



Kilkenny's Draft Biodiversity Action Plan Table of Objectives and Actions



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



Objective 1: Provide Biodiversity Leadership at Local Level

The establishment of the Biodiversity Working Group provides a platform for stakeholders to share best practice and inform participants of their projects and developments within their areas of interest. It will also provide opportunities to identify collaboration projects and drive the biodiversity agenda throughout the county. They will be the county champions. Kilkenny County Council will highlight positive actions for biodiversity and advocate for the recording of species as well as conservation and restoration of habitats to support a vibrant eco-system. A leadership role must be taken by council officials and stakeholders to place biodiversity at the top of the agenda across all sectors.

ACTION NO.	THEME	TARGETS	ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	LEAD	POLICY LINKAGES
1.1	Capacity Building	A Biodiversity Working Group established of stakeholders to champion biodiversity in Co. Kilkenny	Meet 4 times a year One joint meeting with the Heritage Forum The Chief Executive and elected members invited to a special meeting to inform them of issues and opportunities present in Kilkenny	Number of Meetings Retention of BO over the life time of the plan	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1B9
1.2		A better understanding of biodiversity created across the organisation, top down, bottom up approach.	Create specific biodiversity learning modules for staff induction, elected members, planners, engineers and outdoor staff	No. of staff trained	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1B3
1.3		Funding and opportunities for biodiversity themed projects promoted across sectors in Kilkenny	Create a directory for funding sources and promote opportunities locally	Creation of Directory	Biodiversity Working Group	The Citizen Assembly Report on Biodiversity Loss – Recommendation on Supporting Communities
1.5		Biodiversity reporting refined to include qualitative and quantitatively documentation of biodiversity action on council led projects	Transparently report on biodiversity actions progress Devise and activate a system to capture data on biodiversity-based complaints	No. of actions reported annually Data Capture of complaints	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1A8
1.7	Nature Based solutions (NBS)	NBS best practice promoted into Council design projects	Showcase demonstration the Council's NBS projects	No. of NBS integrated into projects	Kilkenny Coco	NBAP Action No. 2C7

1.8	Nature Based solutions (NBS)	A criterion created to prioritise publicly owned sites that could be enhanced for biodiversity	Audit of Council properties to determine sites for enhancement	No. of sites audited	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1D5
1.9	Academic Networks	Local training and education providers exploring potential of increasing biodiversity training opportunities locally	Assess opportunities with local training and education providers to support biodiversity education and boost biodiversity recording capacity	No. of meeting with educational stakeholders No. of new courses provided	Biodiversity Working Group	NBAP Action No. 4C4
1.10	Participatory Processes	A biodiversity online-platform signposting locations of data resources and provide a depository for county studies	Audit resources on Kilkenny Heritage.ie Develop a strategy to improve access to biodiversity mapping and studies. Launch New Platform	Platform Launched	Kk Coco Heritage Team	NBAP Action No. 4B7
1.11	Participatory Processes	Public organisations with properties increasing actions for biodiversity enhancement	Identify potential public body projects Offer support and advice to ensure successful delivery	No of projects completed	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1D5



Objective 2: Strengthen Local Biodiversity Policy and Integrate Biodiversity Procedures into Council Operations

Objective 2 and 3 are intertwined and must be considered collectively as Council operations directly impacts on public amenity space. Kilkenny County Council formalised their commitment to support pollinators by becoming the first formal Local Authority partner of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan in 2019. Ecological connectivity and habitat enrichments is key to further safeguard biodiversity. Council lands may assist in connecting habitats and opportunities may present for habitat restoration under the Nature Restoration Law.

ACTION NO.	THEME	TARGETS	ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	LEAD	POLICY LINKAGES
2.1	Affecting system level change	Expedite the reduction of glyphosate-based chemicals by Kilkenny County Council	Calculate usage annually Determine reduction pathway	Annual litres used No. of pilots to determine alternative management control	KKCoco Parks	NBAP Action No. 2B6/2B13
2.2	Research & Training	Establish an overview of the presence of Alien Invasive Species on public land	Co-ordinate an internal mapping function to identify and manage sites of concern	Launch of staff mapping system	KKCoco Parks	NBAP Action No. 2H2
2.3		Build training capacity and awareness for hedgerow maintenance and retention	Implement training Provide guidance to landowners on retention, translocation methods and cutting maintenance	No. of training events and promotions	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1B3
2.4	Policy	Ecological research informing planning policies to retain and restore ecological corridors and pathway to protect locally important habitats and species	Draft policies based on advancing ecological surveys and studies to inform future planning and development	No. of policies brought to the SPC for consideration per annum No. of meetings with planning	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 3C1
2.5	Bridge Maintenance	Audit sensitive species and habitats before Council bridge maintenance projects	Identify and capture biodiversity opportunities during bridge maintenance works with appropriate stakeholders	No. of actions	Coco Bridge Maintenance Team	NBAP Action No. 2D21

Objective 3: Manage Public Open Spaces for Biodiversity

Objective 2 and 3 are intertwined. Mapping of landscape features and auditing and public space is critical to determine suitability and also to prioritise action areas for biodiversity enhancement. Some actions may involve a change in council operations to make positive changes for biodiversity.

