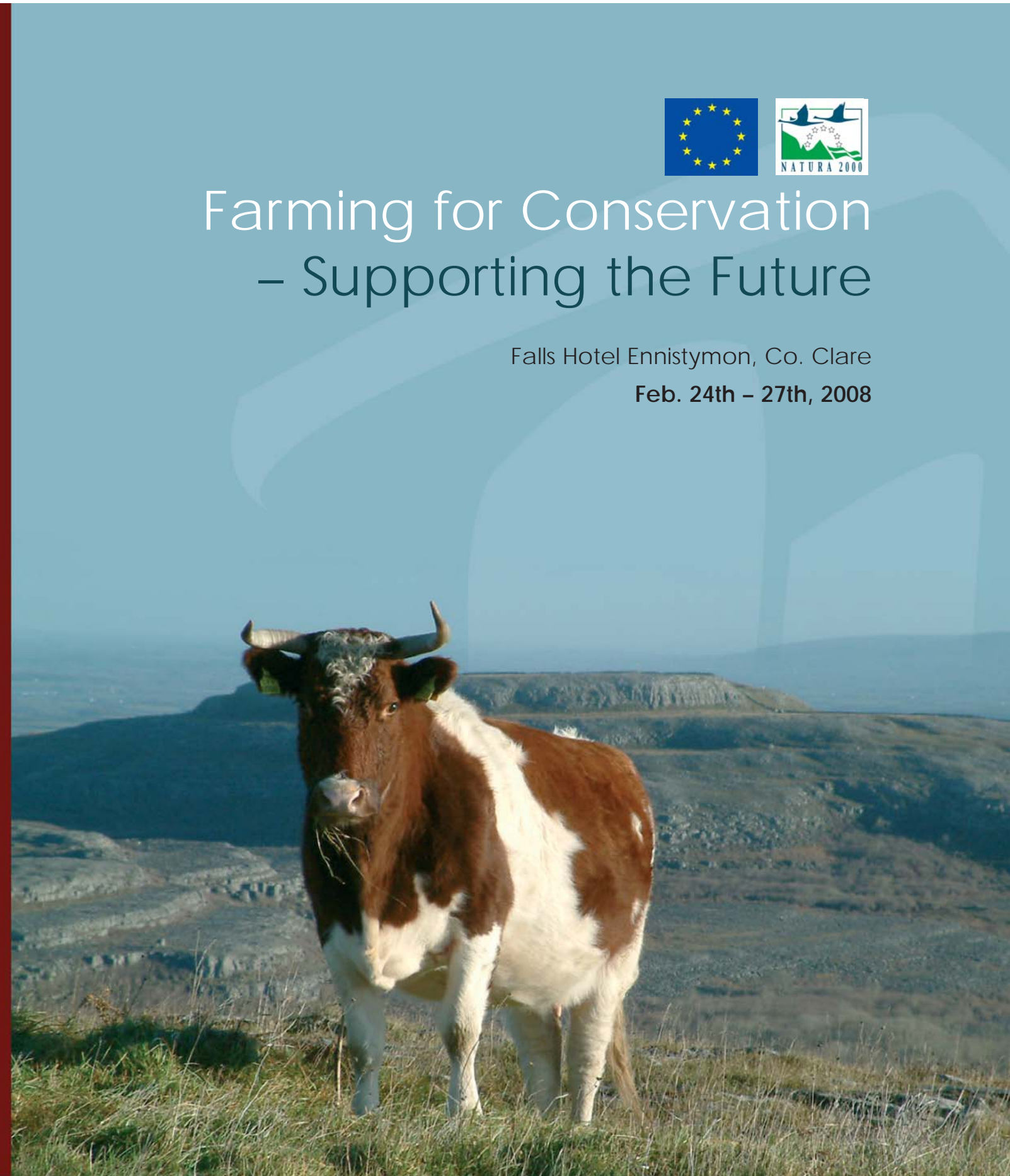




# Farming for Conservation – Supporting the Future

Falls Hotel Ennistymon, Co. Clare

Feb. 24th – 27th, 2008



CONFERENCE 2008





## Introduction

Many of the most important high nature value landscapes in Europe have been shaped, enriched and sustained by generations of farming activity. The conservation of these landscapes, and their associated habitats and species, depends on the continuation of sustainable farming practices. In many cases, this necessitates the development of new models of 'farming for conservation', that build on local knowledge and experience, embrace new ideas and technologies, and develop new partnerships with other stakeholders.

