



Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 7 March 2023

Update version, previously published on : 11 June 1996

Ireland

Lough Oughter



Designation date	7 June 1996
Site number	853
Coordinates	54°01'21"N 07°26'05"W
Area	1 463,50 ha

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

Lough Oughter Ramsar site occupies much of the lowland drumlin belt in north and central Cavan between Belturbet, Killeshandra and Cavan town. This area comprises Lough Oughter itself along with a maze of waterways, islands, small lakes and peninsulas. Lough Oughter, the largest lake in the site, is relatively shallow (maximum depth of 10 m) and considered to be a naturally eutrophic system. The extensive network of lakes, lake margin, streams, rivers, narrow connecting channels, support a range of associated habitats with marsh, fen, reed swamp, wet woodland, wet grassland calcareous spring and scrub. The main inflowing rivers are the River Erne and the Annalee River, whilst the main outflowing river is the River Erne, which connects the lake to Upper Lough Erne and Lower Lough Erne and which ultimately flows into Donegal Bay. Upper and Lower Lough Erne and part of the River Erne lie in Northern Ireland and Upper Lough Erne is a UK Ramsar Site.

Lough Oughter is a Special Protection Area for birds (Lough Oughter Complex SPA) and is of ornithological importance for its wintering waterbird populations. The site is important for wintering Whooper Swan, Great Crested Grebe and Wigeon as well as a range of other duck and wader species. It is also important for its breeding populations of Great Crested Grebe (nationally important) and Common Tern (small colony is present on the site). Historically the site was important for Greenland White-fronted Goose, however there have been few records of this species in recent decades.

The Lough Oughter Ramsar Site is part of the more extensive Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The SAC extends to the border with Northern Ireland and connects Lough Oughter to the Upper Lough Erne Ramsar Site. The SAC is important for natural eutrophic lakes, bog woodland and otter. The site as a whole is the best inland example of a flooded drumlin landscape in Ireland and has many rich and varied biological communities. Nowhere else in the country does such an intimate mixture of land and water occur over a comparable area, and many of the species of wetland plants, some considered quite commonplace in Lough Oughter and its associated loughs, are infrequent elsewhere.

Lough Oughter is a popular coarse angling venue with good stocks of bream, roach, perch and pike. It is important for other tourism activities, such as watersports.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

Institution/agency	National Parks and Wildlife Service Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Postal address	National Parks and Wildlife Service, 90 North King Street, Smithfield, Dublin, Ireland D07 N7CV

National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Institution/agency	National Parks and Wildlife Service
Postal address	National Parks and Wildlife Service Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. 90 North King Street, Smithfield, Dublin, Ireland D07 N7CV

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year

To year

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)

2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A. Changes to Site boundary Yes No

(Update) B. Changes to Site area the area has increased

(Update) The Site area has been calculated more accurately

(Update) The Site has been delineated more accurately

(Update) The Site area has increased because of a boundary extension

(Update) The Site area has decreased because of a boundary restriction

(Update) For secretariat only. This update is an extension

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS? Not evaluated

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<3 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps

Boundaries description

The boundary of the Lough Oughter Ramsar site was delineated as the same boundary as the original Special Protection Area in 1995 (but the latter was subsequently enlarged). The Ramsar site is a maze of waterways and lakes and occupies much of the lowland drumlin belt in north and central Cavan between Upper Lough Erne, Killeshandra and Cavan town. The Lough Oughter Ramsar site is part of the larger Lough Oughter Complex SPA and is part of the much more extensive Lough Oughter and associated Loughs SAC. The Lough Oughter and associated Loughs SAC borders the Northern Ireland Ramsar Site: Upper Lough Erne. Details of the SPA and SAC can be viewed here: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>. A number of GIS data layers were used to define the Ramsar habitats within the site. These included:

