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Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil
Department of Housing,
Planning and Local Government

EPA National Water Event

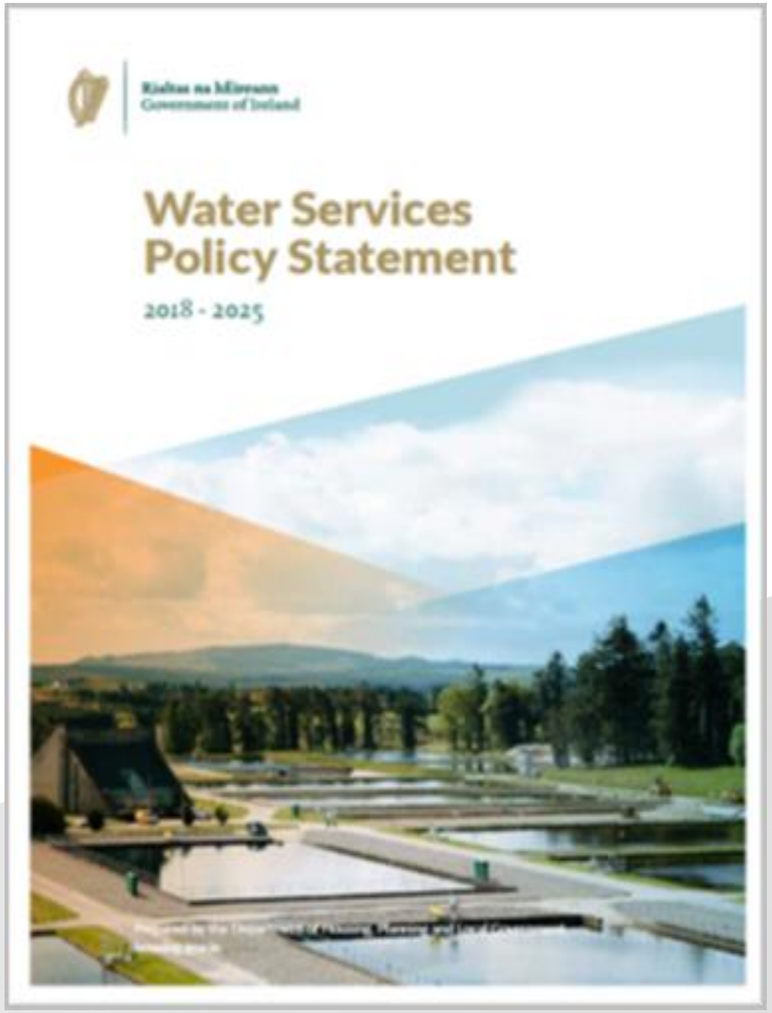
Addressing Ireland's water challenges: the national response

29 Bealtaine 2019

Feargal Ó Coigligh
Assistant Secretary
Water Division

2018 – A Year of Significant Progress

- Setting Strategic Direction
- Giving Policy Clarity
- Delivering the Financial Reources



