

UKILN Conference

**Lakes – protecting,
enhancing and restoring.**

**Westport
16th and 17th October 2019**

Hotel Westport Leisure, Spa & Conference Hotel

<http://www.ukandirelandlakes.org>

United Kingdom Ireland Lake Network



LOUGH CARRA

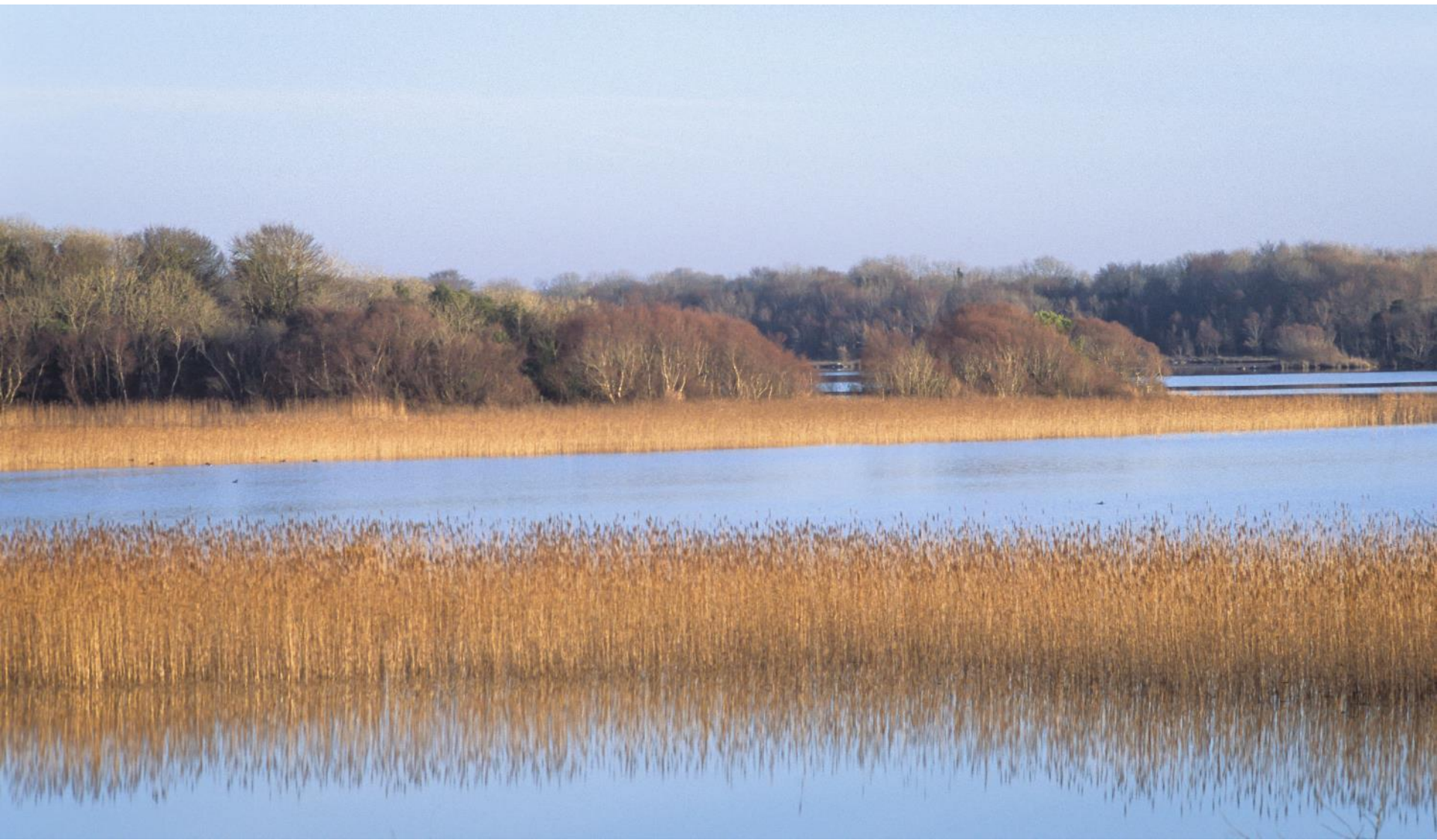
Tom Byrne

Chris Huxley













LOUGH CARRA CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION



BACKGROUND

- DECADES OF ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH BY FISHERIES, EPA, TCD, GMIT, NPWS
- MASS OF EVIDENCE OF ECOLOGICAL DECLINE
- 2004 CONFERENCE AND FOLLOW-UP
- 2015 BOOK
- AL MCDONNELL CAMPAIGN
- ENDA KENNY/EPA/ANDY FANNING

Lough Carra debate hits stormy water

Official denies 'guff' allegation

Tom Shiel

A DISCUSSION about water quality on Lough Carra sparked somewhat acrimonious exchanges between Councillor Al McDonnell and Martin Keating, senior executive officer with Mayo County Council, at a meeting last week.