- CORINE (Co-Ordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data sets (2012).
- Bing Maps Aerial - © Harris Corp, Earthstar Geographics LLC © 2017 Intermap Earthstar Geographics SIO © 2017 Microsoft Corporation.
- Environmental Protection Agency of Ireland Rivers and Lakes layers data layers.
- NPWS data (Site-Specific Conservation Objectives)

Habitat areas were subsequently estimated by reference to the available imagery and GIS habitat layers and should be considered representative but approximate. The mapped area, as calculated from the GIS boundary, differs slightly from the official boundary of the Ramsar site. This is due to historic mapping issues generally as a result of differing mapping projections.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?

b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha):

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW)	Atlantic
EU biogeographic regionalization	Atlantic

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

- Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Hydrological services provided

Lough Oughter is an extensive system of lakes which lies within the Erne catchment (EPA, 2018). The Erne catchment is a cross border catchment with a surface area of 4,415km², 2512 km² of which is located within the Republic of Ireland, the rest being in Northern Ireland. The catchment includes surface water bodies (rivers and lakes), transitional and coastal waterbodies and groundwater bodies. Lake, river and groundwater bodies are all part of the Lough Oughter Ramsar site and provide many key hydrological services including flood protection (water storage during high rainfall events allowing slow downstream release) and water storage (surface and groundwater) which can buffer the effects of drought. The ability of surface and groundwaters to store water is important for many reasons including provision of drinking water, maintaining wetland habitat and it can influence local climate regulation.

Other ecosystem services provided

Freshwater systems such as Lough Oughter have a key role in the following ecosystem services: the decomposition and cycling of nutrients (through aquatic plants and algae), carbon sequestration (through wetland plant communities), erosion prevention (where bankside and riparian vegetation remains in place and are important for soil retention), maintaining populations and habitats (e.g. plant communities, birds, invertebrates, mammals all associated with and reliant upon wetland habitats) and pollination (associated with wet grassland and other wetland habitats with flowering plants).

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

Optional text box to provide further information

Rare (high conservation concern) wintering bird species are defined as:
Regularly occurring species (occurring in at least 3 out of 10 seasons of monitoring or 30% of seasons; based on I-Webs data from 2006/07 to 2015/16) and that are:
- Red Listed in Ireland's national Red List (Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCCI) published by Colhoun and Cummins (2013)
- Classified as VU in IUCN Global and/or European regional list
- Listed in Annex I of the European Union Birds Directive

- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

The assemblage of wintering birds at this site including those of both high (Red Listed in Ireland, Vulnerable in Europe and/or Globally) and medium (Amber Listed species in Ireland) conservation status contributes to biodiversity within the biogeographical region.

- Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

Optional text box to provide further information

Lough Oughter is important for its assemblage of wintering waterbirds including the Annex I Whooper Swan. The lake and associated wetland habitats provide critical foraging and roosting habitat for overwintering and migratory waterbird populations. It is also of national importance for its breeding population of Great Crested Grebe a species which rely on reed bed habitats for nesting; such habitats are present throughout the extensive Lough Oughter wetland complex.

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

The site is important in maintaining the geographic range of a number plant species and communities.

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
Others																	
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				NT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex II (Habitats Directive)	Annex II listing
Birds																	
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anas crecca</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	60	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anas penelope</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	192	2011-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex I Birds Directive	Flock of regional importance known to use the site, part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	2011-2015	0.004	VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Global & Europe)	National (BoCCI), IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	550	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	45	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	206	2011-2015	0.8	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive	Listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	154	2011-2015	1.7	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	55	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	23	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Nationally important breeding site for Great Crested Grebe, part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex I Birds Directive	Small breeding population at this site, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	75	2011-2015		NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Europe region)	National (BoCCI) and IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage.

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Wintering bird species listed under 3.3 have been selected based on an assessment of Irish Wetland Bird Survey data from the period 2006/07 to 2015/16. Lough Oughter is a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds, however not all species listed for the SPA may be listed under 3.3 (or vice versa) as the SPA designation is based on other data and criteria.