Project Ireland 2040

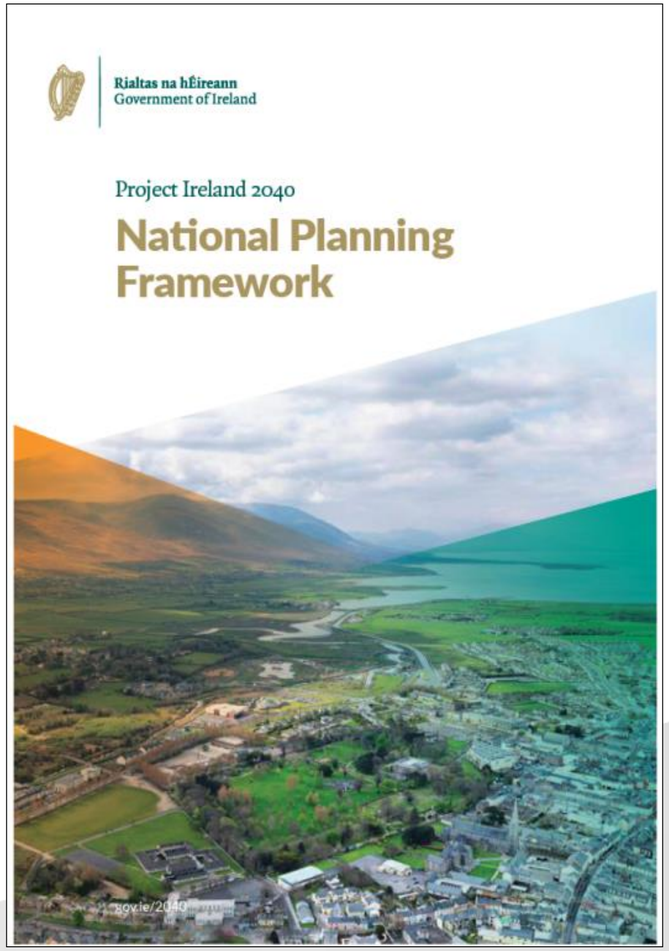
February 2018

1. Providing Balanced Regional Development - NPF

2. Investing in Ireland's Infrastructure - NDP

National Planning Framework

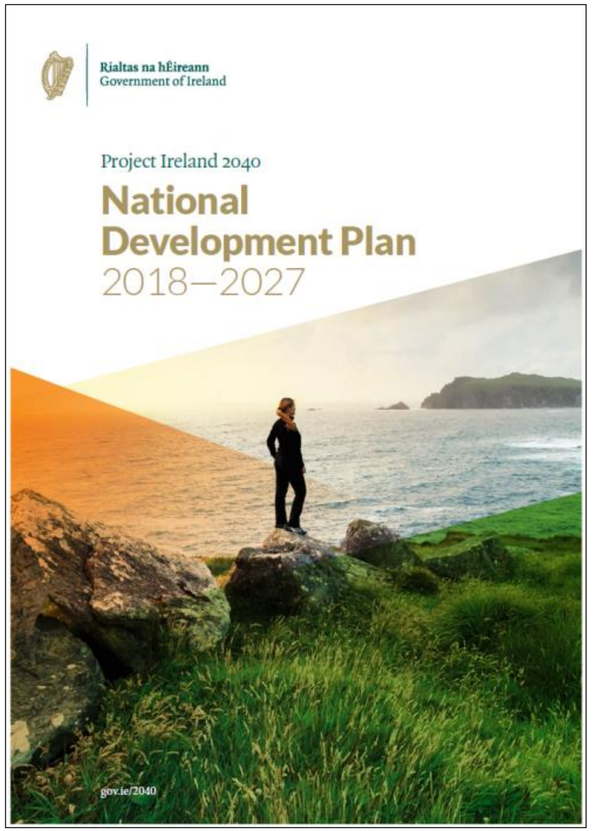
- 1 million population increase in Ireland by 2040.
- Provision of water services infrastructure needed to facilitate development in a sustainable manner.
- Link to planning at regional and county level.
- Local government a key partner.

