

The native forests of Ireland are an important part of the country's natural heritage and biodiversity. Long ago, much of Ireland was covered in native woodland made up of oak, ash, birch, hazel, and yew trees. However, centuries of farming, building, and deforestation greatly reduced these forests. Today, only a small percentage of Ireland's original woodland remains, but many efforts are being made to protect and restore these valuable ecosystems.



One important project is taking place in Killarney National Park, where ancient oak forests are carefully protected. The park is home to rare plants, birds, and animals, and conservation workers remove invasive

species to help native trees grow naturally. Another important location is Glenveagh National Park, where large-scale tree planting programmes encourage the return of native woodland habitats.

In County Wicklow, organisations such as the Wicklow Mountains National Park work to restore forests that were damaged by commercial forestry. Native species are planted instead of fast-growing non-native trees such as Sitka spruce. Similarly, in County Clare, restoration projects in the Burren region support native hazel woodland and protect local wildlife.

Groups such as Coillte and the Woodland Trust are also involved in nationwide conservation programmes. They promote



sustainable forestry, tree planting, and public education about the importance of biodiversity and climate protection.

These efforts are important because native forests absorb carbon dioxide, prevent soil erosion, and provide habitats for wildlife. They also preserve Ireland's

cultural and natural history. By protecting and restoring native forests, Ireland is helping to create a healthier environment for future generations while reconnecting people with the country's ancient landscapes.