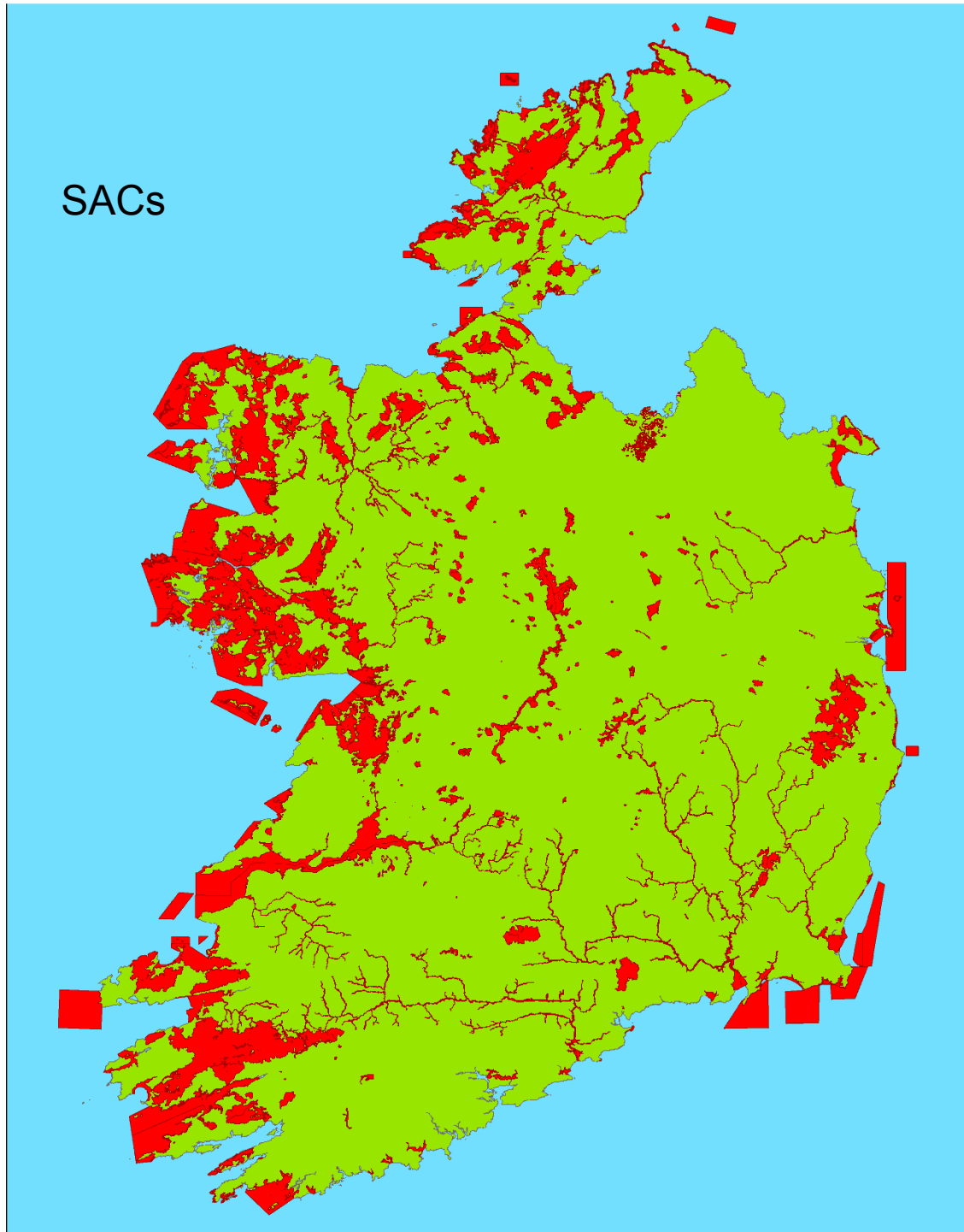


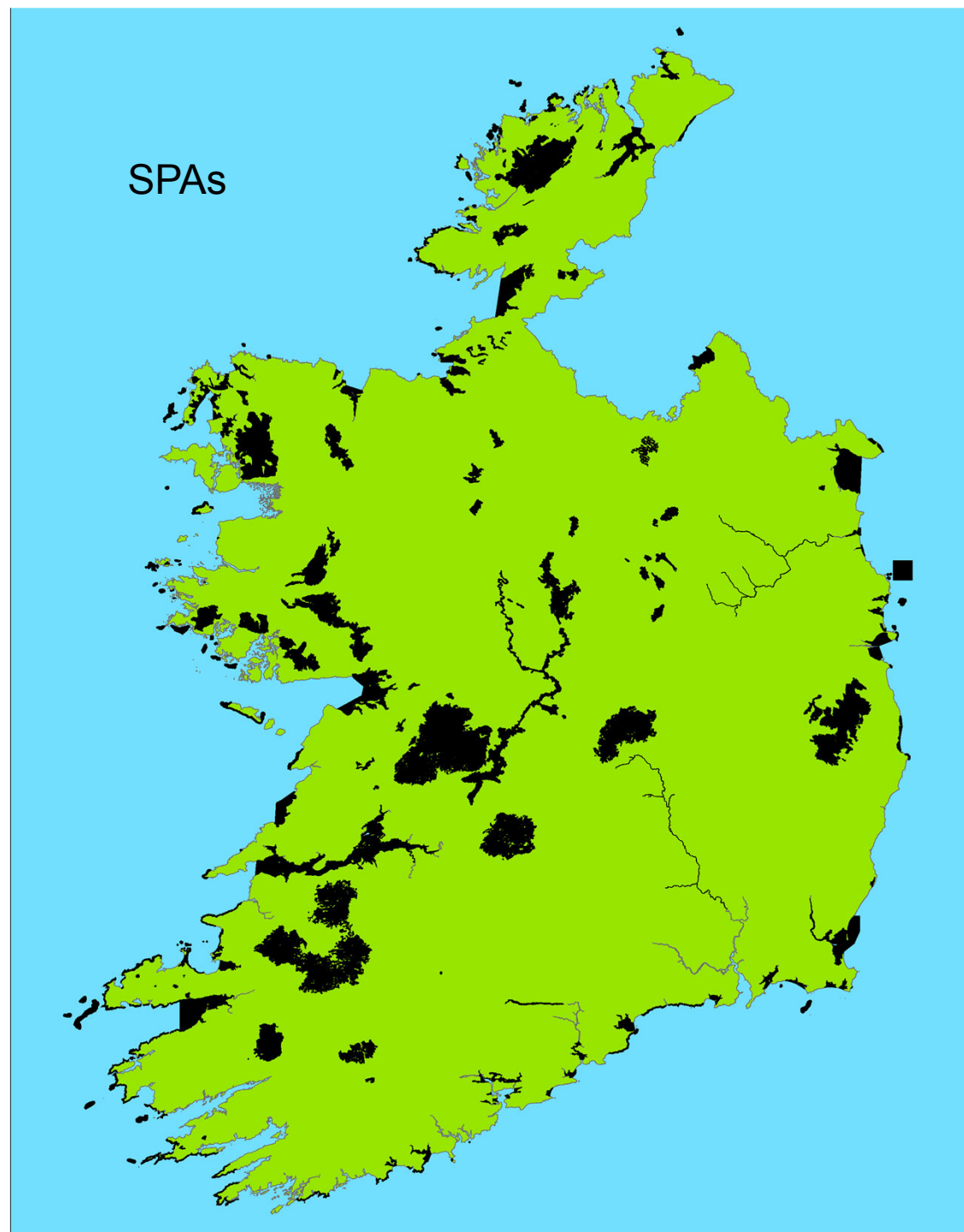
Uplands:
Challenges and Opportunities

Upland Community Partnership Conference