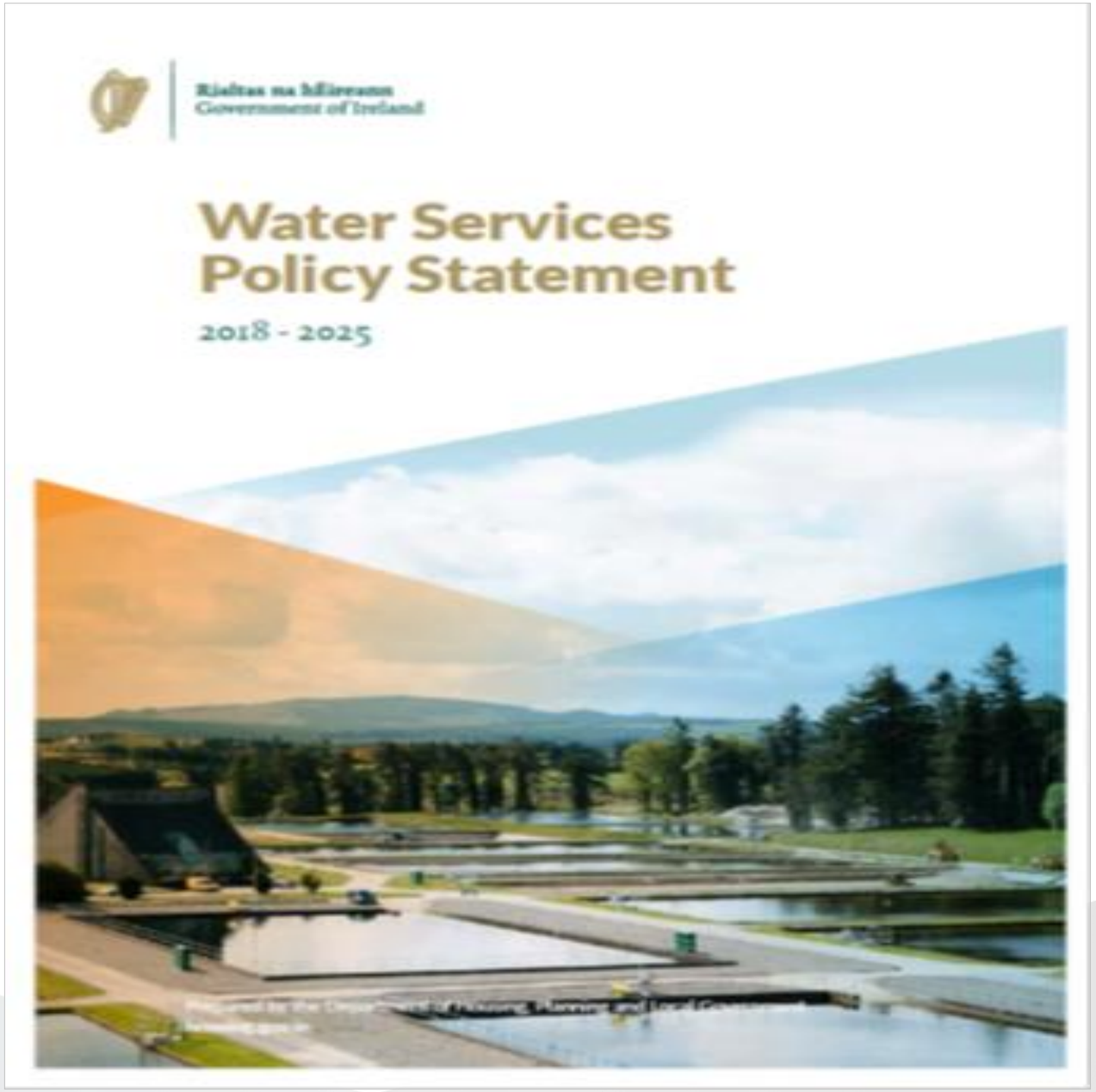


National Development Plan

10 Year investment horizon:

- €8.8 billion for public water services
- €95 million for the Rural Water Programme 2018-2021
- €41 million for legacy issues - lead pipes, developer provided infrastructure (2018-2021)