The bickering started when Councillor McDonnell, a long-time campaigner for environmental measures to improve the quality of the water in the 4,000-acre lake, rejected a suggestion by Larry Walsh, senior executive scientist, that progress is being made on the issue.

Councillor McDonnell is a passionate campaigner for measures to improve water quality on the lake, which feeds Lough Mask, the source of domestic water for tens of thousands of homes in Mayo and adjoining counties.

Mr. Keating took exception to a comment by Councillor McDonnell that 'not enough anxiety' is being expressed towards the issue by the council executive.

"You can express all the anxiety in the world but anxiety does not get results and anxiety does not get resources," he countered.

Mr. Keating went on to state that the path the council has followed has achieved results in terms of additional staff, which are being appointed,



Councillor Al McDonnell

and resources in terms of the issue being prioritised for action.

He added that there has been engagement at community level in terms of explaining what the issues are and galvanising support around trying to take a cooperative approach to the problem.

Councillor McDonnell was immediately on his feet stating he was 'not happy with the response at all', adding, "I am certainly not happy with the tone of it."

There could be no greater priority in the county than a water supply which feeds 32,000 customers, he stated, adding that it was two years since councillors were brought on an inspection tour of the lake and 'very little has been done since'.

The councillor said he 'wasn't at all happy' that what Mr. Keating said about people being organised into specific groups was accurate.

"If they were, I'd know

about it," he continued. "I should be the first to be consulted about it. But I wasn't. Not one single word. It's not good enough."

Councillor McDonnell claimed the issue is not being treated with the urgency it desires. "I am not prepared to listen to general guff about it," he ended.

Responding, Mr. Keating said: "I take exception to that comment."

"Everything I have said is factual and is the actual position. To describe it as guff is totally unacceptable to be quite honest."

"This department has taken it very seriously. It has taken all the steps that are within its remit to progress the improvement of water quality on Carra."

"It (Carra) has been put forward for prioritisation for the resources that are being made available at a national level for this purpose."

"It will be actioned on in early 2019 as Larry (Walsh) has indicated. There is no other route available to the local authority."

Councillor Michael Smyth, cathaoirleach, promised that the issue would be on the agenda for the next SPC meeting.

This was agreed.

At the outset of the discussion, Mr. Walsh explained that Lough Carra has been chosen as a priority catchment.

Hopefully, in early spring of next year there will be progress on the setting up of a Lough Carra Catchment Association along the lines of the Moy Catchment Association, the official stated.

