

# Draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022 - 2027

Presentation to Dublin City Council's Strategic Policy Committee;  
Climate Action, Environment & Energy

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Head of Protection of Water Bodies Office



December 2021

## Presentation content:

1. About the Water Framework Directive & River Basin Management Plan
2. Condition of our waters, nationally and locally
3. Main themes in the plan
4. Overview of measures proposed
5. What this means for Dublin City
6. How to make a submission and get involved locally



# 1.0 - About the Water Framework Directive



The Water Framework Directive ('the Directive') was adopted by member states across Europe in 2000. It requires all waters (rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries, coastal water, canals and reservoirs) are protected and that measures are put in place to ensure quality of these waters is restored to at least 'good' status.

The Directive governs all activities that may have an impact on this objective or on the quality or quantity of water.

The Directive requires an integrated approach (i.e. across all sectors) .

The **River Basin Management Plans** set out the measures necessary to protect and improve the quality of our waters.

The Directive is our legal framework to **protect and restore** clean water and to achieve **good ecological status** in all waterbodies, ensuring their long-term sustainable use.



# 1.0 - About the River Basin Management Plan

## What is the river basin management plan?

A national plan that sets out the measures necessary to protect and restore water quality in Ireland.

The overall aim of the plan is to;

- Manage our natural waters
- Protect our freshwater resources, and
- Maintain & improve Ireland's water environment.

1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2010 – 2015

2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle 2016 – 2021

3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle 2022 – 2027 (Consultation Stage)



River Liffey at Islandbridge

# 1.0 - About the River Basin Management Plan

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle 2022 – 2027 is at draft.

Its overarching objectives:

- Identify the pressures on water quality ;
- Set out the programme of measures to address these pressures.

The Draft RBMP;

- Covers an area of 70,273 km<sup>2</sup>.
- This Plan must include a programme of measures to protect or restore each of the 4,842 waterbodies.
- 46 Catchment management units

A waterbody includes, streams, rivers, canals, groundwater (aquifers), coastal waters & transitional waters (estuaries).

Draft RBMP is accompanied with –

**Appendix 1** sets out the correlation with the WFD text and Annex VII.

**Appendix 2** is the full list of proposed measures.

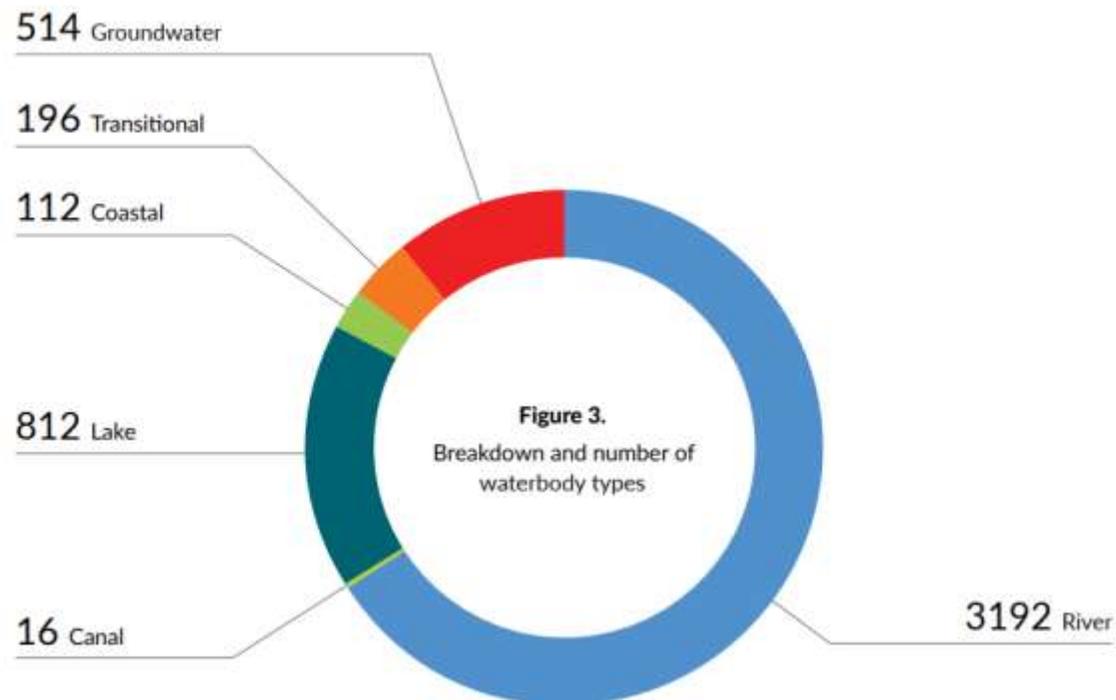
**Appendix 3** is the proposed areas for action.



