



PROTECTING AND RESTORING CLARE'S NATURAL WATERS

PHOTOGRAPH: LOUGH GRANEY BY ARTHUR ELLIS

Feakle - Community Information Meeting

Feakle Community Centre, Feakle


8th October 2025



Co-funded by
the European Union

Waters of **LIFE**

Meeting structure

- Presentation
 - 15 - 20 minutes
 - Questions and Answers
 - 10 - 20 minutes
 - Stand Engagement
 - 30 - 60 minutes
 - We have a **sign-up** sheet at the LAWPRO table if you want to be kept up to date with our work e.g. newsletter
- 

Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO)

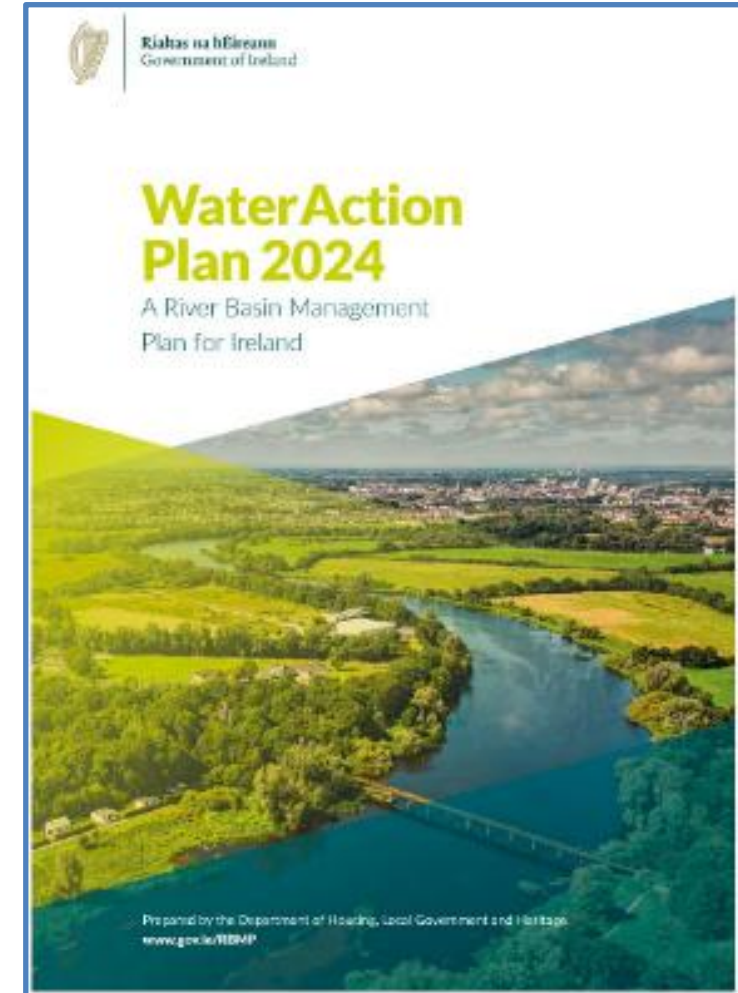
- Shared Service across all Local Authorities
- 5 Regions – Border, West, Southwest, Southeast, and Midlands and east
 - (Clare, Limerick, Kerry and Cork = South-western region)
- 2016 – Communities team
- 2018 – Catchment Assessment team
- 2019 – Blue Dot Catchments Programme
- 2024 – Farming for Water EIP



Water Action Plan 2024

Launched September 2024

- Government commitment to protecting & restoring Ireland's natural waters by complying with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive
- Accelerate the identification and implementation of the **right measures in the right places** to both restore and protect all water bodies



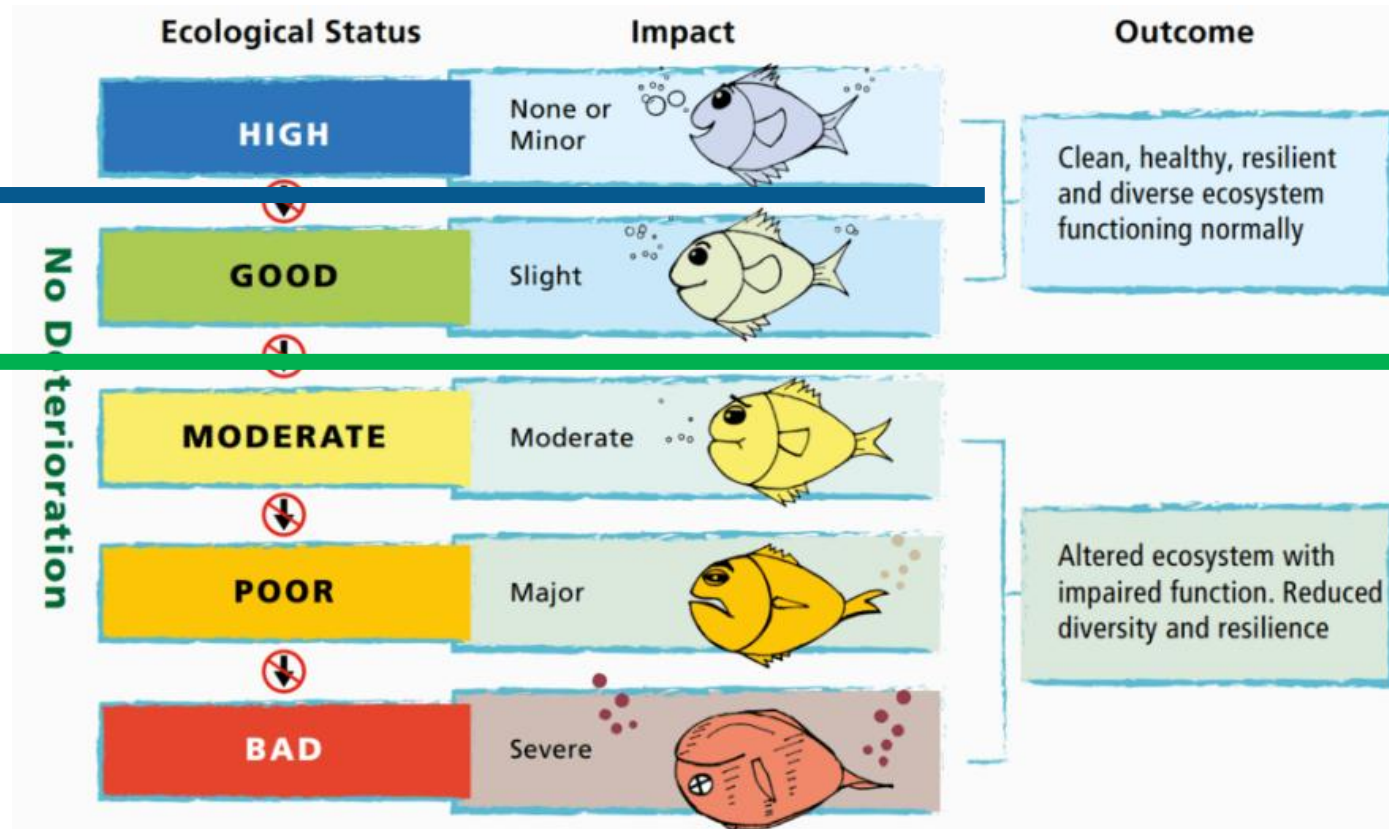
gov.ie - River Basin Management Plan 2022 - 2027

What do we mean by water quality?

