TOBIN

Rooaunalaghta Green Energy Project

Appendix 6-1

Statement of Competency

ROOAUNALAGHTA
Green Energy

BUILT ON KNOWLEDGE

Rooaunalaghta Green Energy Ltd.

Chapter 6 Biodiversity

Appendix 6-1: Statement of Competency

Woodrow Ref: P00016381

Date: October 2026

woodrow
APEM Group

The applicant:	Rooaunalaghta Green Energy Ltd.
Address:	Station Road, Adare, Limerick
Project reference:	P00016537
Date of issue:	October 2026
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Appendix 6-1: Statement of Competency

APEM Group Woodrow, trading as Woodrow Sustainable Solution Limited, is an established and accomplished environmental consultancy committed to delivering robust ecological assessment services for clients in the private and public sectors. APEM Group Woodrow provides an in-house team of ecologists and environmental professionals whose primary specialisms include botany, habitats, birds, bats, mammals, invertebrates, and aquatic ecology. The company's investment in high-quality technology, including field equipment and software, and the use of applications like Survey123 forms throughout all survey types ensures reliability and confidence in our work. APEM Group Woodrow staff are fully conversant with wildlife legislation in both Ireland and the UK, and work to exacting standards, according to established guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

The following APEM Group Woodrow personnel were involved in the preparation of this Ecological Impact Assessments (EcIA), including field surveys.

Gareth Coughlin – Director of Environmental Planning (Ireland) – Project Director

For over 26 years, Gareth has been responsible for the management and assessment of environmental impacts on a range of major infrastructure projects throughout Ireland and the UK for clients in both the public and private sectors. In an Ireland context, Gareth has a wide range of sector experience, including strategic highways, greenways/Active Travel, public transport (bus and heavy rail), residential, urban regeneration, energy (conventional and renewable (wind/solar)), education, recreation and tourism, potable water, wastewater, flood alleviation, coastal, healthcare, remediation and waste management. He also regularly undertakes technical review and lead verification roles of environmental documentation, including EIA Screening Reports, EIA Scoping Reports, and EIARs; environmental constraints and feasibility studies; SEA Screening Reports; Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports; outline Construction Environmental Management Plans (oCEMP); etc. More recently, this has also included environmental due diligence peer reviews of third party EIARs on behalf of clients.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Environmental Science | MPhil Quarry Rehabilitation | C.WEM, CEnv, CSci, FCIWEM, FISEP.

Dr James O'Connor – Senior Ecologist – Project Manager | Report Author (Various Disciplines)

James O'Connor is a senior ecologist with APEM Group Woodrow, who holds a PhD in aquatic sciences with a primary technical specialism in freshwater ecology. He has considerable aquatic field experience, particularly in electrofishing, crayfish and freshwater pearl mussel surveying as well as water quality biological assessments employing benthic macroinvertebrate fauna (e.g. Q-value, SSRS). James has prior experience monitoring wild bird populations with BirdWatch Ireland (BWI) and is heavily involved in ornithological work as part of his role with APEM Group Woodrow. Here, he regularly undertakes vantage point (VP), breeding bird, wetland bird (I-WeBS), and species-specific surveys (e.g. hen harrier). His terrestrial expertise extends to mammal surveys, particularly for otter and badger, which also includes mitigation and monitoring. As a project manager, James manages projects of varying scales and works closely with clients, providing regular consultation and guidance.

His reporting experience includes contributions to EIARs, particularly for onshore wind energy developments, as well as the production of AA Screening and NIS reports and various technical reports. He is the first author of five academic peer-reviewed published research papers and has contributed to reports disseminating key research findings to state agencies such as the Irish EPA and Irish county councils.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Agriculture and Environmental Management | MSc Applied Environmental Science | PhD Aquatic Sciences.