Lough Oughter is a designated Special Protection Area due to the presence of the following species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and/or regularly occurring migratory species: Whooper Swan, Great Crested Grebe and Wigeon. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds. The site is also supports a nationally important breeding population of Great Crested Grebe and a small breeding population of the Annex I species, Common Tern.

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Name of ecological community	Community qualifies under Criterion 2?	Description	Justification
Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation [3150]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex II (Habitats Directive)

Optional text box to provide further information

The SAC Site synopsis for Lough Oughter and associated Loughs SAC which includes the Lough Oughter Ramsar Site describes that the lakes and basins of this site are shallow, and the water well mixed and nutrient rich (eutrophic). The aquatic flora is varied with several pondweed species such as Blunt leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton obtusifolius*), Shining Pondweed (*Potamogeton lucens*), Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*), Reddish Pondweed (*Potamogeton alpinus*) and Various-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton gramineus*). Typical in the zone of aquatic plants are Yellow Water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*), Canadian Pondweed (*Elodea canadensis*), Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), Water Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), Water-dropwort species (*Oenanthe* spp.) and Waterstarwort (*Callitriche* sp.). The aquatic community includes species of limited distribution in Ireland such as the Duckweed species *Lemna gibba* and *Spirodela polyrhiza*.

Bog woodland [91D0] lies within the Lough Oughter and Associated Lough SAC but outside of the Ramsar Site. The SAC synopsis describes areas of wet bog with good Sphagnum cover where bog woodland has developed (ie at Annagh). Downy Birch characterises this habitat; other typical species include Purple Moorgrass and Bottle Sedge. As part of a LIFE Project (LIFE05 NAT/IRL/000182), clearance of adjacent non-native conifers at Annagh (owned by Coillte) c. 2008 had a positive impact on the Annex I bog woodland habitat by increasing light levels and providing potential for expansion.

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

The Lough Oughter Ramsar site is a series of lakes, of which Lough Oughter is the largest, with interconnected channels and through which the River Erne flows. The landscape is dominated by drumlins and the lakes lie within the hollows. Sedimentary rocks dominate the bedrock and soils are clayey giving rise to relatively good agricultural land, on better drained slopes. The lakes and basins within the drumlin landscape are generally shallow and the water is well mixed and nutrient rich. The lakes support a typical aquatic flora with pondweeds and water-lily as well as some species of Duckweed which are of limited distribution in Ireland. The shore line of Lough Oughter and the many interlinked lakes and channels supports a range of wetland habitats and associated plant communities. There are well developed swamp and marsh communities, with variation in species present depending on shelter and exposure. Other wetland habitats include wet pasture or grassland and wet woodland along submerged margins. Next to the site and part of the wider wetland complex is an area of Annex I bog woodland with birch canopy and sphagnum dominated field layer. The open water, associated wetland habitats and adjacent grassland habitats are important for a range of wintering waterbirds which feed on aquatic and/or terrestrial plants and animals and which rely on the safe open waters for resting and roosting. The wetland is also important for a number of breeding birds including Great Crested Grebe and the Annex I species Common Tern. As well as containing important examples of two habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive (naturally eutrophic lakes and bog woodland) the Lough Oughter complex supports a population of the Annex II species, Otter.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Inland wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
Fresh water > Flowing water >> M: Permanent rivers/ streams/ creeks	Rivers, streams	2		
Fresh water > Lakes and pools >> O: Permanent freshwater lakes	Lakes	1		Representative
Fresh water > Lakes and pools >> Tp: Permanent freshwater marshes/ pools	Marsh, reedswamp, wet grassland, fen	3		
Fresh water > Marshes on inorganic soils >> W: Shrub-dominated wetlands	Riparian scrub	4		
Fresh water > Marshes on inorganic soils >> Xf: Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands	Wet woodland	4		

