

# Biodiversity and the role of big data: Using data to drive pollinator conservation in Ireland

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## Abstract

Pollination is a free service provided by nature, that delivers a healthy environment and landscape. Data shows that one third of Ireland's 98 wild bee species are threatened with extinction and that common bumblebees have experienced a 14.2% decline in abundance since 2012. Rare species are disappearing through habitat loss and common species are struggling because of the way we currently manage the rest of the landscape. Pollinators are in enormous difficulties, but we don't have to accept that fate. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan was published in 2015 [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie) making Ireland one of the first countries in Europe with an approach to address this problem. It is a voluntary plan that is supported by more than 100 governmental and non-governmental organisations and it has identified 81 actions to make Ireland more pollinator-friendly. Clear, accessible evidence-based guidelines have been written for all sectors explaining what actions can be taken to help. These have been widely and voluntarily adopted by farmers, local authorities, gardeners, community groups, businesses and schools. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is still in the early stages, but it has demonstrated that you can engage across sectors, and you can bring people together to address a biodiversity crisis. Importantly, it has shown that data is the impetus for change; allows identification of the correct evidence-based actions, and through tracking and monitoring creates the momentum to facilitate real progress.