Brendan Burley – Peat and Wetland Specialist – Report Author (Habitats and Flora)

Brendan is an ecologist with over 26 years' experience working in terrestrial ecology and land management and joined APEM in 2022. Brendan currently undertakes a range of work including eco-hydrological investigations to inform habitat restoration, developing peatland restoration plans, habitat condition assessment and monitoring, and detailed botanical surveys. Brendan has also contributed towards the preparation of the biodiversity chapter and habitat management plan for a wind farm project in County Claire, as well as work associated with peatland habitats to be impacted by cable connection activities from offshore projects in Scotland. Brendan has also previously worked in the consultancy sector on a range of linear infrastructure projects, primarily delivering habitat surveys, including National Vegetation Classification, Phase 1, and River Corridor methodologies, as well as protected species surveys, in a range of habitats including grassland, woodland, wetland and heathland. Brendan has also worked for Natural England undertaking SSSI condition monitoring as well as developing land management plans for the maintenance, restoration and creation of priority habitats including grasslands, heathlands, fens and bogs. Brendan spent five years working as a peatland restoration ecologist for Cumbria Wildlife Trust identifying, designing and then of restoration works on blanket bog, lowland raised bog, and fen habitats for private landowners.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Biology and Geography | MSc Environmental Management | MCIEEM.

Bridget Keehan – Senior Ecologist and Technical Specialist – Technical Review | Habitat Surveys

Bridget Keehan is a professional field botanist, with over 35 years of experience in plant identification. She provides botanical technical expertise to APEM Group Woodrow. Bridget has outstanding habitat classification skills and extensive consultancy experience, undertaking specialist protected habitat and species surveys to inform site assessments; producing concise habitat maps; collecting and presenting data and preparing reports. Having worked on over 40 quarry and wind farm sites, Bridget has wide experience preparing Compliance Reports, Habitat Management Plans, EcIA and NIS, including provision of mitigation recommendations. With up-to-date practical knowledge of both European and National (NI & ROI) environmental legislation she is proficient in providing advice and developing strategies.

Since 2023, Bridget is also employed by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland as their Ireland Officer, a role which includes coordinating botanical recorders across Ireland, undertaking rare plants surveys, organising botanical conferences and field events and providing support with their National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) funded Aquatic Plants Project in Ireland.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Botany | ACIEEM.

Emmi Virkki – Principal Ecologist – Habitat Surveys

An experienced principal ecologist, Emmi has worked for nearly 10 years in ecological consultancy. As a project manager and field ecologist, she undertakes multidisciplinary surveys, specialising in habitat and flora surveys, botanical identification and conservation assessments, as well as bird, mammal (including bats), amphibian, reptile and invertebrate surveys. She is experienced in preparing biodiversity and habitat management plans, EIARs, Biodiversity chapters of EIARs, and reports to inform the AA process (AA Screening and NIS), having produced reporting to inform complex AA for private entities and local authorities for the last decade.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Environmental Biology | MSc (Hons) Environmental Science | Member of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) | BSBI Joint Vice-County Recorder for Co. Sligo and Co. Leitrim | Registered Surveyor for the Woodlands of Ireland Native Woodland Scheme | MCIEEM.

Jason Guile – Associate Director – Technical Lead (Bats)

Jason Guile is an Associate Director with Woodrow with over 15 years' experience in EcIA. and holds a BSc in Marine Biology/Oceanography from the University of Wales, Bangor and a Higher National Diploma in Coastal Conservation with Marine Biology from Blackpool and Fylde College. Jason has a wide range of experience in the preparation of EIARs, AA Screening reports and NIS. Jason was the lead ecologist on a range of projects in the UK, including large scale infrastructural schemes. Since moving to Ireland, he has been leading ecologist/author (EIAR, EcIA, AA Screening reports and NIS's) for a number of projects including historic landfill remediation works, urban planning applications and commercial regeneration sites.

