

County Tipperary **Biodiversity Action Plan**

2025 - 2030
Discussion Paper



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



*“Nature is our biggest ally,
and greatest inspiration”*

- David Attenborough

What is Biodiversity?

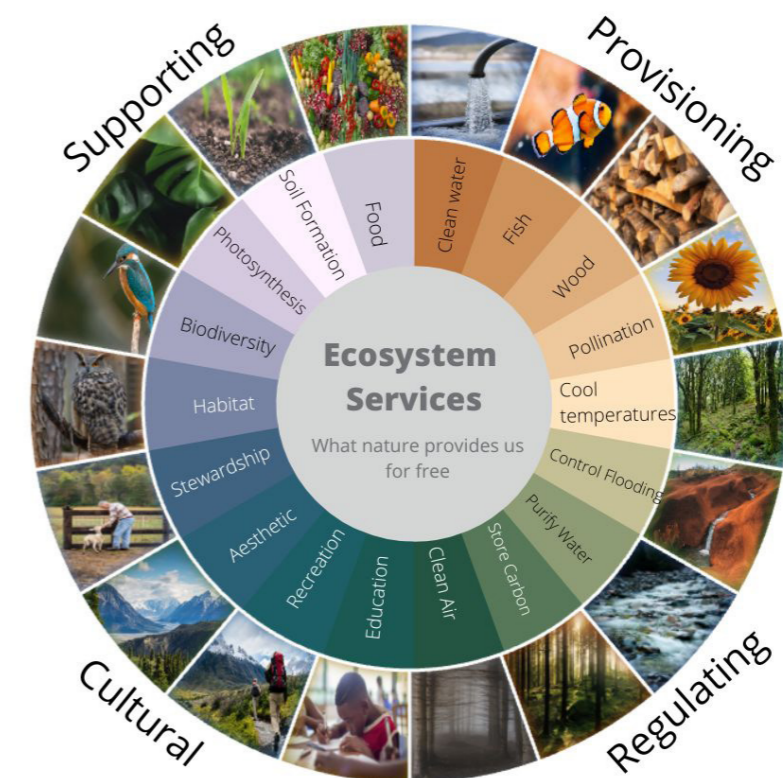
In simple terms, biodiversity or biological diversity is the variety of all living things on earth and includes:

- Genetic diversity (genes)
- Specific diversity (Species)
- Ecological diversity (ecosystems)

Biodiversity, therefore, includes everything from microorganisms, insects, birds, mammals, amphibians, plants and fungi, to larger habitats and ecosystems such as woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, bogs, rivers, lakes and mountains.

Why does Biodiversity matter?

Biodiversity provides us with essential ecosystem services including clean air, food, water purification, climate regulation, soil formation, pollination of crops, disease control, pest control, fuel, recreation and medicine. It is estimated that global value of the services provided by biodiversity is \$140 trillion per year with the value of ecosystem services in Ireland alone being €2.6 billion annually.





Protection of Biodiversity in Tipperary

The Wildlife Acts 1976–2023 are the principle mechanism for the protection of wildlife in Ireland, providing legislation for the protection of wild birds, mammals, amphibians and listed plants.

Additionally, under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, habitats of EU importance are protected as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) and Special Protected Areas (SPA's), collectively, these sites form what is known as the Natura 2000 network.



Biodiversity in Co. Tipperary

County Tipperary is home to a diverse range of habitats including peatlands, wetlands, uplands, woodland, grassland, lakes, rivers and streams.

This diverse range of habitats supports many species of local, national and international importance. Protected species in Tipperary include Freshwater Pearl Mussel, White-Clawed Crayfish, Salmon, Otter, Twaite Shad, Brook Lamprey, River Lamprey and Hen Harrier. Additionally, wetland sites within Tipperary support nationally important numbers of wintering and breeding waterbirds.





Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's) are sites in Ireland, which are considered important for habitats or for species of plants and animals whose habitats require protection. NHA's are protected under the Wildlife Amendment Act 2000. Locally important sites for biodiversity, which occur outside of the Natura 2000 network or NHA's, provide vital 'stepping stone' habitat or 'connectivity' between the network of protected sites. The importance of these 'undesigned' sites is acknowledged in the Tipperary County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's)	Special Protected Areas (SPA's)	Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's)
Anglesea Rd SAC	Lough Derg Shannon SPA	Arraghmore Bog NHA
Ballyduff / Clonfinane Bog SAC	River Little Brosna Callows SPA	Bleanbeg Bog NHA
Bollingbrook Hill SAC	Slievefelim to Silvermines SPA	Cangort Bog NHA
Galtee Mountains SAC		Lorrha Bog NHA
Keeper Hill SAC		Mauherslieve Bog NHA
Kilduff Devils Bit Mountain SAC		Monaincha Bog NHA / Ballaghmore Bog NHA
Liskeenan Fen SAC		Nore Valley Bogs NHA
Lower River Suir SAC		Slievenamon Bog NHA
Lough Derg North East Shore SAC		
Moanmour Mountain SAC		
Philipstown Marsh SAC		
Redwood Bog SAC		
Sharavogue Bog SAC		
Silvermines Mountain SAC		
Silvermines Mountain West SAC		