Bull Island and the Bull Walls – Dublin Bay

## 2.0 - Condition of our waters, nationally and locally

### Breakdown and number of water body types in Ireland

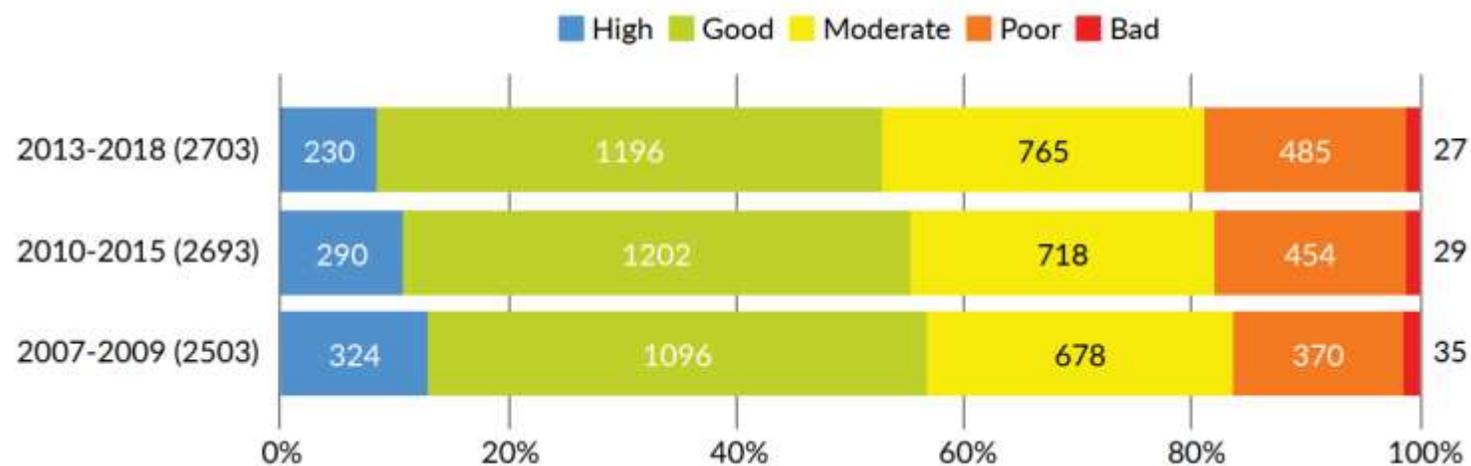


Waterbody Type	No. of Waterbodies
River	3192
Canal	16
Lake	812
Coastal	112
Transitional	196
Groundwater	514
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,842</b>

The most significant influence on water quality management, and any risk to water status, is the land use within the water catchment

## 2.0 - Condition of our waters, nationally and locally

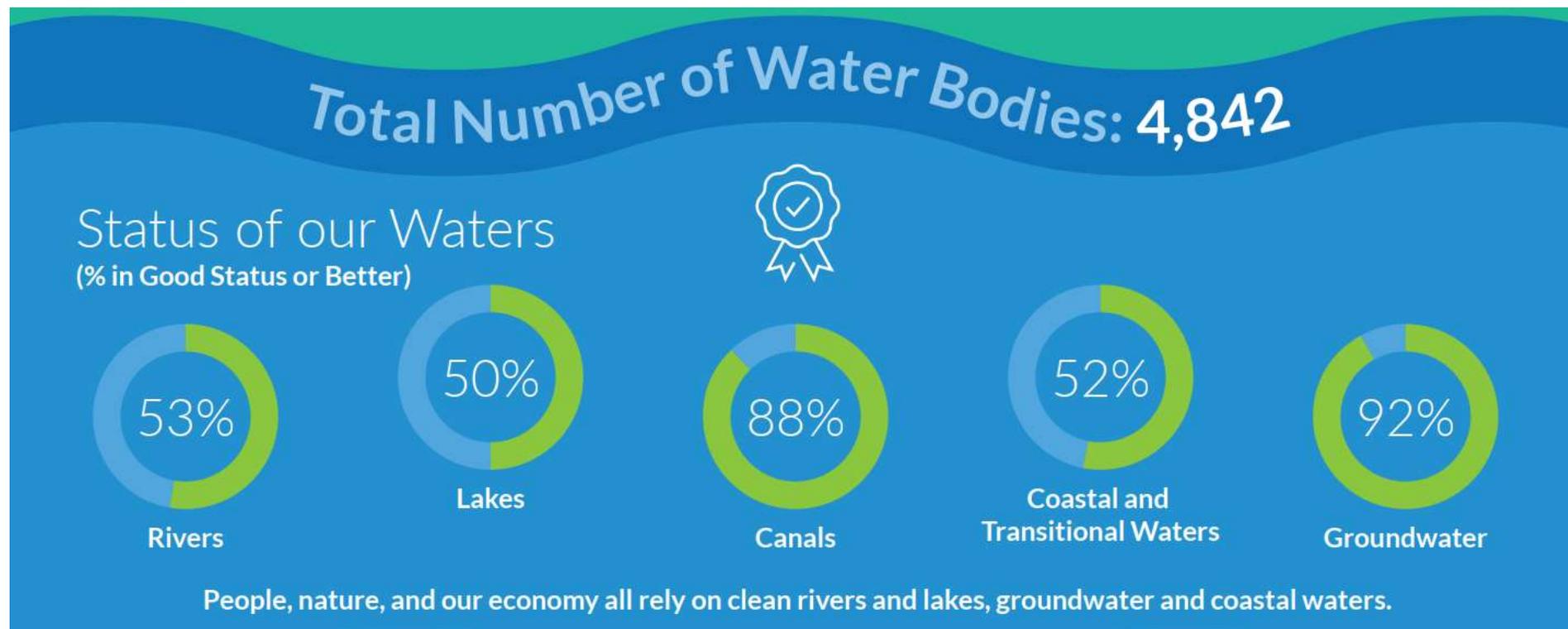
Nationally - Just over half (53%) of surface waters are in good or high ecological status.