EPA July 2016



TCD Research published 2010

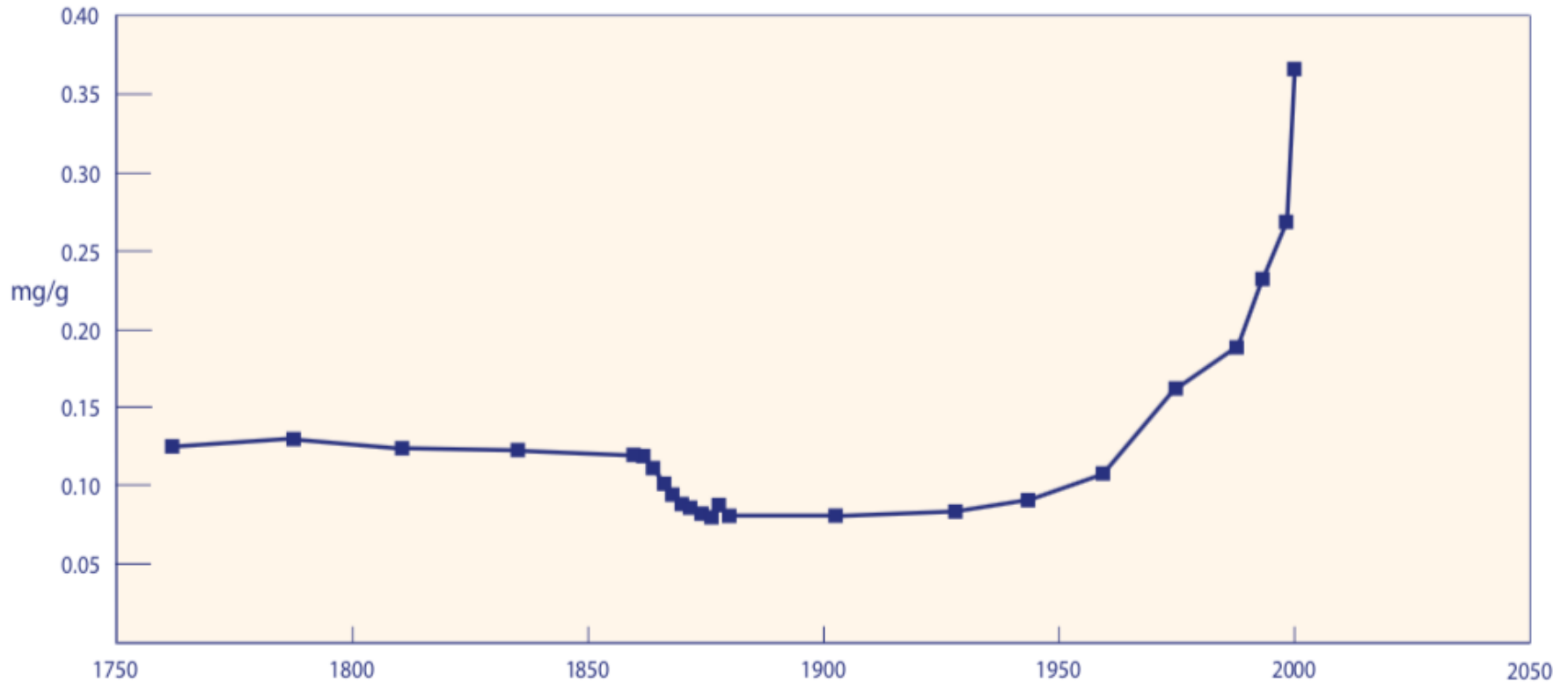
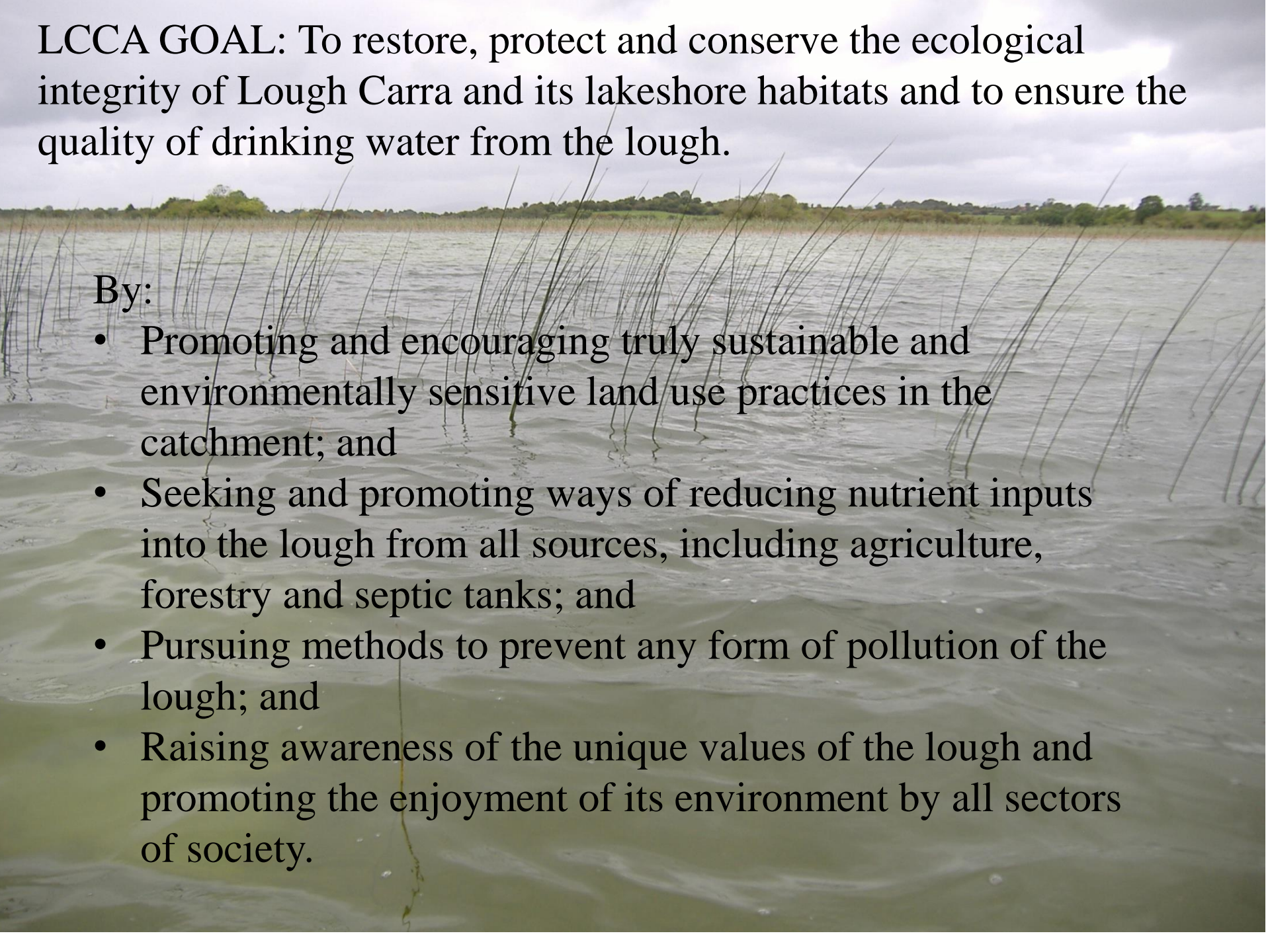