EU Water Framework Directive

No Decline –
Blue Dots

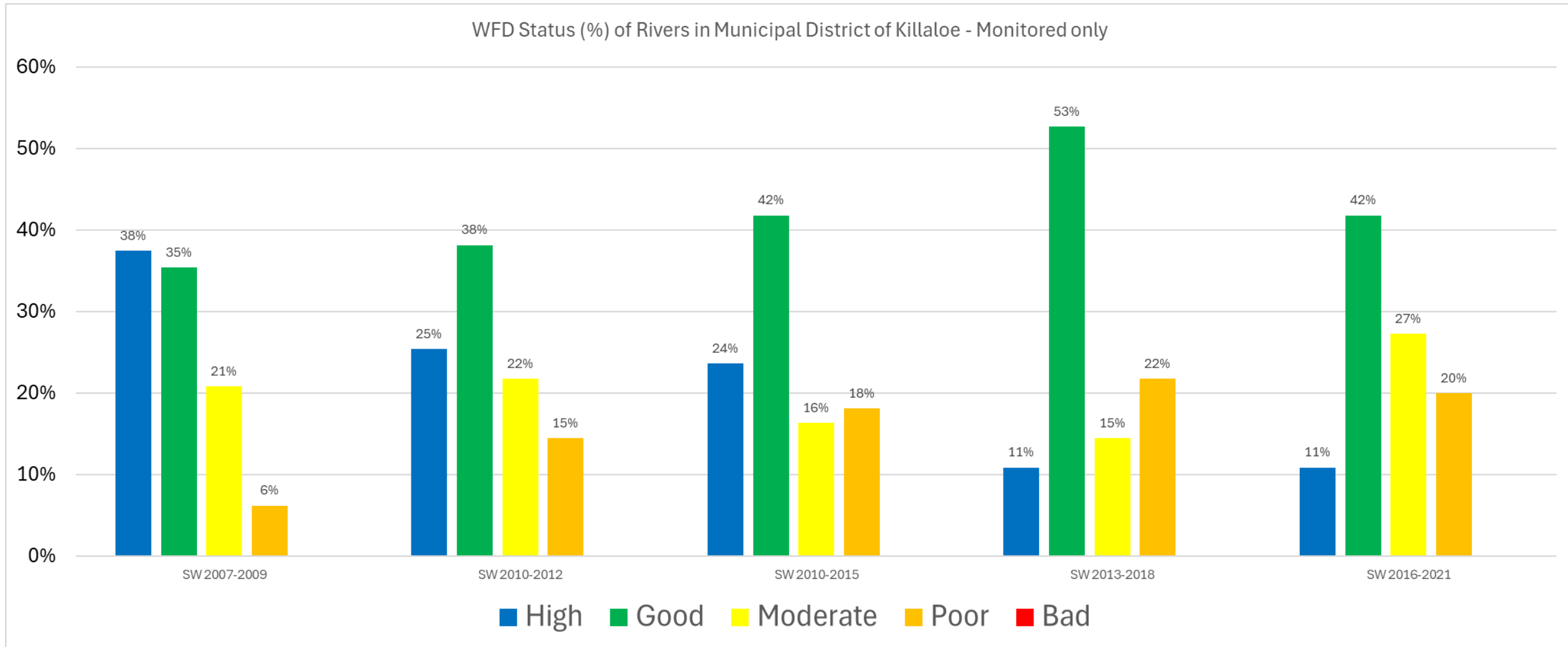
At least Good



All surface waters must achieve at least Good Ecological Status by 2027

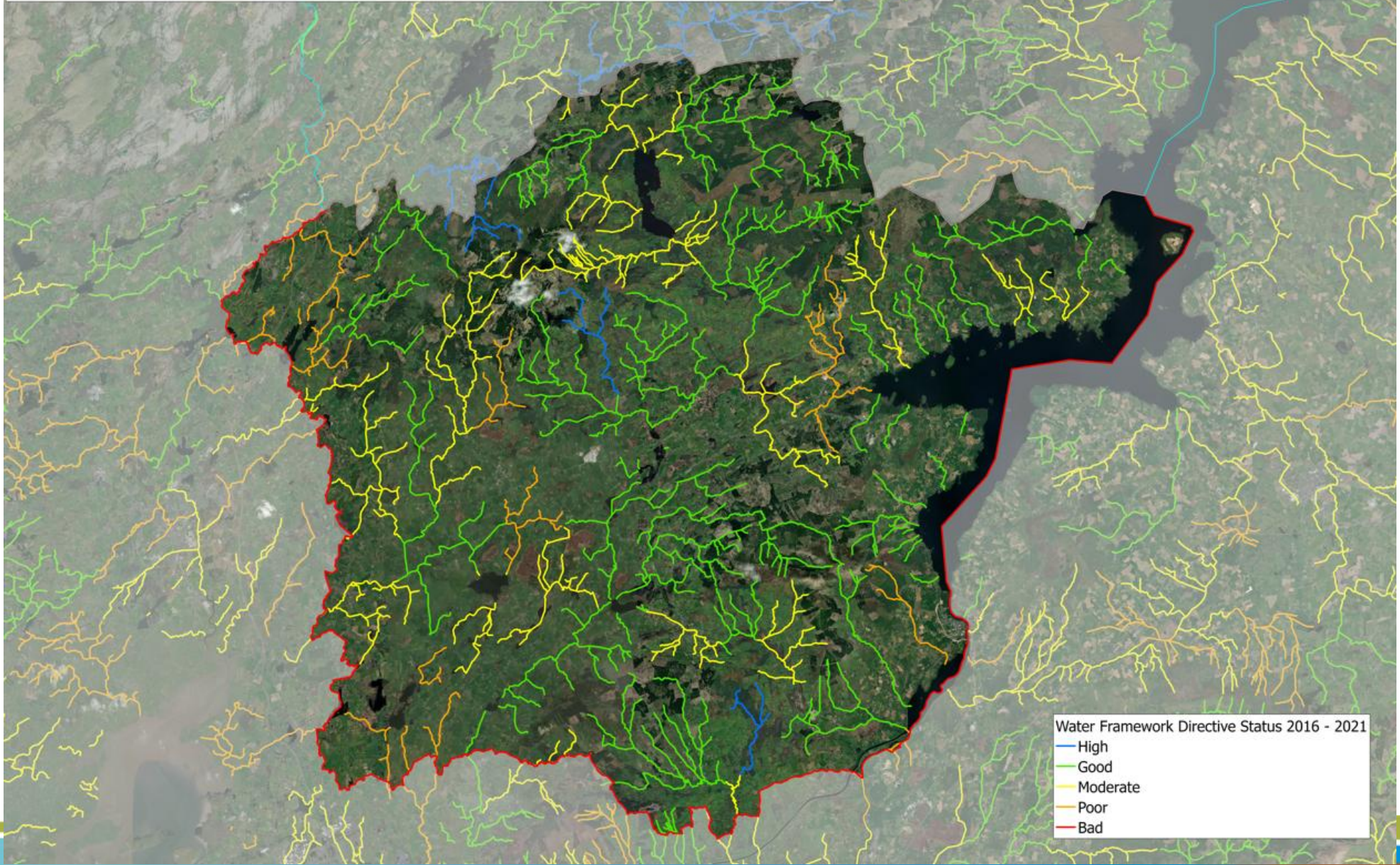
Water quality in Killaloe Municipal District