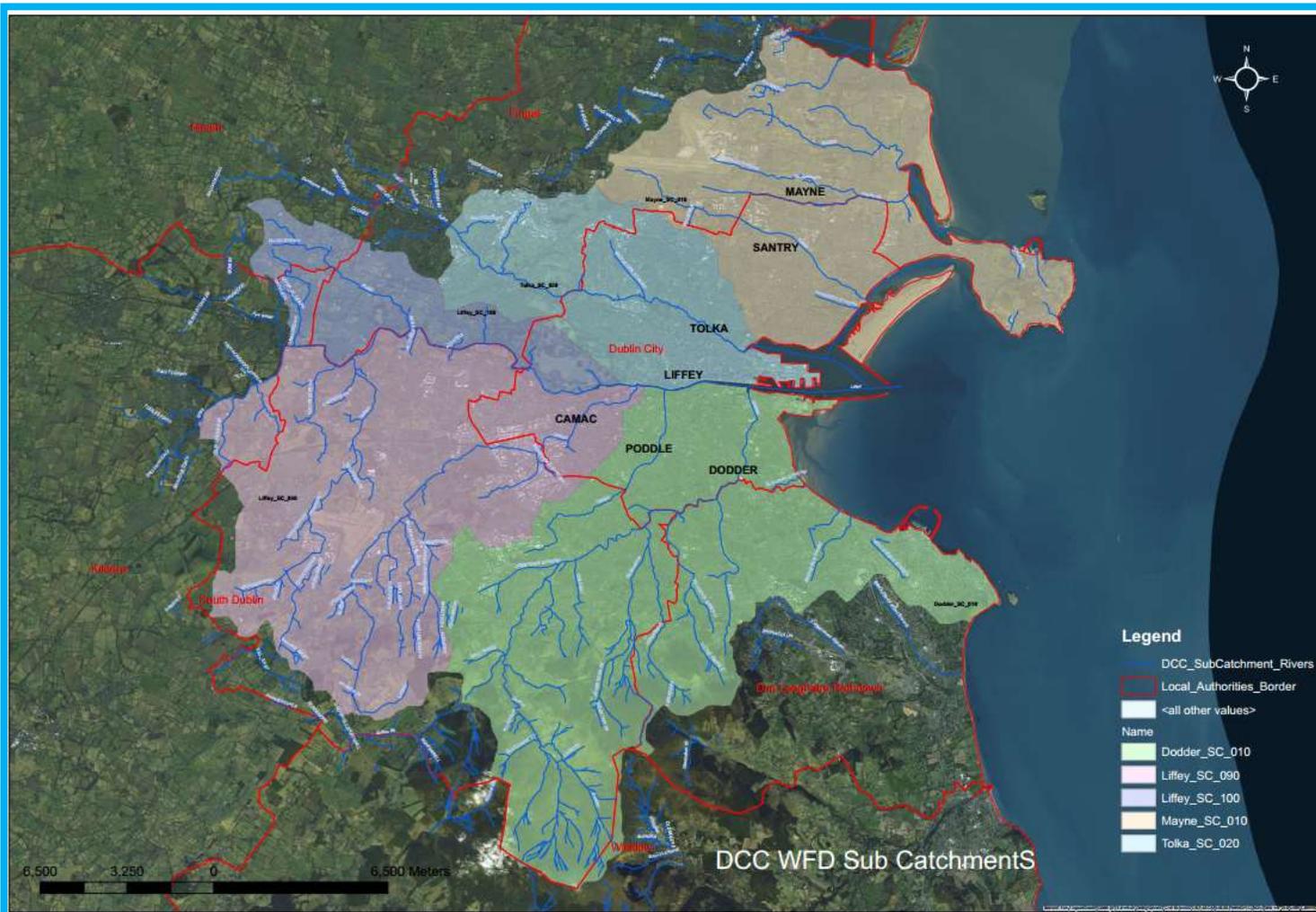
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## 2.0 - Condition of our waters, nationally and locally

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## 2.0 - Condition of our waters, nationally and locally



There are currently two 'Priority' rivers in Dublin City;

