

Forestry and Forestry Development in Ireland

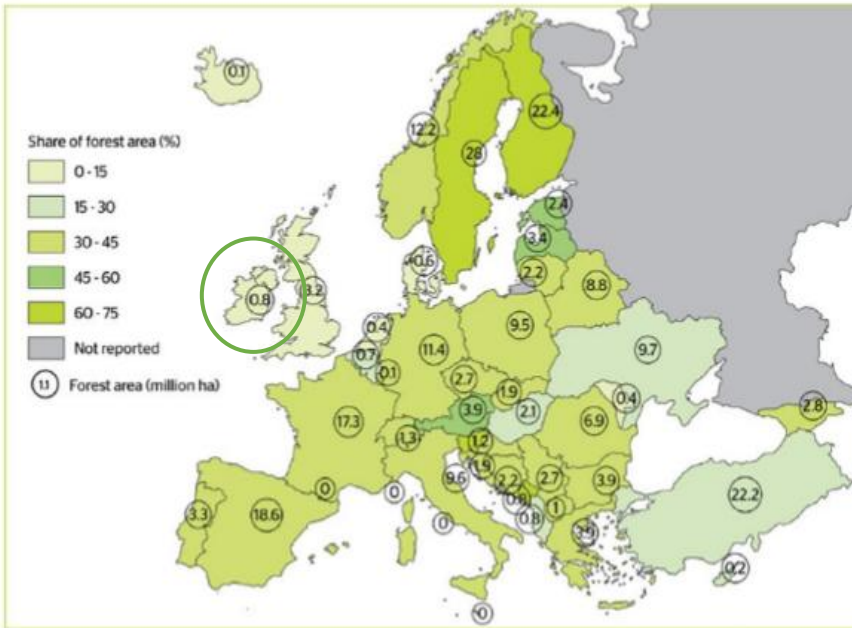
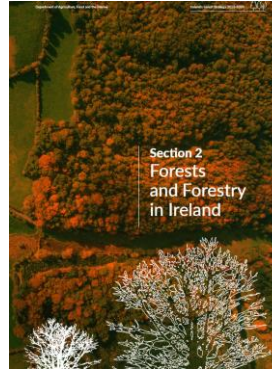
*Dermot Dunphy, Forest Sector Development, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Jonathan Spazzi, Teagasc Forestry Development Department*