Jason's wind energy experience spans both onshore and offshore development. Onshore, he has acted as Technical Reviewer and Approver for the Kellystown Wind Farm revised EIAR biodiversity chapter, and as co-author and QA Reviewer/Approver for bat reporting on Ballinlee Wind Farm. Offshore, he holds Technical Lead, Lead Author and Sign-off Reviewer responsibility on the North Irish Sea Array and Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 offshore wind projects and has provided specialist bat advice to the applicant team at the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm UK Development Consent Order examination.

Qualifications: BSc in Marine Biology/Oceanography | HND in Coastal Conservation with Marine Biology

Patrick Power – Bat Ecologist – Bat Surveys

Patrick Power is an ecologist with Woodrow. Patrick has completed a BSc in Forestry, BSc (Hons) in land management in Forestry with Waterford Institute of Technology and a PGCert in Wildlife Biology and Conservation with Edinburgh Napier University. His work with Woodrow is focused on bat data analysis including bat call identification and bat roost/habitat suitability surveys. Patrick has developed a high level of proficiency with Kaleidoscope and BatExplorer, the analysis software used to assess bat calls and activity. Patrick also possesses reptile, mammal, and woodland tree surveying skills. Patrick currently has a licence to survey bat roosts from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Qualifications: BSc in Forestry | BSc (Hons) in Land Management in Forestry | PG Certificate in Wildlife Biology and Conservation | Member of Bat Conservation Ireland (BCIreland) | CIEEM Student Membership.

Louise Gannon – Bat Ecologist – Assistant Report Author (Bats)

Louise Gannon is an Ecologist with APEM Group Woodrow and has completed a BSc in Environmental Science. Her main experience lies in carrying out protected species surveys for bats (preliminary roost assessments, emergence/re-entry surveys and activity transect surveys) as well as the deployment of static bat detectors and reporting on the same. She also carries out bat call analysis using Kaleidoscope and BatExplorer, the analysis software used to assess bat calls and activity. Louise also has experience in carrying out otter, badger and red squirrel surveys. She has volunteered in various surveys such as the BCI All Ireland Daubenton's bat survey, the Countryside bird survey and is a seal rescue volunteer. Louise is a licenced bat surveyor (DER/BAT 2024-27) and a Qualifying member of CIEEM. She has also gained invaluable experience in various reports such as technical appendices, EcIAs and AA report.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Environmental Science.

Bruno Mels – Ecologist – Bat Surveys, Amphibian and Reptile Suitability Surveys | Data Analysis

Bruno Mels is an Ecologist and Data Coordinator at Woodrow. He is also a digital illustrator, having designed and created various information boards for UNESCO world heritage sites in the Seychelles. Bruno has a vast amount of experience mapping with both ArcGIS and QGIS, as well as data management using Excel and Access. He is also experienced in undertaking habitat suitability modelling, and statistical analysis and modelling using R and Maxent. He is also competent in modelling species population trends using Stella.

Bruno has also experience in a wide range of ecological surveys, including (but not limited to) reptile surveys (including deployment of reptile refugia mats); bat transects and dusk/dawn surveys; trip camera deployment and analysis; PIT-tagging; mosquitofish monitoring in estuaries and rivers; and shore bird surveys.

Qualifications: BSc in Biology | MSc in Biology: Biodiversity, Conservation and Restoration.

Dr Adon McFarlane – Senior Freshwater Scientist – Aquatic Ecology Surveys | Report Author (Aquatic Ecology)

Adon is a freshwater biologist, specialising in protected species. He is an experienced field scientist, with extensive skills in the fields of freshwater habitat assessment; freshwater pearl mussel survey; white-clawed crayfish survey, macroinvertebrate survey, fish habitat assessment and electrofishing survey. He has built up skills in the collection of data both in the field and laboratory, analysis of data using statistical software programs such as R, BORIS, RAVEN and Minitab, creation of distribution maps using GIS. Adon has very strong technical skills in both freshwater and marine laboratory and fieldwork instrumentation and equipment usage. Adon has worked on a number of ecological reports, including Baseline Reports, AA, EcIA, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Reports (PEAR) and Invasive Species Reports. Recently, Adon has coordinated the ecological surveys and prepared the EIAR Biodiversity Chapter of a wind farm project located in Ireland (currently confidential), including the assessment of designated sites and aquatic ecology. Adon has undertaken and coordinated aquatic ecology surveys for a recent onshore wind farm development, Cloonkett Wind Farm project, where he was responsible for aquatic ecology surveys, freshwater pearl mussel surveys, fisheries habitat assessments and the preparation of the aquatic ecology baseline for the EIAR.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Applied Freshwater and Marine Biology | PhD in Aquatic Science | ACIEEM.