- Santry
- Dodder

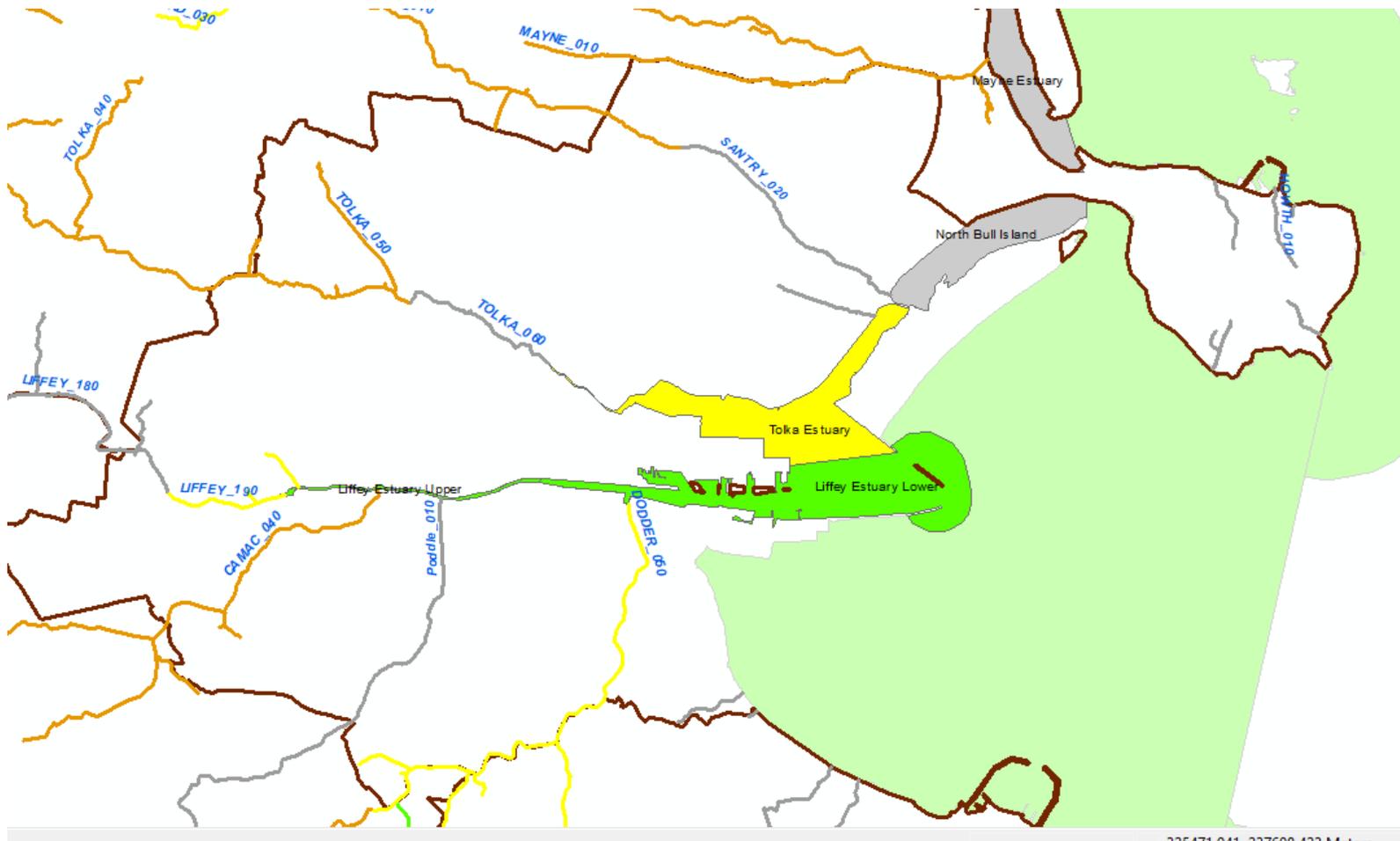
Second Tier rivers currently include;

- Poddle & Liffey

In addition expected in 2022

- Santry & Mayne
- Tolka
- Camac
- Elm Park Stream

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## 2.0 - Condition of our waters, nationally and locally

### Locally: Dublin Rivers & their current WFD Status

River	WFD Status	Local Authority	Draft RBMP Objective
Mayne	Poor	FCC & DCC	Restoration
Santry	unassigned	FCC & DCC	Restoration
Tolka	unassigned	FCC & DCC	Restoration
Tolka estuary	Moderate	DCC	Restoration
Liffey	Moderate	KCC	Restoration
Liffey Estuary	Good	DCC	Protection
Dublin Bay	Good	DCC	Protection
Camac	Poor	SDCC & DCC	Restoration
Poddle	unassigned	SDCC & DCC	Restoration
Dodder	Moderate	SDCC & DCC	Restoration
Elm Park Stream	unassigned	DLRCC & DCC	Restoration



Restoration effectively means; environmental objectives are not being met & action/interventions are required.

Protection – maintain and/or continue to improve.

'Unassigned' WFD status is expected to be assigned in the final Plan.

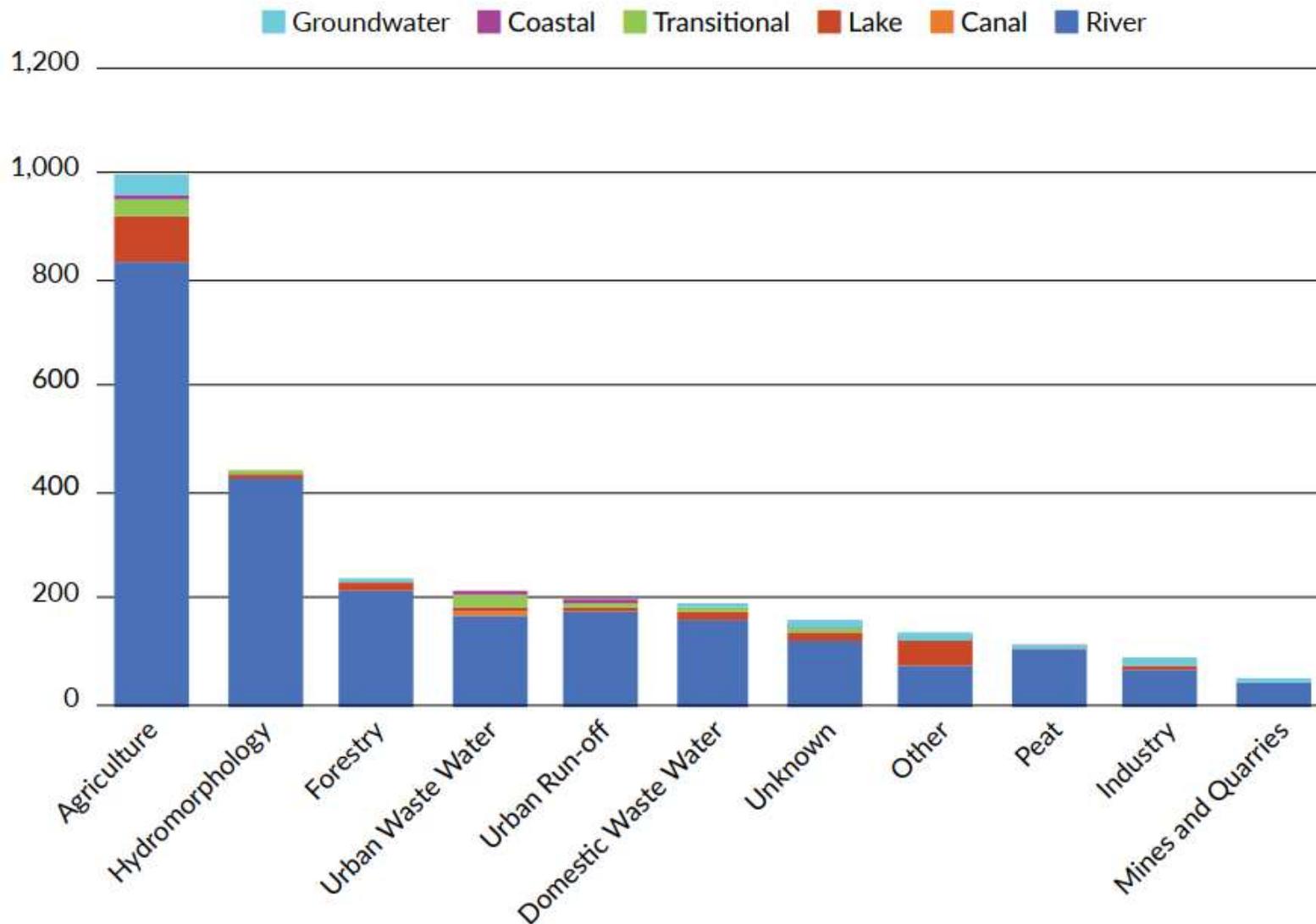
## 2.0 - Condition of our waters, nationally and locally



