

RESTORING ACTIVE BLANKET BOG IN IRELAND

PROJECT No: LIFE02 NAT/IRL/8490

(1ST JULY 2002 – 30TH JUNE 2006)

INTERIM REPORT – TO END OF YEAR 2

COVERING PERIOD

1ST JULY 2002 – 30TH JUNE 2004

(AND INCORPORATING 2ND PROGRESS REPORT)

REPORT COMPILED BY:

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30TH JULY 2004



coillte

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I BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

During the 1960s-1980s, the policy of successive Irish governments was to establish forestry plantations in remote areas mainly on the western seaboard. The main objective of this policy was to retain the population in these areas which had been subject to decades of emigration and to provide employment and wealth, by creating a sustainable natural resource.

As a result, during the 1960s to 1980s, efforts were made to establish forest plantations on blanket peats. Following research trials, large scale annual afforestation programmes were undertaken and extensive areas of blanket bog were drained, fertilised and planted with conifers (mainly Sitka spruce and lodgepole pine), the only tree species that would provide an economic return on these sites. At the time, blanket peats were regarded as wasteland to be converted to more productive uses such as agriculture or forestry. Farm and forest management systems were developed to meet the primary objective of production with little attention being paid to biodiversity or the impact of operations on environmental receptors. This work provided employment for local people as well as the prospect of income and a growing industry into the future. Overall, 150,000 ha of western blanket peats were afforested, the programme on these peats culminated in 1993. Today, in a global or European context, Ireland's blanket peatland resource fulfils the criteria for inclusion, designation and management as a world heritage centre. The resource is acknowledged as:

- A museum of past civilisations, climates and environments
- A habitat for organisms adapted to extreme environments
- Areas of educational and amenity value
- Reserves of genetic resources
- An essential part of the biosphere.

These facts have resulted in new management options for afforested peatland areas. One such option is restoration where suitable of peatland habitat. Such is the focus of this LIFE-Nature project which is now at the mid point of implementation.

At all stages during the project, the work we require to do on each site is being offered to local contractors, where practicable. Every effort is being made to involve local people as much as possible in the project, from working on sites to participating in interpretive meetings and demonstrations.

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II INTRODUCTION, PROJECT OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED RESULTS, AND LINKS TO OTHER ACTIVITIES

The peatlands of the west of Ireland are internationally among the most important intact areas of active blanket bog found in Europe. Since 1997 approximately 135,000 ha of active blanket bog have been proposed as candidate Special Areas of Conservation [SAC] under the Habitats Directive. These proposed Natura 2000 sites are located mainly in the Atlantic seaboard counties of western Ireland, especially County Mayo.

This LIFE-Nature project (duration 2002-2006) aims at priority habitat restoration on 14 blanket bog sites covering 1,212.3 ha within candidate SACs, on a mix of unplanted, or partially or wholly afforested bogland sites. Coillte Teoranta [The Irish Forestry Board], consistent with the principles of its programme of sustainable forest management, has divided its estate into forest management units [FMUs]. The project area is on land owned and managed by Coillte in various FMUs. Special emphasis is being placed on sites in the North Mayo Forest Management Unit, where the full range of blanket bog types occur from lowland to mountain blanket bog (involving sensitive river catchments). In other FMUs, the project sites are representative of afforested peatlands around the country. Five of these sites (No. 3, 5, 7, 13 and 16 on the attached map) have been selected as project demonstration sites, these are the focus of a public awareness programme over the four-year period of the project involving demonstration days, interpretation and boardwalk access.

In the past, the blanket boglands of Ireland were extensively afforested, with unfenced open areas often heavily overgrazed. This has resulted in degradation and drying out of the habitat. These threats are the focus of this project. The issues, which need to be addressed, are:

- Uncontrolled areas on the open bogs have been overgrazed;
- Forestry drains on the open bogs have lowered the natural water-levels;
- Afforestation, including drainage, has reduced the area of blanket bog;
- Neighbouring forest plantations are regenerating onto the open bog SACs.

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This project will reverse these processes and over time will re-habilitate a high quality area of active blanket bog priority habitat by:

- Fencing to gain control of 718.6 hectares of open bog areas;
- Removal of trees on some 493.7 ha to enlarge the blanket bog area;
- Drain blocking to restore the integrity of the bog hydrological systems;
- Removal of naturally regenerated trees from the open bogs.

Bog restoration techniques on afforested peatland pioneered in the LIFE-funded “The Border Mires Active Blanket Bog Rehabilitation Project” (UK) are being used in this project and other techniques are being evaluated. Links with other LIFE funded projects with an emphasis on tree clearance have also been made. This LIFE-funded restoration project is building on draft conservation management plans for the project sites, the development of which by National Parks and Wildlife (formerly Dúchas The Heritage Service) was previously supported by EU LIFE funding.

By the end of this project it is expected that a significant amount of blanket bog restoration will have been achieved. Funding from LIFE-Nature is expected to demonstrate the restoration of suitable active blanket bog sites as one of the management options on afforested peatlands.

Project links with Coillte’s Nature Conservation Programme

Two years working on this blanket bog conservation project has resulted in strong links being developed between the project and Coillte’s nature conservation management programme.

As part of this programme, bio-diversity surveys are undertaken to select 15% of each forest management unit (FMU) for nature conservation management, 7 of which have sites in this project. These surveys are co-ordinated by the company’s ecologist, and include two surveys conducted by the ecologist who serves as contract ecologist for this blanket bog project. The FMU’s concerned were Connemara and North Mayo where a range of blanket bog types predominantly occur. These surveys have shown that Coillte’s estate includes substantial areas of blanket bog, of which a certain percentage is within or adjoining SAC’s (special areas of conservation) and would be ideal for inclusion in a national programme under Article 34 (b) (iv) of the proposed council regulation on rural development 2007 – 2013 (NATURA 2000 payments).

Lessons learned, and techniques used in the blanket bog project to date, have been recommended and are being incorporated into the management plans for the areas identified in these bio-diversity surveys. The project manager and site managers are involved in this work as part of their day to day management.

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Project links with Coillte's Research Project

Coillte is co-funding a research project with COFORD (the National Council for Forestry Research and Development) entitled "Regeneration Options for Forests on Western Peatland". This project which began on 1st July 2004, aims to examine the implications of managing these areas in terms of their sustainability for timber production and ideally the vision for the future of these Western Peatland forests will move towards delivering multiple objectives with a strong emphasis on environmental values i.e. water protection, landscape and nature conservation. Presently the management staff working on this research project are consulting on a regular basis with the project team working on Coillte's LIFE-Nature project "Restoring Active Blanket Bog in Ireland", to ensure sharing of information on management, survey techniques and best practice.

III SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL ACHIEVEMENTS

At this the half way stage, progress to date on Project LIFE02 NAT/IRL/8490 “Restoring Active Blanket Bog in Ireland” has been significant:

- All preparatory “A” actions have been completed at this point, however experience has shown that some of these actions need to continue to some extent, for the duration of the project;
- All non-recurring management “C” actions have commenced, changes were necessitated on some sites, e.g. where C2 – Felling and chipping was planned, C1 – Fell Non-Commercial proved to be the preferred treatment for the site and thus the plan was changed;
- Work done in the first two years of the project under the “C” actions include non-commercial tree felling (C1), felling and chipping (C2), commercial felling (C3), drain blocking (C4), fencing (C5), road building (C6) and installation of dipwells (C7);
- All recurring management “D” actions are currently in progress;
- Work done in the first two years of the project includes removal of natural regeneration (D1), removal of trespassing livestock (D2) and measurement of nutrient flow from sites (D3);
- All public awareness “E” actions programmed for the half way stage are up and running or at planning stage. (Action E4 is not applicable until the last Year of the project);
- Work done in the first two years of the project includes land manager training courses (E1), project website constructed (E2), project information brochure distributed (E3), bog walks held as part of land managers courses (E5), media publicity campaign (E6), (including newspaper articles – national, local, and provincial, radio and television interviews relating to the project, official launch of the project by Government Minister, the background to the project having been posted on the Coillte website (www.Coillte.ie), and various articles having been written and published in Coillte’s in-house magazine (*Coillte Contact*) and technical articles inserted into environmental and forestry external magazines). Boardwalks have been constructed and plans are in place to erect interpretive display signage (E7).
- While not a requirement of the project, a Natura 2000 “Green Day” was organised and held in June 2003 to promote and inform the public about the project, and the official launch of the project was posted on the EU website as a “Green Day” for June 2004. See Appendix 1 (Green Days listed on Euro site Website)

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- All project management “F” actions programmed are operational except Action (F8) Aerial Survey, which is not applicable until a later stage;
- Work done in the first two years under the “F” actions includes Project Management Group meetings (F1), Project Advisory Panel meetings (F2), visit from DG-environment/external team and project report preparation (F3), procurement of expert advice (F4), scientific study of groundwater discharge “flushes” (F5), hydrology monitoring (F6), and vegetation monitoring (F7) and preparation of ground inventory maps for inclusion in the interim report (F9).
- Good links have been made with personnel from other LIFE projects, and a number of staff from the Border Mires project (UK) visited our project in September 2003, staff from the Scottish Life Peatlands project “Restoring active blanket bog of European importance in North Scotland” [LIFE00 NAT/UK007075] visited the West of Ireland in March 2004. Plans are underway for a visit by a group from our project to the Scottish Life Peatlands project in October 2004.