Fig 7.1 The change of total phosphorus (TP) measured in the sediment in relation to time that sediment was deposited

Establishment of the Lough Carra Catchment Association

- LAWCO (Mick Kane) called meeting of selected individuals in March 2018
- At first meeting, decided to form Catchment Association
- Second meeting in April 2018 established group and elected officers
- Monthly meetings since then, minutes in www.loughcarra.org
- Attendance generally over 30, but over 100 involved
- Including NPWS, EPA, MayoCoCo, LAWCO, LAWSAT, IFI, TEAGASC

The background of the slide is a photograph of a body of water, likely Lough Carra, with tall reeds in the foreground and a line of trees on the far shore under a cloudy sky.

LCCA GOAL: To restore, protect and conserve the ecological integrity of Lough Carra and its lakeshore habitats and to ensure the quality of drinking water from the lough.

By:

- Promoting and encouraging truly sustainable and environmentally sensitive land use practices in the catchment; and
- Seeking and promoting ways of reducing nutrient inputs into the lough from all sources, including agriculture, forestry and septic tanks; and
- Pursuing methods to prevent any form of pollution of the lough; and
- Raising awareness of the unique values of the lough and promoting the enjoyment of its environment by all sectors of society.

LCCA Draft Project Outline

- Working group formed including NPWS, LAWSAT, LAWCO and GMIT
- Working Group prepared project logframe
- Project draft used as TORs for Leader application
- Leader funding secured for five month feasibility study
- Output to include documentation for EU LIFE application

Project Goal:

To restore, protect and conserve the biodiversity value and ecological integrity of Lough Carra and its lakeshore and catchment habitats and ensure the quality of water in the Lough.

Project objectives:

- A. To maintain and enhance existing priority habitats in the SAC.
- B. To ensure the protection and conservation of key species in the SPA, the SACs and the catchment.
- C. To prevent and reverse eutrophication by reducing the flow of nutrients into the Lough.
- D. To promote and encourage truly sustainable and environmentally sensitive land use practices in the catchment.
- E. To prevent the further conversion of land and intensification of agriculture in the catchment.
- F. To raise awareness of the unique values of the Lough, including ecosystem services, and promote its enjoyment by local communities and all sectors of society.

Project Activities

- Around 30 separate actions for the 6 objectives
- Examples:
 - Establish appropriate grazing regimes on semi-natural grasslands in the SAC
 - Establish constructed wetlands in key areas
 - Establish buffer zones along banks of inflowing rivers and streams and along whole lakeshore, especially in high risk areas, and provide water troughs where needed

Potential Project Partners

- MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL
- NPWS
- EPA
- TEAGASC
- LAWSAT
- LAWCO
- COILLTE
- Others?

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