



Governance

1 Re-structure and properly fund the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The NPWS should be independent (like the Environmental Protection Agency), allowing it to provide scientific advice, take enforcement action and run education programmes as well as the day-to-day work of protecting nature.

Sufficient resources are required to implement the **National Biodiversity Action Plan** as well as to meet minimum legal requirements under the Habitats and Birds Directives, including drawing up and implementing management plans for all existing protected areas on land and in the sea. We also need legislation for our national parks which will allow for their management and expansion.

There should be a long-term funding commitment to the **National Biodiversity Data Centre**, which is integral to this work.

2 There should be a clear commitment to **fully implement** all existing environmental legislation.



The 2020s need to be the decade of Nature restoration

3 To convene the **Citizens' Assembly** on biodiversity loss as committed to by the Dáil in their declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency in May of 2019. This must be followed by a sustained, national education programme to inform people of the implications and solutions to the ecological crises.

4 Ireland should support the EU in committing to the forthcoming '[Global Deal for Nature](#)' to be agreed at COP15 in China later in 2020 to **protect 30% of land and sea for biodiversity conservation**. This is in line with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

5 Nature-based solutions for climate. The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Climate Action Plan should be implemented, recognising that nature-based solutions could bring us one third of the way to meeting climate targets.



6 Agriculture. Payments under the Common Agricultural Policy should be based on measurable results/outcomes rather than actions. Payments under Pillar 1 should be given for land which is not farmed (abolishing current eligibility rules which require land to be in 'good agricultural condition'). Allowing land to revert to woodland/wetland has multiple benefits to society.

7 Forests. Large areas of connected native woodlands should be created which will be set aside predominantly for nature, with no commercial extraction. Future commercial forestry should be 'close to nature' with 'continuous cover'.

8 Oceans. Legislation should be introduced for the designation of large, effective and fully managed Marine Protected Areas. The network of protected sites should cover at least 30% of Ireland's exclusive economic zone by 2030 and 50% of sites should be no-take-zones. The Wildlife Act should be amended to give legal protection to (non-mammal) marine species such as sharks.

9 Rivers. The Arterial Drainage Act of 1945 should be repealed/replaced to give priority to the restoration of river systems, water quality and natural flood prevention over heavy engineering.

10 Bogs and peatlands should be restored/rewetted where possible. Rewilding should be used to reforest areas of peatland where this is appropriate.