Further detail on all the aforementioned can be seen in the **REPORT BY ACTION** section which follows.

IV TECHNICAL REPORT – ALL RELEVANT ACTIONS

“A” Actions - Preparatory Actions, Elaboration of Management Plans

A1: Site Visit to see another LIFE sponsored project

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 1. The main purpose of this action was to give project staff experience of similar LIFE projects already in existence. However it was felt that it would be more beneficial to split visits by project staff over a longer period in order to see a variety of other LIFE projects. It was also recommended by the external team to develop links with the Scottish Blanket Bog project “Restoring active blanket bog of European importance in North Scotland” Project (LIFE00 NAT/UK/007075).

Completed to date

To date 4 project staff attended the Border Mires Project Conference (LIFE98 NAT/UK/005432) in early October 2002, and a further 6 Coillte staff and 5 staff from the National Parks and Wildlife visited the Border Mires project later in October 2002 (the staff from the National Parks and Wildlife were not charged to the LIFE project budget). Staff from the Border Mires Project subsequently visited our project in September 2003. Another 4 project staff attended the Restoration of Scottish Raised Bogs Project Conference (LIFE00 NAT/UK/007078) in October 2003. Our project was also visited by a group from the “Restoring active blanket bog of European importance in North Scotland” Project (LIFE00 NAT/UK/007075) in March 2004. This group included staff from the Forestry Commission Scotland, Forest Enterprise and the Royal Society for Protection of Birds, Scotland who are all partners in this project. Plans are underway for a return visit by our project to this Scottish project scheduled to take place in October 2004. See Appendix 2 (Photographs of Visits by other Life Project Groups).

Comments

To date, these visits have proved very successful for information exchange and networking. This action will continue until the budget is utilised. Some funding is set aside for project staff to attend end of project conferences on other projects as they arise.

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A2: Elaboration of Action Plans

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The schedule duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 2. The main thrust of this action was consultation with stakeholders in relation to operational work on all sites.

Completed to date

This action is now completed on all sites. However on-going consultation still continues with the National Parks and Wildlife Staff (NPWS) and other stakeholders. In addition to having a member of research branch (NPWS) specialising in blanket bog on the Project Management Group (PMG), it was also agreed at one of our PMG meetings that we would invite a local NPWS ranger to each of our PMG meetings. This began in Quarter 3, Year 2. This has proven very successful and beneficial. See Appendix 1 of our 1st Progress Report (July 2003) for Consultation procedure.

Comments

Although this action is formally complete, we feel that this consultation activity will be an integral part of our continuing work on each site during the lifetime of the project. This action has been most useful in developing good working relationships at local level between Coillte and National Parks and Wildlife on blanket bog restoration. As already referred to under summary of principal actions, staff working on the project are incorporating what has been learned and achieved from work to date on restoring active blanket bog in day to day nature conservation management and work on the COFORD project.

A3: Identify Safety Hazards and draw up a general safety plan for all sites

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The schedule duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 2. The requirement of this action was for Safety plans to be drawn up, hazard identification risk assessment forms (HIRA) to be completed for sites.

Completed to date

Safety plans are drawn up, HIRA forms have been completed for all operational work to date and safety regulations are adhered to on all sites. See Appendix 3 (Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (HIRA) Form).

Comments

Safety is an extremely important issue on our sites and this action will be adhered to over the duration of the project. All site managers and project personnel will continue to work together with Coillte's safety and training team to ensure that appropriate safety procedures are in place on all sites.

A4: Survey of fence lines and enclosures

Scheduled Duration

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarters 2 and 3. Survey work was scheduled to be completed on sites 3 (Dromalonnurt), 5 (Emlaghdauroe) and 6 (Bellaveeny) in order to protect the unplanted land.

Completed to date:

Following a review of programmes for these sites, it was agreed that no survey work was necessary on site 3 (Dromalonnurt) and site 5 (Emlaghdauroe) and 6 (Bellaveeny). Agreement had been reached on undefined boundaries. Survey work was necessary on site 13 (Croaghonagh North) due to issues in relation to undefined boundaries which arose on this site.

Comments

Survey work is now complete on all sites where it was required, this action is now complete.

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A5: To produce plan accurate photographs of all project sites

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarters 1 and 2. All sites were to be surveyed to determine levels for blocking drains. However, as detailed in our 1st Progress Report (July 2003), it became apparent, from discussion with Coillte engineering staff and external contractors, that the agreed budget was insufficient to complete this action as originally set out. We therefore devised an alternative method to achieve this action which is outlined under “Comments” below.

Completed to date

The identification of outfalls, which give a good indication of levels and facilitates planning of the drain blocking action, has been achieved by an alternative method (detailed below) at a number of sites where drain blocking has been completed following tree clearance. (See action C4 – Drain Blocking)

Comments

In order to counteract the budgetary problem and to progress work, a decision was taken to purchase an engineer’s automatic level. A field day was held at - Emlaghdauroe, at which a Coillte engineer carried out a levelling survey training course utilising this level. This course was attended by the project manager, site manager and a number of key project site staff.

A practical approach was taken towards achieving this action considering there was a wide and varied range of topography across the project sites.

The following steps summarise the methodology used to date to determine the levels for drain blocking on project sites.

1. When the ground was cleared a visual assessment of each site was undertaken to determine the water outflows, intensity of blocking required, depths of peat, and slopes.
2. On flat sites the agreed procedure was to block drains at a range of approximately 6.5 – 20m apart. The exact position of the dams depended on a number of local factors, such as tree roots, and small depressions or rises along the ditch profile.
3. Some of the sites are steep sloping and it is not practical or beneficial to block drains on these areas at all.
4. On sites where areas of peat depths are less than 1 metre, it is not practical or beneficial to block drains on these areas either.
5. On sites which have parts both sloping and some parts flat, viewing of the site would indicate the distances for drain blocks to be installed.

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In addition to the above steps, we also sought the professional services of a Consultant Engineer who has an extensive forestry background to complete a drainage survey at one of our largest sites - Owenirragh - on the work that we had completed there. This report has confirmed the suitability of the approach outlined above. He has made a number of recommendations which have been taken on board. See Appendix 4 (Engineers report).

“C” Actions - Non-Recurring Management

C1: Fell mature trees non-commercial felling

Scheduled Duration

The scheduled duration of this action at half way stage was Year 1, Quarters 3 and 4, and Year 2, all Quarters. [It is also scheduled to continue into Year 3, Quarters 1-3.]

Completed to date

The following table outlines progress to date against revised programme for each site which required this action. The revised programme was communicated in our letter of April 16th 2004.

Action C1 – Fell mature trees non-commercial felling

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of action	Revised area for Action (Ha)	Area complete to 30/06/04 (Ha)	Balance to complete (Ha)	Expected Completion date
2	Garrane	Fell to Waste	17.5	17.5	0.0	Complete
3	Dromalohurt	Fell/Windrow	28.3	28.3	0.0	Complete
4	Pollagoona	Fell to Waste	11.6	1.8	9.8	09/04
5	Emlaghdauroe	Fell to Waste	10.0	7.6	0.0	Complete
6	Bellaveeny	Fell/Windrow	126.0	112	14.0	12/04
7	Eskeragh 1	Fell to Waste	10.3	10.3	0.0	Complete
8	Eskeragh 2	Fell/Windrow	17.8	17.8	0.0	Complete
9	Owenirragh	Fell/Windrow	107.0	107.0	0.0	Complete
10	Glencullin	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
11	Shanvolahan	Fell/Windrow	25.8	23.0	2.8	12/04
13	Croaghonagh	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
14	Carrick Barr	Fell to Waste	12.1	1.3	10.8	09/04
15	Sessuegilroy	Fell/Windrow	8.5	2.4	6.1	03/05
16	Slieve Blooms	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
	Total		374.9	329	43.5	

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Comments

Emlaghdauroe – While there was no non-commercial felling programme for this site originally, a programme of 10 hectares of non-harvestable material became apparent during the 1st phase of the harvesting operation and was subsequently recorded as such in the revised programme. The material in this 10 hectares ranged from very poor growing lodgepole pine to some possible harvestable material. However during the 2nd phase of the harvesting operation, the outturn for the area of non-commercial felling was only 7.6 ha's and the balance of 2.4 was felled commercially under action C3.

