



**THEME:**

Environment

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€9,230,313.93

**MATCH FUNDING:**

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs; and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

**LEAD PARTNER:**

Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

**PROJECT PARTNERS:**

East Border Region Ltd; Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council; Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute; Ulster University; Ulster Wildlife; Monaghan County Council; Institute of Technology Sligo; Golden Eagle Trust; Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust; and Scottish Natural Heritage.

Start Date: 01/01/2017

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**PROJECT CONTACT:**

[thecannproject@nmandd.org](mailto:thecannproject@nmandd.org)

 <https://thecannproject.org/>

 @theCANNproject

## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: Collaborative Action for the Natura Network (CANN) - First Aid for Bogs

The Sliabh Beagh uplands span the border of counties Monaghan, Fermanagh and Tyrone and, nestling in a spot known as the Three Counties Hollow, where these counties meet, some ground-breaking conservation work has been taking place. Here, a large area of the blanket bog was drained and readied for planting forestry. But for some reason, pine seedlings never made it into the ground and after Sliabh Beagh was designated as an ASSI and SAC, planting was forever out of the question and left close to 120 hectares of drained blanket bog that had the potential for re-wetting.

Luckily the owners, the Northern Ireland Forestry Service, were happy when the CANN project approached them with a plan to rehabilitate this area of drained bog to return it to a healthy functioning blanket bog. When a bog is drained its lifeblood seeps away. It can no longer hold water and begins to release CO<sub>2</sub> back into the atmosphere instead of capturing it as a healthy bog does. Rain moves off the bog quickly, making rivers flood faster and the biodiversity that depends on a healthy wet bog can no longer flourish. The bog needed some urgent first aid.

During November and December 2020 CANN project contractors set about helping to rehabilitate the bog. The peat dams they installed into the drains act in a similar way to a doctor placing a stitch in a wound, they allow the bog to heal and the drain to close up. This healing process can take many years but is an investment well worth the wait.