WFD Status (%) of Rivers in Municipal District of Killaloe - Monitored only



Water Framework Directive Status

Killaloe Municipal District



Water Framework Directive Status 2016 - 2021

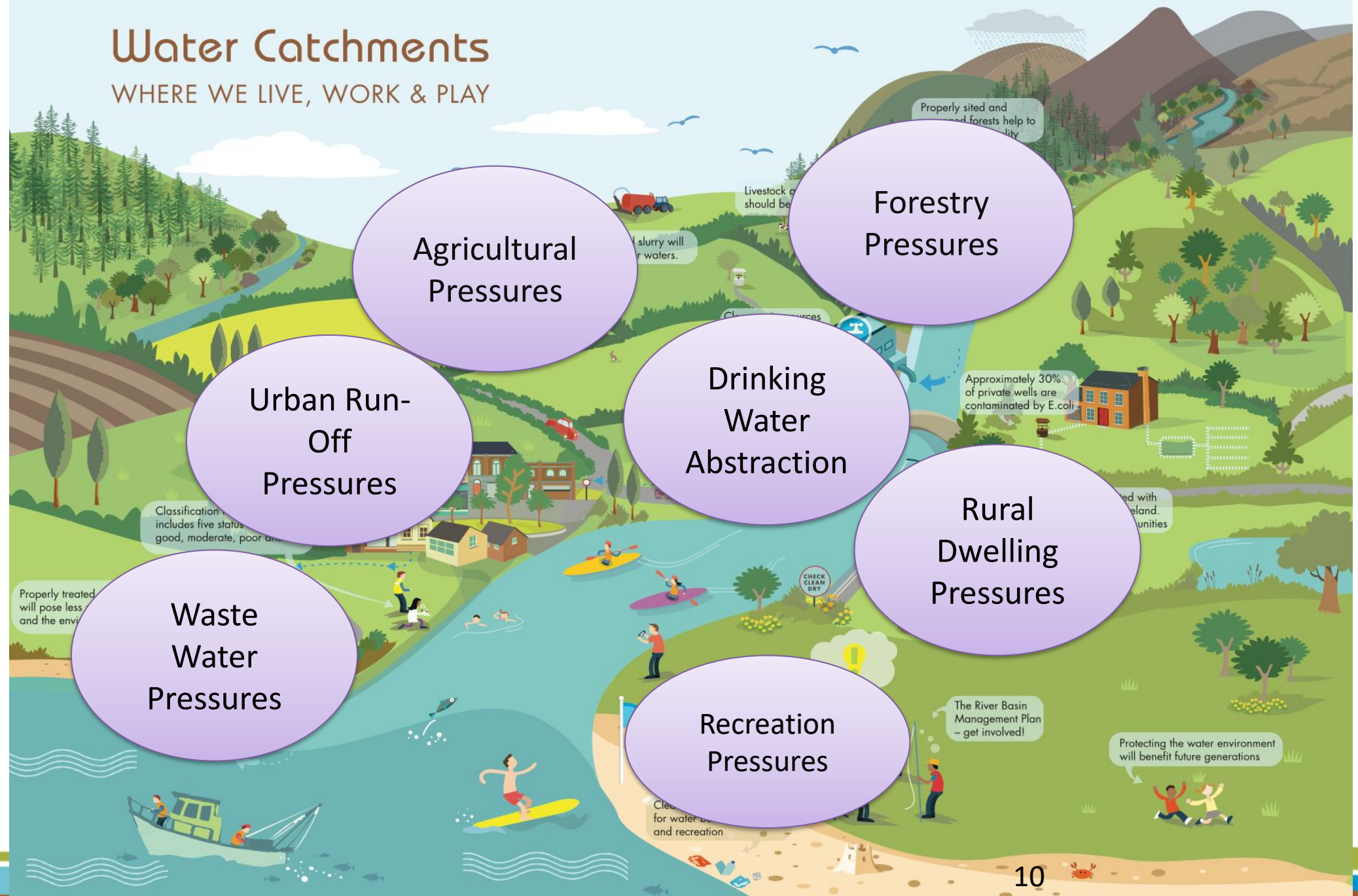
- High
- Good
- Moderate
- Poor
- Bad

What impacts our water?



Water Catchments

WHERE WE LIVE, WORK & PLAY



Agricultural Pressures

Forestry Pressures

Urban Run-Off Pressures

Drinking Water Abstraction

Rural Dwelling Pressures

Waste Water Pressures

Recreation Pressures

Properly sited and managed forests help to improve water quality

Livestock slurry should be stored properly

slurry will pollute waters.

Approximately 30% of private wells are contaminated by E.coli

contaminated with bacteria in rural communities

Properly treated wastewater will pose less risk to the environment

Classification of water quality includes five status classes: good, moderate, poor and very poor

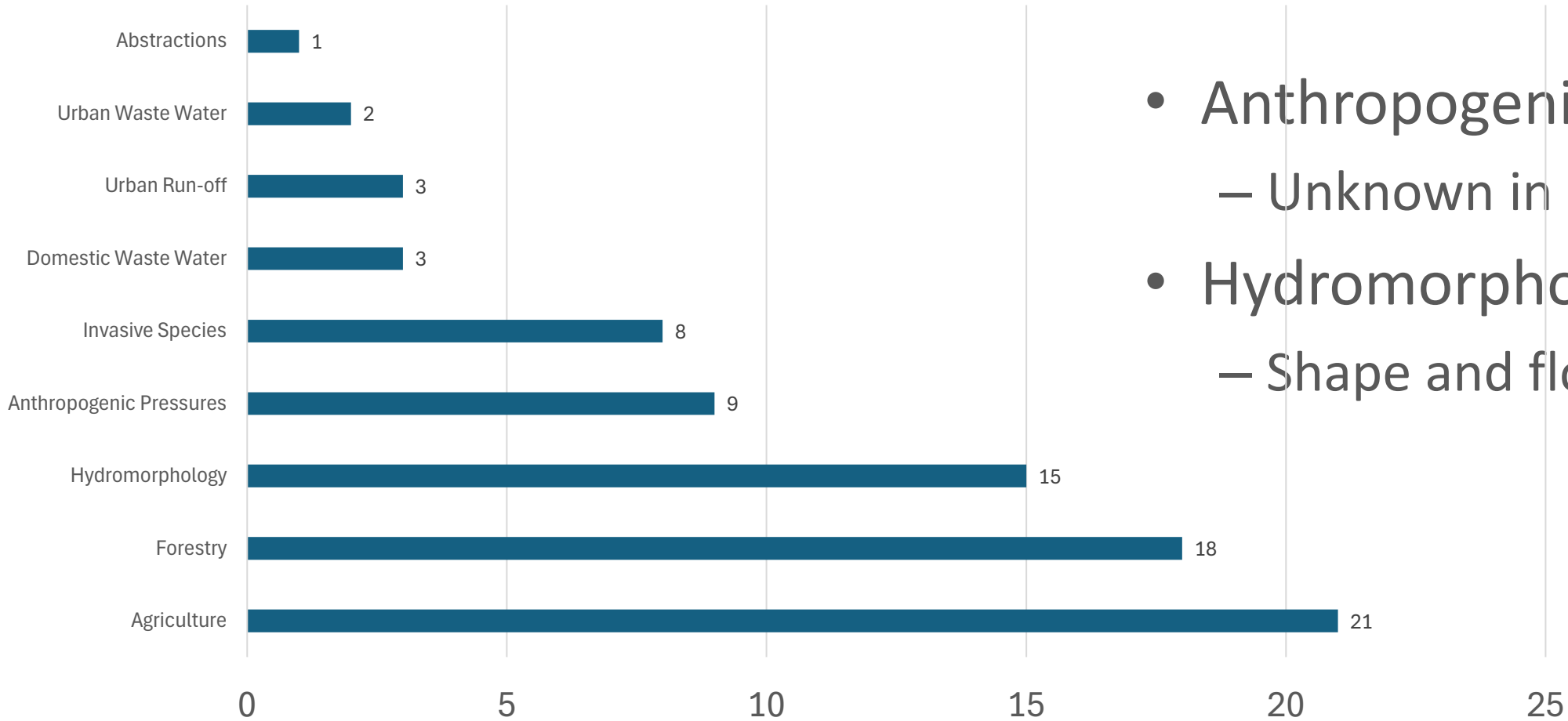
The River Basin Management Plan – get involved!