Bellaveeny – The balance of this lightly stocked area will be felled to waste by the 2nd Quarter of Year 3.

Overall, this action is making excellent progress, with 329 ha (88%) completed to date and is in fact likely to be fully completed ahead of schedule during 2004 (before the scheduled end date of 31 March 2005).

C2: Fell and chip conifers

Scheduled Duration

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 2 and Quarter 4, and Year 2, Quarters. 1-3.

Completed to date

The following table outlines progress to date against revised programme for each site which required this action. The revised programme was communicated in our letter of April 16th, 2004.

Action C2 – Fell and chip conifers

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of action	Revised area for Action (Ha)	Area complete to 30/06/04 (Ha)	Balance to complete (Ha)	Expected completion date
2	Garrane	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
3	Dromalohurt	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
4	Pollagoona	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
5	Emlaghdauroe	Fell and chip	0.17	0.17	0.0	Complete
6	Bellaveeny	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
7	Eskeragh 1	Fell and chip	2.00	0.00	2.0	12/04
8	Eskeragh 2	Fell and chip	8.00	8.00	0.0	Complete
9	Owenirragh	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
10	Glencullin	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
11	Shanvolahan	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
13	Croaghonagh	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
14	Carrick Barr	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
15	Sessuegilroy	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
16	Slieve Blooms	No Program	0.00	0.00	0.0	No Program
	Total		10.17	8.17	2.0	

Comments:

Issues in relation to sites which were originally envisaged to be felled and chipped were communicated in our letter of April 16th 2004 to the Commission.

The work already completed under this action took place in the initial stages of the project. The revised balance of the chipping programme is to be completed on a demonstration site recommended by the contract ecologist working on the project. The remainder of the original programme for this action has been included in the revised programme for Action C1 and these sites have been or are being felled to waste.

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C3: Commercial Felling

Scheduled Duration:

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 4, and Year 2, all Quarters.

Completed to date:

The following table outlines progress to date against revised programme for each site which required this action. The revised programme was communicated in our letter of April 16th, 2004.

Action C3 – Commercial felling

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of action	Revised area for Action (Ha)	Area complete to 30/06/04 (Ha)	Balance to complete (Ha)	Expected completion date
2	Garrane	Fell/Extract	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
3	Dromalohurt	Fell/Extract	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
4	Pollagoona	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
5	Emlaghdauroe	Fell/Extract	62.0	64.4	0.0	Complete
6	Bellaveeny	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
7	Eskeragh 1	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
8	Eskeragh 2	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
9	Owenirragh	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
10	Glencullin	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
11	Shanvolahan	Fell/Extract	41.0	0.0	41.0	10/04
13	Croaghonagh	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
14	Carrick Barr	No Program	0.00	0.0	0.0	No Program
15	Sessuegilroy	Fell/Extract	7.1	7.1	0.0	Complete
16	Slieve Blooms	No Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	No Program
	Total		110.1	71.5	41	

Comments

The delay in relation to completion of this action reflects the fact that Site no. 11 – Shanvolahan was a site designated for Action F5: “Gain scientific understanding of points of groundwater discharge ‘flushes’ and their surrounding ecology”. This necessitated a delay in the original time schedule for harvesting of this site, to allow sufficient time for this research Action F5 to take place before operations impacted on this work.

An area of 71.5 hectares (65%) is completed under this action with a balance of 41 ha commercial felling to be completed which will be done by the 2nd Quarter of Year 3.

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C4: Install Dams

Scheduled Duration:

The Scheduled duration of this action at half way stage was Year 1, all Quarters, and Year 2, all Quarters. [It is also scheduled to continue into Year 3, all Quarters.]

Completed to date:

Action C4 – Install dams

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of Action	Revised area for Action (Ha)	Area complete to 30/06/04 (Ha)	No. dams installed to 30/06/04	Balance to complete (Ha)	Expected completion date
2	Garrane	Install dams	17.5	0.0	0	17.5	06/05
3	Dromalohurt	Install dams	28.3	28.3	3,328	0.00	Complete
4	Pollagoona	Install dams	12.03	3.0	505	12.03	10/04
5	Emlaghdauroe	Install dams	72.17	25.0	6650	47.17	08/05
6	Bellaveeny	Install dams	126.0	0.0	0	126.0	09/05
7	Eskeragh 1	Install dams	12.3	2.0	270	10.3	12/04
8	Eskeragh 2	Install dams	25.8	8.7	1092	17.1	12/04
9	Owenirragh	Install dams	107.0	107	5173	0.00	Complete
10	Glencullin	No Program	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	No Program
11	Shanvolahan	Install dams	66.2	0.0	0	66.2	07/05
13	Croaghonagh	Install dams	33.0	23	1080	23	09/04
14	Carrick Barr	Install dams	12.1	12.1	604	22.2	Complete
15	Sessuegilroy	Install dams	15.6	1.8	420	13.9	12/04
16	Slieve Blooms	Install dams	252.0	184	1040	102.0	07/05
	Total		780	394.9	20,162	457.4	

Comments

Work in relation to this action is completed on 3 sites, and is ongoing on the remaining sites, two of which had no tree cover and the balance of which except one have been cleared of tree cover. On sites that have been completed water levels will be monitored to measure success of operation and any necessary remedial action will be carried out during year three. Levels are being determined as per action A5 – Produce plan accurate photographs.

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Outlined in our letter of April 16th 2004 to the Commission was our reference to the reduction in the number of dams for installation that was submitted on the original application and resulting from this a request for a possible extension to the project. To date site assessments are highlighting areas that are not required to be blocked including sloping sites, peat depths of less than a metre, tunnel ploughed drains that have already blocked up. We are awaiting the views of the commission to this letter.

Action C5: Erect/Repair Fences

Scheduled Duration

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarters 3 and 4, and Year 2, Quarters 1 and 2. The original purpose of this action was to erect 12.75km of new fence and 21.5km of fence repair to be completed; however, a revised programme was later submitted.

Completed to date:

The following table outlines progress to date against revised programme for each site which required this action. The revised programme was communicated in our letter of April 16th, 2004.

Action C5 – Fencing

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of Action	Revised area for Action (Ha)	Revised Metres of fence to be erected	Area complete to 30/06/04 (Ha)	Metres of fence erected to 30/06/04	Balance to complete (Ha)	Balance metres of fence to erect	Expected completion date
2	Garrane	Erect fences	17.9	2000	17.9	2000	0.0	0	Complete
3	Dromalohurt	Erect fences	28.3	3000	28.3	3000	0.0	0	Complete
4	Pollagoona	No Program	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	0	No Program
5	Emlaghdauroe	Erect fences	71.0	4700	54	3300	17.0	1400	11/04 changed.
6	Bellaveeny	Erect fences	165.0	5775	100	3800	65.0	2275	12/04
7	Eskeragh 1	Erect fences	12.3	1500	12.3	1500	0.0	0	Complete
8	Eskeragh 2	Erect fences	28.3	2450	28.3	2450	0.0	0	Complete
9	Owenirragh	Erect fences	107.0	3795	166	4725	0.00	0	Complete
10	Glencullin	Erect fences	28.6	2690	28.6	2690	0.0	0	Complete
11	Shanvolahan	Erect fences	64.0	2240	0	0.0	64.0	2240	09/04
13	Croaghonagh	No Program	33.0	1155	33	1155	0.0	0	Complete
14	Carrick Barr	No Program	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	No Program
15	Sessuegilroy	No Program	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	No Program
16	Slieve Blooms	No Program	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	No Program
	Total		555.4	29305	468.4	24620	146.0	5915	

Comments

Fencing is complete on 7 sites. Site no. 9-Owenirragh had a plan of 107 hectares reflecting the felling target area. However this site required the entire area of 166 hectares to be fenced to protect the unplanted area from overgrazing.

4 sites had no programme, and work under this action on the remaining 3 sites will be completed by the end of Quarter 2, Year 3 of the project.