*In addition to the sites listed above, there are a number of sites which are pNHA's or Proposed Natural Heritage Areas. These sites are published on a non-statutory basis and have yet to be statutorily designated. It should be noted that pNHA's are of significance for habitats and wildlife

Biodiversity Loss

Worldwide, it has become increasingly evident that biodiversity has declined at a disturbing rate. It is now estimated that wildlife populations have decreased by 70% since 1970. Nationally, a similar decline in biodiversity is also apparent.

- 85% of protected habitats in Ireland are in unfavourable condition
- 20% of breeding birds are in decline
- Birds that overwinter in Ireland have declined by over 50% since the 1990s
- 1 in 3 species of bee is at risk of extinction
- 56% of native Irish plant species have declined since the 1950's
- Numbers of wild salmon returning to spawn in Ireland have declined by 90% since the 1970's



Threats to Biodiversity

In similarity with other regions, globally and nationally, biodiversity in Tipperary faces multiple threats as outlined below:

- Climate Change
- Habitat loss & fragmentation
- Agricultural expansion
- Pollution
- Drainage of wetlands
- Modification of rivers
- Invasive Species



Biodiversity and Climate Change

Climate change refers to the long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns which are evident worldwide. These shifts in temperature, rainfall etc. can be largely attributed to human activities, in particular, the burning of fossil fuels.

Climate change can have detrimental impacts on human life including extreme weather events, flooding, and negative impacts on food production. Likewise, climate change also has negative impacts on biodiversity. Frequent changes in weather patterns such as warm winters, early/late springs, heavy summer rainfall, can disrupt the timing of natural cycles

(an early spring may encourage songbirds to nest earlier, when the food source for their young is scarce). Climate change can also enable the spread of invasive species which may not have previously thrived in Ireland's cooler climate.

Many of our habitats not only provide a home for plant and animal species but also act as carbon sinks which can mitigate climate change and the impacts thereof.

Natural habitats sequester carbon by removing CO₂ from the atmosphere and locking it away in wood, roots and soil. When habitats are degraded, their ability to sequester carbon is significantly reduced.

What is a County Biodiversity Action Plan?

A County Biodiversity Action Plan, is a strategic framework, prepared by Tipperary County Council, to protect, enhance and restore biodiversity within the County.

The County Biodiversity Action Plan, will provide a set of objectives and actions for the conservation of biodiversity in Tipperary over the next five years. These objectives will be closely guided by Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP).

To facilitate the delivery of the Biodiversity Action Plan within each County, the NBAP also requires each local authority to have a Biodiversity Officer in place by 2026.

Under the Biodiversity Officers Programme, Biodiversity Officers are employed by the local authority in collaboration with the Heritage Council.

Objectives of the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan



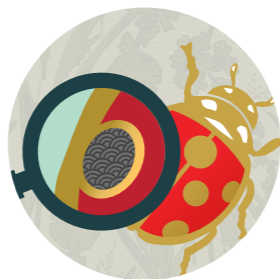
Objective 1:
Adopt a Whole-of-Government, Whole-of-Society Approach to Biodiversity