Taking place in the unique environment of the Burren, this three day international conference will explore some of the issues relating to 'farming for conservation'. In particular it will look at the support requirements of farmers and land managers in heritage-rich but agriculturally-marginal regions across Europe.



**Day 1** will introduce the concept of 'farming for conservation'. European case studies will be presented and the work of the BurrenLIFE Project will be outlined. Following this, a discussion will take place on the practical difficulties and obstacles associated with farming for conservation. Some of the key support requirements will be also be explored.

**Day 2** of the conference will involve field trips to a number of Burren farms (BurrenLIFE participants) where conservation farming is taking place. These field trips will be followed by a panel discussion on the future of farming for conservation in the unique context of the Burren.

**Day 3** of the conference will look at potential models for supporting and delivering farming for conservation. A discussion will take place on the marketing of conservation produce and on delivering conservation through innovative agri-environmental schemes. The conference will conclude with a plenary session focussing on the next steps for supporting farming for conservation in the Burren and elsewhere in Ireland and Europe.







# Conference Schedule



## Sunday Feb. 24th

- 5.00 – 7.00 pm:** REGISTRATION
- 8.00 pm:** Official Opening and Welcome
- 8.30pm:** Wine and Canapés Reception
- 9.00pm:** Illustrated Talk *'The Burren: A Brief Overview'*  
Dinner will be available from 6 to 10pm  
(but not included in package – please make your own arrangements)

## Monday Feb. 25th

- SESSION 1:**  
**9.30 – 11.00 am** **FARMING FOR CONSERVATION – SETTING THE SCENE**  
Opening & Welcome – Conference Objective & Overview - Ruairí Ó Conchúir (BLP)  
Farming For Conservation & European Biodiversity- EC Perspective  
- Michael O'Brian (European Commission: DG Environment - Nature and Biodiversity Unit)  
Conserving the Burren- challenges for the NPWS  
- Ciaran O'Keefe, Director of Research, National Parks and Wildlife Service  
Meeting the needs of Farming for Conservation - Brendan Dunford (BLP)

Coffee Break

- SESSION 2:**  
**11.30 – 12.30 pm** **FARMING FOR CONSERVATION – SOME EUROPEAN CASE STUDIES**  
Limestone Country UK - Tim Thom, Limestone Country LIFE Project, Yorkshire, UK  
The Alvares of Sweden - Susanne Forslund, Kalmar County Administrative Board, Sweden  
The Causse Méjan, France - Eileen O'Rourke, Dept. of Geography, University College Cork, Ireland

Lunch

- SESSION 3:**  
**1.30 – 3.15 pm** **FARMING FOR CONSERVATION –OBSTACLES AND PRACTICALITIES**  
Socio-Economic sustainability: High Labour input, limited returns?  
- Alan Matthews, Dept. of Economics, Trinity College Dublin.  
An example of the relative impacts of pillar I and pillar II measures on "farming for conservation".  
- Eric Bignal, Farmer and Director of European Forum on Nature Conservation & Pastoralism (EFNCP)  
Training & Education: The need for improved sharing of information and resources  
- Sean McGloin, Western Organic Network

Coffee Break

- SESSION 4:**  
**3.45 – 5.30 pm** **FARMING FOR CONSERVATION – SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS**  
Building a Support Base – The Role of Teagasc  
- Gerry Boyle, Director of Teagasc  
Research, Monitoring and Advisory requirements  
- Sharon Parr (BLP) & James Moran (Teagasc / BLP)  
Key Note Address: Sustaining Ireland's Heritage - The Challenges and the Opportunities  
- John Gormley TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government
- 7.30pm** Evening Meal & Entertainment
- 9.30 pm** Optional Presentations from various European LIFE / Other Projects

## Tuesday Feb 26th

- 9am – 2pm** **FIELD TRIP: BURREN LIFE FARMS AND HERITAGE SITES**  
Delegates will be split up into groups / themes  
Registration for Field Trips to be completed at time of conference registration

Late Lunch

- SESSION 5:**  
**3.30 – 5.00pm** **PANEL DISCUSSION:**  
Andy Bleasdale (NPWS); Sean Regan (Teagasc); Michael Davoren (Burren IFA)  
Format: A 5-minute opening statement, followed by a moderated Q & A session