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Position in range / endemism / other
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSISIDA	<i>Alopecurus geniculatus</i>	wetland specialist
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSISIDA	<i>Apium inundatum</i>	Red Listed in Ireland (LC)
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSISIDA	<i>Eleocharis acicularis</i>	Red Listed in Ireland (LC)
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSISIDA	<i>Epipactis palustris</i>	Red Listed in Ireland (LC)
TRACHEOPHYTA/EQUISETOPSISIDA	<i>Equisetum variegatum</i>	Red Listed in Ireland (LC)
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSISIDA	<i>Lemna gibba</i>	Limited distribution in Ireland
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSISIDA	<i>Persicaria amphibia</i>	wetland specialist
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSISIDA	<i>Spirodela polyrhiza</i>	Limited distribution in Ireland

Optional text box to provide further information

Conaghan (1999) recorded Variegated Horsetail (*Equisetum variegatum*) from the north western shore of the Killyvally Peninsula. Conaghan describes Variegated Horsetail as a very rare species of horsetail that grows in wet to damp base-rich areas. Conaghan considers it likely that this species has suffered the same fate as many other fen species and has undergone a decline in distribution over the past 30 years due to drainage and habitat reclamation. Variegated Horsetail is a Red Listed Species (Least Concern: Wyse Jackson et al, 2016).

Conaghan (1999) recorded Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*) from Lough Oughter. Conaghan describes that although this species is still relatively frequent in suitable habitats in the centre of Ireland, it is undoubtedly declining due to drainage and reclamation of its fen habitat and is a very rare species in County Cavan due to the scarcity of base-rich fen habitat. Marsh Helleborine is a Red Listed Species (Least Concern: Wyse Jackson et al, 2016).

Drainage within the area is inefficient and the water levels are prone to natural fluctuation as a result. The regularly flooded areas still accommodate a variety of specialist plant species such as Amphibious Bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*) and Marsh Foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*), as well as rarer species such as Needle Spikerush (*Eleocharis acicularis*) and Lesser Marshwort (*Apium inundatum*) (Source:NPWS Site Synopsis, Lough Oughter and associated Loughs SAC).

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	% occurrence	Position in range /endemism/other
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>				
CHORDATA/MAMMALIA	<i>Lepus timidus hibernicus</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Numenius arquata</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>				

Invasive alien animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Impacts	Changes at RIS update
MOLLUSCA/BIVALVIA	<i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>	Actual (major impacts)	unknown

Optional text box to provide further information

Wading birds such Golden Plover and Curlew feed on wet grassland habitat associated with Lough Oughter Ramsar site. Snipe feed and rest in these habitats during the winter months. Summer breeding sites are likely to be present.

The zebra mussel is impacting the Erne Catchment.

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
C: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with mild winters	Cfb: Marine west coast (Mild with no dry season, warm summer)

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

Entire river basin

Upper part of river basin

Middle part of river basin

Lower part of river basin

More than one river basin

Not in river basin

Coastal

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

Part of the Erne_SC_030 sub catchment which is part of the Erne catchment.

4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

Please provide further information on the soil (optional)

The soil of the study area can be described as a clayey till which, at least on the better-drained slopes, has given rise to relatively good quality agricultural land (Conaghan, 1999).

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	
Usually seasonal, ephemeral or intermittent water present	unknown

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Water inputs from groundwater	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Water inputs from precipitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Water inputs from surface water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Water levels largely stable	No change

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

4.4.6 - Water pH

Circumneutral (pH: 5.5-7.4)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Eutrophic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

Please provide further information on dissolved or suspended nutrients (optional):

EPA maps shows the Water Framework Directive Status for Lough Oughter Ramsar Site to be largely "At Risk" (Data from 2013-2018). Its ecological and biological status is assessed as "moderate".

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the i) broadly similar ii) significantly different site itself:

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

Please describe other ways in which the surrounding area is different:

The main threats to the quality of the site are water polluting activities (such as runoff from fertiliser and slurry application, and sewage discharge) which have raised the nutrient status of some lakes to hypertrophic. Housing and boating developments are on the increase, both adjacent to and within the site. There is also significant fishing and shooting pressure on and around the lakes. Increased afforestation has resulted in some loss of wetland habitat and also loss of feeding ground for wintering birds such as Greenland White-fronted Goose (SAC Site Synopsis for Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC, NPWS, 2013).