Jenny Kiely – Senior Ecologist – Aquatic Ecology Surveys

Jenny is an Ecologist at APEM Group Woodrow, holding a BSc (Hons) in Ecology and Environmental Biology from University College Cork. She has extensive experience in field work across terrestrial and freshwater environments, including kick sampling, diatom sampling, fish habitat mapping, and Freshwater Pearl Mussel surveys. Jenny has significant experience in bat ecology, having conducted bat roost/habitat suitability surveys, nighttime bat walkover surveys, and bat static detector deployments for large-scale developments. She has a high level of proficiency with acoustic analysis software, including Kaleidoscope, Bat Explorer, and Anabat Insight. Jenny has completed training courses on Stage 1 and 2 surveying for freshwater pearl mussels (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) and Biological Water Quality Assessment by the Q-value method. She has a comprehensive understanding of the impact assessment process and Irish and EU wildlife legislation, having coauthored several ecological reports.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Ecology and Environmental Biology.

Tanushree Munda – Freshwater Ecologist – Data Analysis

Tanushree has an International Master of Science in Marine Biological Resources (IMBRSea), based on research focused on life history strategies in marine mammals. She has since specialised in freshwater ecology and has undertaken macrobenthic surveys in India, as well as working with freshwater turtles, dolphin, and crocodile. She has been involved in various EIA projects in India, particularly in mangrove and wetland ecosystems. She has worked closely with fishing communities to understand the challenges posed by unplanned development and fisheries management. Her work with Woodrow focuses on aquatic macroinvertebrate identification, bat acoustic data analysis, and field work for the above.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Environmental Science | MSc (Hons) Ecology and Environment Studies | International Master of Science in Marine Biological Resources (IMBRSea)

Betty O'Brien – Senior Ecologist – GCR Surveys

Betty O'Brien is a Senior Ecologist with APEM Group Woodrow. She obtained a 1st Class Honours degree in Zoology from the National University of Ireland, Galway, and later earned a Master's from IADT with a focus on interdisciplinary research methods and systems thinking in the context of nature. These challenging and varied courses allow Betty to approach ecological challenges with both scientific rigour and creative problem-solving, as well as utilizing skills in community engagement and the facilitation of place-based learning to connect people with nature. Since joining Woodrow, she has been involved in a variety of surveying activities, including terrestrial habitat surveys, NUSH peatland surveys, IAS flora and fauna surveys, aquatic habitat surveys, biodiversity audits, and working on development sites as an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). Additionally, she has provided input into ecological reports including EcIA, AA, and Biodiversity Action Plans, and has gained valuable project management experience in relation to BAP projects.

Qualifications: BSc Zoology (Hons) | MA in Design for Change | Qualifying member of CIEEM

Grisel Calcagno – Senior EIA Consultant – Quality and Technical Review

Grisel is a Senior Environmental Consultant with 4 years' experience in preparing environmental assessments and reports for a wide range of public and private sector projects in Ireland at different stages of development. She has extensive experience preparing EIARs, EIA Screening and Scoping

reports, Options Identification and Appraisal reports, preparation and review of CEMPs, Resource and Waste Management Plans (RWMPs), Environmental Constraints and Feasibility reports, and Stakeholder Consultation. She has been involved in various infrastructure projects including high-profile schemes such as greenways, solar farms, flood relief schemes, gas-fired power plants, data centres, and airports, in addition to Active Travel and other road schemes, public realm developments, commercial developments, and underground powerlines, amongst others. Recent experience (2026) also includes coordination of EIARs for two onshore wind farms (including Scoping Reports, suite of ecological surveys, and consultation with the An Coimisiún Pleanála), technical/QA review of three other onshore wind farms, and coordination and review of a Scoping Report for an offshore wind farm in Scotland (note that, as these projects are currently ongoing, they are confidential at this time).