Protecting the water environment will benefit future generations

Clear water is essential for water supply and recreation

Pressures in Killaloe Municipal District

Significant Pressure in At risk waters in Municipal District of Killaloe

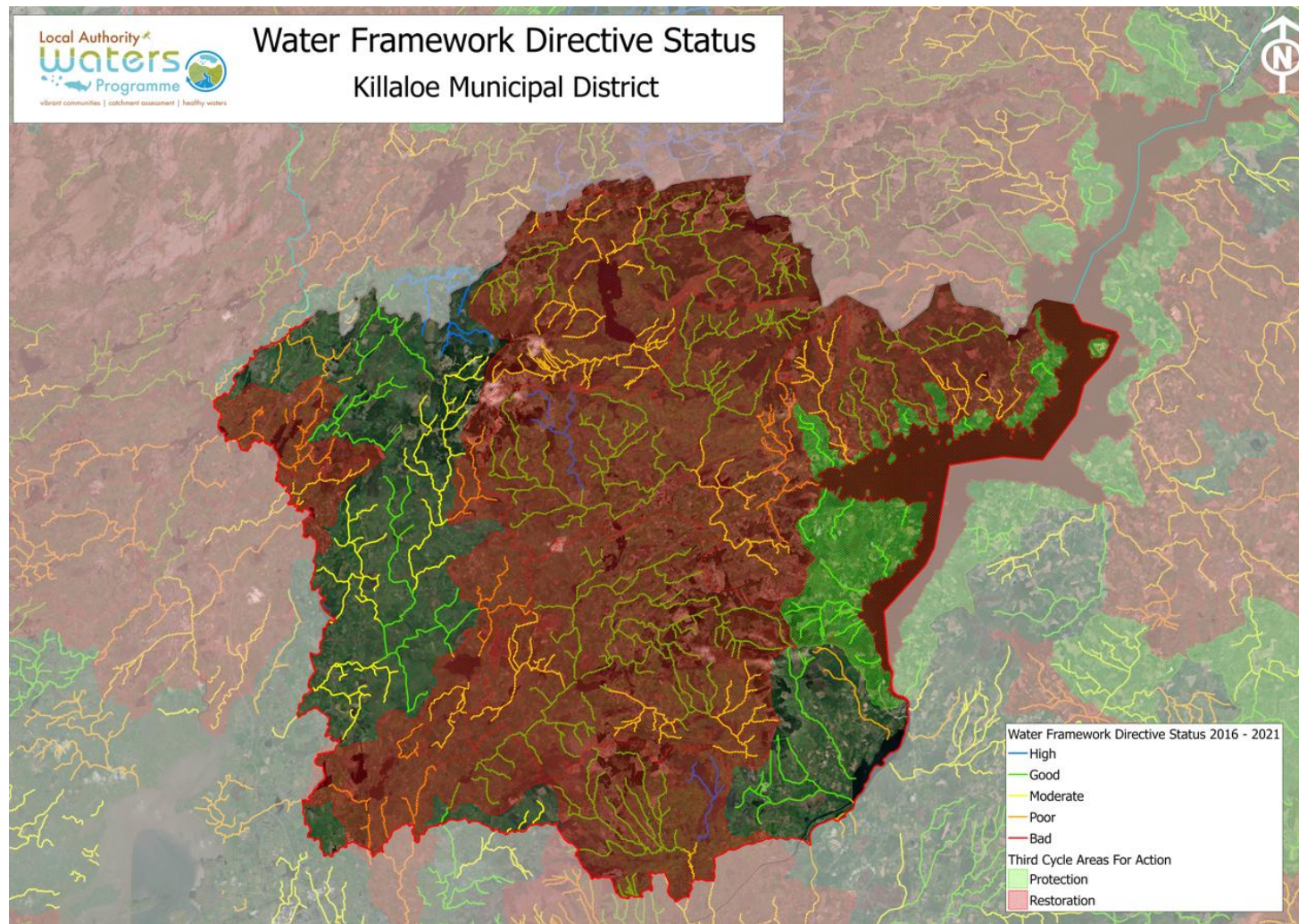


- Anthropogenic Pressures
 - Unknown in most cases
- Hydromorphology
 - Shape and flow

What are we are doing



- Priority Areas for Action
- Detailed assessment of water quality
- Eight areas intersect Killaloe MD
- 42 of 67 waterbodies are in an Area for Action
- Mostly LAWPRO led – red areas



Local Catchment Assessment Finding issues on the ground



Field chemistry and field observations



Biological sampling - invertebrates



River walks



Chemistry sampling



Biological sampling - vegetation

Referrals

- When we find issues, we let people know
 - Agriculture, we refer to ASSAP
 - Forestry, we refer to Forest Service
 - Licensed discharges, we refer to Local Authority or Environmental Protection Agency etc.
- Measures can be used then to address the impact



What is The ASSAP?

- Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme
- Focus is on improving water quality in Priority Areas for Action (PAA)
- Provides free & confidential farm advice and acceptance is voluntary
- Industry, government, farm orgs collaboration
- 44 Advisors - 20 Teagasc, 24 from Dairy Co-ops
- Work in collaboration with Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO)
- LAWPRO – scientific investigation; LCA, desk study, chemical, biological, hydro morphology etc., assess streams
- Provide referrals to advisors to focus farm visits



CARBERY



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

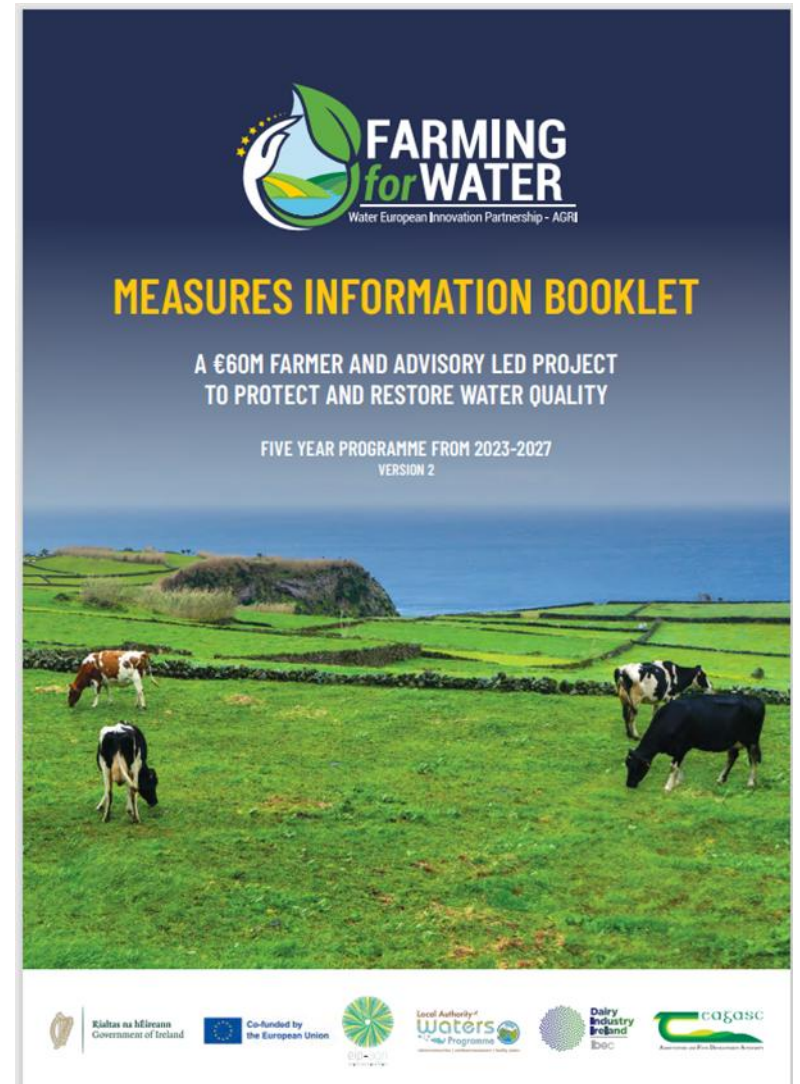


An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



Farming for Water EIP

- Aims to tackle water quality issues while promoting sustainable agricultural practices and delivering environmental benefits
 - Led by LAWPRO in partnership with Teagasc and Dairy Industry Ireland
 - Launched in March 2024 and will run until end 2027
- Collaboration & Innovation
 - Farmers, researchers, policymakers, and others to co-develop practical, scalable solutions beyond regulatory requirements
- Funding & Support
 - €50 million from DAFM and the EC
 - €10 million in administrative support from DHLGH



Key Points

Prioritisation of Entry into the Project

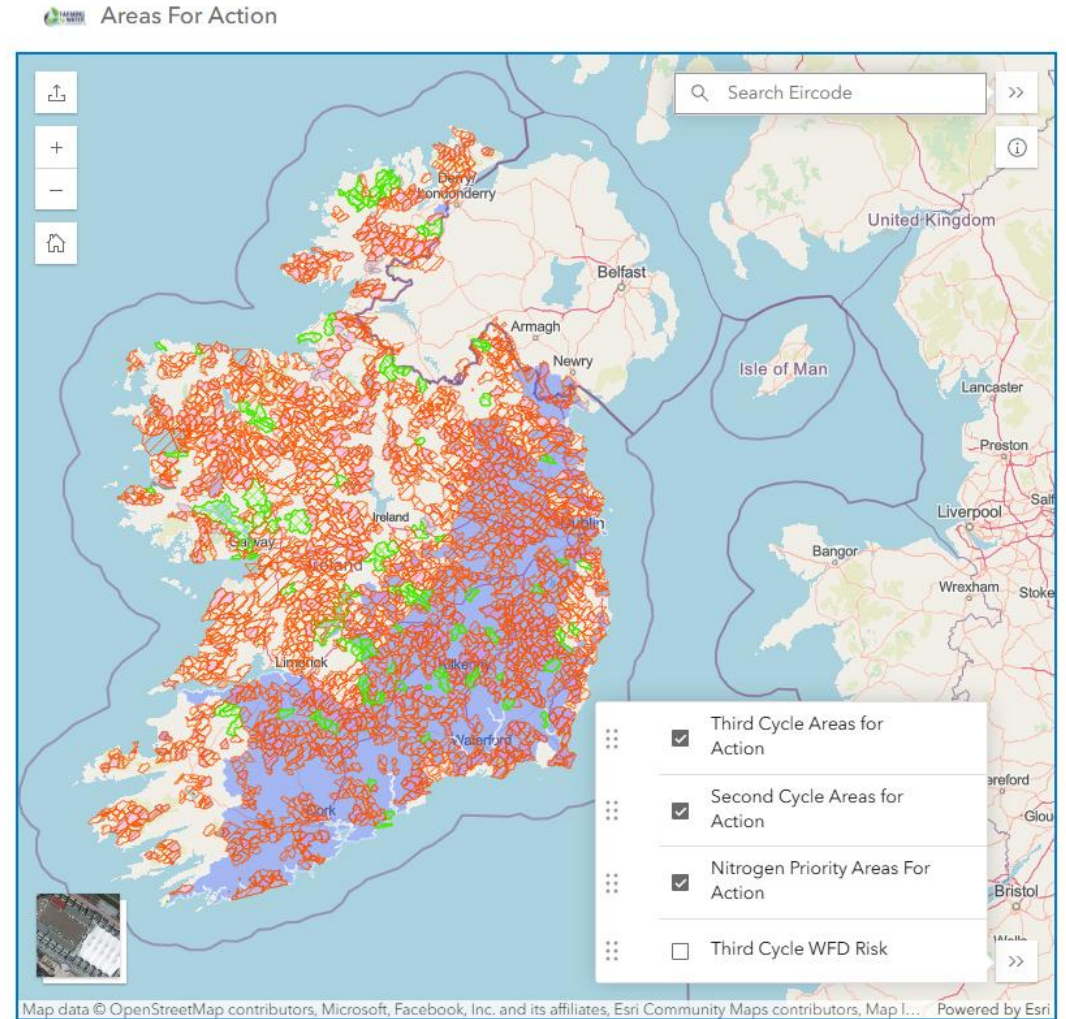
-focus on specific areas based on risk levels.

Mapped Areas for Action: Selected areas [Farming for Water website](https://farmingforwater.ie/).