Note: The targets for fencing in some cases do not reflect the entire site area which was in the original project submission. After evaluation of the sites, in some cases it would not have been practical to fence areas due to elevation, landscape and access. On one particular site, no. 13 – Croaghonagh, the original project submission did not include fencing for this site. However, the adjoining land has changed land use to grazing, and it proved necessary to fence this site. This necessitated a programme to be put in place for this site in order to conserve the bog.

C6: Build and repair roads onto sites for safe access and the removal of trees

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarters 2 and 4. 500m of new road were to be constructed plus road repair.

Completed to date

The following table outlines progress to date against revised programme for each site which required this action. The revised programme was communicated in our letter of April 16th, 2004.

Action C6 – Build/Repair Roads

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of action	Revised metres for Action	Metres complete to 30/06/04	Balance to complete (metres)	Expected completion date
2	Garrane	Build/Repair	0	0	0	Road not required
3	Dromalohurt	Car Park Access	0	0	0	Complete (Car Park only)
4	Pollagoona	No Program	0	0	0	No Program
5	Emlaghdauroe	New Road	230	230	0	Complete
6	Bellaveeny	Repair	1800	1800	0	Complete
7	Eskeragh 1	Car Park Access	0	0	0	Complete (Car Park only)
8	Eskeragh 2	New Road	80	80	0	Complete
9	Owenirragh	No Program	0	0	0	No Program
10	Glencullin	No Program	0	0	0	No Program
11	Shanvolahan	New Road	750	950	0	Complete
13	Croaghonagh	Car Park Access	0	0	0	Complete (Lay-by only)
14	Carrick Barr	No Program	0	0	0	No Program
15	Sessuegilroy	Repair	1500	1500	0	Complete
16	Slieve Blooms	Car Park Access	0	0	0	Complete (Car Park only)
	Total		4360	4560	0	

Comments

This action is complete.

We are 200 metres over the revised target. On site no. 11 – Shanvolahan, it was necessary to upgrade the access road to the property to facilitate timber removal.

C7: Install Dipwells

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The schedule duration at half way stage was Year 1, Quarters 3 and 4 and Year 2, Quarters 1, 2 and 4. The installation of 121 Dipwells (Walrags) was scheduled to be completed during the 1st two years. These Walrags operate mechanically and give maximum and minimum readings for water levels.

Completed to date

Action C7 – Install dipwells

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of action	Complete to 30/06/04 (No.)
2	Garrane	Install dipwell	10
3	Dromalohurt	Install dipwell	8
4	Pollagoona	Install dipwell	10
5	Emlaghdauroe	Install dipwell	9
6	Bellaveeny	Install dipwell	8
7	Eskeragh 1	Install dipwell	3
8	Eskeragh 2	Install dipwell	7
9	Owenirragh	Install dipwell	12
10	Glencullin	Install dipwell	0
11	Shanvolahan	Install dipwell	0
13	Croaghonagh	Install dipwell	12
14	Carrick Barr	Install dipwell	12
15	Sessuegilroy	Install dipwell	7
16	Slieve Blooms	Install dipwell	0
	Total		98

Comments

This action is now complete.

It was not necessary to install dipwells on 3 sites, one due to non requirement of rewetting measures on site no. 10 Glencullin. Please refer to (Russell Anderson Report – Appendix 8, 1st Project Report 2003). On Site no. 11. Shanvolahan due to research action F5: “To gain a scientific understanding of points of ground water discharge ‘flushes’ and their surrounding ecology” which encompasses water level readings on site and lastly on site no. 16 Slieve Bloom where re-wetting measures were only planned along the edge of each sub site.

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“D” Actions – Recurring biotope management

D1: Remove natural regeneration

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The schedule duration of this action at half way stage was Year 1, Quarters 2, 3 and 4 and Year 2, Quarter 1. [It is also scheduled for Year 4 , all Quarters.] This action will prevent the bog-land from drying out and increase the rate of recolonisation by bog species.

Completed to date

Site No.	Site Name	Detail of action	Revised Target for Action (No.)	Complete to 30/06/04 (No.)
2	Garrane	Remove regen		0.5
3	Dromalohurt	Remove regen		0.0
4	Pollagoona	Remove regen		0.0
5	Emlaghdauroe	Remove regen		0.0
6	Bellaveeny	Remove regen		0.0
7	Eskeragh 1	Remove regen		0.0
8	Eskeragh 2	Remove regen		0.0
9	Owenirragh	Remove regen		0.0
10	Glencullin	No Program		0.0
11	Shanvolahan	Remove regen		0.0
13	Croaghonagh	No Program		0.0
14	Carrick Barr	No Program		0.0
15	Sessuegilroy	No Program		0.0
16	Slieve Blooms	Remove regen	252	186
	Total		252	186.5

Comments

This action will vary from site to site depending on the strike of the re-generating conifers (which cannot be predicted with any accuracy) and will be carried out as the need arises mostly in the final year of the project. It will be monitored closely on all sites.

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D2: Removal of trespassing livestock

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action at half way stage is Year 1, all Quarters and Year 2, all Quarters. This action will prevent large numbers of livestock trespassing on the project area and thus seriously inhibiting the recolonisation of bog species.

Completed to date

On two sites a number of hours/lifts have been recorded, this action will take place on sites on an “as required” basis (which cannot be predicted with any accuracy).

Comments

Site managers continue to monitor this operation on a day to day basis.

Action D3: Measure nutrient flow from sites

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action at half way stage was for Year 1, all Quarters, and Year 2, all Quarters. This action will monitor the effects of the restoration project on water quality.

Completed to date

Sampling is ongoing on 4 sites and a final report on data collected will be drawn up when the process is complete. An interim report from Coillte’s research laboratory staff outlines detail in relation to each site. See Appendix 5 (Water Monitoring Report)

Comments

Site managers together with Coillte research staff continue to take water samples on a monthly basis.

“E“ Actions – Public awareness and dissemination of results

E1: Land manager training course

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action at half way stage was Year 1, Quarter 4 and Year 2, Quarter 4. This action is to disseminate the skills and experience needed to restore bogland and to promote awareness and understanding of the LIFE project.

Completed to date:

- Two Land managers courses were organised and held in Year 1. 43 people attended these courses and a number who were invited could not attend. See Appendix 6 of this report for course detail (and See Appendix 5 of 1st Progress Report 2003 for course material produced i.e. Site Managers Booklet)
- Two Land managers course's were organised and held in Year 2. 62 people attended these courses and a number who were invited could not attend. See Appendix 6 – 6.1-Group Photograph with Irish Peatland Conservation Council, (IPCC), 6.2-Society of Irish Foresters (SOIF) Tour Itinerary, 6.3-SOIF Group Photograph and 6.4-Course Material Produced.

Comments

A further land mangers training day is scheduled to take place in September 2004, and planning/organisation is in progress for a course to take place in October 2004.

These training days promote the project, disseminate the experience to date and have been received with great enthusiasm.

E2: Project Website

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action is throughout the project. This action will be utilised to disseminate on-going results from the LIFE project.

Completed to date:

A website has been constructed and can be visited at www.irishbogrestorationproject.ie. It contains information relating to the project sites, background on bogs, links to other related websites and the project summary. The website was highlighted as an information tool at the official launch of the project held in June 2004.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

The website has also been publicised through its links with a schools educational programme, the “Graduate Treasure Trail”. Appendix 7 outlines explanatory information and details publicity gained from involvement with this initiative.

Comments

Plans are underway to expand the information gained from 2 years working on the project. This will include updating the website to include a photo library of progress/work completed to date, project results and restoration progress.

E3: Project Information Brochure

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarters 2, 3 and 4. The purpose of the brochure is to promote public awareness of the project.

Completed to date:

The project brochure has been produced and distributed to a large number of stakeholders – a selection of stakeholders who received brochures are outlined in the following table.

List of Stakeholders	
Environment Section	Clare Co. Council
ENFO – Environmental Information Service	Dublin 2
Education Officers	Glenveigh National Park, Co. Donegal
All Coillte Staff	Countrywide
All National Parks & Wildlife Staff	Countrywide
All Forest Service Staff	Countrywide
National and Second Level Schools	Co. Mayo
National College of Ireland	Sandyford Road, Dublin 15
Dublin City University	Glasnevin, Co. Dublin
Richard Watson – Director	Marble Arch Caves, Fermanagh BT92 1EW
John McLoughlin	Tree Council of Ireland

Comments

Over 15,000 brochures have been distributed to date, and arising from the distribution of the project brochure there have been expressions of interest from schools, non-governmental organisations as well as general queries from our stakeholders. The remaining brochures will be distributed as the project continues and as requests are made for information about the project. See Appendix 8 (Project Brochure)

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E4: Project results booklet**Scheduled Duration**

The scheduled duration of this action is not until Year 4, Quarter 3 and 4.