Qualifications: BSc Env | MSc Env (Hons) | Adv. Dip. Planning and Environmental Law (2025) | GradISEP.

Amy Adwan – Senior Ecologist – TDR Survey

Amy is an ecologist with 10 years' experience in the ecological sector in Ireland and is an Associate Member of the CIEEM. Amy has a BSc in Environmental Science from the University of Limerick. Amy is experienced in a broad range of ecological survey techniques and methodology including bats, mammals, freshwater and habitats. Her working knowledge of Irish and EU environmental legislation is extensive, with particular reference to the Habitats Directive and associated case law. Amy regularly prepares AA reporting, as well as legal reviews of same informed by relevant rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and European Commission guidance. She holds a bat survey licence issued by the NPWS, covering bat handling, photography, and roost inspections. Her bat-related work includes detailed sonogram analysis, impact assessments, mitigation design, derogation licence applications, and post-consent monitoring and Site supervision (ECoW). In addition to her specialism in bat ecology, Amy routinely undertakes EcIA and PEARs across a range of terrestrial and freshwater habitats.

Qualifications: BSc Env | Member of BSBI, BirdWatch Ireland (BWI) and BCIreland | ACIEEM

Former Woodrow staff that worked on the proposed project

Dr Michael Dobson – Associate Director – Technical Review (Aquatic Ecology)

Dr Michael Dobson was a Freshwater Biologist with APEM Group Woodrow with over 35 years' experience (retired in 2026). He spent 20 years as a research scientist, specialising in ecology and management of rivers and freshwater wetlands throughout Europe and East Africa, along with developing biotic indices for river quality assessment in Central America. He was Director of the Freshwater Biological Association for six years before joining APEM in 2013, working initially in the limnology and water quality team before setting up its dedicated invasive species team in 2019 and moving to APEM Ireland in 2022. Mike has written many peer- reviewed papers in ecology and biogeography, along with two undergraduate textbooks for Oxford University Press (both in their second editions) and seven identification guides to freshwater invertebrates of Britain and Ireland. He has extensive experience of survey design, data analysis and reporting, including publication and verbal reporting for non-technical audiences. He has written and reviewed Habitats Directive assessments in both Ireland and the UK.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Biology | PhD in Freshwater Ecology | MCIEEM, FLS.

Damien McAndrew – Bat Ecologist – Bat Surveys | Report Author (Bats)

Damien McAndrew was an ecologist and bat specialist with APEM Group Woodrow. Damien holds an honours degree in Environmental Science, and his work is primarily focused on bat ecology and bat impact assessment for large-scale development projects, including wind energy schemes. He has undertaken a wide range of bat surveys, including habitat and roost suitability assessments, dusk and dawn emergence and re-entry surveys, and static detector deployment and analysis. Damien has considerable experience analysing bat activity data and applying results within EcIA, NIS and AA Screening reports. His work includes the assessment of collision risk and the development of mitigation measures such as turbine micro-siting, buffer assessments, operational curtailment and habitat enhancement. Damien currently holds a licence to survey bat roosts issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Environmental Science.

Leona McSharry – Ecology Support and Data Officer – Data Analysis and GIS

Leona McSharry was an Ecology Support and Data officer with Woodrow Sustainable Solutions. She received a 1st Class Honours in Zoology Hons BSc in 2022. Throughout her academic career Leona has developed a passion for sustainability and conservation. Leona's professional focus has been on Irish bat species, and Irish mammals while her academic focus on reptiles, arachnids and insects. Since joining the Woodrow team, Leona has had the opportunity to develop her skills in GIS mapping, project management, field skills and data management.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Zoology.

