



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Eacnamaíoch agus Shóisialta
National Economic & Social Council

Collaboration on Climate and Biodiversity: Shared Island as a Catalyst

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1. Presentation Outline

Council Report: Key Findings

Urgent, Integrated and Shared Challenges

Consultation: Appetite Exists for Collaboration

Three Key Themes

Recommendations

Shared Ambition: Inspiring vision and statement of common purpose

Shared Experience: Support existing collaborations

Shared Opportunities: Establish strategic working groups

Conclusions

2. Climate change and biodiversity loss are integrated, urgent challenges we share on this island

- ▶ Increasing urgency to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies facing the world.
- ▶ Climate change and biodiversity loss are global issues that are indifferent to geographical boundaries.
- ▶ Council's report examines the particular challenges and opportunities of climate change and biodiversity loss across the island.
- ▶ This is a timely initiative, and it is the first time these important issues have been considered from a shared island perspective by the Council.

'Given our shared geography and climate, both Ireland and Northern Ireland face similar challenges in relation to environmental protection and, in particular, climate mitigation, adaptation and protection of biodiversity.' EPA Submission.

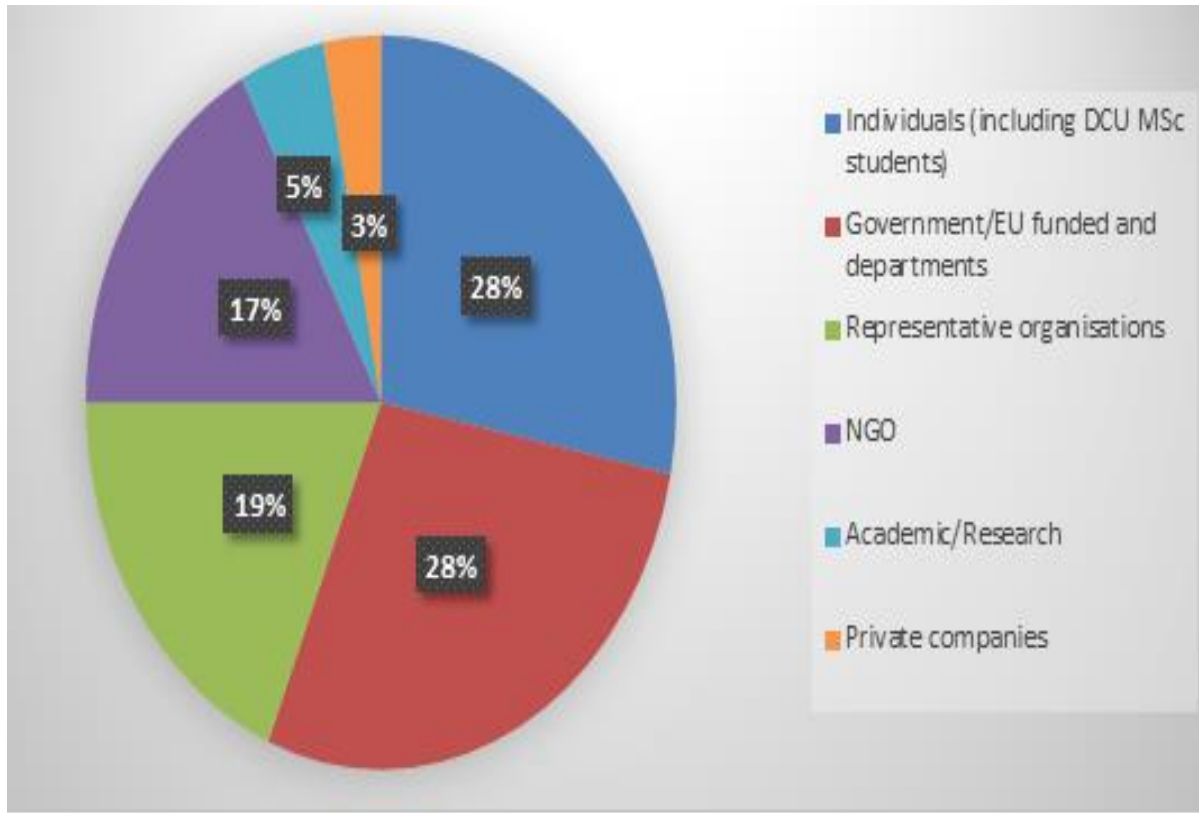
3. Consultation highlights an appetite for collaboration on climate and biodiversity

Council asked: To what extent does the scope exist to strengthen cooperation and collaboration across the island, and specifically the potential for tangible actions on climate and biodiversity?