Risk-Based Selection: Entry into the project is guided by the agricultural sustainability support and advisory programme and is based scientific assessments of agricultural pressures on water bodies.

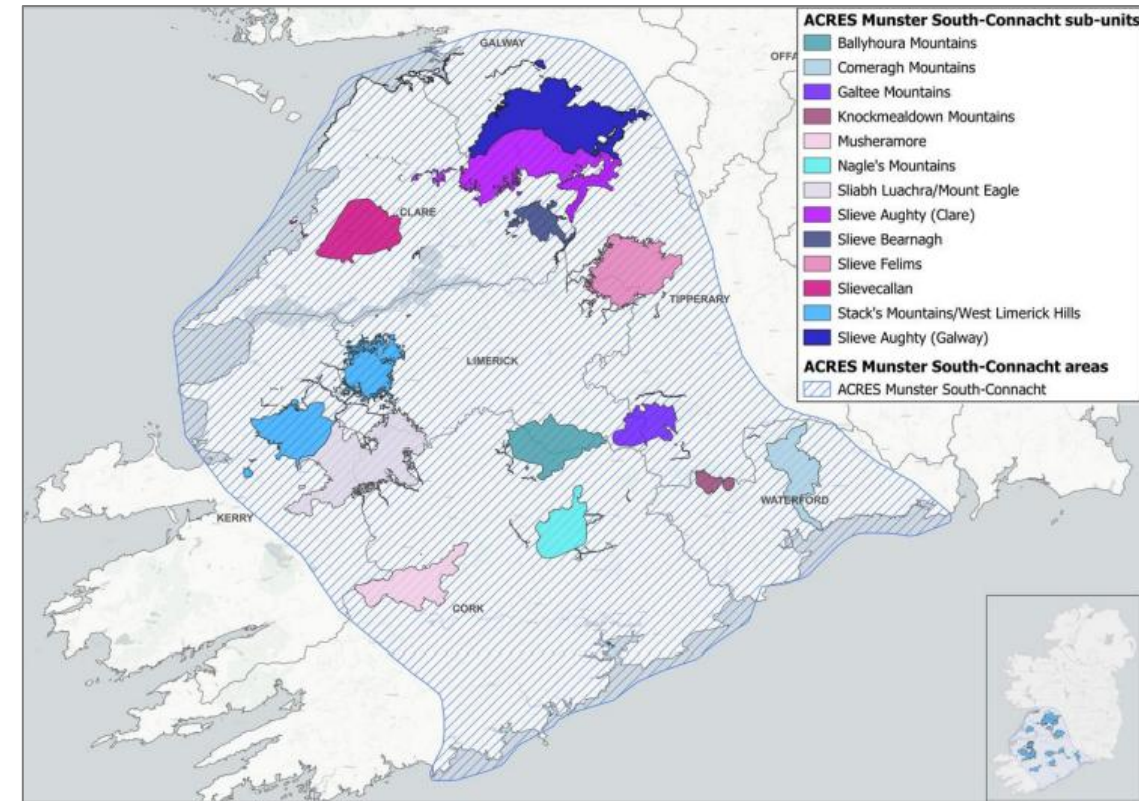
Research projects being developed which will validate the measures being tested as part of the Farming for Water EIP.

<https://farmingforwater.ie/>

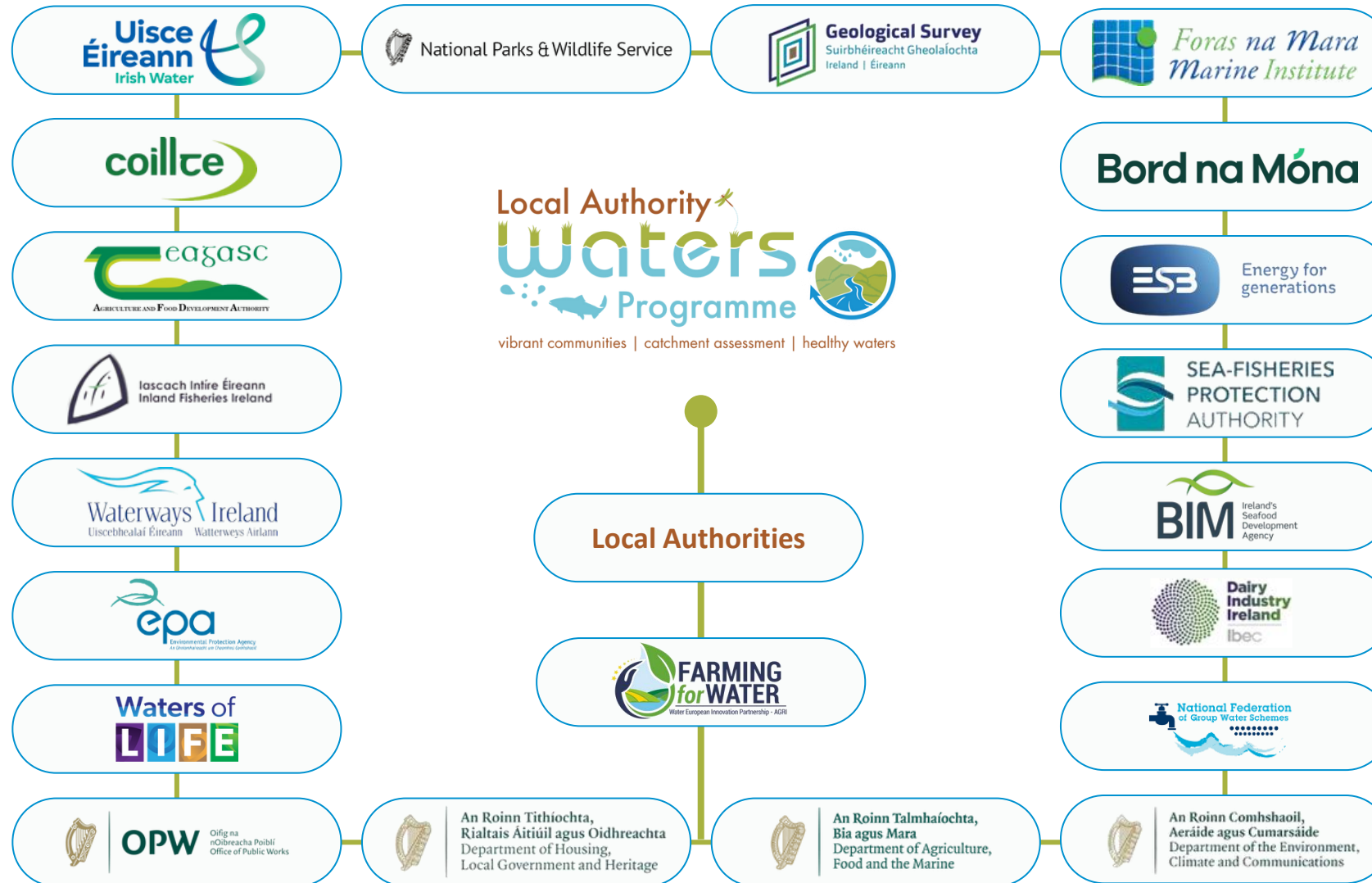


ACRES Cooperation Projects

- [ACRES Co-operation approach](#), available to farmers in eight high-priority geographical areas, who opt to undertake measures, as well as bespoke farm, and landscape actions.
- The Killaloe MD intersects with the Slieve Bearnagh and Slieve Aughty.
- <https://acresireland.ie/munster-south-connacht/>



Who's involved in Water?