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



Background - Forests & Forestry in Ireland



Ireland's National Forest Inventory 2022

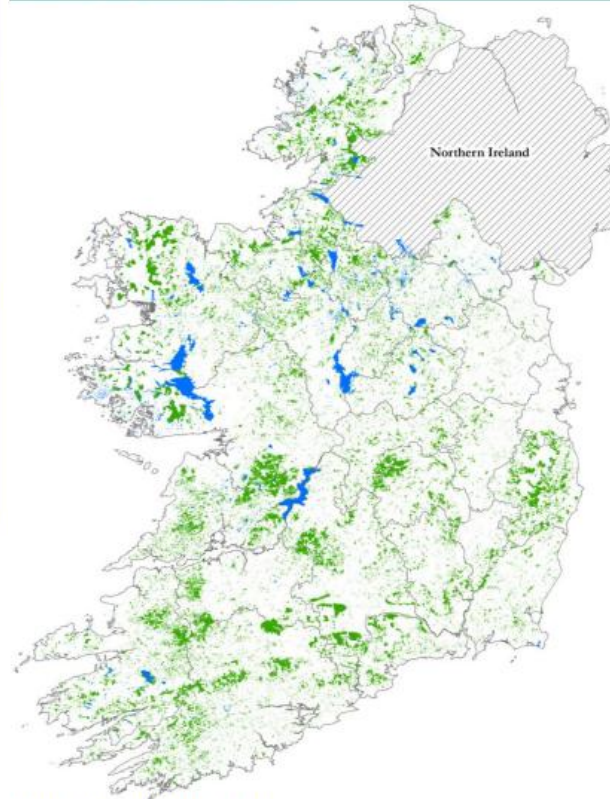
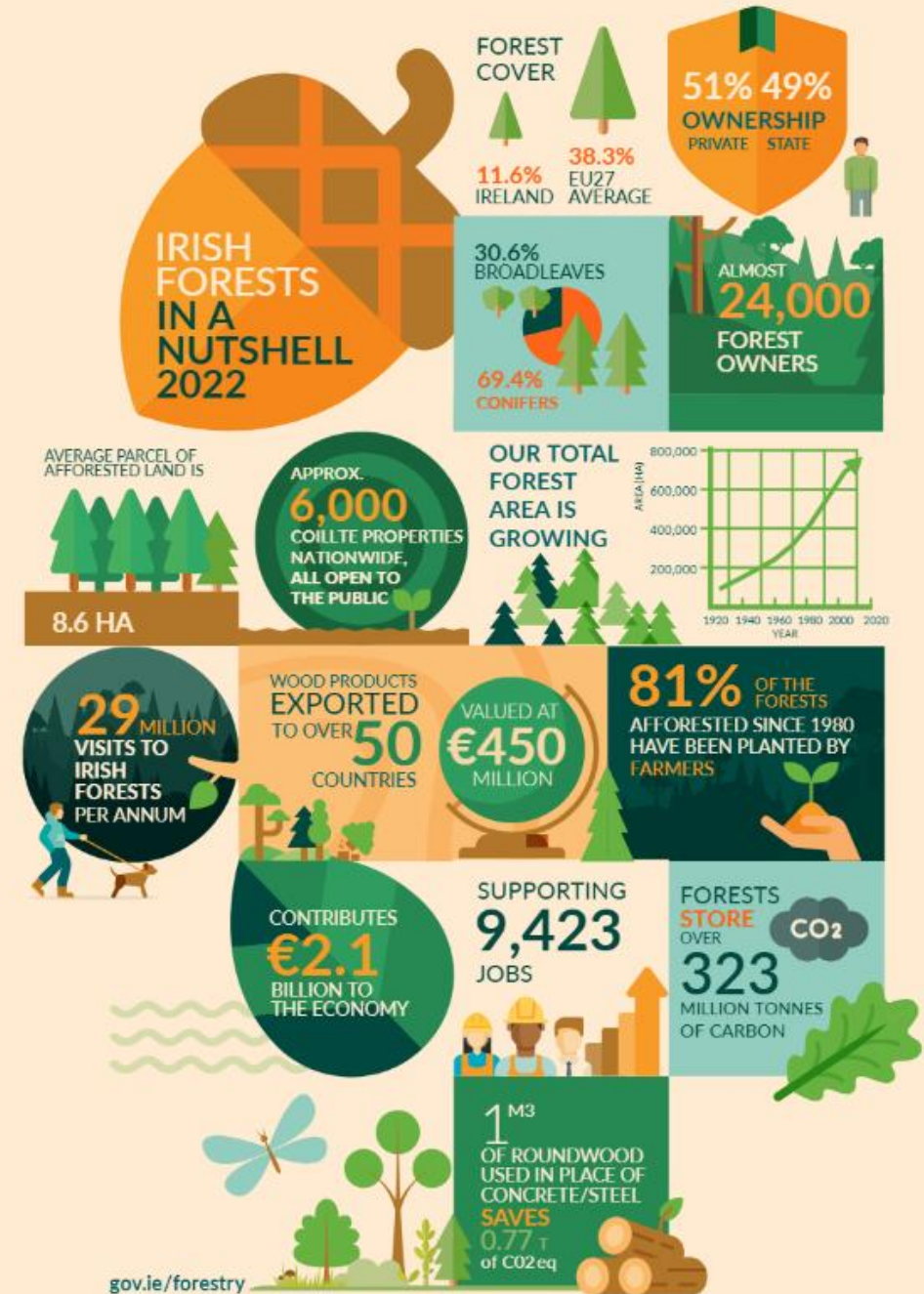
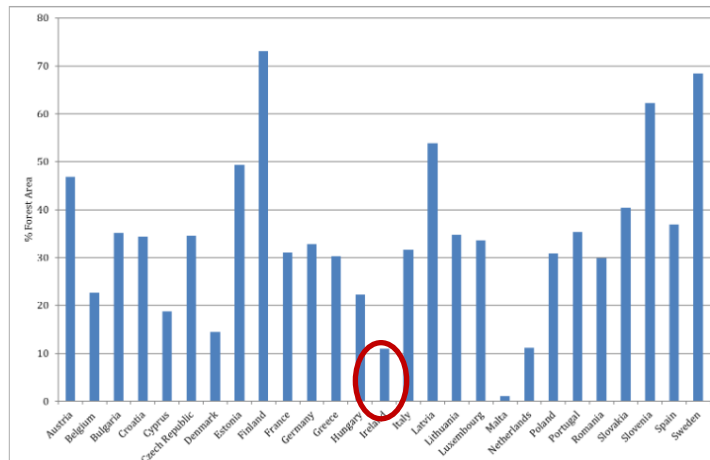
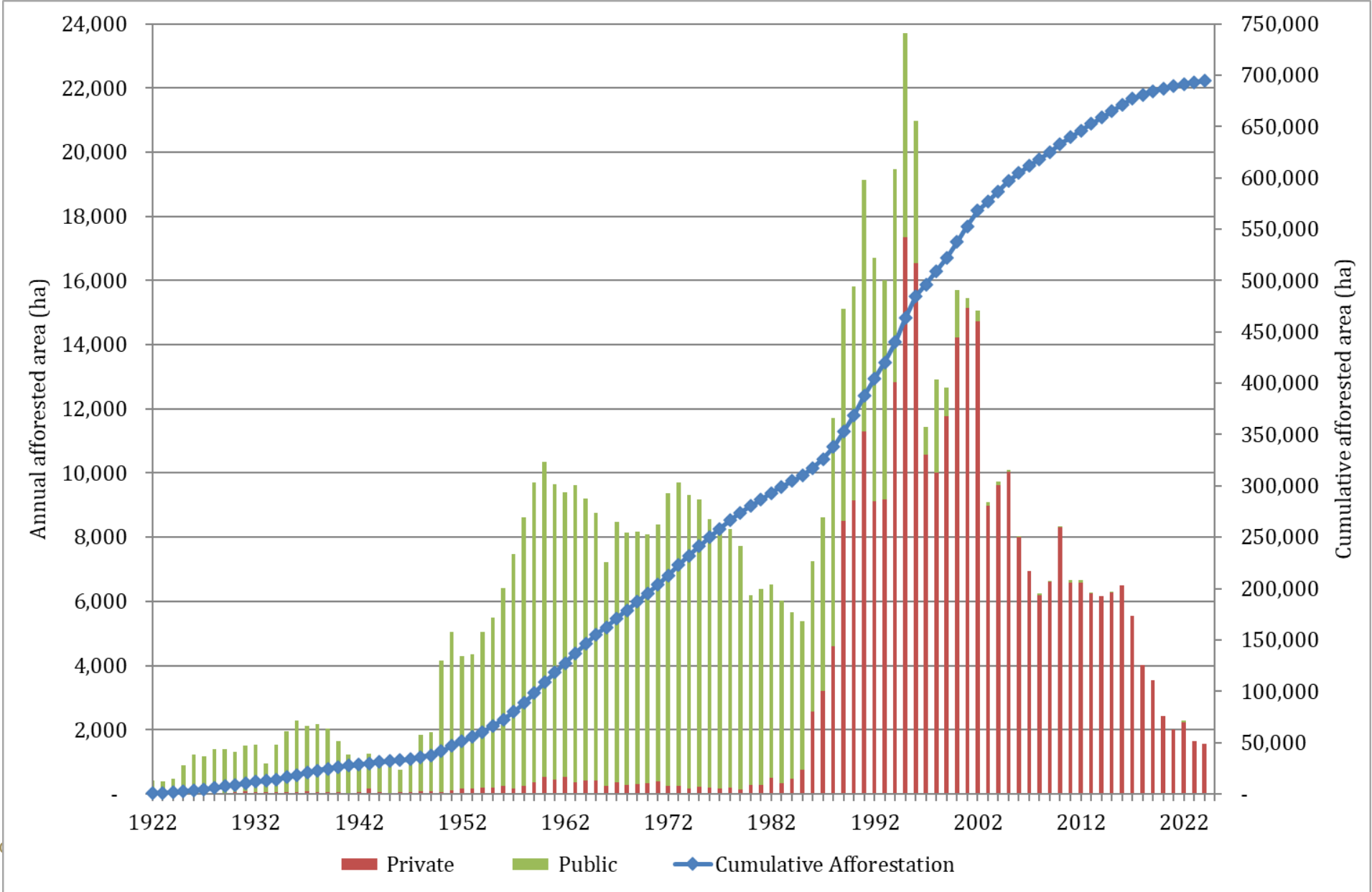


