

3. Supporting Actions

We will have supporting actions also to address other issues of concern. These include:

- **Landowner Ranger System:** This action aims to increase awareness amongst recreational users on such topics as Leave no Trace, farming traditions, ecology and why dogs are not permitted etc., thereby increasing positive interactions between landowners and recreational users.
- **Trail Maintenance and Definition:** Recreational pressure is impacting on agricultural activities, has resulted in a loss of vegetation (affecting habitats & soils) and the outward spreading of a damaged or degraded zone within this sensitive upland environment. This action aims to maintain repaired existing paths to encourage walkers to continue using these paths.



If you would like to find out more about our project please contact us:

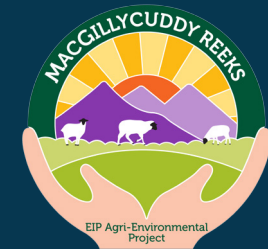
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MacGillicuddy Reeks European Innovation Partnership Project (EIP)



Developing innovative actions for
High Nature Value Farming
in the MacGillicuddy Reeks.

The MacGillicuddy Reeks Project is an EIP (European Innovation Partnership) Locally Led Scheme. The Project is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine as part of Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.





ABOUT OUR PROJECT

The MacGillycuddy Reeks EIP Project aims to improve the sustainability and economic viability of farming in the MacGillycuddy Reeks. This will be done through the development of practical, achievable actions and innovative solutions in order to improve the condition of the habitats of this unique Natura 2000 area, in close conjunction with the landowners/farmers in the area.

Landowners here face difficult challenges farming in the MacGillycuddy Reeks due to the terrain, climate, succession issues, economically unviable labour-intensive practices; and the rising pressures brought about by increasing recreational activities each year.

OUR PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

- To enable and encourage landowners to continue upland hill farming through the development of sustainable agricultural management practices on HNV (High Nature Value) farmland in the MacGillycuddy Reeks area.
- To develop, in collaboration with landowners, innovative management interventions for the preservation and restoration of upland farmed habitats in the area, through the development of collective groups where possible.
- To create a positive outreach programme, raise awareness of the SAC designation and protected habitats and species in the Reeks. To help prevent further habitat damage due to increasing recreational pressures on the Reeks through the formation of a landowner ranger system and trail maintenance works.

HOW WILL WE MEET OUR OBJECTIVES?

1. Results based habitat payments.

Payments to farmers will be based on habitat quality scores earned at land parcel level. This will be determined using a habitat scorecard developed by the MacGillycuddy Reeks EIP Project Team. The habitat quality relates to specific quantitative and qualitative environmental attributes. These reflect habitat condition, landscape value and the richness of biodiversity in the area. This will be supported through controlled grazing

2. Actions Based Payments

This is whereby the farmers aim to improve the environmental condition of their farm holdings through the implementation of actions from agreed individual or commonage work plans. Below are some examples:

- **Rhododendron Removal:** We propose to control and eradicate rhododendron from certain sites. This will be undertaken as per the methodology developed in the adjoining Killarney National Park, involving a combination of stem injection, foliar spraying of regrowth and hand pulling depending on the age, location and density of rhododendron.
- **Bracken (fern) Removal:** Following site specific assessments, it is proposed to use a combination or one of the following: targeted spraying, re-introduction of suitable livestock for trampling and cutting.
- **Training:** practical training will be delivered each year as part of the project and will cover habitat awareness & management, hand held pesticide application, controlled burning etc. to increase awareness of best practice, and allow for sharing of information and skills.

