

Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) & Peatland Options

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NI Peatland Strategy:

‘In line with the recommendations of the Climate Change Committee, success will be measured by bringing 150,000 hectares of peatland under restoration/sustainable management by 2050’.

Introduction to EFS



EFS is NIs devolved Agri-Environment Scheme to:

- Restore, Preserve & Enhance Biodiversity
 - Improve Water Management and Water Quality
 - Reduce Soil Erosion & Improve Soil Management
 - Foster Carbon Conservation & Sequestration in Agriculture
 - Reduce GHG & Ammonia emissions from Agriculture
- EFS PEATLAND Site-Specific REMEDIAL MANAGEMENT PLANS (ssRMPs) ADDRESS ALL THESE AIMS**

Eligibility Criteria



Peatland Falls under EFS Higher (H) and Group Options:

EFS(H) land is split into three (Priority-Based) tiers, depending on which designated site or priority habitat/species it possesses:

TIER 1 – SAC/SPA/RAMSAR

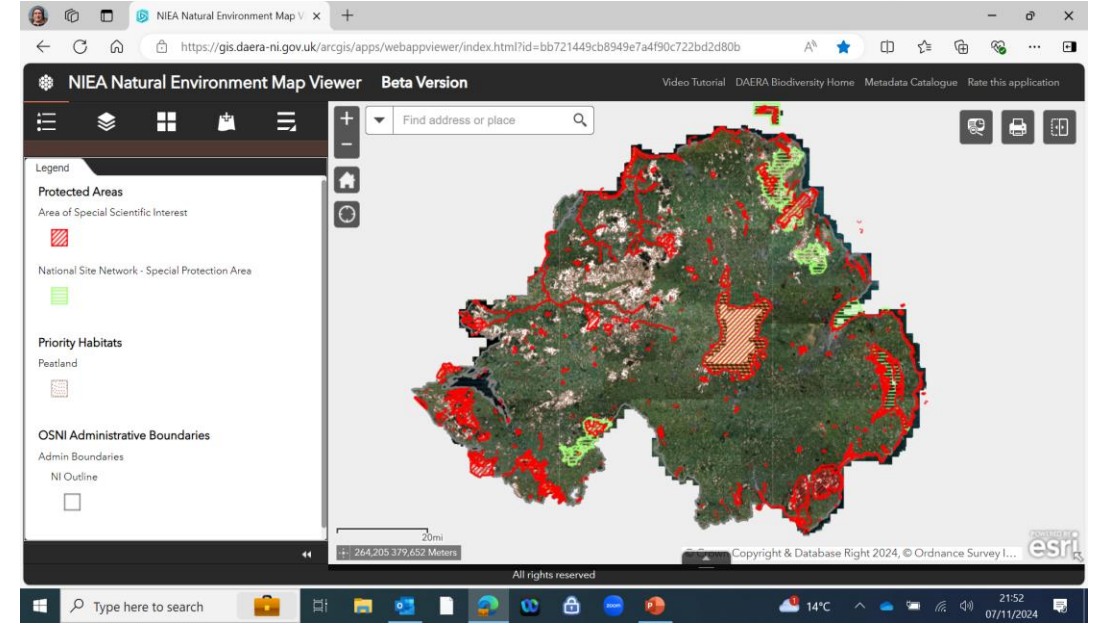
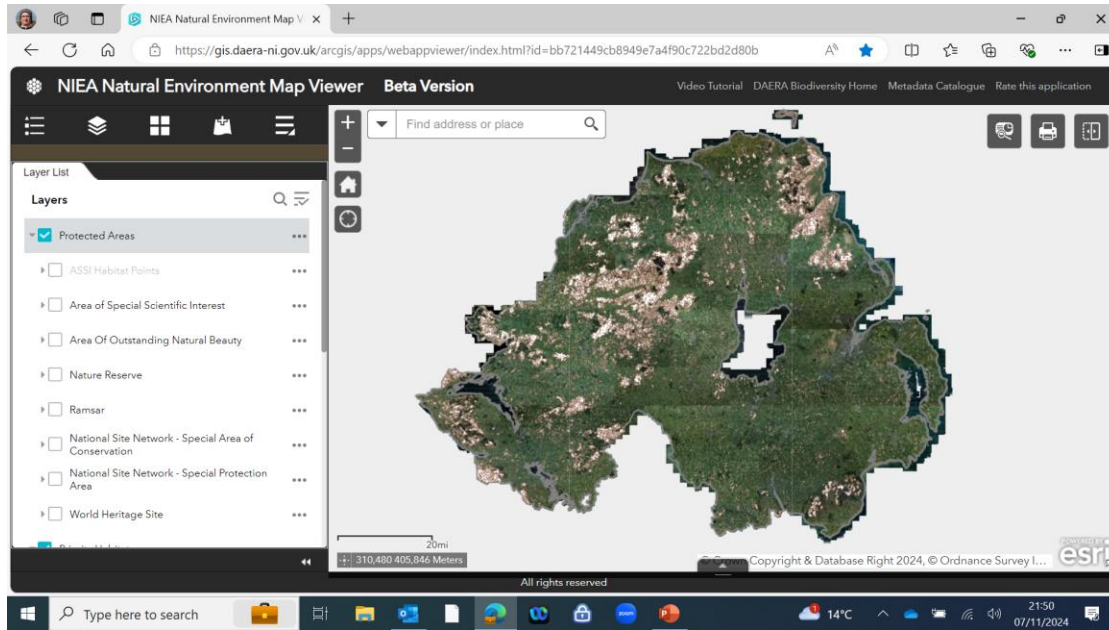
TIER 2 - ASSI