Figure 8. Map of forest cover in Ireland, 2022.



Development of Forest Estate

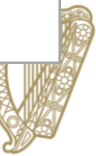
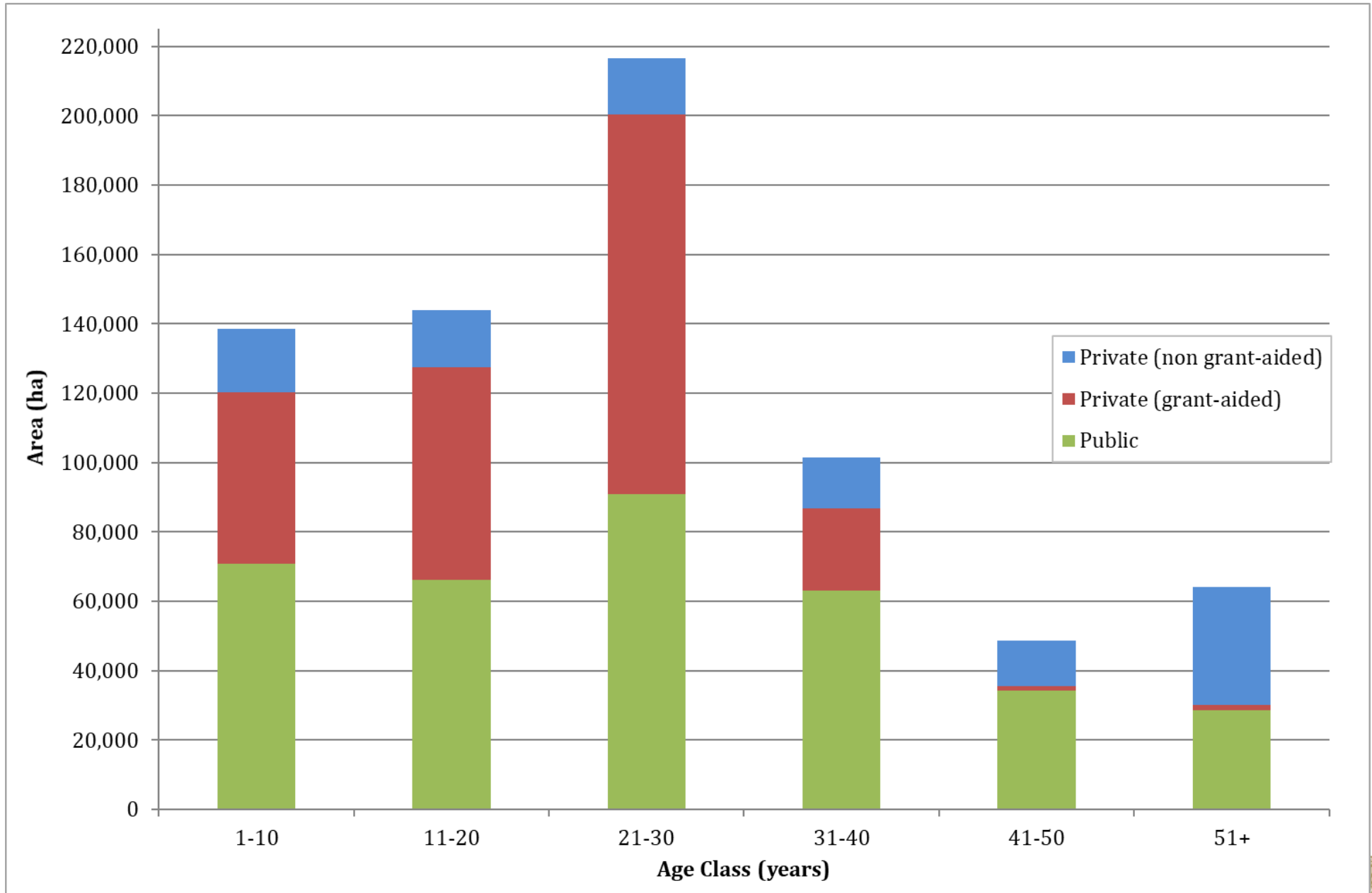


Species Composition

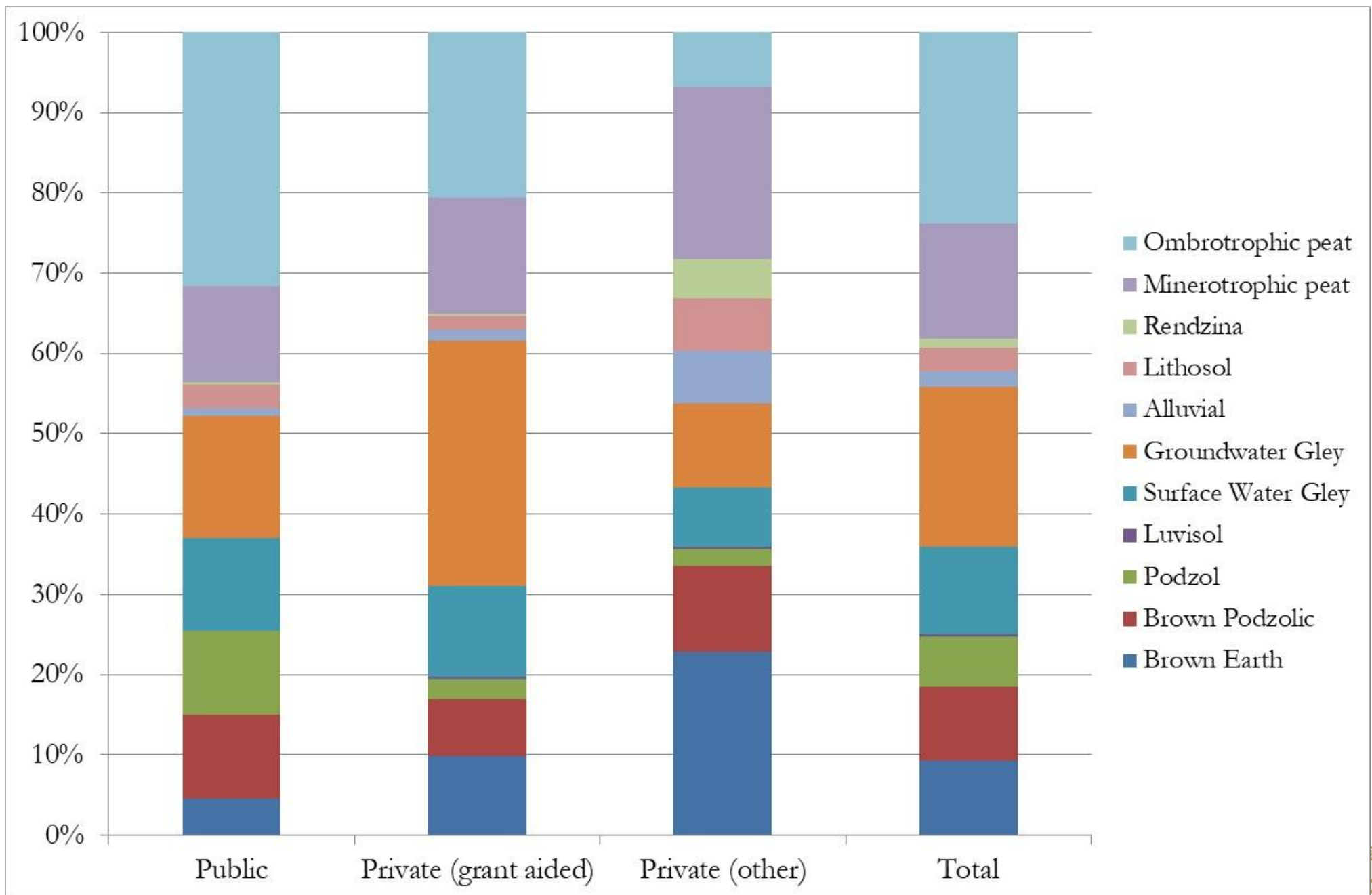
Forest Composition		Area (1,000s ha)	%
Stocked Forest Area (i.e. the area with trees present)	Sitka spruce	360.9	44.6
	Norway spruce	27.0	3.8
	Scots pine	8.4	1.2
	Other pine spp.	62.8	8.8
	Douglas fir	9.3	1.3
	Larch spp.	23.8	3.3
	Other conifers	2.9	0.4
	Total Conifer	495.1	61.2
	Pedunculate and sessile oak	20.2	2.5
	Beech	10.7	1.3
	Ash	24.3	3.0
	Sycamore	10.5	1.3
	Birch spp.	58.0	7.2
	Alder spp.	19.7	2.4
	Other short living broadleaves	63.3	7.8
	Other long living broadleaves	11.4	1.4
	Total Broadleaf	218.1	27.0
	Total stocked forest	713.2	88.2
	Forest Open Area	88.1	10.9
Temporarily Unstocked Area	7.6	0.9	
Overall Forest Area	808.9	100	