E5: Annual bog walk**Scheduled Duration**

The schedule duration of this action at half way stage is Year 2, Quarter 1. It will promote awareness of, and support for, the LIFE project.

Completed to date:

Bog walks were held as part of our land managers courses, one as part of our course held in May 2003 and during our land managers course in June 2004. One was also part of our "Green Day" held in Year 1 of the project. The participants were shown the different flora of the bog and discussion took place surrounding the different characteristics of the particular flora shown.

Comments

Site managers continue to promote local awareness of the project objectives and utilisation of the boardwalks at demonstration sites continue to be used to allow random visitors a view of the surrounding bog and restoration techniques being used.

Further bog walks will be organised to further promote the project progress and objectives.

E6: Media Publicity Campaign**Scheduled duration and main objective**

The scheduled duration of this action is throughout the project. The main focus of this action is to promote public awareness of the background, objectives, actions and events of the LIFE project. A big effort has been made and continues by the Public Relations/Administration Manager to promote the project and its objectives, and to ensure that LIFE-Nature, and joint funding of the project both by EU DG-Environment and Coillte is acknowledged through all forums of media publicity.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Completed to date

Communication of the objectives of the project through the use of the media has been wide and varied. The main tasks completed here are as follows:

- A number of technical articles have been produced and published during the 1st two years of the project. See Appendix 9 (Technical Articles)
- General articles have been published in other external magazines and numerous articles have been produced and published in Coillte's internal company magazine "*Coillte Contact*". See Appendix 9 (General Articles, Coillte Publication Articles)
- Press releases have been published at opportune times during the project, and at major events as the project work progresses. See Appendix 10 (Media Publicity Listing)
- The medium of Radio and Television has been utilised at appropriate times during the project. See Appendix 10 (Media Publicity Listing)
- Local communities, stakeholders, NGOs, environmental groups and relevant public authorities have been targeted to attend information days, and land manager training days.
- It is planned to set up an E-mail bulletin to advise the public of demonstration days, bog walks, results of work to date etc. when all boardwalks and interpretative display signs are in place. It was not prudent to get this aspect of the media publicity campaign up and running prior to action E7 – Interpretative displays and boardwalks being fully completed.
- Promotion of the project objectives, background and progress has also been achieved through the attendance of the Project Manager and PR/Administration Manager at various meetings, field days, community meetings etc. Presentations in relation to the project's objective and progress were delivered and summary handouts and brochures in relation to the project have been distributed at such events. They are listed in Appendix 11.
- The project has been represented at international events by staff attending the Border Mires Project Conference (LIFE98NAT/UK/005432) and Restoration of Scottish Raised Bogs Conference (LIFE00NAT/UK/007075). Arrangements are in place for a visit to site no. 13 Croaghonagh North, Donegal, by project manager Lorcan O'Toole (Golden Eagle LIFE Project (LIFE00NAT/IRL/007145) together with a group of wildlife rangers from the Scottish Forestry Commission. This visit is planned for September 21st 2004, discussion on the project objectives, restoration techniques used and a bog walk are planned for this event.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Special Event

Project Launch and Media Publicity

A major event in the “Life” of the project was the official launch of the project which took place on June 3rd, 2004 in Co. Mayo in beautiful warm Summer sunshine.

Mr. Joe Walsh TD, Government Minister for Agriculture and Food officiated at the event which was attended by a large group of external stakeholders and Coillte staff. The launch allowed national publicity through articles appearing in local and national newspapers. The project also received national television coverage as a result of the launch. Appendix 12 shows information relating to the launch, 12.1 - Copy of launch invitation, 12.2 - Press release, 12.3 - List of invitees, 12.4 - Ministers speech, 12.5 – Photograph of Minister at Eskeragh, and 12.6 – A video showing the national television report on the project is enclosed.

Comments

Publicity of the project, its objectives and actions will continue, and as experience is gained on the different techniques used to complete the restoration work, we feel it will be even more interesting for our stakeholders to begin seeing results based on the work carried out to date.

E7: Interpretative displays and boardwalks

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 4 and Year 2, Quarter 4 [It is also scheduled for Year 3, Quarter 4 and Year 4, Quarter 4.] This action will provide signage that will summarise the LIFE project generally and the individual demonstration site, and will provide boardwalks for safe visitor access and habitat protection.

Completed to date

Consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife has taken place, and general signage displaying the EU LIFE logo and Coillte logo has been erected at all demonstration sites, see Appendix 13 (Photograph of Signage). Plans for the interpretative displays have been drawn up and quotations received, these information signs will be erected towards the end of Quarter 2, Year 3 on demonstration sites.

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Boardwalks have been constructed at site no. 7 – Eskeragh and site no. 16 – Slieve Blooms. Work in progress on construction of boardwalks is continuing at sites no. 5 – Emlaghdauroe and site no. 13 – Croaghonagh North. These two boardwalks will be completed by end of September 2004. Planning is underway re construction of a boardwalk at site no. 3 – Dromalonnahurt. A car park has been constructed at this site, and because of site elevation issues, there is a need to construct a modified boardwalk to achieve a focal point for our visitors to this site. This will be completed by Quarter 3, Year 3.

Comments

Construction of the boardwalks was not feasible on sites until major operational works such as commercial felling and felling to waste were completed.

Carparks and boardwalks at the two demonstration sites completed to date, Eskeragh and Slieve Blooms, have been used extensively to date to publicise the project, its objectives and restorations techniques. Study tours, university students, foreign visitors, and the general public have to date enjoyed the benefits of hearing about the project and its benefits to nature conservation.

An added bonus is that one of the demonstration sites is actually on the “Slieve Bloom Way”, which is a national way marked walkway. This way is used by the public and foreign visitors to view the scenic surrounding countryside of the Slieve Bloom Mountains. During the Slieve Bloom Walking festival, which takes place in early Summer, the way marked walkway on which our site is located is visited by numerous tourists and walking clubs/groups. See Appendix 14 – Slieve Bloom Walkway Leaflet

We now plan to extend our communication action programme to the other demonstration sites when the boardwalks are complete.

“F” Actions – Overall project operation and monitoring

F1: Project Management

Scheduled Duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action is throughout the project. The main objective of this action is to manage the project and evaluate progress in relation to its aims and objectives.

Completed to date:

In October 2002, a new project manager Mr. Kevin Donnellan, was appointed. Also in October 2002, Ms. Caroline White began work as PR/Administration Manager to the project.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Four successful Project Management Group (PMG) meetings were held in Year 1 and four held throughout Year 2.

Year 1

Project management in year one involved 4 Project Management Group meetings, site manager training days, an organised field trip to Liffey Head bog complex in Co. Wicklow where National Parks and Wildlife staff invited the group to see the restoration work completed on this bog.

Year 2

Project management in year two consisted of four Project Management Group meetings held, with a different format from those in Year 1. It was decided, in order to achieve maximum benefit from these meetings, that a field visit be incorporated as part of each meeting to see at first hand operational work and progress achieved on sites visited.

The 1st meeting held in Quarter 1, Year 2, included a site visit to site no. 16, Slieve Blooms to see work in progress and our newly constructed boardwalk.

The 2nd meeting included a visit to site no. 6 Bellaveeny where a range of actions were in progress such as felling to waste, windrowing and fencing. Planning for drain blocking on this site was also in progress and the project management group experienced the issues here in relation to difficulties with drain blocking on steep slopes and difficult terrain. The group also visited Shanvolahan where a demonstration from Minerex took place on water sampling surrounding action F5: "To gain a scientific understanding of points of ground water discharge "flushes" and their surrounding ecology". Lastly the group visited Eskeragh to view felling to waste and drain blocking.

The 3rd meeting involved a visit to site no. 13, Croaghonagh where a newly constructed car park had been built, and drain blocking and fencing had been completed.

This visit also allowed the Project Management Group to view a demonstration of a recycled plastic boardwalk and to discuss and arrive at a decision in terms of which type of boardwalk to construct on this site.

The final meeting of Year 2 involved a site visit to site no. 7 Eskeragh. This meeting was combined with a field visit for the Project Advisory Panel and allowed the group to view the carpark and boardwalk at Eskeragh.

