

Lough Carra LIFE Grassland Assessment Scorecard

Farmer Name: _____ Survey date: _____ Surveyor: _____
 Business ID: _____ Field Number: _____

Dominant Grassland Type:	Soil Type:
Wet grassland	Mineral Soil
Dry grassland	Peat Soil

Total Score (A+B)
/100

A. Ecological Integrity Total Score A (sum of A1 to A4) /90

A.1 What is the number of positive indicators in the field? Tick all positive indicators present below.
Note all positive indicators present as you walk a 'W' through the field.

Low: 0-4	Moderate: 5-8	High: 9-12	Very High: 13 +
0	10	20	25

Positive Indicators: (tick those present)

Positive indicator	Positive indicator
<input type="checkbox"/> Bedstraws & Stitchworts	<input type="checkbox"/> Orchids
<input type="checkbox"/> Bird's-foot trefoils	<input type="checkbox"/> Ox-eye daisy
<input type="checkbox"/> Carline thistle	<input type="checkbox"/> Purple loosestrife
<input type="checkbox"/> Cowslips & Primrose	<input type="checkbox"/> Ragged robin
<input type="checkbox"/> Eyebrights	<input type="checkbox"/> Scabious (Devils bit & field)
<input type="checkbox"/> Forget-me-nots	<input type="checkbox"/> Sedges
<input type="checkbox"/> Heathers	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-heal & Bugle
<input type="checkbox"/> Kidney vetch	<input type="checkbox"/> Sorrel (Common & Sheep)
<input type="checkbox"/> Knapweeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Small rushes (spike, woodrushes, heath)
<input type="checkbox"/> Lady's mantle	<input type="checkbox"/> Sphagnum & Branched mosses
<input type="checkbox"/> Lady's smock (Cuckooflower)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tormentil (Common & English)
<input type="checkbox"/> Lesser spearwort	<input type="checkbox"/> Umbels Large (Angelica Valerian, Common hogweed)
<input type="checkbox"/> Louseworts (Common & Marsh)	<input type="checkbox"/> Umbels Small (Pignut, Yarrow, Wild Carrot)
<input type="checkbox"/> Marsh cinquefoil	<input type="checkbox"/> Vetches & Vetchlings
<input type="checkbox"/> Marsh marigold	<input type="checkbox"/> Violets (all species); Harebell
<input type="checkbox"/> Marsh pennywort	<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Thyme
<input type="checkbox"/> Marsh thistle	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow composites (not Dandelion)
<input type="checkbox"/> Meadowsweet	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow flag/iris
<input type="checkbox"/> Meadow thistle	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow rattle (hay rattle)
<input type="checkbox"/> Mints (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify.

A.2 What is the cover of all positive indicators (listed above) throughout the field?

Cover is the proportion of the field taken up by all positive indicators present.

Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Only a couple of individual plants present or you can take several steps without encountering any positive indicators at all.	You encounter a positive indicator with every few steps taken.	You encounter positive indicators with every step taken.	You encounter multiple different positive indicators with every step taken (and in between steps)
0	10	20	25

A.3 What is the cover of agriculturally favoured species throughout the entire field?

Agriculturally favoured species: (tick if present)

<input type="checkbox"/> Docks (not small sorrels)	<input type="checkbox"/> Thistle (creeping & spear)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ragwort	<input type="checkbox"/> Nettle	<input type="checkbox"/> Perennial rye-grass
High: >25%		Moderate: 5-25%		Low: <5%
Occurring in dense patches or abundant throughout the field. Very visible in the sward.		Occurring in medium to large patches in the field. Readily visible in the sward.		None or scattered or small clumps of negative indicators. Where present, cover should be less than 5%.
-20		-10		5

A.4 Vegetation Structure. Note: If grassland is **primarily grazed use A.4a** (including marsh fritillary suitability assessment); if grassland is **cut for hay or silage, use A.4b.** Refer to the guidance for sward quality details

A.4a What is the vegetation structure in grasslands which are primarily grazed?

Over-Grazed	Moderate	Good	Moderate	Under-Grazed
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Sward short throughout with little variation in height of vegetation. Few flowering plants.	Mostly short vegetation. >50% of field has short sward with occasional to frequent patches of tall vegetation.	Field sward medium height throughout with positive indicators flowering. Areas of taller and /or shorter sward also occur.	Mostly tall vegetation. 50-75% of field has tall sward. Litter and dead vegetation occurring.	Rank vegetation throughout the field.
-10	10	25	15	-10

Marsh Frutillary suitability assessment in primarily grazed grassland

Numerous patches (at least quarter of the field), or majority of field with Devil's Bit Scabious from ankle to knee height throughout.

Yes	No
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OR

A.4b What is the vegetation structure in grasslands which are cut for hay or silage?