Age Class



Soil



Lowering the Water Table



Development Context



- **Forest Strategy 2030 and Vision 2050**

- Both the strategy and vision underpin the Forestry Programme
- The Forestry Programme is the main implementation vehicle in the immediate term

- **Forest Expansion Creation**

- Strong focus on increasing low levels of afforestation
- Need to expand area of native forests, higher premiums and supports
- More diverse commercial forests
- Agroforestry

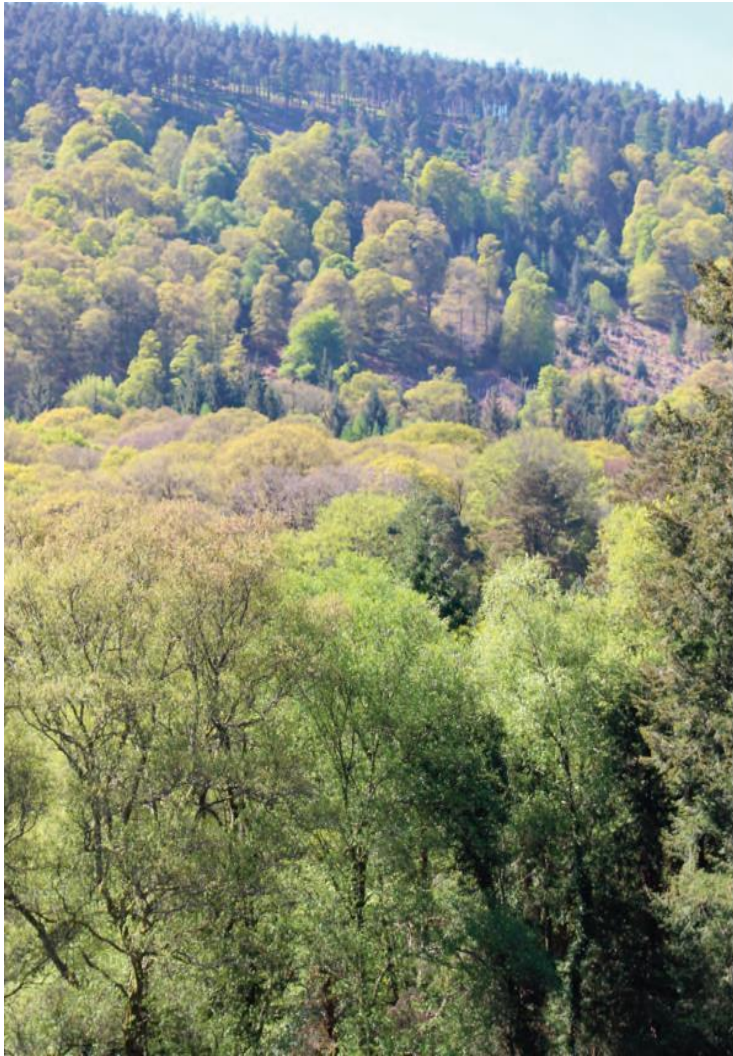
- **Existing Forests**

- Emphasis on restoring existing native woodlands
- Provide better access for communities, through public lands and “neighbourwoods”
- Supports for existing forest owners