As well as the Project Management Group present at these meetings, local site managers led the field trips and elaborated on work progress. Also a decision was taken to invite a local staff member of National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) to attend the meetings to update them on progress and relevant issues. In addition to this Dr. John Conaghan, contract project ecologist, attended the Project Management Group meetings and gave a presentation on his work on each site as the project progressed.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Comments:

PMG meetings have been productive and positive, always proceeding on the basis of consensus.

F2: Project Advisory Panel**Scheduled Duration and main objective**

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 1, and Year 2, Quarter 1. [It is also scheduled for Year 3, Quarter 1 and Year 4, Quarter 1]. The panel will be available to provide technical or management advice should the project management group so request it.

Completed to date:

It has been found to be more useful to hold these meetings in the final quarter of each project year as there is then more to report to the advisory panel. A successful and informative meeting of the Project Advisory Panel held in Quarter 4 of Year 1 including a visit to demonstration site No. 5 (Emlaghadauroe), Clifden, Co. Galway. During this meeting, members of the Advisory Panel contributed useful suggestions and expressed themselves as being impressed with the way the project is progressing.

In Year 2, a second Project Advisory Panel meeting was held in Co. Mayo. This meeting included a site visit to site No.7 (Eskeragh), the group went for a walk on the boardwalk and the site manager discussed the restoration work which has taken place on this site.

Comments

A member of the project advisory panel – Mr. Michael Walsh, Teagasc (Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority) Research Centre expressed a keen interest in the project restoration methods and offered advice in relation to vegetation monitoring timing, from experience gained in his own field. He also requested that the project manager and pr/admin manger brief his staff on the project, its objectives, restoration methods and experience to date.

F3: Project Report**Scheduled Duration and main objective**

The scheduled duration of this action is Year 2, Quarter 1, Year 3, Quarter 1 and Year 4, Quarters 1 and 4. This action is required in order to report to the European Commission on activities and progress during the project in relation to its aims and objectives.

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Completed to date:

Progress Report for Year 1 was produced and submitted to the European Commission and external team on 29 August 2003, and circulated to all members of the Project Management Group. On consideration of the Commission's response to that report, a revised programme for certain actions was sent to the Commission on April 16th, 2004. This letter also requested to know the Commission's attitude in principle to the possibility of adding additional areas to the project in the event of an under spend arising in certain areas of the project budget.

Interim Report to end of Year 2 (and incorporating 2nd Progress Report) prepared during July/August 2004 and sent to the European Commission and the external team.

Comments

Interim report will be distributed to all members of the Project Management Group and kept on file for reference.

F4: Procure the use of expert advice**Scheduled Duration and main objective**

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 1. The project will benefit from the use of correct methodologies and restoration techniques and hence a better return on investment.

Completed to date:

Action Complete in Year 1. Mr. Russell Anderson's (British Forestry Commission Research Branch) report received and utilised. Informal contact has been maintained with Mr. Anderson who has given follow up advice. See 1st Progress Report 2003 – Appendix 8

Comments

Advice has also been obtained from the Irish Peatland Conservation Council (IPCC) in relation to different types of boardwalks; they provided a report to the project on this matter.

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F5: To gain a scientific understanding of points of ground water discharge “flushes” and their surrounding ecology

Scheduled duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action was Year 1, Quarter 2, 3 and 4, and Year 2, Quarters 1 and 2. This action, sub-contracted to Minerex, will monitor how two “flushes” beside sub-sites at 7, 8 and 11 in North Mayo function and their relationship with the surrounding ecology.

Completed to date

Phase 1: Monitoring programme design and setup – including site survey, soil sampling, water sampling and installation of monitoring equipment has been completed.

Phase 2: Work continues here including monthly measurement of flow, hydrochemistry and water levels and collation, plotting, and analysis.

Comments

A close working relationship was maintained to co-ordinate the work of Minerex together with the project work planned for the site to lessen the potential impact that this work may have had on the water monitoring programme. This resulted in a revised start up date for the felling operation. A report outlining work completed to date can be seen in Appendix 15 – Minerex Report

F6: Hydrology monitoring

Scheduled duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action was throughout the project. The objective of this action is to record changes in water levels and whether the bog is improving hydrologically.

Completed to date

As already outlined under action C7 – Install dipwells, Walrags have been installed on 11 sites. Readings are being taken monthly and recorded.

Comments

These readings will be collated as the project progresses to provide information in relation to changes in water levels.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

F7: Vegetation Monitoring

Scheduled duration and main objective

The scheduled duration of this action is Quarter 1 of Year 1, 2, 3 and 4 and also Quarter 4 of Year 4. The main objective of the action is to determine through the use of vegetation transects the degree of success of the restoration project.

Completed to date

Vegetation transects have been laid down on cleared areas on all sites, with an initial vegetation description carried out on site no. 16 – Slieve Blooms. It is not planned to continue a vegetation monitoring programme on this site, due to the large site area, and the minimal impact of forestry operations on this site. It is planned to continue to monitor this site for regeneration of conifer species. Appendix 16 – Vegetation Monitoring Report outlines work completed to date on each site.

Comments

Overall the recovery of bog vegetation is very evident. Positive results can be seen on many sites to date which is encouraging.

F8: Aerial Survey

The scheduled duration of this action is not until the last two quarters of Year 4.

F9: Ground Inventory

The schedule duration of this action is Quarter 3 and 4 of Year 2. The objective of this action is to monitor the progress being made on tree removal across the project areas.

Completed to date

Appendix 17 consists of GIS Maps (Geographic Information System Maps) for all project sites. These maps outline operational work completed at the half way stage of the project.

Comments

Mapping of drain blocking action

Maps show the overall progress on the restoration of the hydrological system of each site. The number of dams required for each site varies greatly depending on a number of factors including the blocking of open drains, strategically blocking key points of outfall and where it was necessary to raise water levels. Thus, in some cases the installation of a small number of dams can restore the hydrology over a relatively large area.

In addition on site 13, Slieve Blooms, drain blocking was largely required along the perimeter drains and only intermittently within the site. This blocking ensures that the restoration of the complete hydrological system.

In summary:

Code	Action	Progress
C1	Fell non-commercial mature trees	88%
C2	Fell and chip	80%
C3	Fell commercial trees	65%
C4	Install dams	51%

On completion of all peatland restoration work for all sites, the Company inventory database will be updated to take account of the project work and will include all these areas as part of Coillte's management units for nature conservation..

V TIME PLANNING

Action Activity at half way stage

Table Legend

- ✓ = original time planning schedule
- ▼ = action continuing through specific quarters
- = action fully completed for specific year

Action Number/name	Project Year 1				Project Year 2				Project Year 3				Project Year 4			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
A. Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or action plans:																
A1 Site visit to see another LIFE sponsored project.	✓	▼	▼	▼		▼										
A2 Elaboration of action plan.		✓	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼								
A3 Identify Safety Hazards and draw up a general safety plan for sites.		✓	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼								
A4 Survey of fence lines and enclosures.		✓	✓	▼	▼	▼	▼	■								
A5 To produce accurate photographs of all project sites.	✓	✓	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼								
B. Purchase/lease of land and/or rights:																
None																

Action Number/name	Calendar Year 1				Calendar Year 2				Calendar Year 3				Calendar Year 4			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
C. Non-recurring biotope management:																
C1 Fell mature trees non-commercial felling.			✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓					
C2 Fell and chip conifers		✓ ▼	▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓									
C3 Commercial felling.				✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼								
C4 Install dams.	✓	✓	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓	✓				
C5 Erect enclosures on unplanted areas and repair fences on cleared areas.			✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	▼	▼								
C6 Build and repair roads onto sites for safe access and the removal of trees.		✓	▼	✓ ▼	▼	▼	▼	■								
C7 Install dipwells.		▼	✓ ▼	✓ ■	✓	✓		✓								
D. Recurring biotope management:																
D1 Remove natural regeneration.		✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	▼	▼	▼					✓	✓	✓	✓
D2 Removal of trespassing livestock.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
D3 Measure nutrient flow from sites.	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Action Number/name	Calendar Year 1				Calendar Year 2				Calendar Year 3				Calendar Year 4			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
E. Public awareness and dissemination of results:																
E1 Land manager training Course				✓ ■				✓ ■				✓				✓
E2 Project website	✓	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
E3 Project information brochure		✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	▼	▼	▼	■								
E4 Project results booklet															✓	✓
E5 Annual bog walk				▼	✓			▼	✓				✓			
E6 Media publicity campaign	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
E7 Interpretative displays and boardwalks	▼	▼	▼	✓ ▼	▼	▼	▼	✓ ▼				✓				✓