29th of May 2014

SACs





Cur, Co. Galway



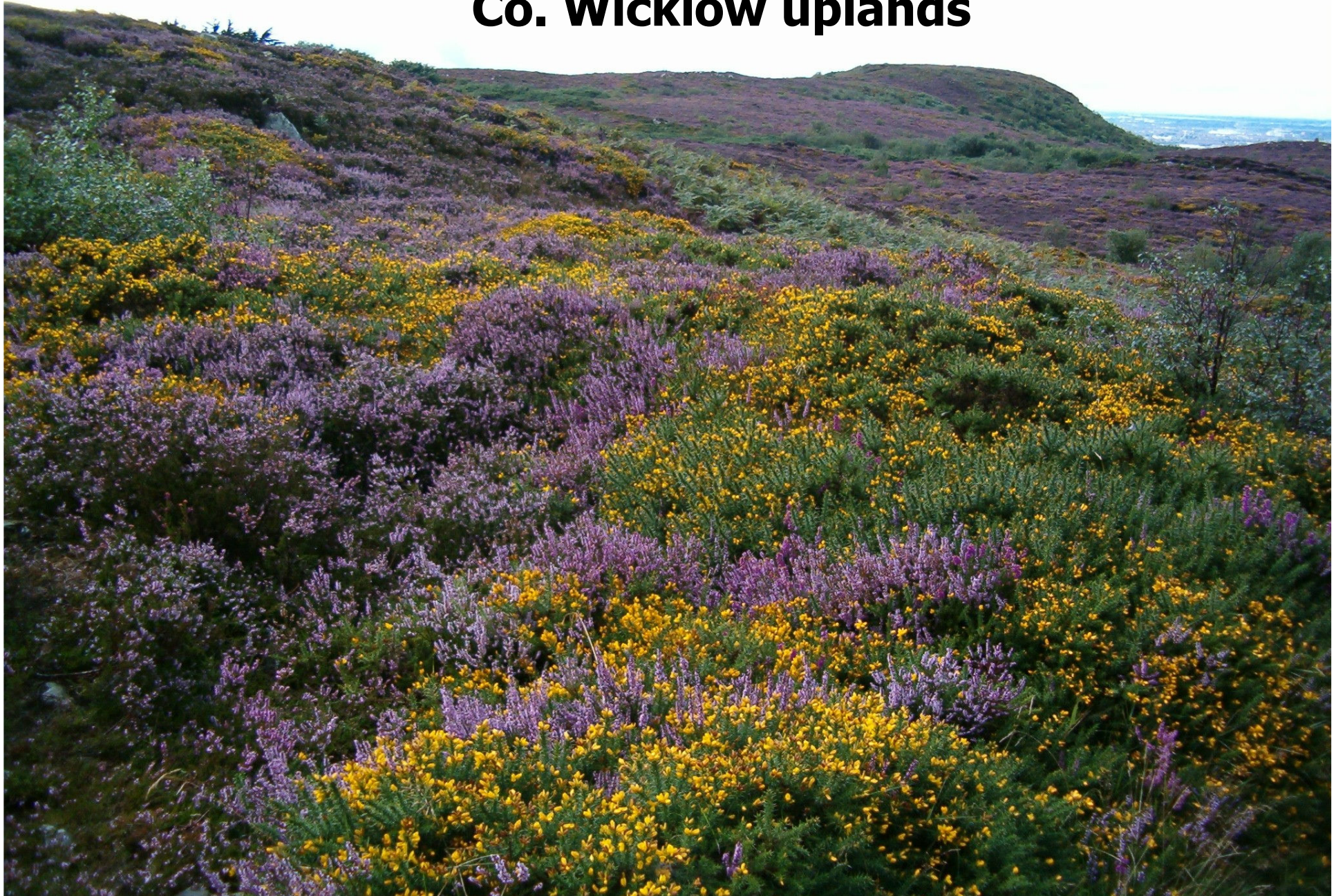


Bundorragha, Co. Mayo

Mullaghareirk Mountains, Co. Cork



Co. Wicklow uplands