ACTION NO.	THEME	TARGETS	ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	LEAD	POLICY LINKAGES
3.1	Procedures & Protocols	Enhancement of green and blue corridors connectivity including the protection of riparian vegetation, instream connectivity and habitat networks	Determine a procedure to prioritise the blue/green corridors for mapping the connectivity of public green and blue corridors Identify gaps and restore ecological connectivity Map pollinator foraging network in urban areas	No of projects completed	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 3A3
3.2		Pollinator-friendly mowing practices formalised	Map areas of semi natural grasslands on public grounds Increase % of short flowering meadows by completing pilot trials and expand where suitable Complete an audit of % land in public meadow.	No. of pilot areas returned to short cut meadow Map of semi natural grasslands completed	Parks Department KK Coco	NBAP Action No. 5A5
3.3	Research & Policy	Protection of Urban Trees in Kilkenny City	Develop a tree strategy to include a baseline of tree canopy cover, identify species diversity and tree health	Strategy Launched	Parks Department KK Coco	NBAP Action No. 2B11
3.4		Adoption of dark sky biodiversity friendly lighting policy for public spaces whilst maintaining standards for safety and security concerns	Integrate dark sky protocols into Council developments Audit Council properties to determine if artificial light reduction is possible	No. of developments with dark sky protocol integrated No. of properties audited	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 2B13
3.5		Public parks and amenity trails management plans in operation	Audit number of parks and amenity trails Complete a management plan for each	No. of management plans	Parks Department KK Coco	NBAP Action No. 5A5

Objective 4: Conduct Habitat Mapping and Monitoring to Support Data-Driven Management Decisions

The use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) will be a critical component of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Mapping habitats and identifying ecological corridors will assist in deciding on prioritising projects in specific areas. The display of information by mapping will make information easier to interpret. Kilkenny County Council completes environmental monitoring annually, actions are listed to promote monitoring findings and make data more accessible to the public.

ACTION NO.	THEME	TARGETS	ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	LEAD	POLICY LINKAGES
4.1	Research and Development	Non-designated sites of local biodiversity importance that currently has no statutory protection identified and local protection sought	Identification completed by research and field studies Develop a mechanism for sites to be considered for local protection under the County Development Plan	No. of meeting with forward planning	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1D5
4.2		Community Biodiversity Action Plans influencing communities' vision when consulting on local area plans, and village renewal proposals to retain ecological connectivity	Promote the development of Community Biodiversity Action Plan that include habitat mapping of urban areas	No. of Community Biodiversity Action Plans developed	Biodiversity Officer	National Biodiversity Action Plan
4.3	Research and Development	A visual storyboard to present biodiversity hotspots in the county to highlight project opportunities	Create a county storyboard that identifies all the statutory protected sites, ancient woodlands and known biodiversity hotspots and include biodiversity projects to inform and track biodiversity rich sites and biodiversity projects	Delivery of county storyboard	Biodiversity Action Group	NBAP Action No 2B7
4.4		Protection of wetland sites	Review the County Kilkenny Wetland Survey and prioritise recommended actions	No. of actions completed	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No 2B7
4.5		Protection of Hedgerows	Complete audit of Kilkenny hedgerows and prioritise future projects on enhancing ecological connectivity between biodiversity rich sites	Audit Completed	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No 2B7
4.6		Protection of Ancient Woodlands	Identify, map and determine a pathway to secure the conservation and restoration of Kilkenny's Ancient Woodland habitat	Ancient Woodlands mapped and pathway identified for conservation and restoration.	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No 2B7
4.7	Affecting system level change	Water quality data easy to source and understand	Farm inspection team to collaborate with agricultural sector, Nore Vision, IFI, Teagasc and LAWPRO to complete water quality assessments and communicate issues impacting water quality and promote actions to improve water quality	No. of promotions	Environment Department KK Coco	National Water Action Plan 2024 Agri Actions 1-5
4.8		Promote annual data from the EPA RMCEI Plan that illustrates the work completed by the Environment Section Communicate the findings of the EPA Annual Water Quality Reports to raise awareness of water quality issues	No. of promotions	Environment Department KK Coco	National Water Action Plan 2024	

Objective 5: Record and Monitor Protected Species

By the restoration of habitats, water quality improvements and restoring ecological connectivity will bring benefits to a wide variety of species. The recording of species will provide information on habitat quality, connectivity, species abundance and distribution. Data recording is required to track changes over long periods and citizen science can contribute significantly if adequate training is provided.