Action Number/name	Calendar Year 1				Calendar Year 2				Calendar Year 3				Calendar Year 4			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
F. Overall project operation and monitoring:																
F1 Project management	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
F2 Project advisory panel	✓			■	✓			■	✓				✓			
F3 Project Report					✓ ■			■	✓				✓			✓
F4 Procure the use of expert advice	✓ ■															
F5 To gain a scientific understanding of points of ground water discharge 'flushes' and their surrounding ecology		✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ■	✓ ▼	✓ ■										
F6 Hydrology monitoring.		✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓ ▼	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
F7 Vegetation monitoring.	✓ ▼	▼	▼	■	✓ ▼	▼	▼	■	✓				✓			✓
F8 Aerial survey.															✓	✓
F9 Ground inventory.							✓	✓ ■								

VI SUMMARY OF DELIVERABLE PRODUCTS

Product	No. of Action	Deadline	Progress to end Year 2
Project Information Brochure	E3	31.10.2002	Overall 15,000 have been distributed to a large number of stakeholders in order to publicise the background, objectives, and actions of the project. Requests for additional information and attendance at field days from schools, individual members of the public and interested bodies have resulted from the distribution of the brochure.
Safety Plan and Hazard Identification	A3	31.10.2002	A safety plan has been produced and HIRA (hazard identification, risk assessment forms) are completed on all sites before actions begin. Site managers will continue to work with Coillte's safety & training team to ensure that appropriate safety procedures are in place at all times while work is ongoing during the project.
Produce plan accurate photographs of project sites	A5	31.10.2002	Budget proved to be seriously inadequate and timing inappropriate. An alternative, more practical, approach has been put in place within original budget – see Action Report.
Training Pack year II	E1	30.05.2003	In Module 1 each course participant received a specially prepared “Site Managers Booklet” and in Module 2 a Project Summary covering project background, objectives, specific actions and methodologies was distributed to each participant.
Study of flush areas (Report)	F5	28.11.2003	Interim report received from contractor on Phase I and Phase II – See 1 st Progress Report 2003 Appendix 9, and see Appendix 15 of this report.
Nutrient Flow Study (Interim Report)	D3	30.10.2004	See Appendix 5 of this report.
Training Pack Year III	E1	28.05.2004	Not scheduled for Years 1-2.
Training Pack Year IV	E1	28.05.2005	Not scheduled for Years 1- 2.
Aerial survey is completed	F8	30.06.2006	Not scheduled for Years 1- 2.
Project Results Booklet	E4	31.07.2006	Not scheduled for Years 1- 2.
Nutrient Flow Study (Final Report)	D3	31.07.2006	Not scheduled for Years 1- 2.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

VII ACTIVITY REPORTS FORESEEN
(Progress Report, Interim Report, Final Report)

Progress Report Year I	31.07.2003	Submitted 29.08.2003
Progress Report Year II with interim report	31.07.2004	Submitted 30.09.2004
Progress Report Year III	31.07.2005	
Progress Report Year IV with Final Report	29.07.2006	

VIII SUMMARY OF PROJECT MILESTONES

Milestone	No. of Action	Deadline	Progress to end Year 2
Appoint Project Director	A - F	31.01.2002	Original Project Manager (Mr Tom Kavanagh) took up a position with the Irish Forest Service and was replaced by the present Project Manager (Mr Kevin Donnellan) in October 2002.
Project Launch	E6	31.09.2002	The Minister for Agriculture and Food, Mr. Joe Walsh T.D., officiated at the formal launch of the project on June 3 rd , 2004 at Site No. 7 Eskeragh, Crossomlina, Co. Mayo.
Project Website Launch	E2	31.03.2003	Project website http://www.irishbogrestorationproject.ie established and available on-line since June 2003. With 2 years experience working on the project, expansion of the website is intended to include a photo library of the work completed to date, project results and experience to date. The website was publicised as an information tool together with the overall project at the high profile launch which took place in the Summer of 2004.
Complete ground inventory on all sites to show cleared areas	F9	31.07.2004	GIS (Geographic Information System) maps are produced for all sites where major operational actions have taken place, these are included in the Appendix 17.
All major clearance, fencing and damming work will be completed	C1:C2:C3: C4:C5	31.07.2005	Not scheduled for Years 1- 2.
Project results disseminated	E4	31.07.2006	Not scheduled for Years 1- 2.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

IX FINANCIAL SUMMARY – INTERIM REPORT (at end of Year 2)



Financial Summary Year 2

Category →	A (Form 16)	A (Form 16)	C (Form 18)	C (Form 18)	D (Form 19)	D (Form 19)	E (Form 20)	E (Form 20)	F (Form 21)	F (Form 21)	Total costs € Actual	Total costs € Budget	Total Variance €
Budget item ↓	↓												
↓	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
1. Personnel	10,799	4,063	172,552	239,953	36,671	52,980	85,099	193,849	171,617	289,527	476,738	780,372	303,634
2. Travel	7,077	15,140	4,568	33,331	6,392	8,887	5,266	45,710	35,370	56,507	58,673	159,575	100,902
3. External assistance	0	5,586	530,444	1,137,414	423	50,311	7,291	0	130,582	185,123	668,740	1,378,434	709,694
4. Durable goods	550	0	336,021	1,458,796	27,329	16,655	6,153	25,396	1,749	2,539	371,802	1,503,386	1,131,584
5. Land purchase/lease	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Consumable material	0	0	11,192	3,961	0	0	1,000	20,315	0	12,189	12,192	36,465	24,273
7. Other costs	14	127	4,587	0	4,762	45,873	20,711	35,999	988	1,978	31,062	83,977	52,915
8. Overheads	448	2,187	10,926	130,557	2,332	27,386	8,588	17,770	27,554	75,584	49,848	253,484	203,636
TOTAL	18,888	27,103	1,070,290	3,004,012	77,909	202,092	134,108	339,039	367,860	623,447	1,669,055	4,195,693	2,526,638
% of total budget spent	70%		36%		39%		40%		59%		40%		

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)



Summary of Project Spend for Reporting Period

Expenditure Category	Amount Spent	Amount Budgeted	Variance	% Spent
Personnel	476,738	780,372	303,634	61%
Travel	58,673	159,575	100,902	37%
External Assistance	668,740	1,378,434	709,694	49%
Durable Goods	371,802	1,503,386	1,131,584	25%
Consumable Material	12,192	36,465	24,273	33%
Other Costs	31,062	83,977	52,915	37%
Overheads	49,848	253,484	203,636	20%
Total	1,669,055	4,195,693	2,526,638	40%

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Expenditure by Action Type

A Actions

Preparatory Actions, Elaboration of Management Plans

Budget Item	A1		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	443	-	443
Travel	6,340	12,600	6,260
External Assistance	-	-	-
Durable Goods	-	-	-
Consumable Material	-	-	-
Other Costs	-	-	-
Overheads	-	-	-
Total	6,783	12,600	5,817

A2		
Actual	Budget	Variance
-	-	-
623	1,270	647
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
623	1,270	647

A3		
Actual	Budget	Variance
8,888	4,063	4,825
55	1,270	1,215
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
14	127	113
448	2,187	1,739
9,405	7,647	1,758

A4		
Actual	Budget	Variance
437	-	437
59	-	59
-	1,777	1,777
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
496	1,777	1,281

Budget Item	A5		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	1,031	-	1,031
Travel	-	-	-
External Assistance	-	3,809	3,809
Durable Goods	550	-	550
Consumable Material	-	-	-
Other Costs	-	-	-
Overheads	-	-	-
Total	1,581	3,809	2,228

Total		
Actual	Budget	Variance
10,799	4,063	6,736
7,077	15,140	8,063
-	5,586	5,586
550	-	550
-	-	-
14	127	113
448	2,187	1,739
18,888	27,103	8,215

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Expenditure by Action Type
C Actions
Non-Recurring Management

Budget Item	C1		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	24,381	4,653	- 19,728
Travel	331	1,270	939
External Assistance	213,168	224,426	11,258
Durable Goods	-	-	-
Consumable Material	-	-	-
Other Costs	-	-	-
Overheads	5,863	2,503	- 3,360
Total	243,743	232,852	- 10,891

C2		
Actual	Budget	Variance
21,964	34,897	12,933
3,106	7,618	4,512
136,142	135,862	- 280
-	25,395	25,395
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	18,777	18,777
161,212	222,549	61,337

C3		
Actual	Budget	Variance
1,781	16,285	14,504
-	2,857	2,857
93,750	93,750	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	8,762	8,762
95,531	121,654	26,123