Pressures on our water quality in urban environments include;

- Morphological change
- Pollution incidents
- Dumping
- Domestic run-off
- Misconnections
- Invasive species
- Flooding
- Green waste
- Light industry
- Contaminated land
- Construction activity
- Sewer overflow

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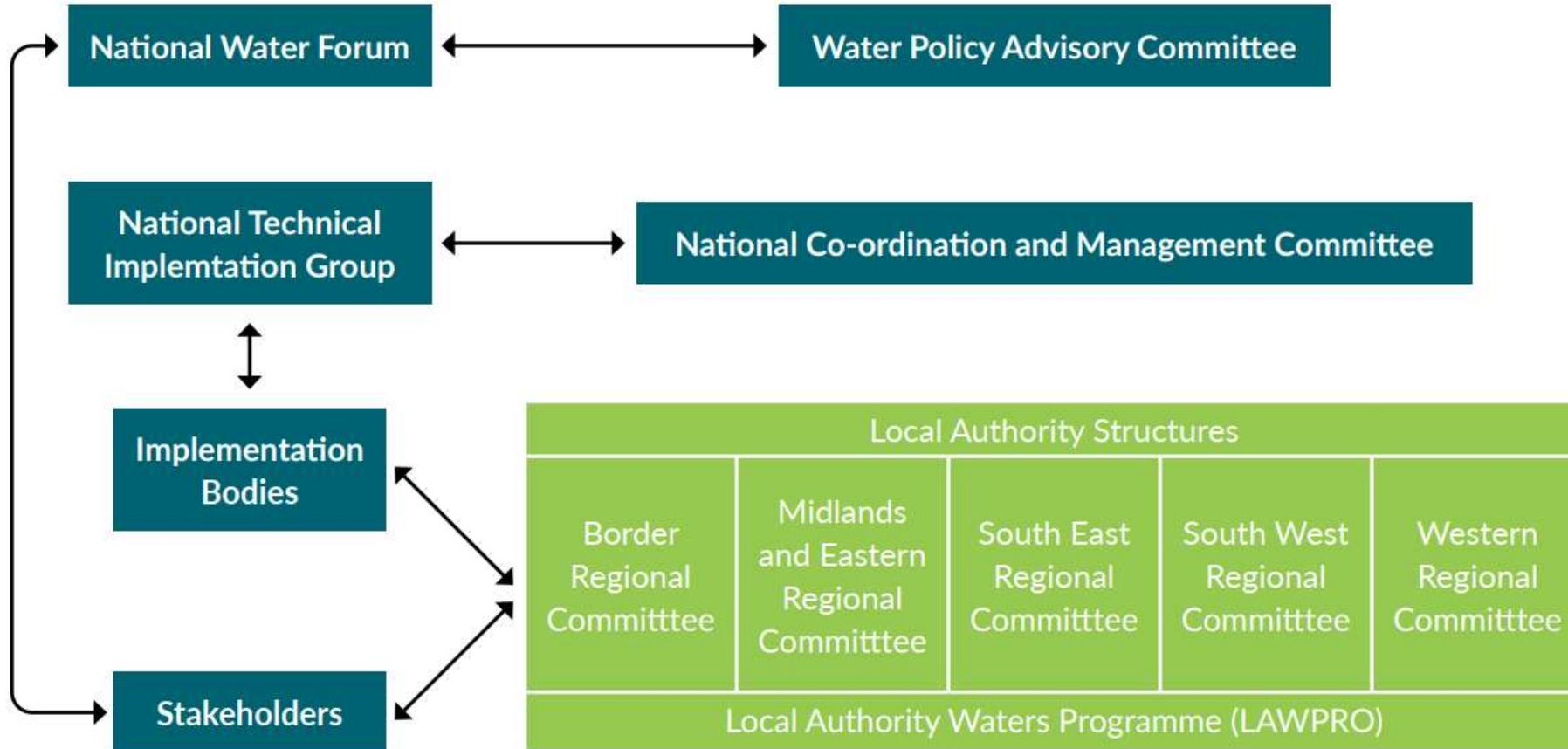