Red Grouse



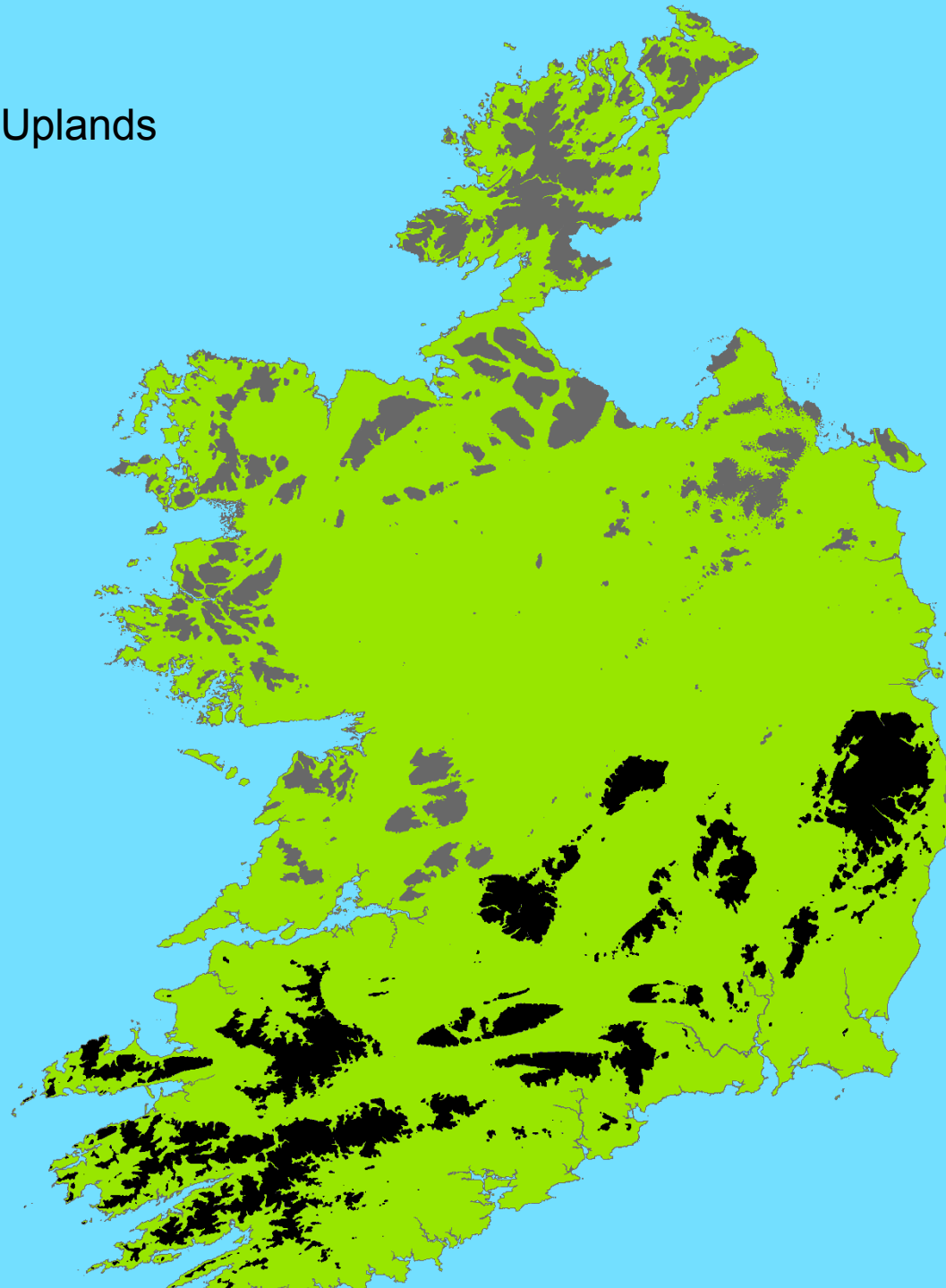
Hen Harrier



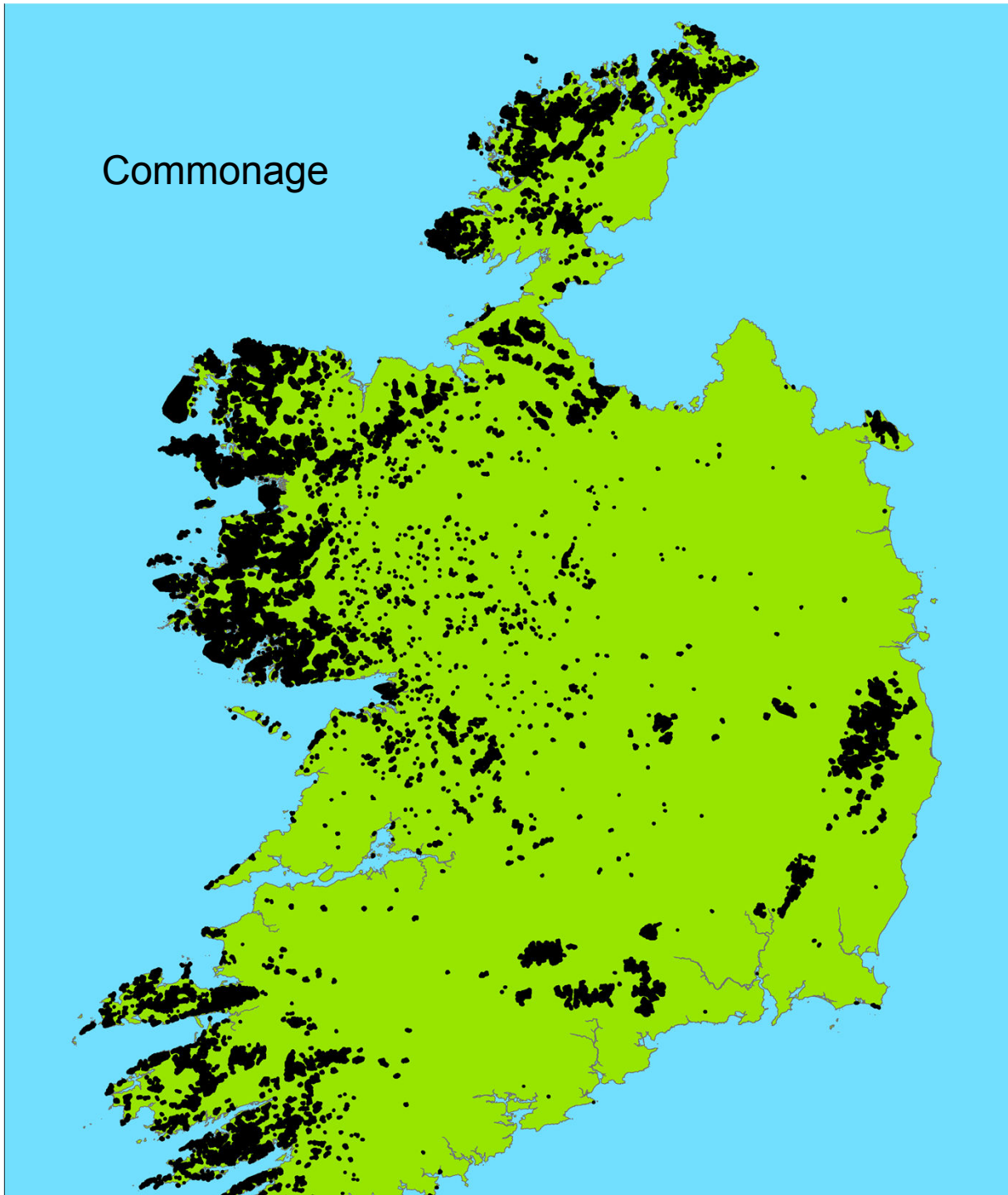
Freshwater Pearl Mussel



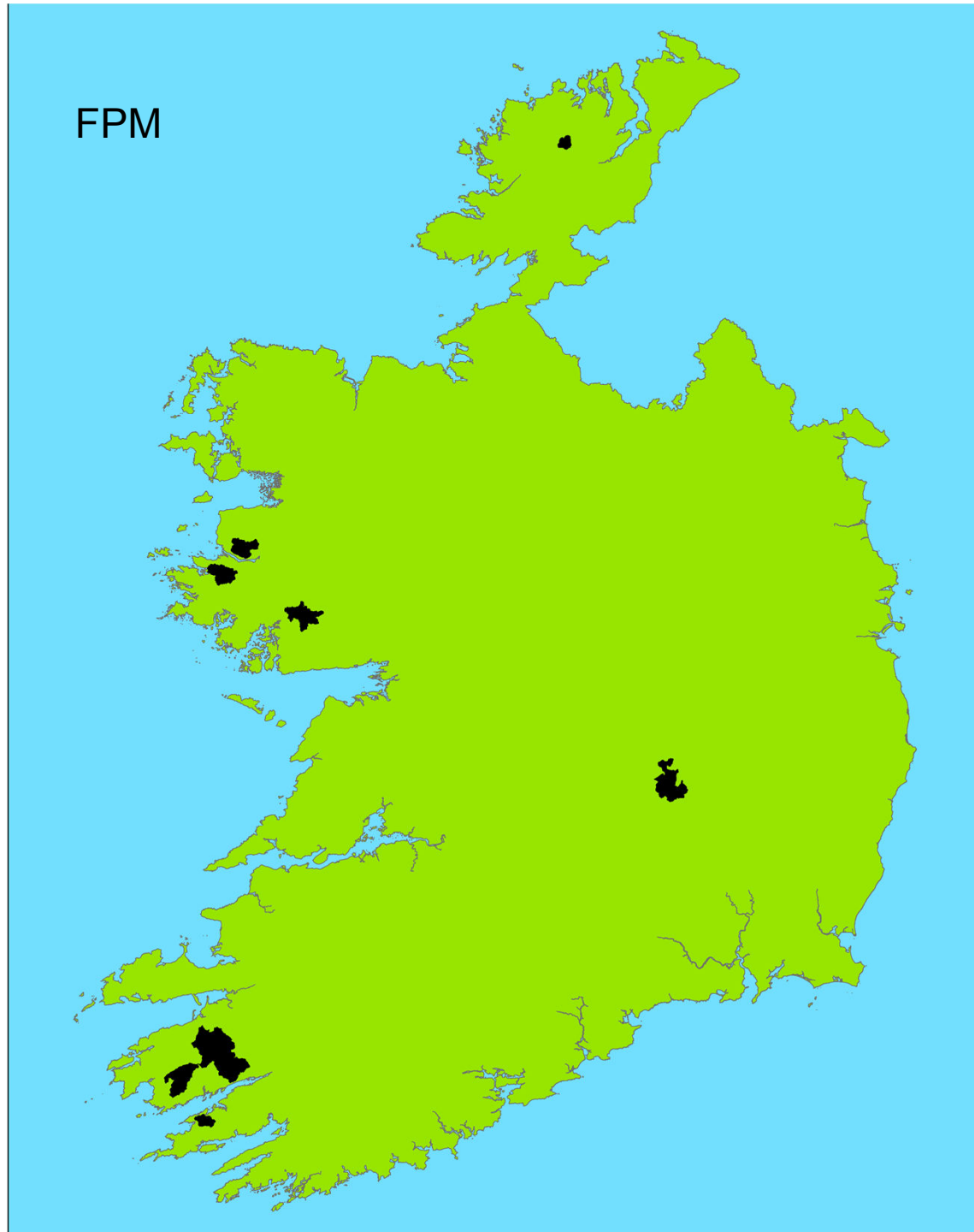