Maeve Maher McWilliams – Associate Director – Technical Review

Maeve was an Associate Director with APEM Group Woodrow until May 2026. Maeve has over 13 years' experience on complex EIAs and mitigation design for infrastructure and development projects across Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Scotland. Maeve has been involved in projects across several sectors such as renewable energy; linear infrastructure; flood relief schemes and port developments; tourism and recreation; residential, pharmaceutical, and data centre developments. Included in this list are over twenty onshore wind energy projects in Ireland and Northern Ireland, and associated substations and onshore grid connections. Maeve has provided advice and recommendations throughout project lifetimes from inception and due diligence, right through to the planning process and into post-planning compliance and secondary consents. As a field ecologist, Maeve is skilled in multidisciplinary surveys, habitat surveys, bat surveys, mammal surveys, and specialises in ornithology surveys. As a project manager and ecologist, Maeve directs, manages and authors large scale EIARs biodiversity chapters including ornithology chapters for wind energy projects.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences | MSc Evolutionary and Behavioural Ecology | Member of BCIreland and BWI | ACIEEM.

Mike Trewby – Associate Director– Former Project Manager

Mike Trewby was an Associate Director with APEM Group Woodrow until June 2025. Mike is a highly experienced ecologist with over 24 years' field work and research experience. While specialising in avian studies, he has expanded his field skills to cover a range of survey methodologies. He is also experienced at undertaking invertebrate surveys and amphibian surveys. Mike is regarded as one of

the leading authorities on chough ecology in Ireland, having produced reports detailing the ecology of several regional chough populations and assisting in the designation of SPAs for choughs. He has studied some of the country's iconic bird species including red grouse and important seabird colonies adorning the Irish coastline.

Qualifications: PGDip Environmental Studies | BSc Zoology and Botany | MCIEEM.

Kevin O'Reilly – Bat Ecologist – Bat Surveys | Report Author (Bats)

Kevin O'Reilly worked with APEM Group Woodrow until October 2025. Kevin obtained a 1st Class Honours degree in Business and Law at University College Dublin before training and qualifying as a Solicitor with the Law Society of Ireland. In 2024, he completed a master's research project in Environmental Management and GIS with Ulster University with a focus on bats and street lighting. Kevin has also undertaken several volunteer projects to gain valuable experience in habitat surveying techniques and knowledge of environmental management and the flora and fauna of protected species in Ireland and abroad. During his time with Woodrow, Kevin undertook bat surveys including static detector deployment and roost surveys and worked on several large-scale developments. Kevin is a qualifying member of CIEEM and holds a full bat derogation licence issued by NPWS.

Qualifications: BBL Bachelor of Business and Law, Professional Practice Courses I and II – The Law Society of Ireland | MSc Environmental Management with GIS.

Adrian Walsh – Ecologist – Mammal and GCR Surveys | Report Author (Mammals and Habitats)

Adrian was an Ecologist with APEM Group Woodrow until November 2025. He completed an honours BSc with a focus on Zoology and an MSc in Wildlife Conservation and Management at University College Dublin. He is a Qualifying Member of the CIEEM. At APEM Group Woodrow, Adrian undertook a variety of surveys including terrestrial mammals, bats and extensive ornithology monitoring. He also authored many EcIAs and AA Screenings. He used a variety of surveying techniques and equipment including longworth, novel and the Mostela camera trapping techniques to survey small mammals, reptile refugia mats and various newt surveying techniques including torchlight surveys and egg searches. He is also an avid ornithologist and volunteers as a surveyor for Birdwatch Ireland for the Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) and the Countryside Bird Survey (CBS).

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Zoology | MSc Wildlife Conservation and Management | Qualifying member of CIEEM.