- **Forest Management**

- More emphasis on continuous cover forestry
- Increased focus on management plans

Forestry Programme 2023-2027



- The €1.3bn funded Forestry Programme 2023-2027 is the largest investment in tree-planting to date in Ireland
- It is ambitious and aims to increase forest cover whilst also delivering ecosystem services with environmental and climate benefits
- Target of 8,000ha per annum broken down by 12 forest types
- Significantly increased grant & premium rates (between 46% & 66%)
- Designed to incentivise farmers to engage as an additional income stream and diversification option.
- Reflected by increased premiums to 20 years for farmers

A photograph of a forest floor covered in a dense carpet of bluebells. The trees are tall and thin, with their trunks visible in the background. The lighting is soft, suggesting a slightly overcast day. A semi-transparent dark grey text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Forestry Programme 23–27: Close to Nature and Continuous Cover Forestry

Forest Creation

FT1 Native Forest

FT2 Forest for Water

FT3 NeighbourWood

FT5 Emerging Forest


FT10 Continuous Cover Forestry

Woodland Improvement Scheme

Element 1: Thinning and Tending

Element 3: CCF

Element 4: Coppice and Coppice with Standards



Forestry Programme 23–27: Close to Nature and Continuous Cover Forestry

Climate Resilient Reforestation

Element 1: Reforestation for Continuous Cover Forest

Element 2: Reforestation for Native Forests

Element 3: Reforestation for Biodiversity and Water



CCF Scheme Approvals to Date

- The total area that has been approved since the WIS CCF came in: 1222.91ha
- Total area approved for afforestation under FT10 : 314.26ha
- Total area of FT10 approved at First Instalment: 72.36ha
- Total area where CCF is the management system used in a private TFL's: 5045.08ha

Forestry Development in Ireland

Jonathan Spazzi

Teagasc Forestry Development Department



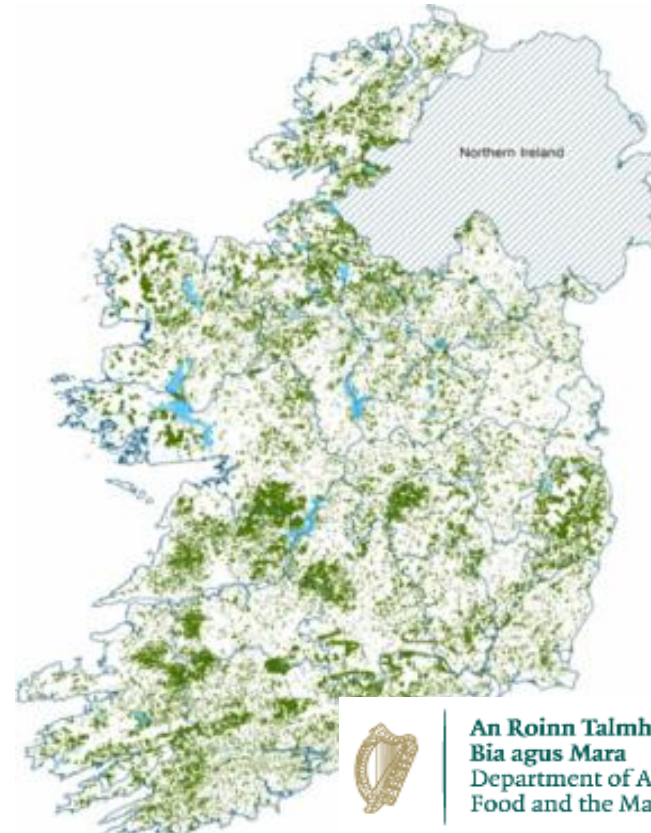
>24,000 private owners
82% farmers, >400,000 ha
8.6 ha average size
80% male and over 50



Direct employment 5600,
mainly in rural areas



Ireland's forests and Forestry Programme supporting...



