



**life
insular**
LIFE20 NAT/ES/001007



Integrated strategy for sustainable management of insular habitats in Natura 2000 islands of the Atlantic Ocean LIFE INSULAR (LIFE20 NAT/ES/001007)

Atlantic Ocean islands

The islands of the Atlantic Ocean are one of the most biodiverse areas in the EU, thanks to the combination of climatic conditions, edaphic and coastal dynamics, so they harbour a very high diversity of habitat types and species included in Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC, many of which are considered for priority conservation. These insular ecosystems generally present shared environmental problems, which is why they are extremely threatened and, consequently, the habitats present in them, which form complex mosaics that present joint patterns of fragmentation and vulnerability, nowadays aggravated by global change.

Threats over island habitats

It has been recognized that the most endangered habitats of the Atlantic Ocean islands are the dune ecosystems (2130*) and their contact habitats (4030), on which 4 main threats causes them an unfavourable-bad conservation status in most of the LIFE INSULAR's involved territories.



T1 Senescent forest plantations made from the 1930s to the 1970s caused a significant reduction of former areas covered by insular habitats, and nowadays are functioning as a source of encroaching trees on adjacent habitats.



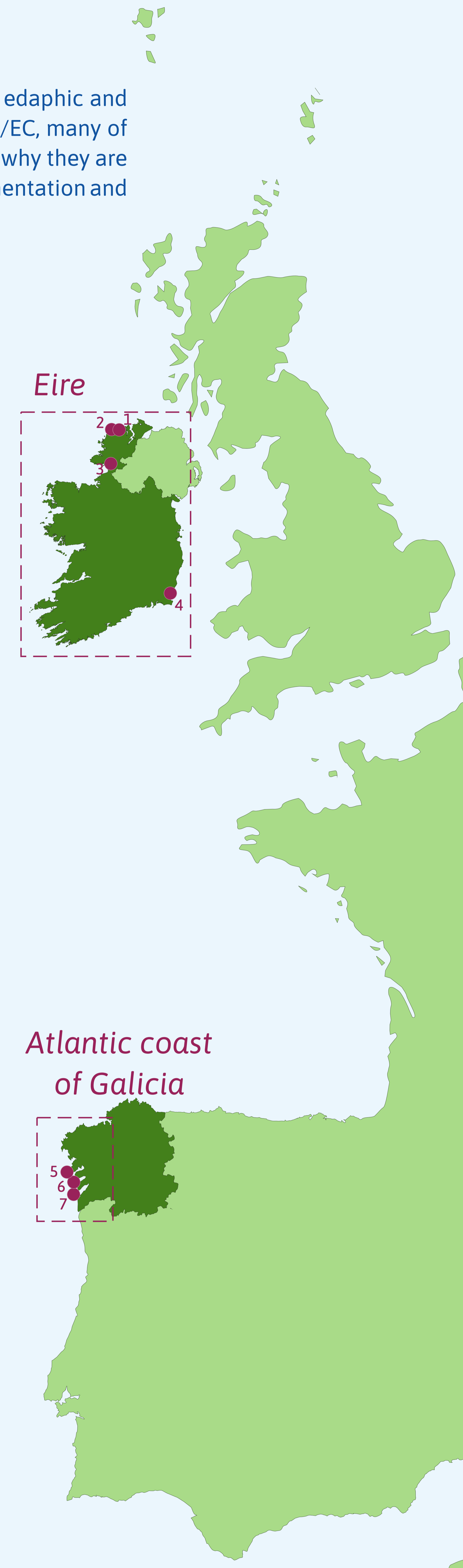
T2 Plant IAS are seriously affecting the composition and structure of every targeted Spanish island habitat, so the situation is critical and urgent measures are necessary.



T3 Recreational/tourist activities cause some negative effects because of uncontrolled traffic of visitors on the structure, functionality, and future prospects of insular habitats.



T4 Climate change impact is expected to be high, as island habitats are under greater risk than other continental ecosystems, increasing the effects of all the aforementioned threats and therefore affecting the future prospects of all island habitats.



Eire

Atlantic coast
of Galicia

LIFE INSULAR project

LIFE INSULAR is a project that aims to implement an integrated transnational strategy between Spain and Ireland for restoration of insular habitats (2130*, 4030) in Atlantic Ocean islands spread across Atlantic and Macaronesian biogeographical regions, promoting their favourable conservation status and increasing their resilience as the main measure of adaptation to current global changes. For this purpose, LIFE INSULAR has chosen 8 Spanish and Irish Natura 2000 SACs located in 5 different islands from both Member states.

In these insular territories, the project will aim to a favourable conservation status of island habitats in 276.6 ha: 165.6 ha corresponding to 2130* habitat (23.5%) and another 117.0 ha to 4030 habitat (42.5%). These results will be achieved through best practices of proven effectiveness that will be applied on insular habitats to address common conservation problems and threats from a transnational approach:

- 1. Increasing the area** covered by insular habitats, through elimination of old forest plantations, cultivation of characteristic plant species of insular habitats for their restoration.
- 2. Improving the structure and functions** of insular habitats through elimination of old forest plantations, encroached trees, and the control of competition against plant IAS, without using herbicides.
- 3. Improving the future prospects** of insular habitats through the improvement of habitat knowledge and protection measures against anthropogenic pressures.
- 4. Informing and raising public awareness** to the general public about the relevance, natural values and ecosystem services provided by insular ecosystems.
- 5. Transferring** the measures developed in the project for their **replicability** at EU level through specific replication and networking strategies.



Irish Atlantic region:

- 1 - Sheephaven SAC
- 2 - Horn Head and Rinclevan SAC
- 3 - Donegal Bay (Murvagh) SAC
- 4 - Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC

Spanish Atlantic region:

- 5 - Complejo húmido de Corrubedo SAC
- 6 - Complejo Ons - O Grove SAC
- 7 - Illas Cies SAC

Spanish Macaronesian region:

- 8 - Archipiélago Chinijo SAC

Canary Islands

The project will have great demonstrative and pilot characters, allowing a high replicability and transferability to other European island territories, or even worldwide, as it is considered that the selected insular territories will be representative from 2 biogeographical regions where European Natura 2000 islands in the Atlantic Ocean are located.

Duration: 01/09/2021 - 31/12/2026 - **Total budget:** 5.274.922 € - **EU contribution (75%):** 3.956.056 €

www.lifeinsular.eu



An Roinn Tithíochta,
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