- 7pm** Conference Gala Dinner with Entertainment

## Wednesday Feb 27th

- SESSION 6:**  
**9.30 – 11.15am** **LOOKING FORWARD: SUPPORTING THE DELIVERY OF FARMING FOR CONSERVATION**  
Marketing Conservation Grade Local Produce - Ruairí Ó Conchúir (BLP)  
Delivering through innovative Agri-environmental schemes  
- Harry Gracey, Dept. of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)  
Northern Ireland.  
A new model for farming for conservation in Europe: The High Nature Value Farming approach - Gwyn Jones/ Guy Beaufoy (EFNCP)

Coffee Break

- SESSION 7:**  
**11.45 – 1.30pm** **FARMING FOR CONSERVATION - SUPPORTING THE FUTURE**  
Recap on Main Conference Themes Emerging - Brendan Dunford (BLP)  
Plenary Session - Ail (BLP)  
Review of Conference Objectives – Timeframe & the Next steps?  
- Ruairí Ó Conchúir (BLP)  
Departure and Word of Thanks - Sharon Parr (BLP)

- 1.30 pm** Close, Lunch and Depart

# Speakers

## Sean McGloin

Sean lives in Co. Leitrim. He is a graduate of Ballyhaise agricultural college and has studied rural development and GIS. He is presently completing a MSc in organic farming. Work experiences over the past 18 years include broadleaf forestry, fisheries and environmental management and energy conservation. For the last 2 years, Sean has been involved in managing and designing training for the organic sector. Sean has been actively involved in setting up farmer's markets and in rare breeds conservation

## Dr. Harry Gracey

Harry is head of countryside management branch in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), Northern Ireland. He graduated from Queen's University, Belfast with a degree in general agriculture, and went on to complete a master's degree at the University of Saskatchewan and a doctorate through Queen's University. For both his post graduate qualifications he studied different aspects of the impact of agriculture on the environment. In 1988 he was appointed to the post of senior conservation adviser with the DARD. Since 1991 he has headed countryside management branch which delivers a one stop shop for farmers across the range of agri-environment issues. For the past 20 years he has been actively involved in developing agri-environment schemes and initiatives – the target for 2013 is to have 60% of the agricultural land in Northern Ireland under environmental enhancement agreements.

## Guy Beaufoy

Guy works as a consultant evaluating the effects of EU agricultural, forestry and environmental policies in rural areas. In recent years he has been involved in projects relating to high nature value farming in Spain, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. Guy is a member of the executive committee of the European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism (EFNCP). Guy lives in Spain where he works part-time as a farmer, producing olive-oil, figs, biodiversity, landscape and fire-prevention.

## Dr. Eileen O'Rourke

Eileen's research interests lie at the interface of natural and social science systems, spanning the fields of ecology and anthropology, in an attempt to understand human modified environments. She holds an MSc in environmental science from Trinity College, Dublin, and a PhD in human ecology from the International Ecotechnology Research Centre, Cranfield University, UK. She was awarded a Marie Curie post-doctoral fellowship, and subsequently spent four years attached to the National Agronomy Research Institute (INRA), Toulouse, France. Her post-doctoral research centred on socio-natural interaction and biodiversity change within the Cévennes National Park, France. She currently lectures on biogeography and human ecology at the Geography Department, University College Cork. She also co-ordinates a Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) funded research project on biodiversity change in the Kerry uplands.

## Dr Eric Bignal

Eric worked for over 20 years as a wildlife biologist with the UK Nature Conservancy Council - latterly as their Senior Agricultural Ecologist. He is a director of the European Forum on Nature Conservation & Pastoralism (EFNCP) which he was instrumental in establishing in 1988. Eric works as an environmental consultant specialising in agriculture and wildlife management. He is a recognised European researcher and expert on the ecology and requirements of the chough, *Pyrrhonorax pyrrhonorax*. For the last 19 years, Eric and his wife Sue have run an extensively-managed 600 hectare sheep and cattle farm on the island of Islay in the Scottish Hebrides, re-establishing a traditional pattern of mixed farming based on low-intensity pastoralism. The area has a host of designations – SSSI, SPA, SAC, NATURA and Ramsar.

