



REPORT

Green Foundation Ireland
invites you to an evening online TALK
by **Karin Dubsy** of Coastwatch

Coastal Riches and Coastal Restoration



Venue: by Zoom (details given after registration)
Saturday 15 May 2021 – 19:00 to 20:00

Admission to this event is **FREE** but you **MUST** register beforehand.
You can do so through our website at www.greenfoundationireland.ie

*This event is part of the National Biodiversity Week 2021
organised by Irish Environmental Network*

Coastal Riches and Coastal Restoration

THEME

This talk explored aspects about protecting our coastlines, as well as discussing habitat restoration and projects.

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ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Karin Dubsy: Karin is an experienced member of the environmental NGO community, post-graduate scientist researcher, consultant and teacher. She works in Trinity College Dublin, and has practical scientific and basic legal expertise in water, biodiversity, waste, planning, public participation and access to justice issues.

Karin founded **Coastwatch** – which developed into Coastwatch Europe – a voluntary organisation which monitors the coastal and wetland environments of several European countries, campaigns for improvements to environmental policies and for the implementation of existing environmental legislation, and organises public information events and seminars.



You can find out [more about Coastwatch here](#).

ABOUT OUR MODERATOR

Claire Downey: Claire, who is a Director of Green Foundation Ireland, is Executive with Community Reuse Network Ireland (CRNI), an all-Ireland umbrella body funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that represents community based organisations involved in reuse and recycling. In this role she is responsible for the promotion of reuse, support for members to overcome barriers to reuse, communication and policy input, networking and research.

Claire Downey introduced our speaker, **Karin Dubsy** from Coastwatch, who opened her talk by telling us of the wonders of our 7,000 km of Irish coastline. She asked us to go to the beach and listen out for the clip clapping noises of limpets and periwinkles in the evening as they move around. This magical sound has been lost from Germany, where pollution from oil has decimated the limpet population.

Karin then showed us the shells and egg cases of whelks. Unfortunately, there are no protected areas or closed seasons for whelk harvesting in Ireland, and this is chipping away at their numbers. We need to take the precautionary approach on harvesting.

She went on to speak about the kelp in Bantry Bay where it has been proposed to cut the top 6 inches from the top of the plant, which would kill it. An older way of harvesting was to trim the top every year, taking a small amount and preserving the plant.

Karin then spoke about the latest EU plan for restoration, which has great potential.

The Estuary at Hook Head is protected and has many different types of seaweed. A sudden abundance of sprat led to common dolphins and seals visiting the estuary. However then came overfishing, with dead dolphins and seals caught as bycatch. 6,000 tonnes of fish were caught between October and January, all for fishmeal. Cashing in financially took precedence over allowing nature to return.

But restoration measures can work. TBT paint used to be found on large boats. When it was eaten by female dog whelks, the females turned into males, and the species collapsed. TBT paint was banned from sale 25 years ago and the dog whelk numbers are increasing.

She then talked about a case taken by Coastwatch against Drogheda Port for destruction of a mudflat. The Port Authorities eventually restored the mudflat having been taken to the Supreme Court. Scientific evidence by citizen scientists played a major part in showing the Judge the damage which had happened to the mudflat.

Karin remains hopeful about the protection of biodiversity, feeling that we have reached a tipping point, and the public is now behind protection of our biodiversity.

An extremely lively Q&A session followed, with some highly interesting questions being raised by the 45 participants who attended our talk.

Karin's talk was wonderful – and we all need to now go and hear those limpets clip clapping on the beach for ourselves.