Extensive consultation and research process with people from a range of organisations and different areas of expertise, across the island.

- ▶ Strong welcome for paper and process;
- ▶ Focus on an integrated and holistic approach;
- ▶ Support for collaborative action building on multiple existing networks; and
- ▶ Scope to build on what has already been achieved and to capture new opportunities.

4. Rich Engagement



64 submissions.

- ▶ 70% from people or organisations based in Ireland.
- ▶ 19 % from all-island organisations.
- ▶ 8% from Northern Irish organisations.

38 interviews with range of experts/researchers and national organisations

- ▶ 29% NI organisations
- ▶ Focus group on green transformation with 18 participants.

5. Extracts from the submissions

- ▶ *‘Environmental research has a strong all-island dimension and provides significant opportunities for cooperation and developing solutions to common environmental challenges’.* Submission from the EPA.
- ▶ *‘By only addressing one issue, it will exacerbate the other issues. The biodiversity crisis & climate crisis are both of equal importance & weighting’.* Submission from Derry City and Strabane District Council
- ▶ *‘By integrating **Natural Capital** into our decision making, we can make more informed decisions that better reflect the values of nature when taking investment decisions to help rebuild the economies in both the North and the South’.* Submission from RSPB NI.
- ▶ *‘Common environmental standards play a crucial role in providing a level playing field and preventing unfair regulatory competition across key sectors in relation to cross-border trade, indirectly securing more robust protection of the environment’.* Submission from Chambers Ireland.
- ▶ *‘There are several clear areas of common interest and where **cooperation and coordination** would likely prove **mutually beneficial for both jurisdictions**, as the low carbon transition unfolds across the island.’* ICTU Submission
- ▶ *‘Nature and our atmosphere protect and enhance the island of Ireland, but to maintain and improve these assets requires **societal engagement, innovative thinking and collaboration**’.* Submission from SFI.

6. Three Key Themes



Shared Ambition:
Common Purpose and Cooperation

Shared Experience:
Networks and Projects

Shared Opportunities and Challenges:
Collaboration and Problem-Solving

7. Council's Recommendations

- ▶ **Shared ambition: A shared and inspiring vision and statement of common purpose**
- ▶ **Shared experience: Support existing collaborations**
- ▶ **Shared challenges and opportunities: Support and deepen shared knowledge and practice; Establish strategic working groups**

8. Shared ambition: A shared and inspiring vision and statement of common purpose

- ▶ A shared and inspiring vision for integrated climate and biodiversity action across the island could be developed through a joint statement of common purpose.
- ▶ This could outline the shared climate and biodiversity challenges and ambition, and include a commitment to work collaboratively across sectors and communities.
- ▶ There is potentially a role for the institutions and bodies established under the Good Friday Agreement - including the North South Ministerial Council.

9. Shared experience: Support existing collaborations

- ▶ Develop and support collaborative ways of working on environmental challenges, to mitigate against climate change, and protect nature.
- ▶ Create a distinct funding stream for mapping and exploring the work of existing environmental networks across all sectors in Ireland and Northern Ireland.
- ▶ Series of all-island conferences on key themes, to include in the first instance: circular economy and bioeconomy; renewable energy; marine conservation and adaptation; and water quality and management.

10. Shared challenges and opportunities: Establish strategic working groups

- ▶ Deepen research, knowledge and expertise.
- ▶ Strategic working groups could provide a focus and setting for collaborative, forward-looking discussion and formulation of advice on shared opportunities in key areas.

These could include:

- ▶ **Sustainable Agriculture: Expanding Shared Areas of Interest;**
- ▶ **All-Island Opportunities from a Circular Economy and Bio-economy;**
- ▶ **Collaborations on Renewable Energy;**
- ▶ **Valuing Networks for Nature; and**
- ▶ **Marine and Coastal Climate Adaptation and Impact.**

11. Conclusion: There is very significant scope to strengthen cooperation and collaboration

- ▶ A shared understanding and ambition can be strengthened to address urgent and shared environmental challenges.
- ▶ A deep, shared experience can be further explored that provides a solid foundation to deliver on this ambition.
- ▶ Common ground is underpinned by existing structures that can form the basis for a more collaborative approach to climate and biodiversity action across the island.
- ▶ A vision and common purpose can be articulated that will guide and inform action on the ground.
- ▶ Strengthening cooperation takes time and requires public engagement and participation.