

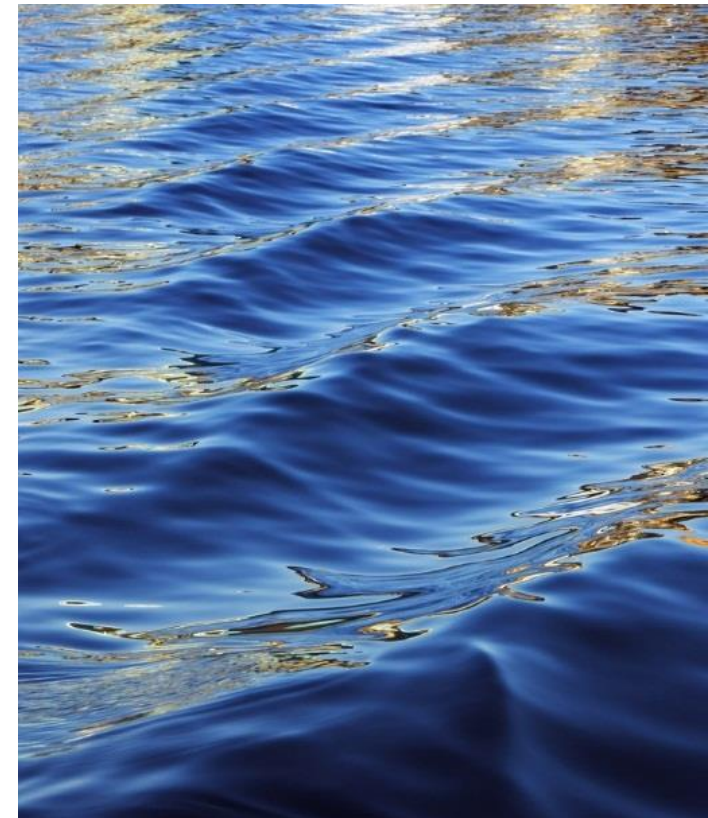


# Biodiversity

Decline and Policy



National Rural Network





Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources and includes diversity within and between species and ecosystems.



Biodiversity is the foundation of ecosystem services, to which human well-being is intimately linked.



On a global scale, 1 million species face extinction as a result of human activities.



Land use change has the largest negative impact on ecosystems, other drivers of biodiversity decline include pollution, climate change, exploitation of species and invasive species. It is acknowledged that intensive agriculture impacts biodiversity, with efforts now being made to find a harmonious approach to biodiversity and farming



65% of Ireland's land area is dedicated to agriculture. Farmers therefore have a crucial role to play in the protection and enhancement of biodiversity. Changes in practices now will influence how habitats look in the future.



An EU evaluation of policies on Greening, EFA's and CAP currently in place, determined that policies led to a very limited change in farming practices, sought to limit the burden on farmers and member states rather than to maximize the environmental benefit and that most CAP funding has had little positive impact on biodiversity to date.



Future CAP reform is now likely incorporate to elements of the European Green Deal to place an added emphasis on environmental measures. 'Additionality' is likely to be central to any future policy in order to go beyond current farming practices having an insignificant benefit to biodiversity.



[The Living Planet Report 2020](#) highlights the current causes and trends in global biodiversity decline. The Signpost Series webinar week 25, 2020 provides further insight from Teagasc as to how any future policy may look and is available [here](#).



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