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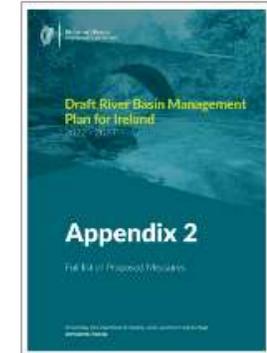
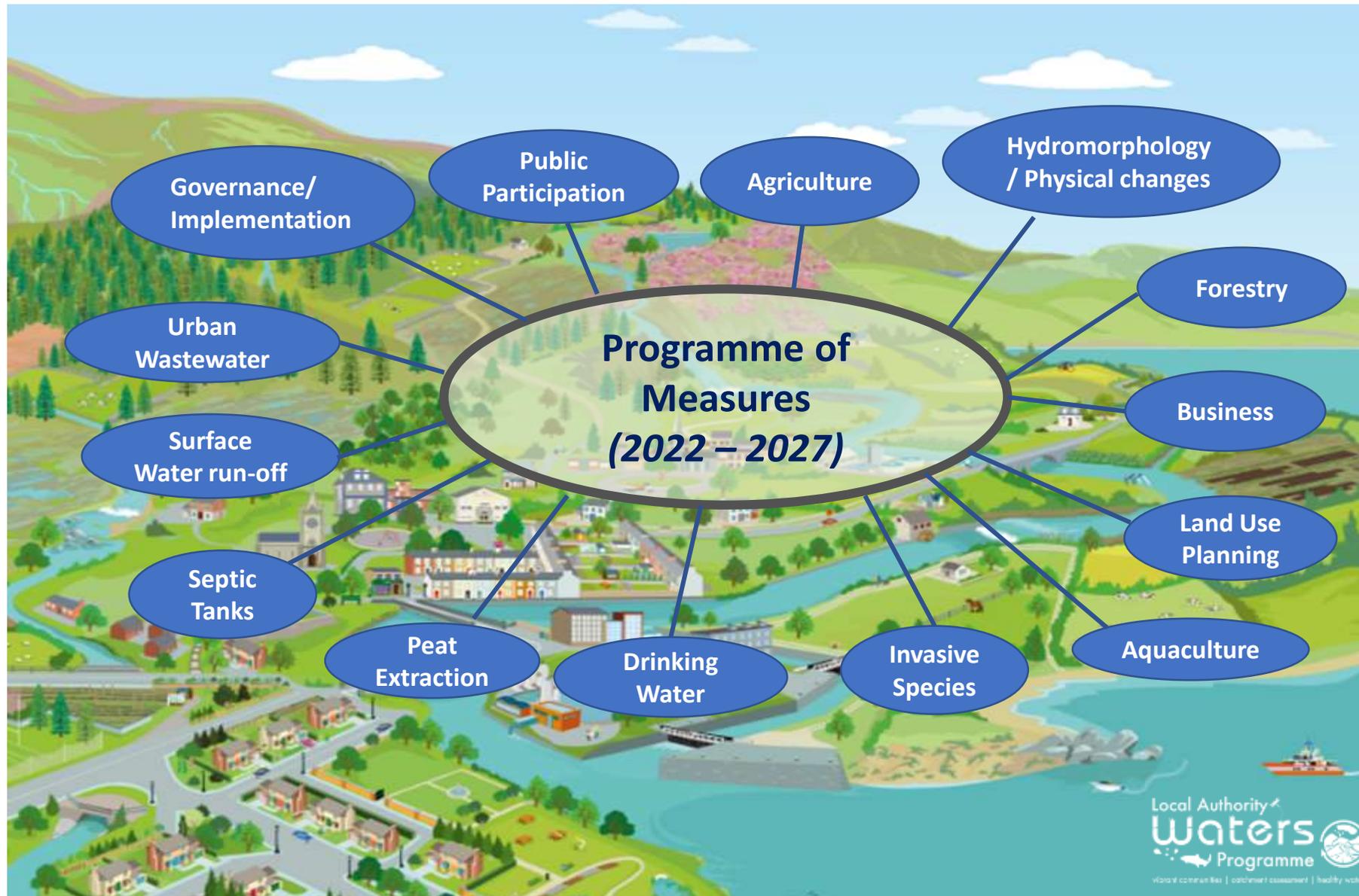
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### 3.0 - Main themes in the draft plan