Uplands



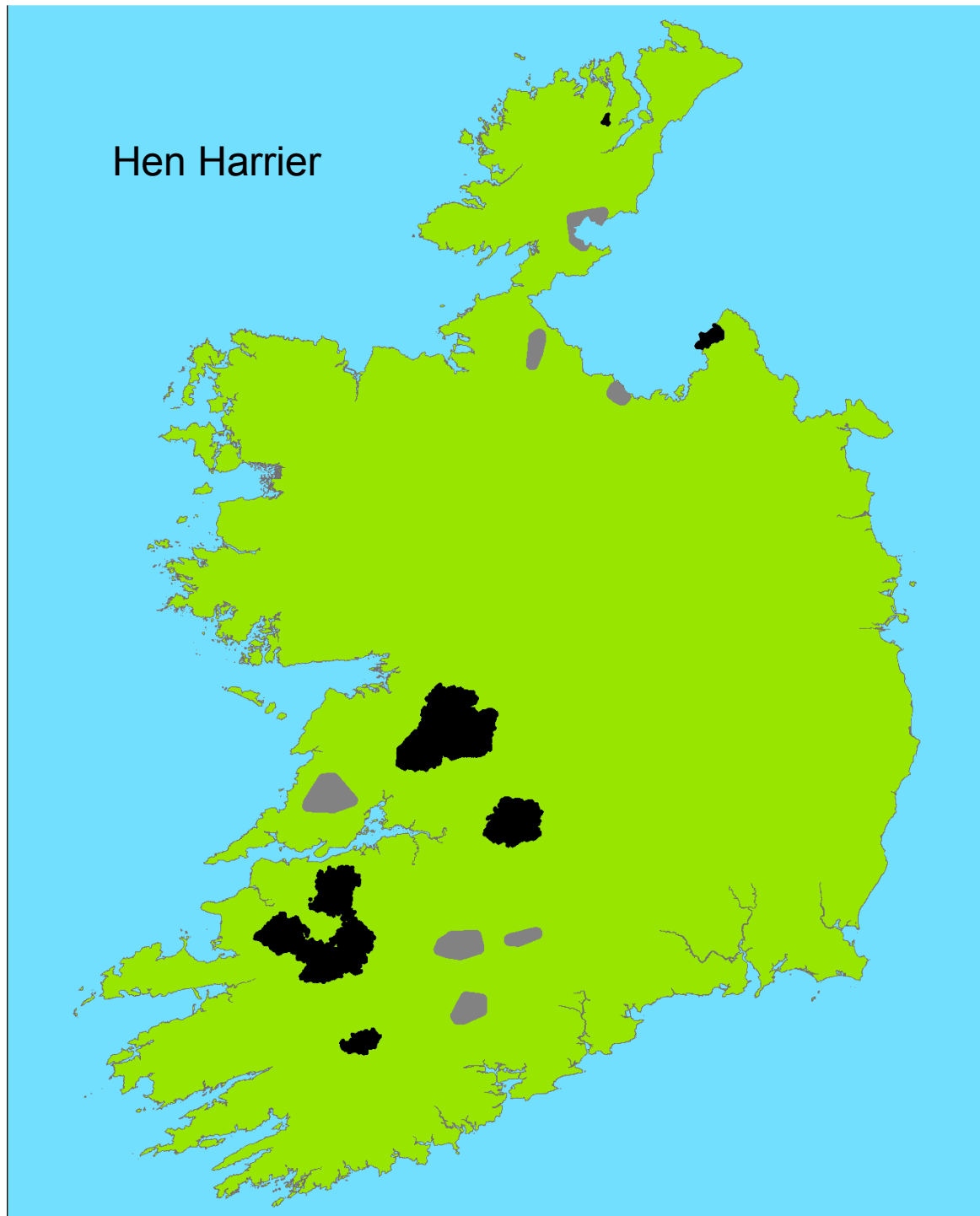
Commonage

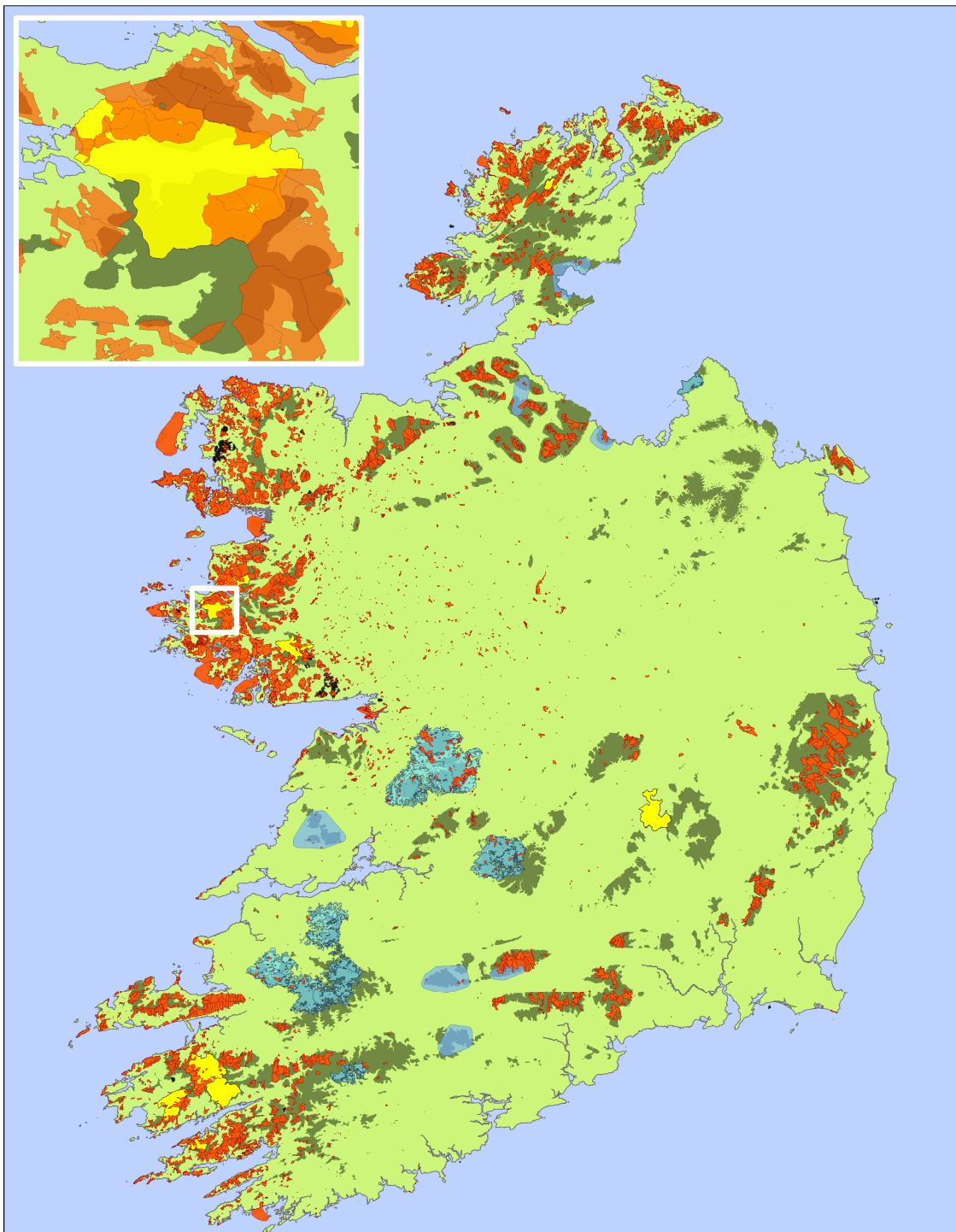


FPM



Hen Harrier





Management of commonages in Ireland

- Headage and premia lead to increases in sheep numbers/overgrazing in the 70s-90s
- Commonage plans commenced in the late 90s
- Destocking prescribed as necessary
- ECJ C117/00 judgement against Ireland. Case closed in January 2009.
- Decoupled payments/extensification
- Ageing farming population
- Reduced supports (DAS, SPS, REPS/AEOS)