TIER 3 – PRIORITY HABITATS & SPECIES OUTSIDE DESIGNATED SITES

- ALL INCLUDE PEATLANDS

BUT – Designated Sites only cover c. 10% of peatland habitat – most is out-with designated sites

Eligibility & Application Criteria



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Clipboard Paste Font Alignment Number Styles Cells Editing Analysis Sensitivity Add-ins

A20 1/077/101/9

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	Field Number	Scheme Level	Field Area(ha)	MEA(ha)	Layer Name	Area Overlap(ha)	Percentage Overlap (%)	Attributes
1	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	Special Protection Area	0.45	93.07%	Lough Neagh and Lough Beg, UK9020091
2	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	RAMSAR Site	0.07	13.83%	Lough Neagh and Lough Beg, UK12016
3	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	WFD Lakes	0.04	7.49%	Lough Beg
4	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	Grassland - HELP and other wader areas	0.49	100.00%	Breacart, Lough Beg
5	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	Biological Areas of Special Scientific Interest	0.45	93.07%	Lough Beg, ASSI027
6	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	BASSI - N sensitive	0.03	6.93%	Lough Beg, ASSI027
7	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	Farmland bird - Yellowhammer (hectads)	0.49	100.00%	1489
8	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	Sensitive Semi-natural Grassland Area	0.34	69.75%	1573, Lough Beg area of gr
9	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	WFD Rivers	0.12	24.36%	UKGBN11N8030301153
10	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	New Forestry Woodland	0.01	1.56%	NFS/36066, BROADLEAF
11	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	WFD Critical Risk Intensive Agriculture (GREEN)	0.00	0.00%	Improved grassland, Improved
12	1/077/101/1/A	Higher Tier 1	0.49	0.49	WFD Critical Risk Intensive Agriculture (GREEN)	0.00	0.04%	Improved grassland, Improved
13	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	Special Protection Area	0.06	1.04%	Lough Neagh and Lough Beg, UK9020091
14	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	RAMSAR Site	0.02	0.40%	Lough Neagh and Lough Beg, UK12016
15	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	Biological Areas of Special Scientific Interest	0.06	1.04%	Lough Beg, ASSI027
16	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	BASSI - N sensitive	5.44	98.96%	Lough Beg, ASSI027
17	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	Farmland bird - Yellowhammer (hectads)	5.50	100.00%	1489
18	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	Sensitive Semi-natural Grassland Area	0.02	0.31%	1573, Lough Beg area of gr
19	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	Peatland	1.39	25.26%	Peat Cutting, PC
20	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	New Forestry Woodland	0.00	0.03%	NFS/36345, BROADLEAF
21	1/077/101/9	Higher Tier 3	5.50	5.27	New Forestry Woodland	0.00	0.08%	NFS/36377, BROADLEAF

Ready Accessibility: Good to go

Count: 8

Defining EFS Peatland Habitat Types:

‘All Fields in an EFS Application within or intersected by a moorland layer on the Farm Features Report require a **Moorland Rapid Condition Assessment (RCA)**’

RCAs  DAERA EFS Peatland Habitat Descriptors:

PEAT DEPTH, DWARF SHRUB COVER, SHAGNUM MOSS COVER, (INDICATOR) SPECIES PRESENT  **PEATLAND TYPE:**

BLANKET BOG (BBG); UPLAND HEATH (Wet/Dry) (UHG); LOWLAND HEATH (LHG),

MONTANE HEATH (MHG);

INTACT LOWLAND RAISED BOG (ILR);

FEN (FNG)

The Excel spreadsheet displays two sheets. The top sheet, 'Sheet1', contains a table with columns for 'Habitat', 'Peat depth (m)', 'Dominated by', 'Sphagnum', and 'Indicator species & NVC codes associated with habitat'. The bottom sheet, 'Sheet2', contains a table with columns for 'Habitat', 'Peat depth (m)', 'Dominated by', 'Sphagnum', and 'Indicator species & NVC codes associated with habitat'. The spreadsheet also includes various formulas and data points related to habitat management.