Water Framework Directive implementation structures and their interactions



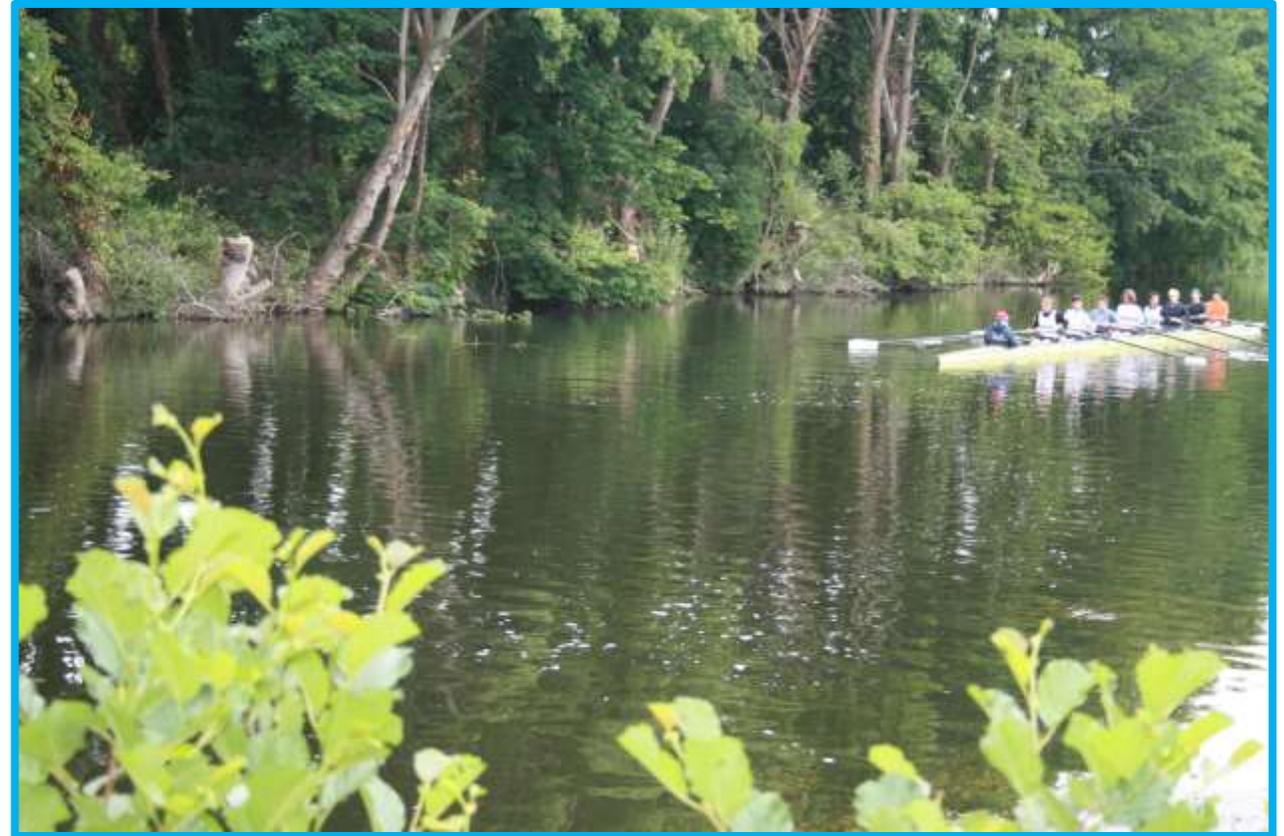
## 3.0 - Main themes in the draft plan



Appendix 2 contains 111 different measures. Here are some key themes:

## 3.0 - Main themes in the draft plan

- Increased national ambition to halt the decline in water quality and reverse the damage.
- Integrated Catchment Planning – a specific plan put in place for each of the 46 river catchments in the country.
- Greater coordination and collaboration between State agencies, local authorities, and LAWPRO & Other Stakeholders, Including community engagement & educational initiatives.
- Delivering multiple benefits for nature, air quality, climate change, and local communities.
- Continued monitoring, evaluation and review of waterbodies
- A programme of measures setting out how we protect and restore water quality



## 4.0 - Overview of Measures Proposed

### A Protection of Water Bodies – Prevent any deterioration of water quality

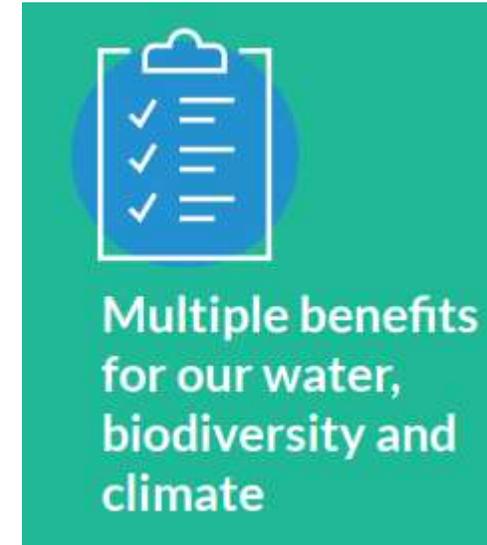
Ensure statutory measures are implemented, enforcement of legislation, land use policy, & continuous assessment.

### B Structural & Societal Measures

Governance,  
Public participation, &  
Areas for Action.

### C Environmental Measures

Agriculture,  
Hydromorphology, (Physical alteration of watercourse)  
Urban Waste Water,  
Urban run-off pressures  
Aquaculture, &  
Land-use planning, to name a few.



The proposed measures are many and diverse. They incorporate the inclusion of eleven existing EU Directives, e.g. Nitrates Directive, Water Framework Directive and the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

## 4.0 - Overview of Measures Proposed

### Selected Plan Measures - Nationally

- LAWPRO, in consultation with all stakeholders, will produce templates for the catchment management plans that will be put in place for each of the 46 hydrometric catchments
- Each local authority will put in place a County level plan. These will have to be coordinated at catchment scale
- Carry out a review of Local Authority resources. Establish appropriate resourcing to support individual local authorities in fulfilling their role in water quality protection and restoration.
- The Department, along with the governance tiers, will continually review progress in implementation of measures to the 2027 target.
- DHLGH will finalise new water and planning guidance.
- Community water development fund
- The Department will strengthen water protection provisions where necessary in relevant sectoral policies. These include water services policy, spatial planning policy, agricultural policy and aquaculture policy.