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

808,848 ha
11.6% of land
area

Wood and wood based product exports

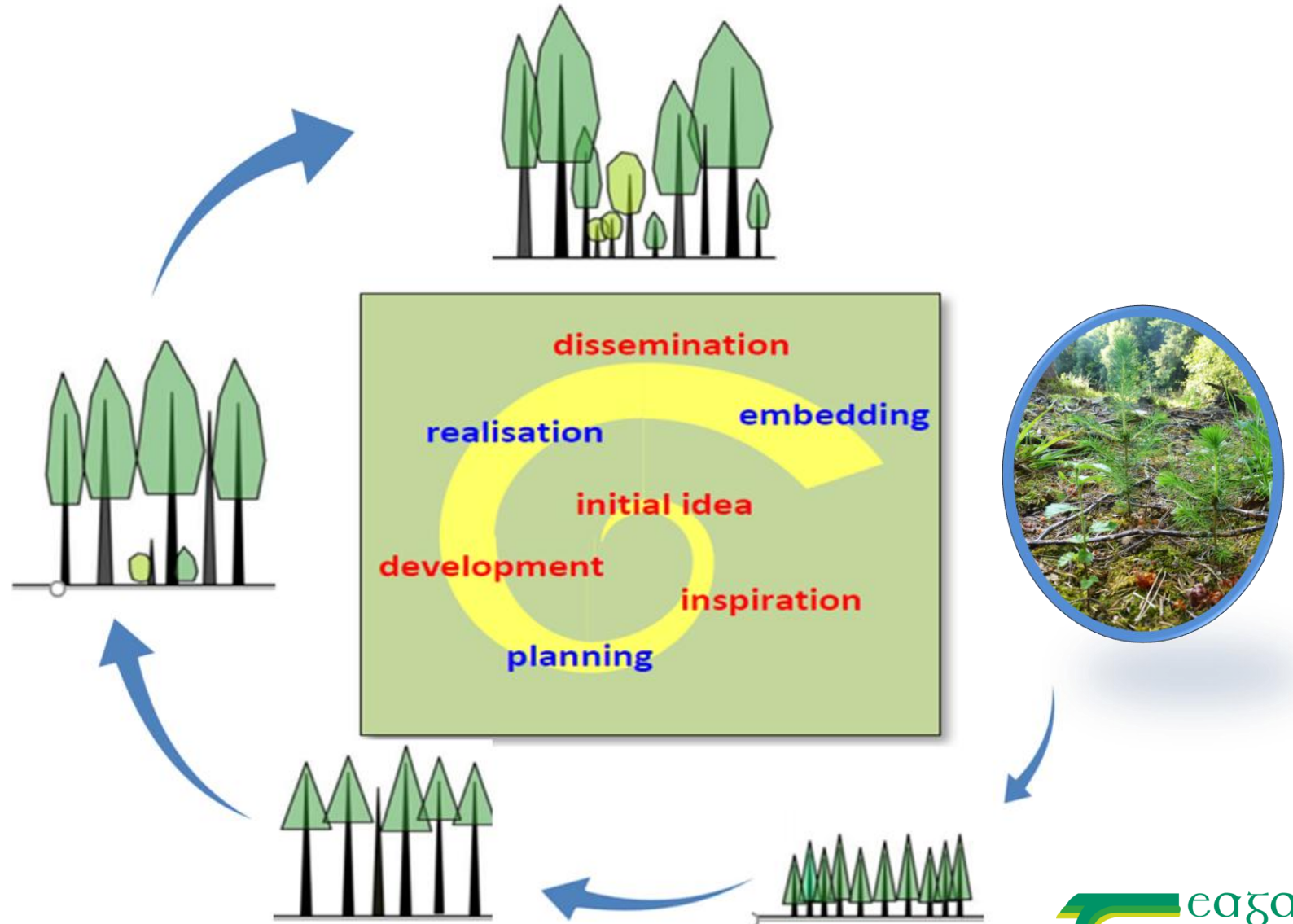


Ecosystem services



Enabling New Networks for Innovation in Silviculture

- Transfer: “I know what is good for you”
- Exchange: “Can we make a deal?”
- Co-creation: “What can we create by pooling resources?”



H.E.Wielinga (2016): “Dynamics of Living Networks”

The Forestry Promotion Fund



- Funded by DAFM since 2019
- Supporting a range of community and forestry organisations
- 48 projects in 2025-26
- Fostering innovation and promoting the benefits of Forestry Programme
- Teagasc in support role

The Knowledge Transfer Groups

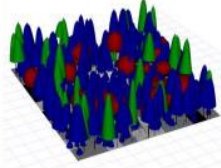
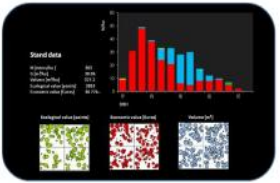
- Funded by DAFM for forest owners
- To raise awareness of sustainable forest management practices, including continuous cover forestry and agroforestry
- Led by practicing foresters
- Teagasc in supporting role
- Approximately 2,700 participants have participated in the scheme since 2018.



