

Farmers Attitudes to RBPS



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The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development: Europe
investing in rural areas.



Result based payments

- Whole new approach for farmers
- A lot of resources and time needed on education
- Give farmers time to adapt
- Trust and encouragement
- Empowers farmers to make the right decision for the farm business
- Meaningful payments



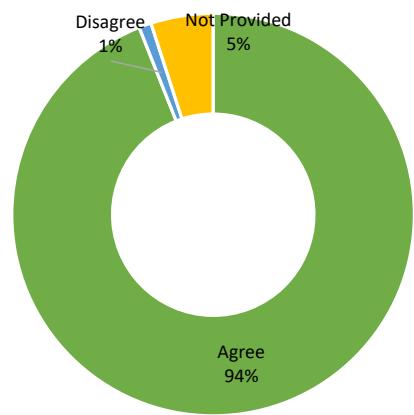


Figure 10: Words used to describe PMP catchments currently.



Figure 11: Words used to describe PMP catchments in twenty years time.

It is important to me that the wildlife on my farm is conserved



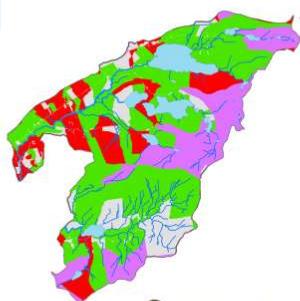
Is a results-based programme fair?

91% Agree



80% of all herd numbers in the catchment area

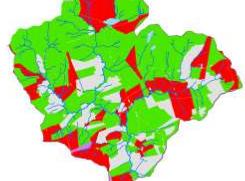
Catchment Coverage (south-west)



Currane
Signed Contracts: 45

Legend

- Lakes
- Rivers
- PMP Participant
- Non Participant
- Non-priority Commonage
- Other lands (not farmland)



Kerry Blackwater
Signed Contracts: 57



Pearl Mussel Project

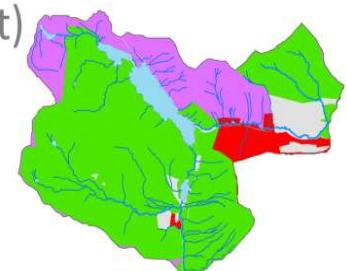
Catchment Coverage (west & north-west)



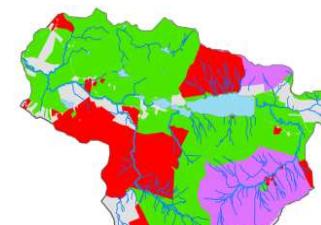
Glaskeelan
Signed Contracts: 12

Legend

- Lakes
- Rivers
- PMP Participant
- Non Participant
- Non-priority Commonage
- Other lands (not farmland)



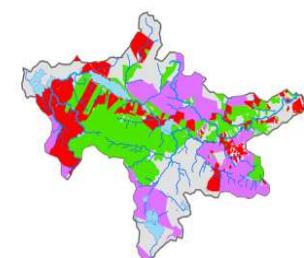
Bundorragha
Signed Contracts: 53



Dawros
Signed Contracts: 46



Pearl Mussel Project



Owenriff
Signed Contracts: 37







The Pearl Mussel project had over 850 supporting actions completed with in excess of €265,000 paid out to farmers for delivering supporting actions









Pearl Mussel Fertiliser & Slurry Guidance

Before Slurry spread
Algae growing in river due presence of nutrients
Dead and stressed pearl mussels

After Peatland scores improved
No slurry spread
Low scoring peatland

Fertiliser & Slurry Guidance

The Pearl Mussel Life Cycle

Freshwater pearl mussels are in decline due to lack of reproduction, so ensuring the survival of juveniles is key to protecting the species for future generations.

Artificial Fertiliser

Applying artificial chemical phosphorus (P) without soil samples and with insufficient buffer strips in place, is recognised as being a major source of nutrient loss to watercourses in the PMP catchments.

Protected urea fertiliser is preferable to artificial P fertiliser in freshwater pearl mussel catchments.

Artificial chemical phosphorus (P) can only be applied once soil sample results show deficiency of P and there is no risk of loss to watercourse.

Buffer zone needs to be 5m or greater, depending on slope and time of year.

P-index 3 or 4: Not suitable for spreading lime as this poses a risk to water quality and is of no benefit to grass growth.

P-index 1 or 2: Artificial fertiliser acceptable with suitable buffer zone

Lime is toxic to freshwater pearl mussels. Farmers must seek approval from Project Team before spreading lime. Consent from NPWS is required if lime is to be spread within 20m of a SAC river, stream, or floodplain.

Options for
Spread on suitable
Exporting of slurry
Look at more traditional
• Spreading slurry on
• Spreading should be
• Consider split application
• It should be noted that floodplain areas are
• Lime is toxic to freshwater pearl mussels. Farmers must seek approval from Project Team before spreading lime. Consent from NPWS is required if lime is to be spread within 20m of a SAC river, stream, or floodplain.

ACRES WEST CONNACHT

Tips for habitat management

ACRES ACRES (Agri Climate Rural Environmental Scheme) is the new Agri environment scheme.

There are two streams to ACRES:

- 1. ACRES General** is a mix of result-based and prescriptive actions. It is available nationally in all areas outside of the co-operation zones.
- 2. ACRES Co-operation Project** is available in 8 priority areas

ACRES

PEATLAND HABITAT THREATS & PRESSURES

Management tips:

Consider type & number of livestock along with the timing of the grazing on the peatland.

Do not spread slurry, farmyard manure, chemical fertilisers or herbicides on peatland habitat.

Avoid creating new drains on peatlands as they will dry out the bog. Peat needs to be consistently wet for optimal function.

Allow existing drains to re-vegetate where possible to assist with water filtration & storage. Apply to project team for peatland restoration as a landscape action.

Supplementary feeding with silage can add welcome nutrients and water to the diet, particularly to supplementary feed, use concentrates, mineral buckets or hay and more feeding points regularly to minimise damage.

Minimise disturbance near watercourses and consider establishing riparian zones which can help improve water quality and biodiversity.

ACRES WEST CONNACHT

ACRES WEST CONNACHT

The two zones have been broken down into 6 local areas (see map below) with project officers located in each area. Our team has a wide range of expertise in agriculture and ecology and are available to provide specialist advice.

ACRES West Connacht includes two Co-operation Project (CP) zones:

- Northwest Connacht
- South Mayo / Connemara

Feedback from farmers involved in RBAPS

‘Having the reasons behind the actions the team wanted me to carry out explained to me clearly without been told I had to do them was a change from other schemes we were in’

‘Now I understand the environmental links on my farm, I look for actions I can do myself without needing to be told or paid for them’

‘All we ever heard from schemes and DAFM is a list of all the things you cannot do, no one ever told us what we could do until we joined the Pearl Mussel Project’



“The benefit I can see from a scheme like the Hen Harrier, is that the policy planners and scientist implementing it, are valuing the farmers’ opinions.”

“Farmers knowledge is as important, as policy makers, if not a little more so. But there is a lot we need to learn from scientist too”.

“The uplands can be best maintained through farming practices, which are supported by schemes like the Hen Harrier project. The GLAS is just a blanket payment, whereas the Hen Harrier project is specific and improving the farm, but improving it with the environment in light, as opposed to just improvement for commercial reasons”.



Successful RBPS for farmers

Communication and Engagement

Needs to make sense to farmers:

Financially

Environmentally

Administratively





Thank you