EFS Higher ...ne 2024.pdf

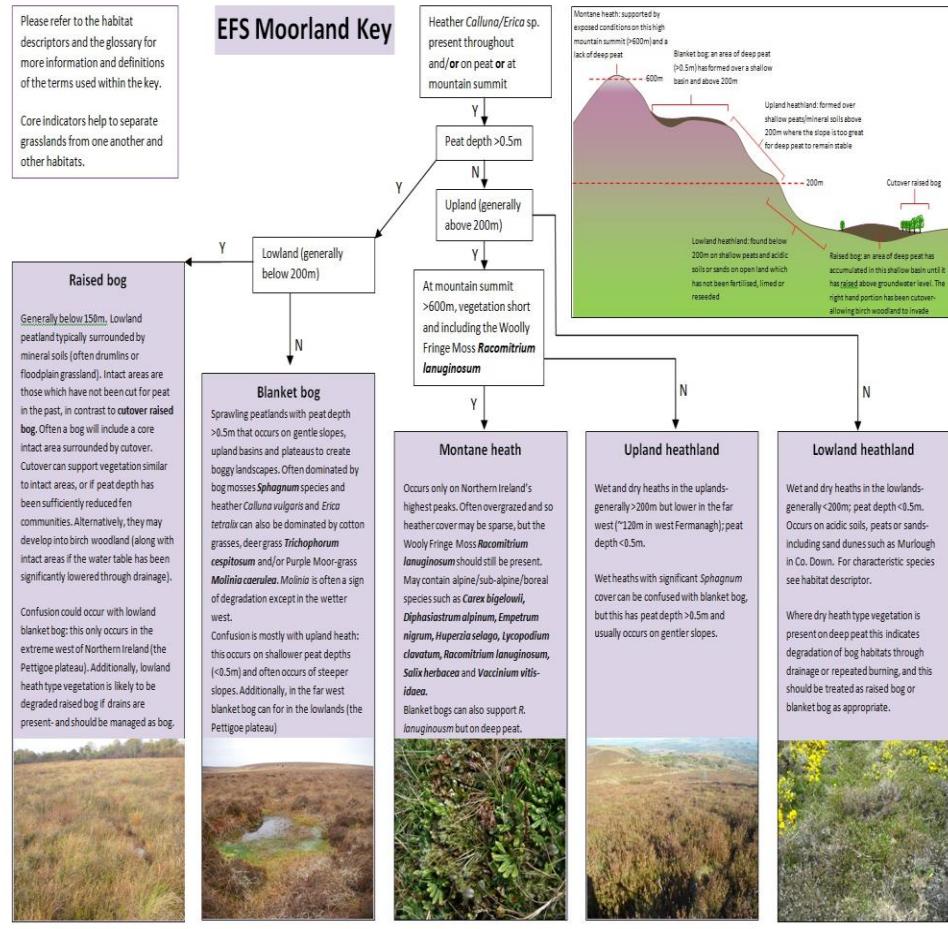
Summary table of habitat classifications *Note: *Molinia* may be constant in all moorland habitats

Habitat (option code)	Peat depth (m)	Dominated by	Sphagnum	Indicator species & NVC codes associated with habitat
Blanket Bog (BBG)	>0.5	<i>Molinia</i> , Ericoids 33 - 50%, (in good condition) but not usually dominated by them.	Sphagnum > 25% (if in good condition).	Hare's-tail Cottongrass <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i> (only found on blanket bog). Common Haircap Moss <i>Polytrichum commune</i> , Heath bedstraw <i>Galium saxatile</i> , Bog asphodel <i>Narthecium ossifragum</i> , Heath rush <i>Juncus squarrosus</i> & Matt grass <i>Nardus stricta</i> if overgrazed. NVC Codes: M17, M18, M19; the following NVCs are subject to disturbance M15, M20, M25; bog pool communities M1, M2, M3.
Lowland Raised Bog (ILR)	>0.5	Bog mosses <i>Sphagnum</i> species and Cotton-grass <i>Eriophorum</i> species with a limited range of other characteristic species.	>25% (if in good condition).	Heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), Cross-leaved Heath (<i>Erica tetralix</i>), Deer Grass (<i>Trichophorum germanicum</i>) and Purple-moor Grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>). NVC Codes: M2, M1, M17, Mire communities M15, M20, Grassland communities M23, M25, MG10. Woodland community W4.
Wet Heath (UHG, LHG)	<0.5	Ericoids (50 - 90% in good condition).	Sphagnum >25% (if in good condition).	Cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i> , Common Cottongrass <i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i> , Bog asphodel <i>Narthecium ossifragum</i> . NVC Codes: M15, M16.
Dry Heath (UHG, LHG)	<0.5	Ericoids (50 - 90% in good condition).	No sphagnum.	Bell heather <i>Erica cinerea</i> , Sheep's fescue <i>Festuca ovina</i> , Matt grass <i>Nardus stricta</i> , Tormentil <i>Potentilla erecta</i> , Glaucous sedge <i>Carex flacca</i> , Carnation sedge <i>Carex panacea</i> . NVC Codes H7, H8, H10, H12, H21.
Purple-Moorgrass and Rush Pasture (PRG)	< 0.5	<i>Molinia</i> and jointed rush < 20% (no ericoids).	No sphagnum unless in a fen flush.	Devil's-bit Scabious <i>Succisa pratensis</i> , Meadow thistle <i>Cirsium dissectum</i> , Tormentil <i>Potentilla erecta</i> , Marsh-bedstraw <i>Galium palustre</i> , Wild angelica <i>Angelica sylvestris</i> . NVC Codes: M23a, M24, M26.