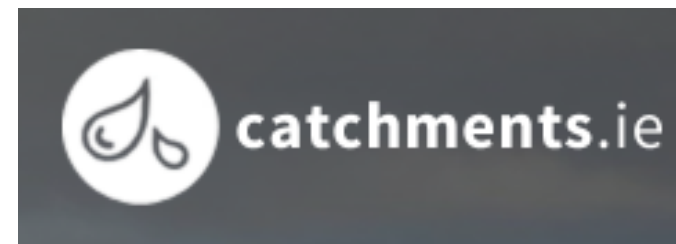


Community Engagement

Colum Walsh is the Community Water Officer for Clare

- Our work with Communities
 - Engaging groups and communities
 - Project Delivery
 - Capacity Building
 - Education
 - Citizen Science
 - Blue Dot awareness
- Funding Opportunities
 - Community Water Development Fund
 - Catchment Support Fund
 - Small Grants and Events Scheme

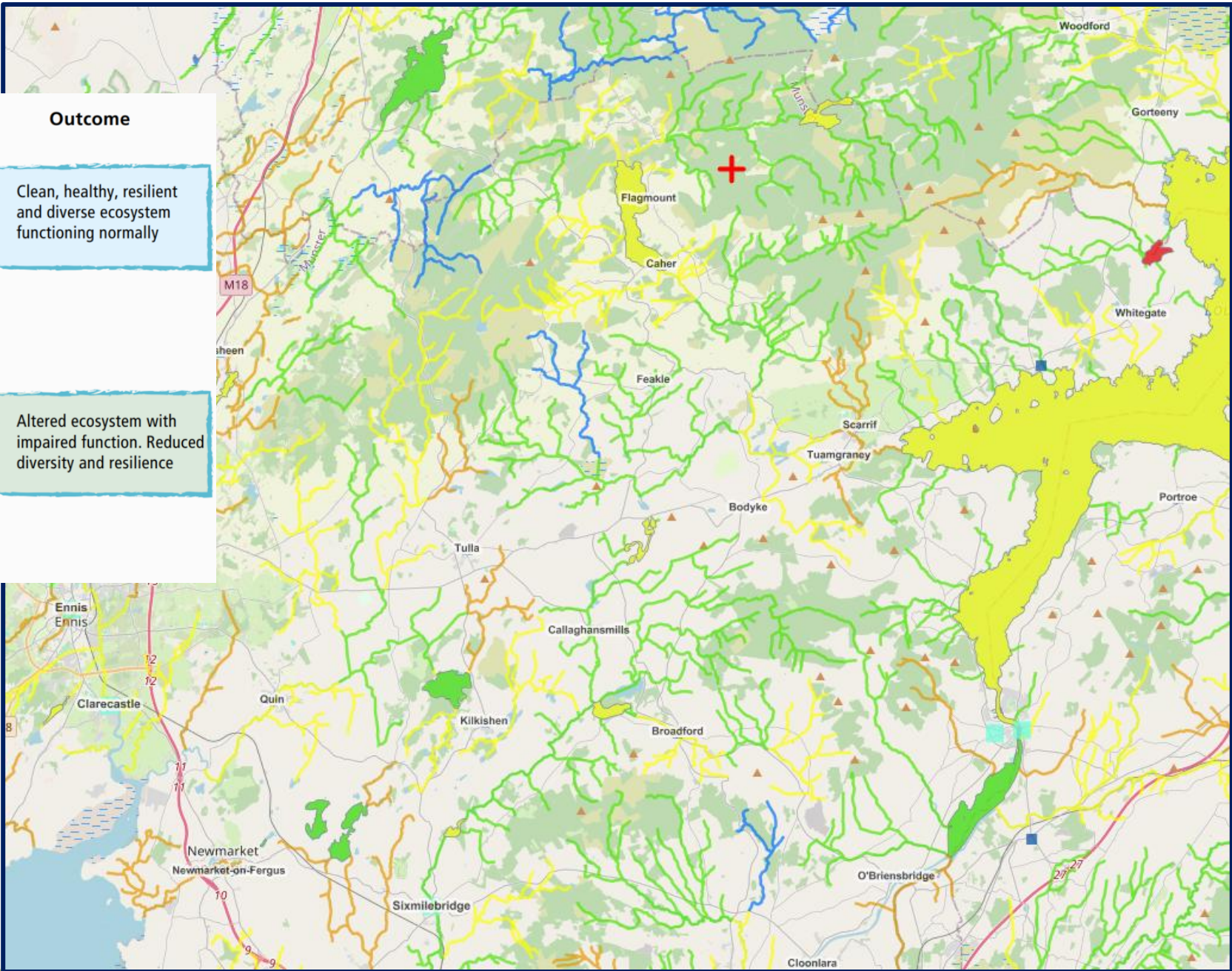
Talk to Colum for more info



No Deterioration

Ecological Status	Impact
HIGH	None or Minor
GOOD	Slight
MODERATE	Moderate
POOR	Major
BAD	Severe

Outcome
Clean, healthy, resilient and diverse ecosystem functioning normally
Altered ecosystem with impaired function. Reduced diversity and resilience