C4		
Actual	Budget	Variance
84,400	156,566	72,166
349	14,602	14,253
30,228	609,065	578,837
320,160	1,396,448	1,076,288
-	-	-
4,471	-	- 4,471
4,255	84,243	79,988
443,863	2,260,924	1,817,061

Budget Item	C5		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	37,212	17,928	- 19,284
Travel	760	5,714	4,954
External Assistance	15,384	47,728	32,344
Durable Goods	11,264	26,040	14,776
Consumable Material	-	-	-
Other Costs	116	-	- 116
Overheads	198	13,144	12,946
Total	64,934	110,554	45,620

C6		
Actual	Budget	Variance
2,199	5,815	3,616
22	1,270	1,248
32,101	26,583	- 5,518
-	-	-
11,192	3,961	- 7,231
-	-	-
30	3,128	3,098
45,544	40,757	- 4,787

C7		
Actual	Budget	Variance
615	3,809	3,194
-	-	-
9,671	-	- 9,671
4,597	10,913	6,316
-	-	-
-	-	-
580	-	- 580
15,463	14,722	- 741

Total		
Actual	Budget	Variance
172,552	239,953	67,401
4,568	33,331	28,763
530,444	1,137,414	606,970
336,021	1,458,796	1,122,775
11,192	3,961	- 7,231
4,587	-	- 4,587
10,926	130,557	119,631
1,070,290	3,004,012	1,933,722

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Expenditure by Action Type

D Actions

Recurring Biotope Management

Budget Item	D1			D2			D3			Total		
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	3,396	24,453	21,057	1,142	5,079	3,937	32,133	23,448	- 8,685	36,671	52,980	16,309
Travel	-	6,348	6,348	-	-	-	6,392	2,539	- 3,853	6,392	8,887	2,495
External Assistance	221	50,311	50,090	202	-	- 202	-	-	-	423	50,311	49,888
Durable Goods	-	1,418	1,418	-	-	-	27,329	15,237	- 12,092	27,329	16,655	- 10,674
Consumable Material	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Costs	4,762	-	- 4,762	-	-	-	-	45,873	45,873	4,762	45,873	41,111
Overheads	-	14,770	14,770	-	-	-	2,332	12,616	10,284	2,332	27,386	25,054
Total	8,379	97,300	88,921	1,344	5,079	3,735	68,186	99,713	31,527	77,909	202,092	124,183

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

E Actions

Public Awareness and Dissemination of Results

Budget Item	E1			E2			E3			E4		
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	3,835	42,323	38,488	-	29,335	29,335	-	5,290	5,290	-	10,578	10,578
Travel	2,716	5,079	2,363	-	-	-	-	635	635	-	635	635
External Assistance	840	-	840	700	-	700	-	-	-	-	-	-
Durable Goods	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consumable Material	-	2,539	2,539	-	2,539	2,539	-	635	635	-	635	635
Other Costs	3,500	12,776	9,276	80	-	80	1,890	7,301	5,411	-	9,142	9,142
Overheads	663	2,286	1,623	4,900	3,047	1,853	515	825	310	-	1,041	1,041
Total	11,554	70,003	58,449	5,680	34,921	29,241	2,405	14,686	12,281	-	22,031	22,031

Budget Item	E5			E6			E7			Total		
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	800	8,240	7,440	73,950	87,527	13,577	6,514	10,556	4,042	85,099	193,849	108,750
Travel	450	12,697	12,247	2,100	22,855	20,755	-	3,809	3,809	5,266	45,710	40,444
External Assistance	-	-	-	350	-	350	5,401	-	5,401	7,291	-	7,291
Durable Goods	-	-	-	2,808	5,396	2,588	3,345	15,000	11,655	6,153	25,396	19,243
Consumable Material	-	2,539	2,539	-	10,158	10,158	1,000	1,270	270	1,000	20,315	19,315
Other Costs	-	-	-	12,985	5,079	7,906	2,256	1,701	555	20,711	35,999	15,288
Overheads	-	1,524	1,524	2,069	4,603	2,534	441	4,444	4,003	8,588	17,770	9,182
Total	1,250	25,000	23,750	94,262	135,618	41,356	18,957	36,780	17,823	134,108	339,039	204,931

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

Expenditure by Action Type

F Actions

Overall Project Operation and Monitoring

Budget Item	F1		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	165,156	205,830	40,674
Travel	32,785	38,093	5,308
External Assistance	-	-	-
Durable Goods	1,749	2,539	790
Consumable Material	-	3,809	3,809
Other Costs	988	-	988
Overheads	26,626	65,001	38,375
Total	227,304	315,272	87,968

F2		
Actual	Budget	Variance
-	3,526	3,526
249	6,349	6,100
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	1,270	1,270
-	-	-
387	762	375
636	11,907	11,271

F3		
Actual	Budget	Variance
4,009	28,424	24,415
2,336	-	2,336
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	7,110	7,110
-	-	-
541	9,821	9,280
6,886	45,355	38,469

F4		
Actual	Budget	Variance
-	-	-
-	1,270	1,270
9,688	8,808	880
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	317	317
-	-	-
9,688	10,395	707

Budget Item	F5		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-
External Assistance	90,666	95,000	4,334
Durable Goods	-	-	-
Consumable Material	-	-	-
Other Costs	-	-	-
Overheads	-	-	-
Total	90,666	95,000	4,334

F6		
Actual	Budget	Variance
2,452	51,747	49,295
-	-	-
21,185	-	21,185
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
23,637	51,747	28,110

F7		
Actual	Budget	Variance
-	-	-
-	10,795	10,795
8,971	58,460	49,489
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	1,661	1,661
-	-	-
8,971	70,916	61,945

F8		
Actual	Budget	Variance
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	19,046	19,046
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	19,046	19,046

Budget Item	F9		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Personnel	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-
External Assistance	72	3,809	3,737
Durable Goods	-	-	-
Consumable Material	-	-	-
Other Costs	-	-	-
Overheads	-	-	-
Total	72	3,809	3,737

Total		
Actual	Budget	Variance
171,617	289,527	117,910
35,370	56,507	21,137
130,582	185,123	54,541
1,749	2,539	790
-	12,189	12,189
988	1,978	990
27,554	75,584	48,030
367,860	623,447	255,587

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Comments

As requested by the Commission, the revised achievement targets by site for the “C” and “D” actions were submitted in our letter of 16th April, 2004. The technical report by action (part IV above) shows physical achievement to date against the revised targets. However, the summary financial report shows expenditure by action against the original project provisional budget.

It is not envisaged that any increases or decreases in one or more categories of expenditure of the project provisional budget will exceed the 10% threshold and be considered substantial.

40% of the total approved provisional budget has now been incurred. The level of expenditure arising under each action category reflects the extent to which operational milestones have been achieved. These are outlined in detail in the technical report.

“A” Actions – Preparatory Actions, Elaboration of Management Plans

70% of the allocated budget has been incurred in the period covered by the interim report. While all preparatory actions are completed, some of these actions need to continue for the life of the project.

Over and under spends against budget arise in personnel and external assistance costs respectively. Coillte personnel have been used instead of sub-contractors for survey of fence lines (A4) and plan accurate photographs (A5) actions.

“C” Actions - Non-Recurring Management

As outlined above, revised operational targets for C actions have been submitted for approval.

The cost of felling and chipping conifers (C2) proved to be substantially higher than originally anticipated, and the revised target transfers much of the original programme to non-commercial felling (C1).

The number of dams required to be installed has proven to be significantly less than that originally envisaged (C4).

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)

“D” Actions – Recurring Biotope Management

Revised operational targets have been submitted to the Commission.

Durable goods (auto samplers) exceeded the spend originally anticipated.

Sub-contractors were originally intended to be used for natural regeneration removal activities (D1) but Coillte personnel are being used instead.

“E” Actions – Public Awareness and Dissemination of Results

Personnel and travel costs are under spent for this action type at this stage. Expenditure under these actions is proportionately greater as the project progresses, as there are further achievements to communicate.

The project results booklet (E4) is not scheduled until year 4.

Some of the annual bog walk action (E5) took place in conjunction with the land manager’s training courses (E1).

“F” Actions – Overall Project Operation and Monitoring

59% of the provisional budget has been incurred in the period covered by the interim report. Proportionately less expenditure in the personnel and travel areas is expected for the remainder of the project as most actions have commenced and should require less management time to monitor progress.

The aerial survey (F8) is not scheduled until year 4.

Coillte Teoranta (The Irish Forestry Board)