Meadhbh Costigan – Senior Ecologist – Habitat Surveys

Meadhbh Costigan was a Senior Ecologist with APEM Group Woodrow until August 2025 and conducted fieldwork across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, gaining experience in habitat identification (in accordance with Fossitt, 2000; Phase 1 JNCC; NVC; and the National Survey of Upland Habitats), as well as botanical identification, application of the biodiversity metric, and specialised Marsh Fritillary surveys. She was the lead author on a range of reports, including AA, Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA), EcIA, Habitat Management Plans, and Local Biodiversity Action Plans

Qualifications: BA (Hons) Natural Science | MSc Ethnobotany.

Fern McCann – Assistant Ecologist – Habitat Surveys

Fern worked with APEM Group Woodrow until April 2026 and was an ecologist with significant field experience in habitat assessments and botanical surveys. She specialised in habitat and flora surveys and conducted multidisciplinary surveys, including Marsh Fritillary and other invertebrate surveys. During her time at APEM Group Woodrow, Fern contributed to reports for development and conservation projects, while continuing to build her expertise in habitat and botanical surveys, particularly in upland and calcareous environments. She also assisted with reporting, including constraints and EcIA reports. Prior to this, Fern managed and led projects with KRC Ecological and the Mourne Heritage Trust, where she delivered project data and reports and presented findings to stakeholders.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Botany | Member of BSBI and NIFG.

Fiona Bracken – Freshwater Technical Specialist – Aquatic Ecology Surveys

Fiona Bracken worked with APEM Ireland Ltd. (APEM Group) until December 2023. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Zoology from University College Dublin and a PhD in Biological Sciences from Durham University, focusing on European lamprey (*Lampetra spp*.) ecology, and later secured funding for postdoctoral research using environmental DNA (eDNA) to identify spawning sites. With over 15 years' experience, she worked across regulatory agencies, NGOs and universities in Europe and Africa, specialising in aquatic habitats and species of conservation concern. She led research and development of non-invasive monitoring methods, particularly eDNA, delivering projects on assay development and monitoring techniques for aquatic species worldwide, and providing technical input to a range of stakeholders. Fiona also had extensive experience in survey design and implementation, project and field team management, and a strong understanding of wildlife legislation and stakeholder engagement.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Zoology and Animal Biology | PhD in Conservation Biology.

Gráinne Keogh – Senior Ecologist – Aquatic Ecology Surveys

Gráinne Keogh was a Senior Ecologist with APEM Ireland Ltd. (APEM Group) until November 2023. She carried out field and laboratory work across marine, terrestrial and freshwater environments. This included habitat surveys and mapping, species identification, freshwater pearl mussel surveys, electrofishing surveys, and chemical and biological water quality analysis, including SSRS and Q-value assessments. She previously worked on the Climate Change Mitigation Research Project with Inland Fisheries Ireland and also spent time at sea on research vessels conducting fisheries surveys with the Marine Institute. Gráinne had a strong understanding of impact assessment processes and Irish and EU wildlife legislation, and she contributed to a number of AA, NIS and EcIA reports to support planning applications.

Qualifications: BSc Ecology and Environmental Biology | MSc Marine Biology.

Sammy Pooley – Ecology Support and Data Coordinator – Desk Study | Data Analysis and GIS

Sammy Pooley was an Ecology Support and Data Coordinator with APEM Group Woodrow until September 2025. He graduated from the University of Galway in 2024 with a BSc in Environmental Science. While in Galway, Sammy gained valuable experience in data analysis and a range of survey techniques including botanical and freshwater invertebrate surveys. During his final year, he focused

on industry standard bird survey techniques, particularly in relation to windfarm development. During his internship with ORCA Ireland Sammy also garnered skills in Marine megafauna and seabird identification and carried out bioacoustics analysis of marine mammal vocalisations in the biodiverse Atlantic Ocean.

Qualifications: BSc Environmental Science | Member of BSBI and Irish Wildlife Trust (IWT).