Community Projects



Community Projects



LOUGH ATORICK
CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

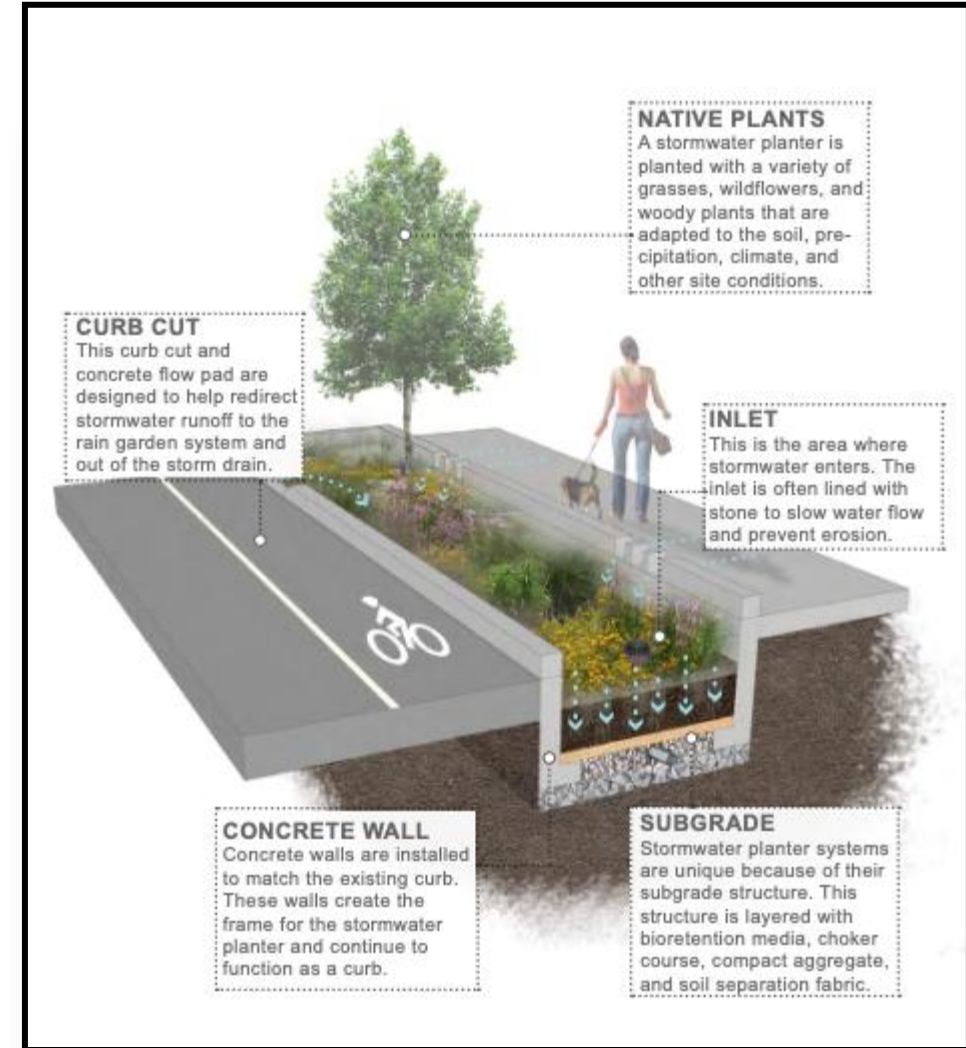


Mainstreaming of Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

- 2 No. Nbs Engineers appointed in LAWPRO working in this area since 2024:
 - Tom Brennan SEE Tbrennan@lawaters.ie
 - Eamonn O’Connell SEE eoconnell@lawaters.ie
- Local Authority Engagement / Supports include
 - *Guidance Document for Planners Developers & Developer Agents*
- *Rainwater Management Plan – Guidance for Local Authorities 2024*
- Progression of National Strategy for NBS

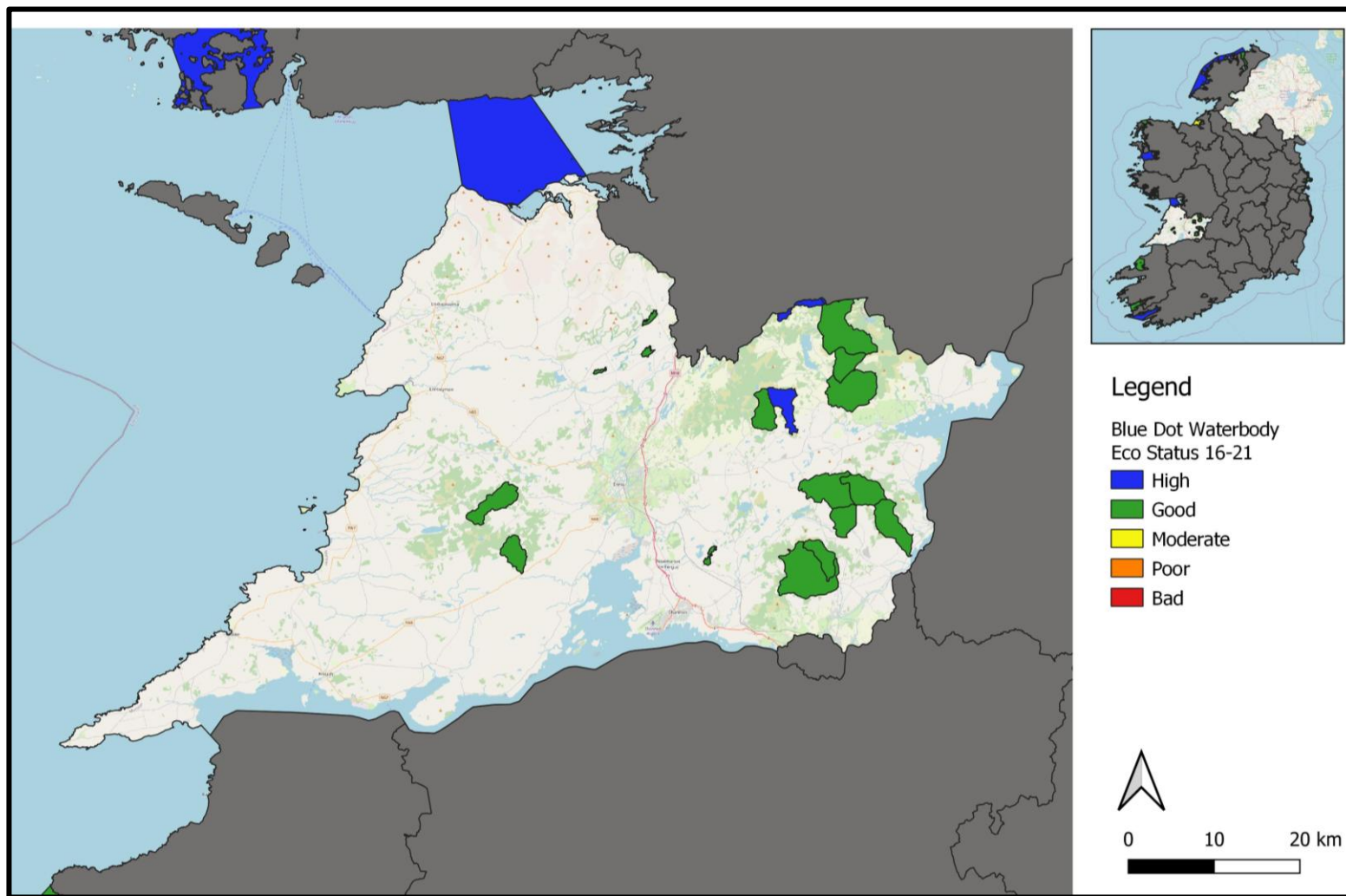


Mainstreaming of Nature-based Solutions (NbS)



Blue Dot Catchment Programme

- Blue Dots are waterbodies that SHOULD achieve high ecological status i.e. WFD objective is high status
 - Blue Dots = High Status Objective
- Currently there are 402 Blue Dots
 - 17 Blue Dot WBs in Clare
 - 13 River WBs
 - 4 Lakes
 - (Outer Galway Bay)
 - ❖ Graney WOL Demonstration Catchment
 - 1 High Eco Status (2016-21) (Ayle_010)
 - 16 Good
 - 13 At Risk
 - 1 Review
 - 3 Not at risk



Collaboration is key to success



Q and A



Meet the room

- LAWPRO – Dermot Leahy and Trish O’Brien
- ASSAP/Farming for Water EIP – Paula Browne
- ACRES CP –
- Clare County Council –

www.lawwaters.ie

www.catchments.ie



Contact Details

- Community Water Officer
 - Colum Walsh - cwalsh@lawaters.ie
- Technical Lead
 - Dermot Leahy – dleahy@lawaters.ie
- ASSAP advisor for the area
 - Paula Browne - paula.browne@teagasc.ie