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Fresh water	Drinking water for humans and/or livestock	High
Wetland non-food products	Other	Medium

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Pollution control and detoxification	Water purification/waste treatment or dilution	Medium

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Water sports and activities	Medium
Recreation and tourism	Picnics, outings, touring	Low
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	Medium
Spiritual and inspirational	Aesthetic and sense of place values	Medium
Scientific and educational	Educational activities and opportunities	Medium

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	High

Within the site:

Outside the site:

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland

ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland

iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples

iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland

<no data available>

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Provincial/region/state government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

Within the Ramsar site: the water body of the lake is owned by the state. Areas of wet grassland/seasonally flooded meadow are also within the site and these are generally under private ownership. The surrounding area is largely under multiple private ownership. However the state – through some of its agencies including Coillte has tenure over portions of the surrounding and/or adjacent land.

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

National Parks and Wildlife Service,
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
90 North King Street,
Smithfield, Dublin,
Ireland
D07 N7CV

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Maurice Eakin

Postal address:

National Parks and Wildlife Service,
National Parks and Wildlife Service Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
90 North King Street,
Smithfield, Dublin,
Ireland
D07 N7CV

E-mail address:

maurice.eakin@housing.gov.ie

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Human settlements (non agricultural)

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Tourism and recreation areas	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown

Water regulation

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Water abstraction	Low impact	unknown impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Agriculture and aquaculture

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Livestock farming and ranching	High impact	High impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	unknown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Human intrusions and disturbance

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Recreational and tourism activities	unknown impact	unknown impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Natural system modifications

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Dams and water management/use	unknown impact	unknown impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown

Invasive and other problematic species and genes

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Invasive non-native/ alien species	High impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	increase	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	increase

Pollution

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Agricultural and forestry effluents	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Climate change and severe weather

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Storms and flooding	High impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	increase	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	increase

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

Regional (international) legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
EU Natura 2000	Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC (000007)	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000007	whole
EU Natura 2000	Lough Oughter Complex SPA(004049)	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004049	whole

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Wildfowl Sanctuary	Lough Oughter Group	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/wildfowl-sanctuaries	partly

Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	Lough Oughter IBA	http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/lough-oughter-iba-ireland	whole

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

- Ia Strict Nature Reserve
- Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection
- II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
- III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
- IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
- V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
- VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Implemented

Habitat

Measures	Status
Catchment management initiatives/controls	Implemented
Land conversion controls	Implemented

Species

Measures	Status
Threatened/rare species management programmes	Implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Management of water abstraction/takes	Implemented
Regulation/management of wastes	Implemented
Fisheries management/regulation	Implemented
Harvest controls/poaching enforcement	Implemented
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented
Research	Implemented

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? No

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No need identified

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Water regime monitoring	Implemented
Water quality	Implemented
Birds	Implemented
Plant species	Implemented

A requirement of the Water Framework Directive is that plants and animals, must be sampled from lake water bodies at least twice within a river basin cycle (6 years) in order to classify these water bodies. Chemical and physical parameters are measured several times a year. The site is sampled and monitored under this programme.

As a EU Natura 2000 site, it is required under Article 12 and 17 of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives respectively, that the status and trends of the conservation objectives within the site are monitored and reported on every 6 years.

The site is monitored under the I-WEBS scheme (annual monitoring over the winter months).

The site is regularly inspected by the National Parks and Wildlife Service Conservation Rangers for the area.

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Colhoun, K. and Cummins, S. 2013. Birds of conservation concern in Ireland 2014-2019. Irish Birds 9: 523-544

Conaghan, J. 1999. The Vegetation, Ecology and Conservation of the Lough Oughter Lake System, Co.Cavan. Prepared by Dr John Conaghan, Enviroscope Environmental Consultancy.