The Oak Park Martelloscope Workshops



SimInForest
Combining field exercises and simulations
on martelloscopes to develop integrative and sustainable
silviculture approaches



- Funded by Teagasc with support by the Integrate Network
- Running since 2019 in Oak Park Carlow
- Team effort
- Over 100 participants each year
- Interactive all day workshops on integrated management
- New development :
The SiminForest 4 years project

PI: Dr. Benoit Courbaud, INRAE, France
Co-PIs: Andreas Schuck EFI, Germany & Sergey Zudin, EFI, Finland



MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE FOR FOREST RESILIENCE

Next session from 15 October 2025 to 15 January 2026

The first free online course for mixed species, continuous cover forestry, available in three languages



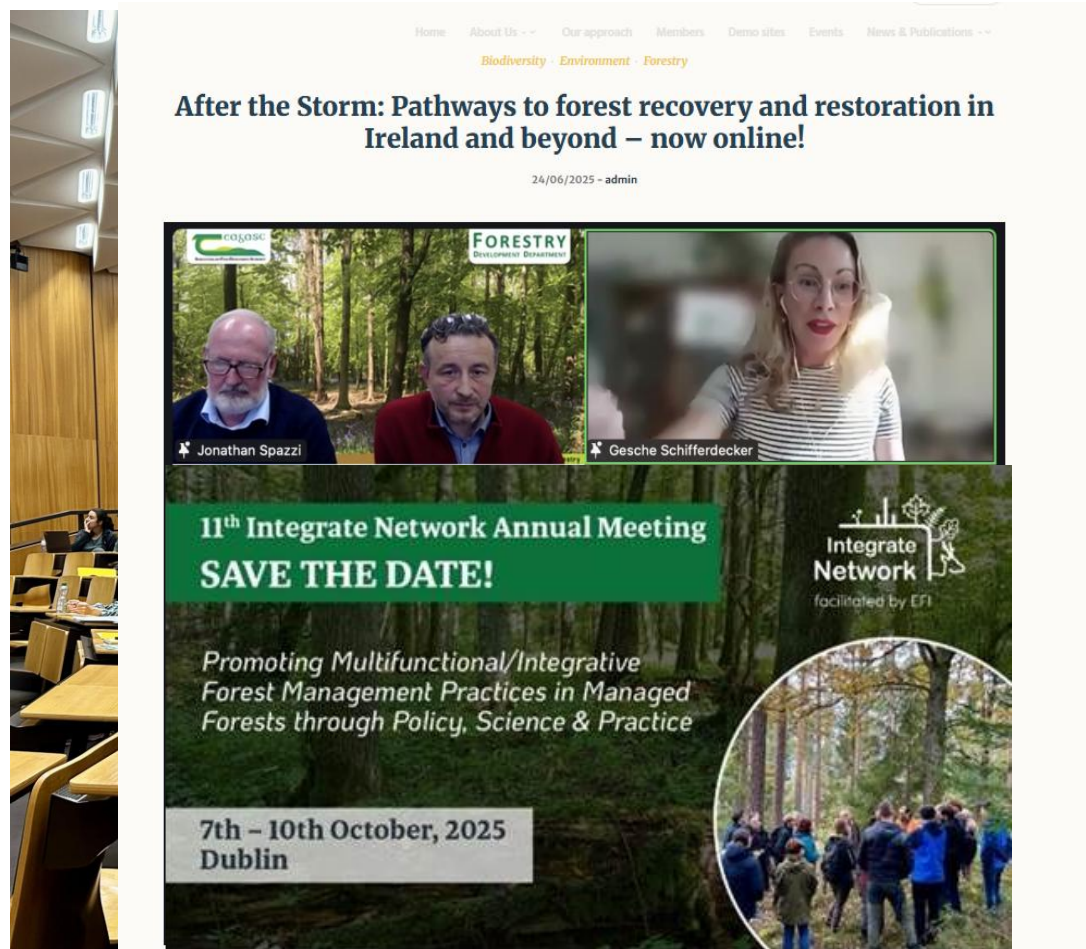
Improve the level of information, knowledge and skills of forest managers and owners in the field of CCF in order to impact their practices for the benefit of a management adapted to the challenges of climate change.

Free Online Training on Close-to-Nature Management

- 8 weeks online programme: facilitation-style virtual meetings, video tutorials and interactive exercises
- Collaboration between Teagasc and 3 forestry extension agency led by Foret-Nature in Belgium
- **Over 16000 participants in 3 languages in the last 2 years**
- **To be translated in Spanish this year**
- **New session starting soon**

The Integrate Network Chairmanship

- SUPERB expert workshop: *Bridging people and policy in forest restoration initiatives*, Basel, Switzerland, 2 December 2024
- ProSilva Ireland 25 year anniversary conference
14 March, 2025 Enfield, Ireland
- ProSilva Europe annual meeting 7-9 May, Sardinia, Italy
- Integrate Workshop 2-4 June 2025 in Zürich, Switzerland
Increasing biodiversity to promote adaptation and resilience of European forests by using close to nature forestry
- Integrate Webinar 11 June 2025
- 11th Annual Meeting of the European Integrate Network
7-10 October 2025 Dublin, Ireland



Further Development

- Expand the area of forest in transformation management
- Increase the number of practicing foresters engaging with close to nature management
- Diverse markets for diverse species
- Availability of contactors and forest machinery appropriate to the scale of private forestry
- New biodiversity prospective within forest management
- User friendly-surveys methods for adaptive learning
- Continue to incentivise and support owners willing to start the long journey towards integrated management





Thank You

