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Appendix 1

## DELIVERING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

### PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Positively contributing to the environment and to communities is a core value for Coillte and something we take great pride in. As Coillte manages nearly 7% of the land of Ireland, we have a vital role and responsibility in managing that land sustainably. Our commitment to managing the natural environment sustainably and responsibly is at the heart of what we do.

Certification of our forest estate is an independently verified way we demonstrate to stakeholders and customers that our natural resource management practices are economically, socially and environmentally responsible.

### \* PROTECTING OUR FOREST ENVIRONMENT \*

Coillte ensures that environmental and social impacts of all forest operations or other land based activities are assessed prior to commencement of any operations.

Environmental Impact Appraisals (EIA) are carried out prior to any operations in our forests to identify potential impacts at the planning stage and to mitigate against them.

Coillte uses four levels mitigation as part of its EIA Process. They are:

- Avoidance
- Reduction
- Remedy, and
- Contingency or emergency planning \*

Since 2012, Coillte has been developing an Environmental Management System to streamline and simplify the multiple environmental assessments that apply across the operational processes, making it easier for staff to implement the necessary environmental controls during planning and operations.

The Environmental Management System is a structured method of managing Environmental performance at Coillte. It is owned by the Stewardship and Risk Team on behalf of Coillte Forest and Coillte Enterprise. The Environmental Management System uses a Plan, Do, Check, Act Continuous Improvement Cycle. The Continuous Improvement Cycle is executed on an annual basis, starting with the construction of an Annual Environmental Improvement Programme. Each year the approved Annual Improvement Programme is delivered according to a project schedule, with continuous monitoring of the improvement results, and identification of improvement activities for the following year.

## Appendix 1

**ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT (ERA)**

During 2013, we started developing new procedures for environmental risk assessment (ERA). The objective was to improve current procedures, specifically to: standardise our approach to environmental issues; integrate environmental assessment with business planning; streamline existing environmental procedures, which are becoming increasingly complex (e.g. in response to legislation). The ERA forms part of Coillte's Environmental Management System (EMS).

The ERA procedure was subsequently applied in the 2014 Timber Supply Planning.

**SUPPORTING NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVES****FOREST BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH**

Coillte continues to be a partner in a major study of forest biodiversity in Ireland. The PLANFORBIO project, in collaboration with University College Cork, Trinity College Dublin and Waterford Institute of Technology, addresses forest diversity and management practices, focusing primarily on the forest types that are currently being encouraged through State policies and financial incentives.

These are the forests of the future, yet very little is currently known about them. These forests are assessed for diversity and a number of long term monitoring sites have been established and a monitoring programme is now in place. In 2013, the BIOPLAN research component of PLANFORBIO continued at University College Cork and Trinity College Dublin.

Further details may be found at [www.ucc.ie/en/planforbio](http://www.ucc.ie/en/planforbio) (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/planforbio/>)

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