry and leisure gardeners to encourage the adoption of peat alternatives.

Priority Actions 27, 28 and 29: Research

Respondents supported further research into the effects of a changing climate on peatlands and the contribution of peatland restoration in climate change mitigation. There was a call for more applied research, particularly in relation to future agricultural policy and land use and management and more engagement with stakeholders to help shape the research agenda and ongoing policy development. There was awareness of the already extensive research undertaken in other jurisdictions and support for the use of evidence already obtained to inform decision making here. Further research into the effects of nitrogen deposition was welcomed with the caveat that research should focus on solutions.

Priority Action 30: Evidence Gaps

There was support for further work to both identify and fill evidence gaps with resources targeted to where current scientific knowledge is inadequate. It was suggested that funding for pilot projects would help to inform the development of the strategy and allow for a locally informed and adaptive approach.

Priority Action 31: Evaluation and Monitoring

Respondents stated that it was critical to monitor and evaluate both the success of peatland restoration activities and the peatland restoration programme, with regular transparent and accessible reports on progress. Citizen Science projects were seen as both valuable in supplying information and also as a tool for public engagement.

Priority Action 32: Research into alternative growing media

The proposal to facilitate research into alternative growing media was welcomed in that it could assist in the transition away from the use of peat. The Horticulture Industry supported the need for this action to be adequately funded and progressed rapidly, building on the current research across the UK and further afield. It was suggested that research efforts should focus on unresolved issues of critical importance to the local industry and research into the barriers to uptake of peat alternatives.

5.8 Strategic Objective 5 – Communication, Education & Access

Target: Peatlands are recognised for their unique biodiversity and ecosystem services provision.

The consultation sought views on agreement with Strategic Objective 5 and whether the priority actions listed would ensure that Objective 5 is achieved.

- 86% of respondents agreed and 14% disagreed with the Strategic Objective 5.
- 74% of respondents agreed and 26% of respondents disagreed that the priority actions listed would ensure that Strategic Objective 5 is achieved.

Respondents agreed that the understanding and appreciation of peatlands in Northern Ireland was limited and that there needed to be enhanced communication of the wider value of peatlands, particularly the provision of ecosystem services. Access needed to be sensitively managed in consultation with landowners, to ensure that nature is protected from disturbance.

Priority Action 33: Peatland Communications

Respondents supported the establishment of a long-term, well-funded communications campaign to both boost the appreciation and knowledge of the role of peatlands in providing ecosystem services and also to help create connections between landowners, communities and their local landscape and biodiversity. Respondents also called for effective engagement with both the horticultural industry and amateur users to support the transition away from the use of peat products. A number of respondents stated that a communications campaign should begin immediately and run concurrently with peatland restoration activities.

Priority Actions 34 and 35 Access for Recreation and Education

There was qualified support for increasing access to peatlands with the caveat that installation of access facilities may not be desirable or feasible for every site and it must only take place with agreement from the landowner. Respondents raised issues around potential damage to very sensitive sites and that there may need to be restrictions on access at particular times of year e.g. bird breeding season. Issues

were also raised around disturbance to livestock and increased littering and anti-social behaviour. Support for a scoping exercise to assess the recreation and educational potential of our peatlands was also expressed with a view to securing managed access to appropriate peatland sites for recreation and education.

5.9 Strategic Objective 6 – Governance, Implementation & Funding

Target: The necessary structures are in place to deliver on the Strategic Objectives and Actions contained within the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy.

The consultation sought views on agreement with Strategic Objective 6 and whether the priority actions listed would ensure that Objective 6 is achieved.

- 94% of respondents agreed and 6% disagreed with the Strategic Objective 6.
- 70% of respondents agreed and 30% of respondents disagreed that the priority actions listed would ensure that Strategic Objective 6 is achieved.

Respondents commented that there was urgency in progressing a governance mechanism for the strategy, developing an implementation plan and establishing a forum for engaging with stakeholders, as this was viewed as fundamental to being able to deliver the actions necessary for peatland conservation and restoration.

Priority Action 36: Implementation Plan & Reporting Framework

Respondents encouraged the development of an implementation plan and reporting framework for the peatland strategy by 2022 at the latest with measurable targets, milestones, delivery partners and costings clearly identified. There was strong support for a secure and long-term funding framework, in proportion to the funding for peatland conservation and restoration allocated by other Devolved Administrations. Reliance on grant funding was not viewed as an appropriate or sustainable way forward.