## Dr. Tim Thom

Tim has been the Senior Wildlife Conservation Officer (otherwise known as Ecologist) for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) for the past eight years. Tim is responsible for managing a team of four wildlife conservation staff. Tim's role is essentially to deal with all aspects of wildlife conservation for the YDNPA. This covers everything from developing and implementing policy and strategy to survey & monitoring and supervising research. Tim wrote the Yorkshire Dales National Park's Local Biodiversity Action Plan and was the first chair of the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum. Tim, in partnership with Paul Evans from English Nature (now Natural England) developed the Limestone Country Project and has been the joint project manager for the last five and a half years.

## Prof. Alan Matthews

Alan is Professor of European Agricultural Policy based in the Department of Economics, Trinity College Dublin. His major research interests are agricultural policy analysis and evaluation of the impacts of common agricultural policy measures, including impacts on developing countries. He was a member of the Irish government's AgriVision 2015 group in 2004 tasked with setting out a strategy for Irish agriculture over the next decade.

## Gwyn Jones

Gwyn is an independent consultant based on the Isle of Skye. Born in Wales, he has worked as a farm advisor in NW Scotland for the last 13 years. He first worked with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group and then with the Scottish Agricultural College advisory service, ending up as area manager for Skye and Lochalsh. Gwyn is a director of the European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism (EFNCP) and represents them on the DG Agriculture Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

## Dr. Sharon Parr

Sharon is the BurrenLIFE Project scientist. Sharon is a biologist who, before taking up her current role, spent two years creating a map of the broad habitats of the Burren using satellite imagery and extensive field walking. Previously, she spent 15 years in UCD as a large animal parasitologist where she worked extensively with farmers and livestock. She has also worked in botanical consultancy.

## Dr. Brendan Dunford

Brendan is manager of the BurrenLIFE Project. From a farming background in Co. Waterford, Brendan has spent the past 10 years in the Burren region. In 2001 he completed his doctorate on the impact of farming on the heritage of the Burren, later published by Teagasc as 'Farming and the Burren'. He is co-founder of the not-for-profit Burrenbeo project, which specialises in providing heritage information and education services, and is a board member of the Heritage Council of Ireland.

## Dr. James Moran

James is an ecology and conservation specialist working with Teagasc. From a farming background in Co. Mayo, James worked full time as a REPS planner from 1997-1999 in Cos. Clare and Galway, after graduating from NUI, Galway. Between 2000 and 2005 he worked part time as a REPS planner and ecologist while completing his doctorate on the influence of grazing and flooding regimes on the biodiversity of turloughs. He is currently employed in the environment advisory section of Teagasc, specializing in agri-environment schemes and conservation farming systems in the Burren and other high nature value farmland areas.

## Ruairi Ó Conchúir

Ruairi is the finance and operations administrator of the BurrenLIFE Project. Originally from Dublin, Ruairi worked in rural development in West Clare from 2001 - 2004. Prior to this he worked in Southern Africa for 10 years with local and international NGOs and the South African government on land reform, rural development, LandCare and community based eco-tourism projects. Ruairi holds an M.Sc (Agric) from University College Dublin.

## Susanne Forslund

Susanne is a biologist at the Kalmar County Administrative Board. She works with nature conservation, management and offers advice to farmers, NGOs and other authorities concerning farmlands with high values, especially natural values. Susanne has been the coordinator for the LIFE projects "Protection and restoration of Stora Alvaret" (1996-1999) and "Coastal meadows and Wetlands in the Agricultural Landscape of Öland" (2000-2003). She wrote the application for the LIFE-project "Restoration of alvar-habitats at Stora Karlsö" (2000) and was involved in the process making "The agricultural landscape of southern Öland" a World Heritage Site.

## Michael Davoren

Michael is chairman of Burren IFA (Irish Farmers Association) and comes from a long and proud tradition of Burren farmers. Today he works as a part-time farmer, managing a suckler herd in Kilcorney in the central Burren. He is actively involved in community organisations such as the Gaelic Athletic Association. Michael was very involved in the formulation of the BurrenLIFE project and currently sits on the steering committee of the project.