EPA, 2018. Erne Catchment Assessment 2010-2015 (HA36). Catchment Science and Management Unit. EPA. December 2018. Version no.3.

Lewis, L. J., Burke, B., Fitzgerald, N., Tierney, T. D. & Kelly, S. (2019) Irish Wetland Bird Survey: Waterbird Status and Distribution 2009/10-2015/16. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 106. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Ireland

Marnell, F., Looney, D. & Lawton, C. (2019) Ireland Red List No. 12: Terrestrial Mammals. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland

NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC 000007. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for Lough Oughter Complex SPA [004049]. Generic Version 9.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

O'Connor, W., Hayes G., O'Keeffe, C. & Lynn, D. (2009) Monitoring of white-clawed crayfish *Austroptomobius pallipes* in Irish lakes in 2007. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No 37. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

Wyse Jackson, M., FitzPatrick, Ú., Cole, E., Jebb, M., McFerran, D., Sheehy Skeffington, M. & Wright, M. (2016) Ireland Red List No. 10: Vascular Plants. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Dublin, Ireland.

IUCN 2017. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2017-2. <http://www.iucnredlist.org>. Downloaded on 14 October 2017.

Birdwatchireland.ie
<http://www.ramsar.org>
<http://eunis.eea.europa.eu>
 The Irish Wetland Bird Survey (IWeBS).
 Map of Irish Wetlands (Wetland Surveys Ireland) <https://www.wetlandsurveys.ie/miw-intro>

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<no file available>

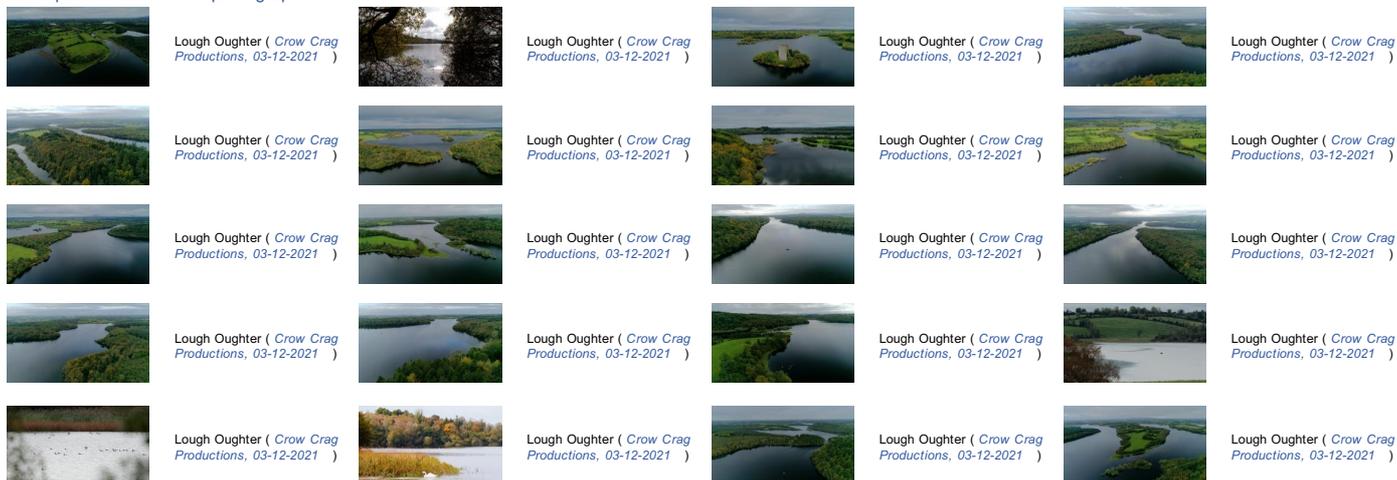
vi. other published literature

<no file available>

<no data available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation	1996-06-07
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