Introduction

In line with Bord na Móna's accelerated decarbonisation strategy, the company has committed to ambitious enhanced peatland rehabilitation improvements, initially targeting over 30,000 hectares.

This strategy has been developed to optimise benefits of peatland rehabilitation and restoration such as carbon storage, biodiversity and water (catchment management). These improvements are in line with the Government Climate Action agenda, and will bring with them significant benefits for the environment and people. They will also create a stable natural landscape, for the benefit of wildlife as well as of neighbours and local communities in former peat production areas.

Rehabilitated cutaway wetlands developing at Drinagh Bog, Co. Offaly. This is an example of a more alkaline site, that will develop reedbeds and fen habitats.

Bord na Móna and Environmental Responsibility

Bord na Móna operate under nine Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) Licences. As part of Condition 10 of these licences, decommissioning and rehabilitation must be carried out when industrial peat production ceases.

The Government plan to support enhanced rehabilitation improvements, which will help deliver on climate action and biodiversity objectives. Funding to support these works comes from the Climate Action Fund.

Bord na Móna brings over 40 years of experience in peatland rehabilitation that informs these improvements which are also informed by consultation with relevant bodies and groups. We are committed to acting in an environmentally responsible manner in rehabilitating and decommissioning these bogs and in the future management of these lands.

Bord na Móna will strive to ensure that the decommissioning and rehabilitation works will have minimal impacts on local land-owners and communities and there will be engagement with all stakeholders throughout this process.

Bord na Móna

Contact us
Our dedicated staff can answer your queries and provide further information
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Bord na Móna

Peatlands Climate Action Scheme

Supported by the Government of Ireland's Climate Action Fund

Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Decommissioning

Decommissioning covers all areas of general clean-up within the bogs including removal of stock (harvested peat) and associated machinery, bog pumps (where feasible), infrastructure and waste material, lifting of railway lines and silt control. Silt ponds will continue to be maintained during this phase until such time as the rehabilitation work is completed and the bogs are stabilised.

Decommissioning includes the removal of old machinery.

Rehabilitation

The general objective of peatland rehabilitation is to ensure environmental stabilisation of the former industrial peat production areas. Enhanced rehabilitation focuses on optimising suitable hydrological conditions (stable water levels close to the surface) by blocking production field drains, re-profiling peat fields, building bunds and other wetland measures that will be planned in detail. This will create soggy peatland conditions that will be both naturally colonised and proactively seeded with targeted vegetation including inoculation of appropriate bog areas with Sphagnum. This will allow compatible peatland habitats to redevelop. It will also slow water movement across these bogs and trap silt.

From bare peat fields to revegetated and re-wetted areas.

These improvements will prioritise the development of peat-forming habitats, where possible. This will optimise climate action benefits (reducing carbon emissions significantly) by re-wetting the residual peat to keep carbon in the ground and accelerate the trajectory towards naturally functioning peatland ecosystems.

Eventually carbon sinks can be developed again but successful peatland restoration takes time. Continual monitoring will be carried out to measure and evaluate progress and delivery of benefits (e.g. biodiversity and greenhouse gas fluxes).

Machine drivers blocking drains to re-wet peat.

Varying environmental conditions such as peat depth, water level, pH and nutrient status also mean that a mosaic of cutaway peatland habitats including embryonic bog, birch woodland, scrub, heath, fen and wetland will develop. Different bogs have different starting points.

The objective for sites with deep residual peat will be to re-establish embryonic Sphagnum-rich bog communities. Sphagnum moss is a key species that sequesters carbon. Raised bog species require water-logged acidic conditions to thrive.

Sphagnum-rich vegetation developed on cutaway bog. This is now known to be a sink for greenhouse gases.

Land Management and Future Development

When the improvements are complete, Bord na Móna will continue to manage its lands, by providing land security, boundary management and by liaising with local communities.

Bord na Móna is focused on building new sustainable businesses aligned to national climate and energy policy. By stabilising and rehabilitating our peatlands, the company can create opportunities for such business operations. We are looking at new beneficial uses for lands across our entire estate that are both environmentally sustainable and commercially viable.

Options for a variety of complimentary sustainable developments on peatlands are assessed by Bord na Móna on ongoing basis.

A portion of our lands will be considered for future sustainable developments. Other land-uses such as amenity and walkways may also be integrated with this new rehabilitated landscape.

Where other after-uses are developed on cutaway bog areas, these will be subject to the relevant regulatory and planning consents.

Lough Boora Discovery Park – amenity developed on cutaway bog.