

# Peatland Regeneration: Practice and Prospects

Symposium organised as part of the Behavioural Change in Hill and Upland Farming (BeChuf) project (DAERA: E&I 21/2/03)

*Venue: Conference Hall, AFBI Hillsborough*

(Large Park, Hillsborough, Co Down, BT26 6DR)

*Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2024*

## 1) Registration:

- a. 9:30-10:00 Registration, Tea and Coffee on Arrival

## 2) Morning Session: Presentations with Q&A

- a. 10:00-10:05 **Paul Caskie: Welcome and Opening Remarks**  
Paul is Head of the Economic Research Branch, SAFSD in AFBI.
- b. 10:05-10:30 **Fiona Dickson: Overview of Peatland Policy in Northern Ireland.**  
The draft NI Peatland Strategy will set the direction of travel for the next two decades and beyond and provides a framework for both conserving our intact peatlands and our peatland restoration programme. This presentation will provide an overview of the strategic objectives to meet the challenging recommendations for the Climate Change Committee.  
Fiona is a Deputy Director in Natural Environment Policy Division, DAERA.
- c. 10:30-11:00 **Eimear Reeve & Bobbie Hamill: Peatland (habitat and peat soils) Extent and Condition in Northern Ireland.**  
Eimear is the Peatland Link Officer NIEA Natural Environment Division.  
Bobbie Hamill from Habitat Survey Team - ASSI Programme: Designation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Natural Environment Division, NIEA.
- d. 11:00-11:20 Tea and Coffee
- e. 11:20-12:15: **Linked presentations on current experience with peatland regeneration in Northern Ireland**

### **Simon Gray: Peatland Restoration in Practice.**

A brief background on why peatland restoration is needed, some of the restoration techniques currently in use and a case study from Cranny Bogs SAC where external funding to deliver restoration works were combined alongside working with landowners and farmers through the Environmental Farming Scheme.  
Simon is the Head of Peatland Recovery at Ulster Wildlife Trust.

**Gareth Bareham: Peatland Options in the Environmental Farming Scheme.**

The talk will consist of a brief introduction to EFS – What it is, eligibility criteria, and delivery through the Group Schemes. Then I will outline the options and related payments currently available to farmers to manage peatlands.

Gareth is the Advisory Manager for RSPB NI.

**Stephanie Clokey: Barriers to Uptake of Peatland Restoration.**

The presentation outlines the obstacles upland farmers face when it comes to engaging in peatland restoration.

Stephanie is the Peatlands Officer at Ulster Farmers Union.

### **3) 12:15-13:00 Lunch break**

### **4) Afternoon Session: Presentations with Q&A followed by Panel Discussion**

a. 13:00-13:40 **Gary Goggins: Lessons from Results Based Payment Schemes (RBPS) in Wild Atlantic Nature.**

The presentation will provide an overview of a pilot RBPS with 820 farmers under LIFE IP Wild Atlantic Nature and outline current developments with RBPS in the Republic of Ireland. The presentation will demonstrate how Wild Atlantic Nature are building on RBPS to deliver large scale restoration.

Gary is the Public Awareness Manager with Wild Atlantic Nature.

b. 13:40-14:15 **Simone Angioloni: Impacts on Uptake and Outcomes of Farmers' Preferences for Results Based Peatland Regeneration Scheme Design.**

The presentation will report the results of an economic discrete choice experiment framed to elicit preferences of beef and sheep farmers in the uplands of Northern Ireland towards an AES aimed to peatland regeneration.

Simone is the Head of Behavioural Studies research in Economic Research Branch - AFBI.

c. 14:15-15.00 **Panel Session: Fiona Dickson, Simon Gray, David McBride, Gary Goggins and Simone Angioloni**

Each panel member will have 2 mins to identify the main behavioural barrier to improving peatlands in the uplands after which the audience can comment panel members on the issues raised.

### **5) Close**

a. 15:00 – 15.10 **Paul Caskie: Concluding Remarks and Thanks**