



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council



Group Water Scheme Source Protection Pilot Project in Roscommon wins 'European Bee Award 2020'

The Brussels-based European Landowners' Organisation has announced that the Source Protection Pilot Project in Co. Roscommon is the winner of the 'European Bee Award 2020' for its 'Let it Bee' initiative, in the category "Land Management Practices," thanks to its outstanding contribution to the protection of pollinators.

The overall aim of the Group Water Scheme initiative is to educate the public about the relationship between what happens in a source catchment and the quality of tap water, and to help explain the important role biodiversity enhancement can play in drinking water source protection.

The project has included the distribution of beehives to local farming families, trees being provided to primary school children in 88 National Schools across Roscommon, awareness campaigns on pesticides and farmers implementing measures to protect water courses, which also act as habitats for pollinators.

The https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BijH8U5Z_DLI4Tuz7M7twQFIjlbAPgyj/view?usp=sharing

and [I've Planted a Tree and My Garden is Pesticide Free](#) initiatives have captured the public's imagination.

In a virtual awards ceremony that would normally take place in the European Parliament in Brussels, Dr Michael Garratt, President of the jury of the European Bee Award, commented:

"The 'Let it Bee' project is a really exciting and innovative project. The European Bee Award panel was really impressed with the diversity of activities the project has undertaken and that it looks to support not only wild pollinators and managed bees, but also deliver wider biodiversity and water quality benefits too. The engagement of such a wide range of stakeholders through this project and the number of schools involved in the 'I've planted a tree' initiative is a real strength."

<https://youtu.be/Qkw34OuOdQg>

<https://youtu.be/HrtXzVylmZM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMWF5uVFepQ>

Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive, Roscommon County Council, commented:

"Roscommon is a beautiful county which is rich in heritage and unspoilt landscape, and by protecting our drinking water sources, we are ensuring that County Roscommon is an attractive, inclusive, prosperous and vibrant place to live, invest, work and visit. This project has been reviewed by our peers in Europe and the Award may influence future policy in the European Commission and the European Parliament."

Catherine Finlay, Senior Executive Officer, Roscommon County Council, added:

"This project is a fine example of National, Regional and Local stakeholders working together in partnership with our communities for the benefit of everyone living in County Roscommon. In Roscommon County Council we are very proud of the close working relationship we have with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and our Group Water Scheme members which has been key to the success of this project."

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Barry Deane, CEO of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes (NFGWS), added:

“This award is vindication of the shared vision and the hard work that is carried out by the group water schemes in Roscommon, our own organisation, Roscommon County Council, and the Pilot Project steering group. We are particularly happy that our project has been acknowledged against 22 other entries from across the EU. A special acknowledgement has to go to all the group water schemes, especially the Corracreigh GWS for their enthusiasm in being the first scheme to roll out the ‘Let it Bee’ initiative. We hope that this model of engagement with citizens can not only be rolled out throughout Ireland but also by our European friends.”

Video: [NFGWS Source Protection Pilot Project in Roscommon wins European Bee Award 2020](#)