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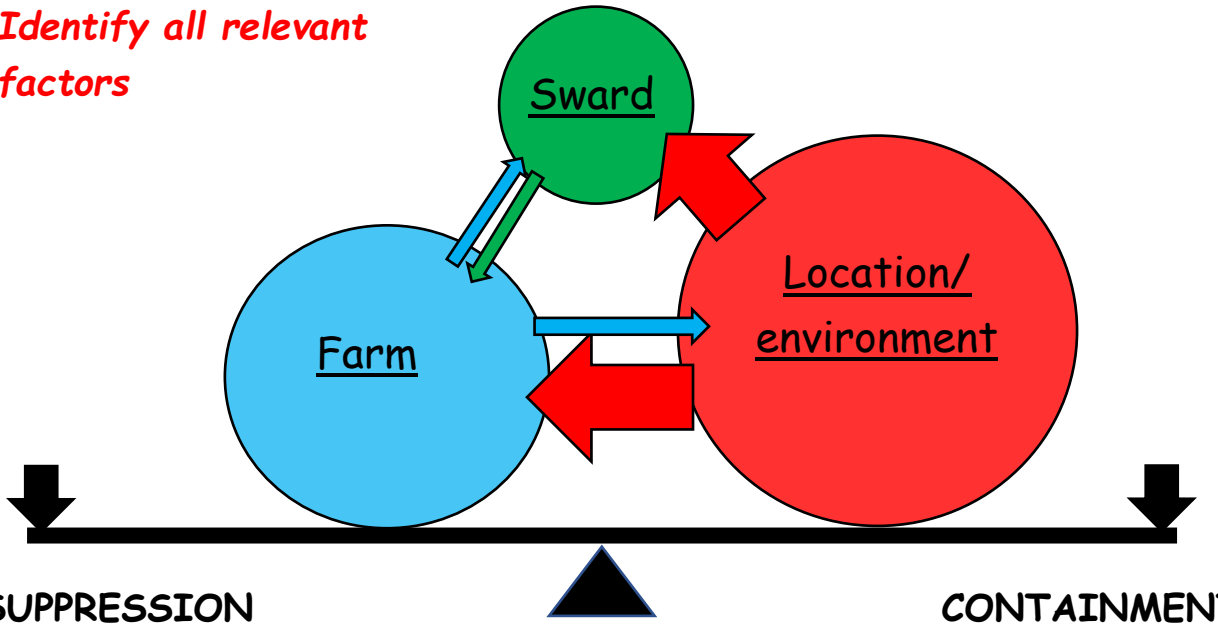
An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Managing rushes – containment or suppression?

1. Identify all relevant factors



SUPPRESSION
(Aim is sustainable cost-effective rush control)

CONTAINMENT
(Aim is to limit further rush encroachment

2. Weight relevant factors as appropriate and choose method best suited to your situation

Suppression

Location factors

Soil structure & drainage – moderate/good
pH - > 4.5
Nutrient status – fair/good
Environmentally sensitive – low risk

Farm factors

Farm profitability - viable
Cost/benefit analysis - positive

Sward factors

% rush infestation – small clumps present
% competitive grasses – medium/high

Containment

Location factors

Soil structure & drainage - Poor
pH - ≤ 4.5
Nutrient status - impoverished
Environmentally sensitive – high risk, close to water course/within a drinking water catchment

Farm factors

Farm profitability marginal
Cost/benefit analysis - negative

Sward factors

% rush infestation - high
% competitive grasses - low

Options to promote Suppression

- Top and remove rushes
- Deal with wet soil conditions e.g. sub-soil, mole drain, field drains if appropriate (get professional advice)
- On basis of soil test address pH and nutrient status
- Introduce additional grass seed mixture
- Apply high standard of grassland management
- If appropriate consider application of suitable herbicide

Requires long term investment in time, money and resources

Options for Containment – *opportunistic management strategies*

- Graze during late spring early summer
- Top if ground conditions allow
- Bale and remove cut rushes if ground conditions allow

Containment does not require the use of herbicides