Poor structure	Moderate structure	Good structure
No field margins present. Field topped right up to the field boundary line. No aftermath grazing. Little or no variation in sward height.	Narrow field margins present (~1m). Low number of flowering plants and vegetation structure within the field margin poor to moderate. Some aftermath grazing providing some structural variation.	Wide field margins present (2m+) and or good headlands. Aftermath grazing takes place providing variations in height of sward; sward does not look uniform in appearance.
-10	15	25

A.5 Field boundary quality. Assess the quality of the WORST 30m of field boundary in the field. Refer to guidance document for details

Poor	Moderate	Good
Wire fence only or very poor quality field boundary present.	Moderate field boundary quality.	Good field boundary quality.
0	5	10

What is the dominant field boundary in this field?

Dominant	Drop down menu with the following options: Hedgerow; earth bank, drainage ditch, treeline, stonewall, wire fence
Also present	Drop down menu with the following options: Hedgerow; earth bank, drainage ditch, treeline, stonewall, wire fence

B. Threats & Pressures

Total Score B
(sum of B1 to B6)
/10

B.1 Is there any evidence of damaging activities to habitat, vegetation, or archaeology?

High	Moderate	Low	None
Damage occurring across a large area or of a serious nature if confined.	Damage occurring across a moderate sized area or of a moderate nature if confined.	Damage occurring across a small area or of a minor nature if confined.	No damaging activities.
-30	-20	-10	0

Damaging activities:

(tick relevant damage or describe in comments)

Supplementary Feeding		Damage to archaeological features		Herbicide use	
Dumping		Quarrying		Other (please specify)	
Boundary damage		Burning			

B.2 What is the level of risk to the quality of natural water bodies within, adjacent to and downstream of the field due to pressures relating to flow, sediment, nutrients or other pollutants?

The source - pathway - receptor model should inform the assessment (see guidance).

High	Moderate	Low	None
-25	-15	-5	0

B.3 What is the extent of bare soil and erosion?

High	Moderate	Low
Areas of bare and eroding soil resulting in exposure of the underlying rock seen at regular intervals along main stock paths particularly those leading to main feed sites or water points. Excessive areas of bare soil within main grazing area and bare soil extending out significantly from the main feed sites. Significant rutting caused by vehicles/machinery particularly going between access gate and feeding points.	Bare soil mainly along regularly used routes or areas with minor soil loss occurring at a few points. Minor rutting and soil disturbance caused by occasional vehicle access may be present. Bare soil may extend a short distance beyond the main feed site or water points.	Bare soil more or less restricted to regular stock paths, 'pinch' points & congregation areas. No soil loss.

-20	-10	10	
B.4 What is the cover of non-native invasive species?			
High	Moderate	Low	None
Abundant, some forming dense clumps, many seedlings.	Frequent. Some flowering, many seedlings present.	Plants scattered and mostly small and not flowering.	No non-native invasive species present.
-30	-20	-10	0
Non-native invasive species: <i>(tick if present)</i>			
Rhododendron		Japanese Knotweed	
Himalayan Honeysuckle		Giant Hogweed	
Himalayan Knotweed		Himalayam Balsam	
Cotoneaster		Other (please specify)	
B.5 To what extent is the expansion of immature spreading scrub occurring?			
<i>(This can be brambles, seedlings, scrub and trees generally lower than 1m in height and with a stem diameter of <5cm. Do not include established scrub).</i>			
High	Moderate	Low	
>25% of the field has scrub cover, some well-established saplings may be present. Field is likely to show few signs of management, such as signs of recent grazing or signs of livestock.	Cover of immature scrub in patches or individuals with overall cover of between 11-25% with particularly briars/brambles coming in.	Small patches of scrub or individual seedlings of immature scrub with overall cover of less than 10%. Grass growth easily seen underneath the scrub.	
-20	-10	0	
B.6 What is the cover of bracken?			
High	Moderate	Low	
Very dense stands of bracken covering over half or more of the field, forming closed canopy.	Bracken forming dense stands covering parts of the field; mostly forming closed canopy.	Bracken absent or some scattered fronds and none forming closed canopy. Can include areas limited to very small patches or steep slopes.	
-20	-10	0	
Specific field management advice/comments:			
Common management recommendations to pick from:			
Continue current management of this high quality grassland.			
Control the occurrence and spread of invasive species. Consult with CP team regarding solutions.			
Control the occurrence and spread of encroaching scrub, supporting actions are available.			
Control the occurrence and spread of encroaching bracken.			
Consider reducing fertiliser inputs.			
Consider using supporting actions to slow or impede the flow of drains.			
Use stock to graze field more evenly.			
Improve stock management, supporting actions e.g. Fencing / drinking facilities are available.			
Move feeders / troughs regularly and keep away from drains and rivers.			
Establish a field margin.			
Field boundaries - Reduce cutting.			
Field boundaries - Consider planting gaps with suitable native species.			
Field boundaries - continue current management of high quality boundaries.			
No management advice.			
Other management advice			