Objective 2:
Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs



Objective 3:
Secure Nature's Contribution to People



Objective 4:
Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity

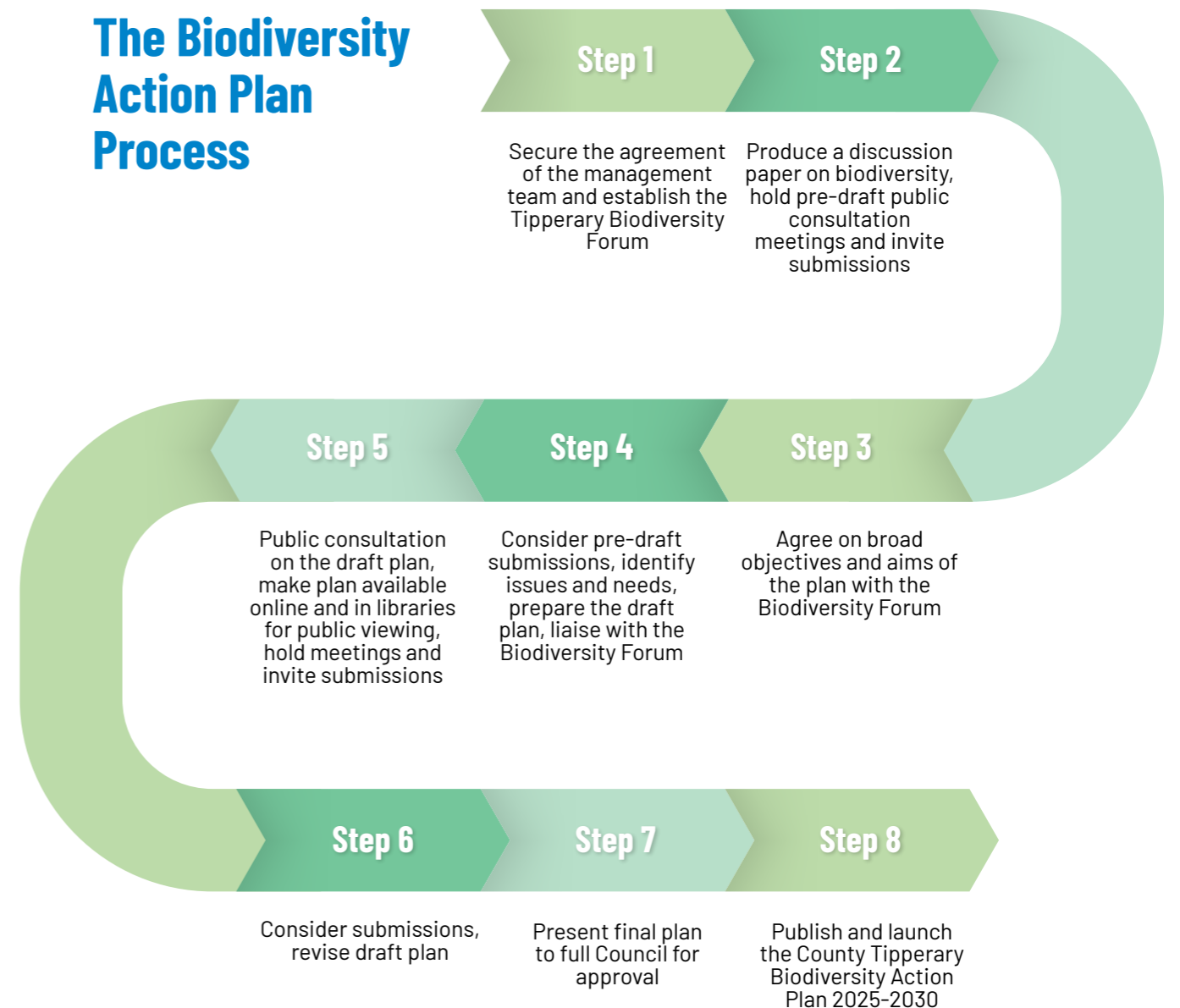


Objective 5:
Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives

The Aims of the County Biodiversity Action Plan

1. Increase awareness of biodiversity and implications of its loss
2. Embed biodiversity into all Local Authority Policies and Plans
3. Identify locally important habitats and species
4. Develop plans to restore habitats
5. Support communities with biodiversity conservation projects

The Biodiversity Action Plan Process



We want to hear from you!

Objective 1. of the 4th NBAP is to adopt a 'Whole government, whole of society approach to biodiversity'. Your contributions during this pre-draft consultation stage, will help to guide the objectives and actions of the Tipperary Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030.

- Why is biodiversity important to you?
- Have you noticed a decline in biodiversity in your local area?
- What are the greatest threats to biodiversity in County Tipperary?
- What actions for biodiversity would you like to see within the County or your local community?
- How can we continue to embed biodiversity in Climate Action?
- How can we reverse biodiversity decline by 2030?

How to make your submission

The 'Pre-Draft' public consultation on the County Tipperary Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2023 is open now until 4pm on Tuesday the 12th of September 2024. You can make a submission on the plan as follows;

Online:

<https://consultations.tipperarycoco.ie/consultations>

By Post:

FAO: Biodiversity Officer,
Ballingarrane House, Clonmel,
Co. Tipperary, E91E183

*Submissions by post should
be marked County Tipperary
BAP 2025-2030

In Person:

Public drop-in information and consultation events as follows:

Municipal District	Venue	Date	Time
Carrick-on-Suir	Carrick-on Suir Library	19/08/2024	2.30-5.30pm
Thurles & Templemore	Thurles Library	20/08/2024	3-7pm
Clonmel	Clonmel Library	21/08/2024	3-7pm
Tipperary, Cahir & Cashel	Tipperary Town Library	22/08/2024	2-5pm
Nenagh	Nenagh Library	27/08/2024	3-7pm

Tipperary County Council wish to acknowledge the role of the Heritage Council in funding the Biodiversity Officer Programme and the production of the Biodiversity Action Plan in collaboration with the Local Authority.



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