ACTION NO.	THEME	TARGETS	ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	LEAD	POLICY LINKAGES
5.1	Capacity Building	Strong synergies existing between Kilkenny County Council and the National Biodiversity Data Centre and other NGO's	Promote national monitoring schemes locally to encourage participation	Increase rate of participation	Biodiversity Working Group	NBAP Action No 4B7
5.2	Academic Networking/ Education	Students have strong interest in biodiversity and species recording	Promote the Heritage Council's "Heritage in Schools Programme" Support biodiversity programs under Kilkenny County Council's Green School Programme. Promote/develop school supports to engage students in species identification	No. of students engaged	Biodiversity Working Group	The Citizen Assembly Report on Biodiversity Loss – Recommendation Public Engagement, Education and Awareness
5.3	Outreach	Strong citizen science participation rate in Kilkenny	Support and promote local NGOs such as the Kilkenny Naturalist Field Club and Kilkenny Birdwatch Ireland Branch	No. of supports provided	Biodiversity Working Group	The Citizen Assembly Report on Biodiversity Loss – Recommendation Public Engagement, Education and Awareness
5.4	Research and Development	Annex II and IV species of the Habitats Directive presence and distribution documented	Kilkenny County Council to commission surveys	No. of Surveys	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1D5

Objective 6: Foster Engagement and Promotion of Best Practice Biodiversity Action

Fostering engagement and promoting best practise for biodiversity action is critical. Lifestyle choices can impact biodiversity locally and internationally. Environmental campaigns to highlight personal responsibility is a way to show the interconnectivity of lifestyle choices and its impact on biodiversity and the wider environment.

ACTION NO.	THEME	TARGETS	ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	LEAD	POLICY LINKAGES
6.1	Outreach	Kilkenny Citizens Informed about biodiversity	Assist in the dissemination of Biodiversity promotional material, promoting funding streams, training opportunities, field days and workshops Build a portfolio of talks, workshops Promote Biodiversity Week (May) and Heritage Week (August) annually	No. of events per annum No. of materials distributed per annum No. of events annually for Heritage and Biodiversity Week Annually	Biodiversity Officer	The Citizen Assembly Report on Biodiversity Loss – Recommendation Public Engagement, Education and Awareness
6.2		Leverage creative, cultural and artistic initiatives to enhance engagement on biodiversity issues	Encourage and support artists whose work promotes ecological awareness and biodiversity and enables individuals to connect with nature	Level of promotion and supports	KK Coco Creative Ireland Engagement Officer	Local Authority Creative Ireland Culture and Creativity Strategies (2023-2027)
6.3		Pollinator Friendly Actions Widespread throughout communities	Support local initiatives that engage the public using the sectoral themed resources from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan	No. of initiatives supported Programme per annum	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 2B13
6.4	Participatory Processes	Agricultural biodiversity enhancement projects widespread	Promote field days, demonstration walks, workshops and field days that educate farmers on biodiversity practices Distribute biodiversity farm packs as part of the Council's Farm Survey visits Collaborate with LAWPRO to highlight the uptake, successes and outcomes of their EIP programme	No. of promotions per annum No. of biodiversity farm packs distributed No. of collaborations with LAWPRO per annum	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 2D1

ACTION NO.	THEME	TARGETS	ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	LEAD	POLICY LINKAGES
6.5	Participatory Processes	Private landholdings biodiversity enhancement projects widespread	Support and promote demonstration events that lead to a better understanding of options for landowners to increase the biodiversity value of landholdings	No. of Events	Biodiversity Officer	NBAP Action No. 1B10
6.6		Community tree nurseries promoting local provenance widespread	Determine the methodology for set up Identify interested parties Identify training requirements Identify possible funding avenues	No. of community tree nurseries established	Biodiversity Officer	The Citizen Assembly Report on Biodiversity Loss – Recommendation on Supporting Communities
6.7	Engagement	Wide appreciation of soil health, and benefits known of home compost and leaf mould	Promote soil science Promote compost free gardening Promote leaf mould as an alternative source to compost	No. of promotions	Environmental Awareness Officer	NBAP Action No. 2D1
6.8	Engagement	A greater understanding of actions the general public can take to take to assist biodiversity	Complete awareness campaigns highlighting how households can lower nutrient loading in river catchments e.g Greener Cleaning, Septic Tank Maintenance	No. of campaigns	Environmental Awareness Officer	NBAP Action No. 2D1
6.9		Water conservation widespread across all sectors	Promote water conservation across sectors, providing the linkage to importance to biodiversity protection Promote rain water harvesting across different sectors	No. of promotions	Environmental Awareness Officer	NBAP Action No. 2D1