Priority Action 37: Peatland Partnership

The establishment of a stakeholder group was supported by respondents although this was conditional on adequate resourcing being provided and representative membership, particularly from communities, landowners and industry, in addition to

environmentalists. Independence of the group from Government was seen as essential, as was an influential and authoritative role. There was a recommendation to involve the stakeholder group in the development of the Implementation Plan. Scoping of alternative delivery models was also advised. The proposal that progress with implementing the peatland strategy would be reported to both the DAERA Minister and the Northern Ireland Executive was welcomed.

Priority Action 38: Review of Progress.

Respondents suggested that any proposed review of progress was an essential element in the implementation of the Peatland Strategy provided there was a commitment to act on any recommendations arising from the review. Reporting on 3 year intervals was viewed as adequate, although a 5 year reporting interval was also suggested.

Priority Action 39: Funding for SAC Management Plans and Management Plans for Sites outside the Designated Sites Network

There was acknowledgement that DAERA was producing Management Plans for SACs but respondents proposed development of restoration plans for the significant amount of peatland not within the Designated Site Network and that this needed to be considered as a matter of priority. Secure, long-term funding was a necessity for peatland restoration both within and outside the Designated Site Network.

Priority Action 40: Long-term funding and restoration in partnership with communities

Respondents asserted that local community ownership of a peatland conservation and restoration programme was vital, with communities included in both the planning and delivery phase of any restoration projects to secure buy-in and enhanced community understanding of the importance of peatlands. A long-term funding commitment was viewed as essential.

Priority Action 41: Peatland Code

There was support for increasing the number of Peatland Code projects, though it was cautioned that this should not be seen as a substitute for government funding for peatland conservation and restoration.

6. Conclusion

The Department has considered all comments received and will update the draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040 where appropriate.

Appendix 1 – List of Respondents (in alphabetical order)

Steven Agnew – RenewableNI

Rebecca Allen – Northern Ireland Water

Victor Allister

Derek Anderson – North Antrim Hills Wildlife & Conservation

Gerard Beatty – Flyovers Enterprise

Danielle Begley – Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Thomas Bell – Clyde Shanks on behalf of Bulrush Horticulture Ltd.

Neil Bragg – GMA UK & Substrate Associates Ltd

Victoria Brown – A Greener NI

Aidan Campbell – Rural Community Network

Malachy Campbell – Northern Ireland Environment Link

Martin Carey – Mourne Heritage Trust

Eileen Cassidy – NIAPA

Robin Cathcart – Scottish Power Renewables

Sean Clarke – Broughderg Area Development Association

Amber Connett – Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management

Jemima Cooper – Institute of Chartered Foresters

Chris Corrigan – Butterfly Conservation

Julie Corry – Fermanagh & Omagh District Council

Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC)

Christine Doherty – Derry & Strabane District Council

Peter Donnelly – Horticulture Forum NI

Seamus Donnelly

Thomas Rhys Dunn – Horticultural Trades Association

Ian Garner – Ulster Wildlife

Stephen Gordon – Fern Hill Nurseries

John Hardy

Nichola Hughes – Sustainable NI

William Irvine – Deputy President, Ulster Farmers Union

Tony Johnston – NI Farm Forestry

Emma Kelly – Turley on behalf of Dalradian Gold Ltd.

Victoria Magreehan – The National Trust
Orla Maguire – Belfast City Council
John Martin - RSPB
William Montgomery – Montgomery Nurseries
Cormac McAleer
Vincent McAlinden
Fiona McCool – Friends of the Earth
Neville McKee
Trea McLernon
Adrian Morrow – Irish Grouse Conservation Trust
Geoff Newell
Geoff Newell – Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon District Council
Ciaran O’ Connor – Sinn Fein
David O’Connor
Conor O’Gorman – British Association for Shooting and the Conservation (BASC)
Fidelma O’Kane – Save Our Sperrins
Grainne O’Neill – St Columb’s Park House
Alastair Onion – Motorhome Craic
Clive Phair – Premier Garden Plants
Jonathan Piddick – Nature Friendly Farming Network
Liz Port
Caoimhe Quinn
Hugh Quinn – Low Country Native Honey Bee Association
Professor JR Rao – AFBI
Laura Roddy – ABO Wind NI Ltd.
Patrick Rowland
Mrs M.E. Scroggy – Bali-Hai Mail Order Nursery
James Spillane – Westland Horticulture Ltd.
Professor Graeme Swindles – The Queen’s University of Belfast
William Taylor – Farmers for Action
Siobhan Thompson
Doug Thomson – Grower’s NI
Colm Warren – Natural World Products Ltd.
Rachel Woods

Roisin Willmott – RTPI NI

David – Private

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