Commonages in Ireland

- 6,793 LPIS plots, in varying condition
- circa 15,000 herd numbers
- 435,978ha gross area (2011)
- 410,187ha reference area (94%)
- Dormancy an issue (only 63.3% claimed*)
- To date, no proper management of grazing, either of overgrazing or of undergrazing – nobody knows what stock are on the hills
- Significant risk for SPS payments (€190 million per annum to commonage farmers)

2005



2005



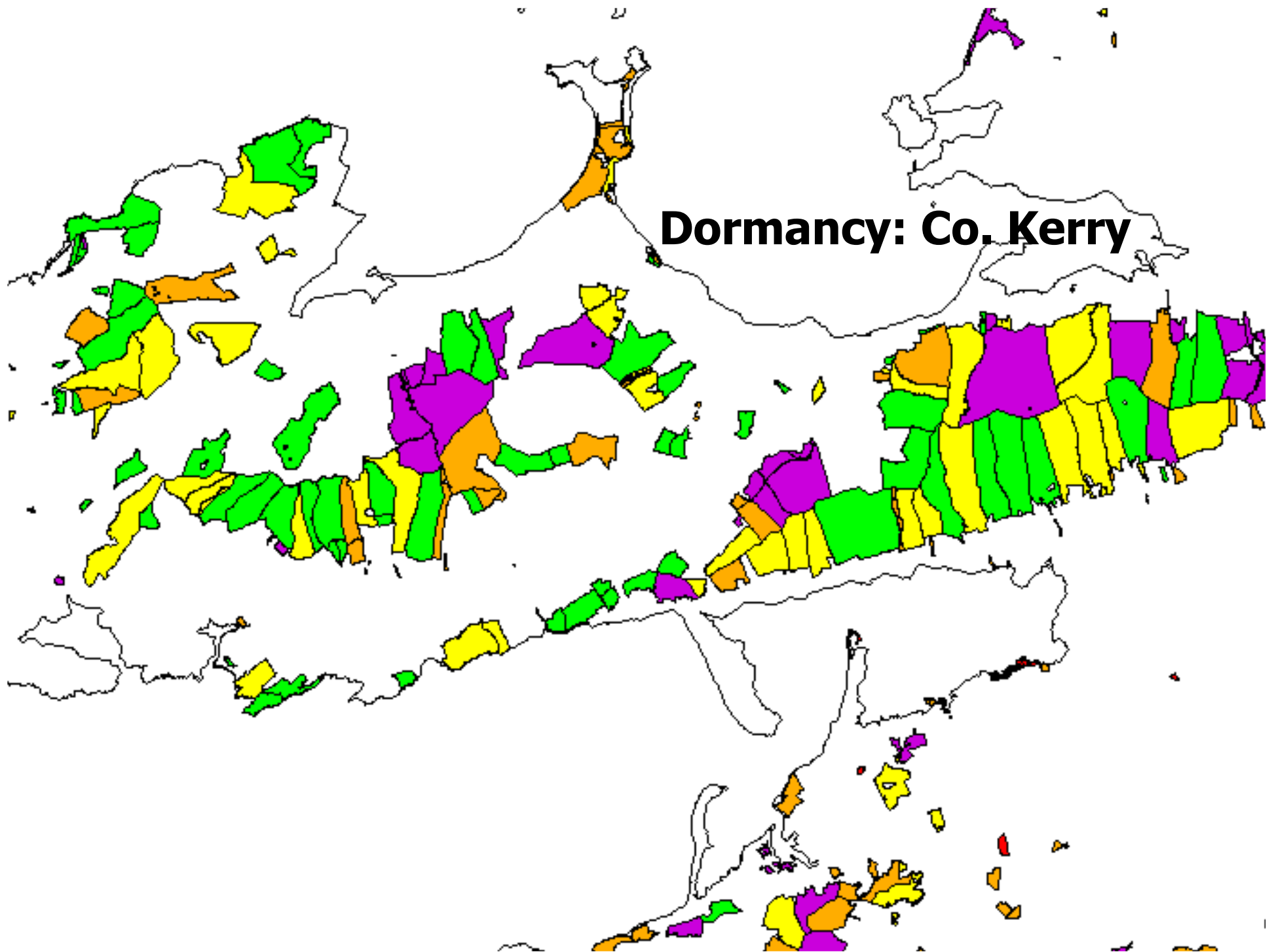
2010



Dormancy – have we enough farmers?

- Very worrying trends, particularly in commonages
- Some farmers have abandoned the commonages, others are not currently allowed to increase
- Some farmers are claiming the commonage on SPS but are not grazing the commonage
- We need to agree a better model that
 - Allows farmers increase numbers where the commonage requires an increase (ie to unfreeze the commonage)
 - Ensures that the land is in GAEC (with other benefits)
 - Protects payments
 - Delivers biodiversity
- Future supports depend on this (both Pillar 1 & 2)
- Many farmers welcome this approach

Dormancy: Co. Kerry







What has been proposed for commonages?