## 4.0 - Overview of Measures Proposed

### Selected Plan Measures – Key measures include

- Investment by Irish Water of €1.7bn in waste water improvements over the period 2017 – 2021, continuing to €1.022bn in 83 WWTPs and 10 collection networks between 2020-2024
- EPA to review Waste Water Discharge Licences to ensure they appropriately reflect RBMP objectives
- Hydromorphology/ Physical alterations: DHLGH to establish a restoration programme to mitigate negative impacts of past construction
- Focus on nature based solutions - Green Infrastructure and promote Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)



## 5.0 - What this means for Dublin City

### Support actions required to meet our Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives:

- Establish and resource a **multidisciplinary team**;  
Including skills in engineering, technicians, environmental scientists and site operatives.
- Coordinated delivery of measures at regional and local level;  
Integrated approach across functional areas toward catchment planning & management to inform future developments within the catchment.
- Continued regular engagement and coordination of activities with LAWPRO.
- Tracking progress and effectiveness of measures, including quality data and GIS infrastructure;
- Annual reporting of progress;
- Ensuring public and stakeholder engagement in implementation;  
Greater community engagement & involvement. Community projects, the role of citizen science and education of the water quality pressures and solutions required.
- Supporting national policy development and implementation;  
Greater utilization of Green Infrastructure principles and the use of nature-based solutions that deliver multiple benefits for our communities and environment.



## 5.0 - What this means for Dublin City

Support actions required to meet our Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives:



Pollution Incident  
response readiness



Continued monitoring  
of water quality, e.g.  
oxygen levels, flows



Pollution source  
investigations (Commercial  
and domestic)

# 5.0 - What this means for Dublin City

Support actions required to meet our Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives:



Address hydromorphology



Develop Green Infrastructure

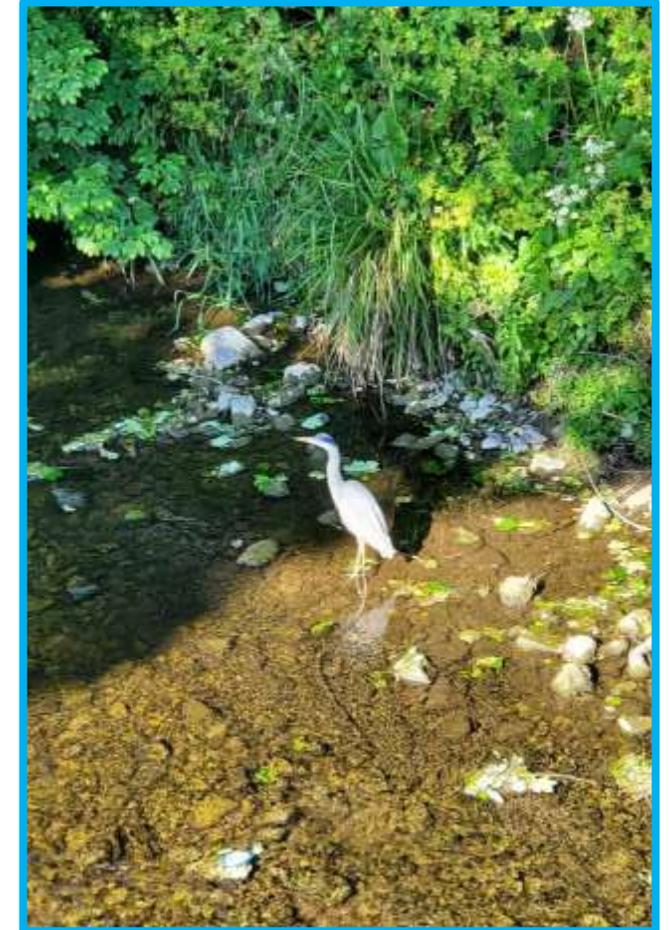


Community Engagement

## 5.0 - What this means for Dublin City

### Activities currently under way include:

- Establishment of the **Protection of Water Bodies Office**, with a dedicated multi-disciplinary team to build on our work to date and delivery the measures set out in the River Basin Management Plan;
- Santry River Restoration and Greenway Project initiated;
- Green Infrastructure Pilot Sites Study at design stage;
- River Mayne Local Catchment Assessment commenced;
- Several local community and schools project engagements, with more being planned;
- More scientific assessment of the impact of pressures ongoing;
- Development of resources for householders commenced (e.g. Rainwater Planters Design Guide);
- Establishment of performance monitoring, data and GIS support structures;
- Camac River Flood Project underway with Water Framework Directive elements;
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Policy being finalised;
- Bathing Waters Task Force – To identify and remediate pollution sources which enter Dublin Bay, and;
- Stronger resourcing of pollution incident and misconnection investigations team.
- Ongoing planning and coordination with LAWPRO team.



## 6.0 - How to make a submission and get involved locally

1. Direct to Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage [www.gov.ie/draftRBMP](http://www.gov.ie/draftRBMP)
2. Visit the LAWPRO Virtual Consultation Room at [LAWaters.ie](http://LAWaters.ie) or <https://drbmp-vcr.ie>
3. This draft RBMP is open to public consultation up until **31<sup>st</sup> March 2022** – LAWPRO lead.
4. Final River Basin Management Plan publication expected **Q4 2022**



# How to get in touch

- [wfd@dublincity.ie](mailto:wfd@dublincity.ie) - Dublin City Council's Water Framework Directive section
- [waterpollution@dublincity.ie](mailto:waterpollution@dublincity.ie) - Dublin City Council's Water Pollution Control section
- [www.gov.ie/draftRBMP](http://www.gov.ie/draftRBMP) - Online access to the draft River Basin Management Plan & Appendices
- [www. Catchments.ie](http://www.Catchments.ie) - Substantial data and background information pertinent to the Plan

## Questions?

**Roy O'Connor - Head of the Protection of Water Bodies Office &  
(Enter LAWPRO representative), LAWPRO**





Comhairle Cathrach  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City Council



Thank you