Please refer to the habitat descriptors and the glossary for more information and definitions of the terms used within the key.

Core indicators help to separate grasslands from one another and other habitats.

EFS Moorland Key



EFS PEATLAND OPTIONS

AREA OPTIONS:

- SUPPORT APPROPRIATE GRAZING MANAGEMENT

NON-PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS/CAPITAL ITEMS:

DITCH BLOCKING; BRACKEN CONTROL; HEATHER REGEN.
(FLAILING/BURNING); INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL;
SCRUB CONTROL; STOCK PROOF FENCING ETC

Examples of Grazing Prescriptions for some Peatland Options in EFS

Habitat	Grazing Prescriptions
Blanket Bog	<p>Sheep Only.</p> <p>1 March to 31 October at an Av. stocking rate not exceeding 0.075LU in each Year.</p> <p>No Grazing from 1st November – 28/29 February</p>
Upland Heath	<p>If Sheep Only – 1 March to 31 October at an Av. rate not exceeding 0.25LU/ha in each year.</p> <p>If Sheep & Cattle:</p> <p>1 March to 31 May Sheep only at an Av. density not exceeding 0.25LU/ha in each year</p> <p>1 June – 31 August Cattle and Sheep at an Av. density not exceeding 0.20LU/ha</p> <p>1 September to 31 October Sheep only at an Av. density not exceeding 0.25LU/ha in each year</p> <p>If Cattle only:</p> <p>1 June to 31 August at an Av. density not exceeding 0.20LU/ha in each year</p>
Lowland Heath	<p>Sheep and/or Cattle:</p> <p>1 March to 31 October at Av. density not exceeding 0.25LU/ha in each year</p>

Other Prescriptions/prohibitions pertaining to Peat Cutting, heather burning or flailing, land applications, bracken and scrub control and tree planting are also detailed in the manual.

Advice includes shepherding of stock to graze stock across the site and ensure flushes are grazed appropriately to keep vegetation cover open.

CODE	AREA RMOs	PAYMENT/ha/Yr	
BBG	MOORLAND (BLANKET BOG) remedial management	UP TO 50HA 50.01 – 100HA More than 100ha	£40 £20 £10
UHG	MOORLAND (UPLAND HEATH) remedial management		
LHG	MOORLAND (LOWLAND HEATH) remedial management		
MHG	MOORLAND (MONTANE HEATH) remedial management		
ILR	INTACT LOWLAND RAISED BOG remedial management		
LFP	FEN REMEDIAL MANAGEMENT	£50	

CODE	NPI RMOs	PAYMENT
DBS	Ditch Blocking – plastic piling dams (small dam)	£62/Dam
DBM	Ditch Blocking – plastic piling dams (medium dam)	£151/Dam
DBL	Ditch Blocking – plastic piling dams (large dam)	£385.16/Dam
HRF	Heather regeneration - Flailing	£58.68/ha
HRB	Heather regeneration – Controlled Burning	£142.30/ha
RLP/RLF	Rhododendron and laurel – Primary/Follow-up control	£5049.57/£90/ha
ARI	Rhododendron and laurel control – control by stem injection	Actual Costs
BPT/BFU	Treatment of Bracken – Primary/Follow-Up (Mechanised or Chemical)	£216.35/£108.30/ha

Conclusion

NI Peatland Strategy:

‘In line with the recommendations of the Climate Change Committee, success will be measured by bringing 150,000 hectares of peatland under restoration/sustainable management by 2050’.

This ambitious goal will only be achieved with the support of an effective Agri-Environment Scheme Peatland Programme which has:

- **Widespread Buy-in & Uptake**
- **Comprehensive Support and Incentivisation**