- Data for 4,600 LPIS parcels has been published, accounting for 372,000ha (91% of the resource)
- Some outstanding areas to be assessed
- Collective min/max figures given by DAFM, which could be translated into individual figures BUT this won't work if there are dormant shares
- This is a real opportunity for self regulation and to protect payments
- Lead in time / professional support

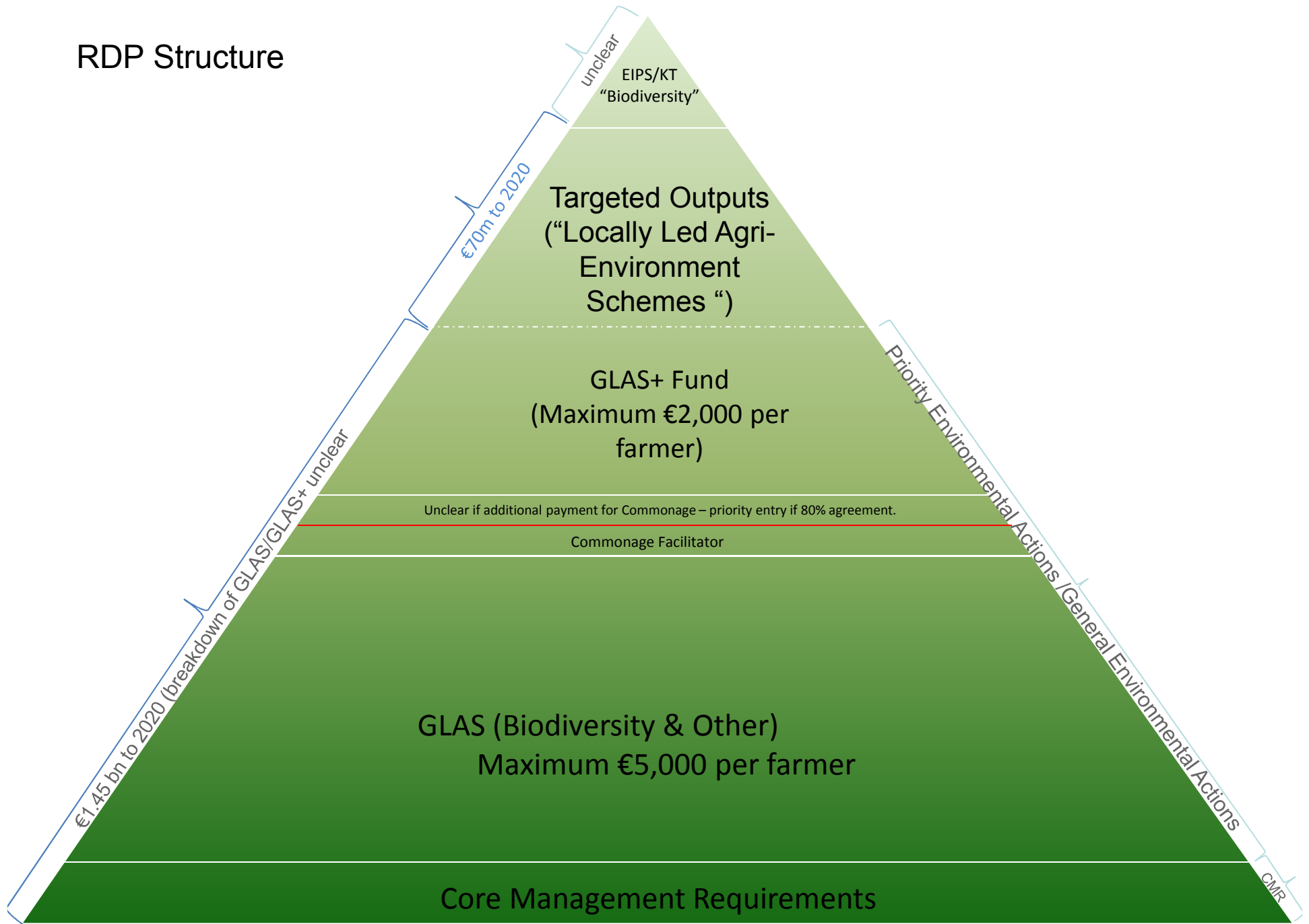
A partnership approach:

- Many interested parties, with common objectives (whether they realise it or not!)
- There are issues in the uplands that need to be addressed (grazing management, burning, invasive spp, dumping, scrub encroachment) – this approach could provide a forum for a possible solution
- Future AE schemes will favour a collective approach. Pillar 1 supports will demand appropriate management of the uplands (incl commonages)
- Uplands working group have shown the way

Possible Next Steps for Uplands

- *A partnership approach*; between DAFM, DAHG, the farming organisations, the farmers, the Heritage Council, BWI, Teagasc, Mountaineering Ireland, the Golden Eagle Trust, NARGC, WUC/IUF etc etc
- Communicate the outcomes and the roadmap for the next six years
- Look to use incentives in the next RDP
- Develop a commonage review process
- Finalise the remaining commonages (9%)
- Ensure co-ordination, facilitation and lead in time; the structure and hooks are there
- Maintaining the *status quo* is not an option

RDP Structure



Míle buíochas