# Speakers

### John Gormley TD

John was born in Dublin and educated in St. Munchin's College Limerick, UCD and Freiburg University, Germany. He contested his first general election in 1989. In 1991 he was elected to Dublin City Council and was Lord Mayor of Dublin from 1994 - 1995. In June 1997 he was elected to the Dáil, and re-elected in 2002 and again in 2007. In 2002 he was elected as the Green Party's first Cathaoirleach (Chairperson) and was elected Party Leader in July 2007. Following the 2007 General Election he was appointed Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

### Sean Regan

Sean is programme manager for agri-environmental advisory services at Teagasc, The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority. He has led this programme area for more than 20 years and has been centrally involved with the development of Teagasc's REPS planning services. Earlier in his career he was a staff member of the Department of Agriculture and later of ACOT. Sean is based in Athenry, Co. Galway.

### Prof. Gerry Boyle

Gerry holds Adjunct Professorships at the University of Limerick and the University of Missouri, Columbia and until recently was Emeritus Professor of Economics at the National University of Ireland (NUI), Maynooth and former Head of its Economic Department. As an academic, Gerry specialized in applied microeconomics and the economics of public policy. He previously worked as a senior research officer with the Agricultural Institute (now Teagasc) and as an economist with the Central Bank of Ireland. From 1995-1997 he served as economic adviser to the Taoiseach (Prime Minister). In recent years he worked as a senior international consultant, specializing in agricultural policy, with the world bank. Gerry is a past president of the Irish Economic Association and of the Agricultural Economics Society of Ireland. In 2007 he was appointed Director of Teagasc, The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority.

### Dr. Ciarán O'Keefe

Ciaran is a director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), responsible for areas including biodiversity, science and licensing. He spent 17 years based in Glenveagh National Park in Co Donegal, first as manager of the National Park and latterly as Regional Manager of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Since moving to NPWS Head Office in 1999, he has been much involved with the farming sector in relation to nature conservation and designations.

### Dr. Andrew Bleasdale

Andy is a native of Co Clare, living in Connemara. He is an ecologist in the Science and Biodiversity Section, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and he heads up the Agri-Environment Unit. Among other things, he has co-ordinated the commonage framework planning exercise for NPWS with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (DAFF) and is now leading the NPWS farm plan scheme. This scheme is an alternative to REPS in designated areas. Andy is particularly interested in the interface between farming and the environment and sees the farming community as important participants in all future NPWS initiatives in designated areas and commonages.

### Dr. Michéal O'Briain

Michéal works for the Nature and Biodiversity unit of the Directorate General responsible for Environment in the European Commission. Michéal's role is to support the development and implementation of community policies and legislation for nature conservation and biodiversity in Europe, with particular responsibility for the United Kingdom and Ireland. Michéal also deals with the Birds Directive.

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**BurrenLIFE, c/o Conference Connections, Castlehannon House, Castlefergus, Quin, Co. Clare**  
Alternatively you can register on line at [HYPERLINK "http://www.burrenlife.com" www.burrenlife.com](http://www.burrenlife.com)  
(Please note that Registrations cannot be accepted unless accompanied by full payment)

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<b>PACKAGE 1:</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>PACKAGE 2:</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>Full delegate package - Single occupancy</b> Conference Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday Field Trip on Tuesday morning 3 nights B&B - Sunday, Monday & Tuesday nights Lunch- Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday Dinner - Monday & Tuesday nights Price: €400.00 per person	<b>Full delegate package - Double/Twin Occupancy</b> Double Room: <input type="text"/> Conference Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday Field Trip on Tuesday morning 3 nights B&B - Sunday, Monday & Tuesday nights      Twin Room: <input type="text"/> Lunch - Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday Dinner- Monday & Tuesday night Price: €365.00 per person  If you would like to select shared accommodation please tick Twin room above and tick the gender box below;  Male: <input type="checkbox"/> Female: <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>PACKAGE 3:</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>PACKAGE 4:</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>Day delegate package</b> Conference Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Field Trip on Tuesday morning Lunch - Monday Tuesday & Wednesday Dinner - Monday & Tuesday night Price: €240.00 per person	<b>Day delegate package</b> Conference Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Field Trip on Tuesday morning Lunch - Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday (does not include dinner) Price: €175.00 per person

Note: Subject to availability - Should you wish to participate on any particular day(s) of the Conference please contact Conference Connections on 065 68 25700 for price and availability.

Do you wish to participate in the Field Trip                      yes                       No

#### SECTION IV – MISCELLANEOUS

Do you have any special dietary requirements?

If **YES**, please specify:

Please indicate if you have any other special requirements:

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Please confirm the total amount to be charged:

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