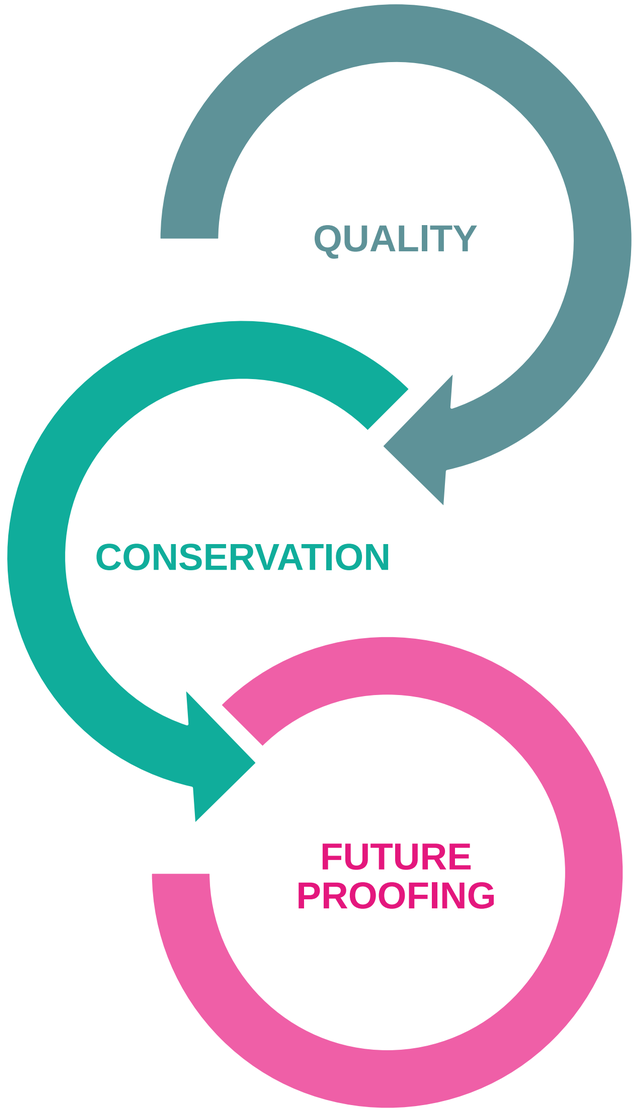
Published following Government approval on 21 May 2018

4 High Level Principles

Structure services around Ireland's needs:

- The centrality of customers
- A focus on quality health and environmental outcomes
- A national national water services authority – in public ownership - Irish Water
- Working together in partnership with clear governance arrangements and agreed outcomes

3 Key Themes Themes



- Quality: in drinking water and waste water treatment
- Conservation: tackling leakage and excessive usage
- Future proofing - economic growth, resilience and climate change

Quality

Objectives:

- Substantial State investment, through Irish Water and the Rural Water Programme.
- Ensuring public water and wastewater services meet international benchmarks – independently verified.
- Achieving improved outcomes for rural and private drinking water and wastewater treatment.
- Use forward planning and risk management to minimise and eliminate non-compliances with EU Directives

Conservation

Objectives:

- Embedding conservation at the heart of water policy through:
  - prioritising resource management,
  - abstraction control,
  - source protection,
  - tackling leakage, and
  - encouraging behavioural change.
- Reflected in strategic investment planning by Irish Water.
- Work programmes for leak detection, awareness, first-fix, network improvements
- Informs the review of rural water services currently underway

Future Proofing

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Objectives:

- Ensuring investment decisions are aligned with strategic aims of *Project Ireland 2040 and National Planning Framework*.
- Adapting water services to withstand the impact of climate change.
- Improving the resilience of rural and private water supplies.
- Supporting population and economic growth, including housing, competitiveness, security of supply and energy efficiency

Funding Security

Water Services Policy Statement

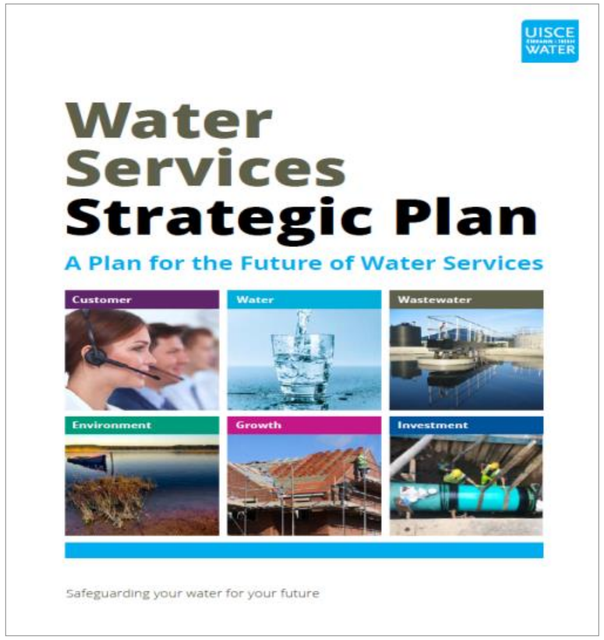
Water Services Strategic Plan (25 years)

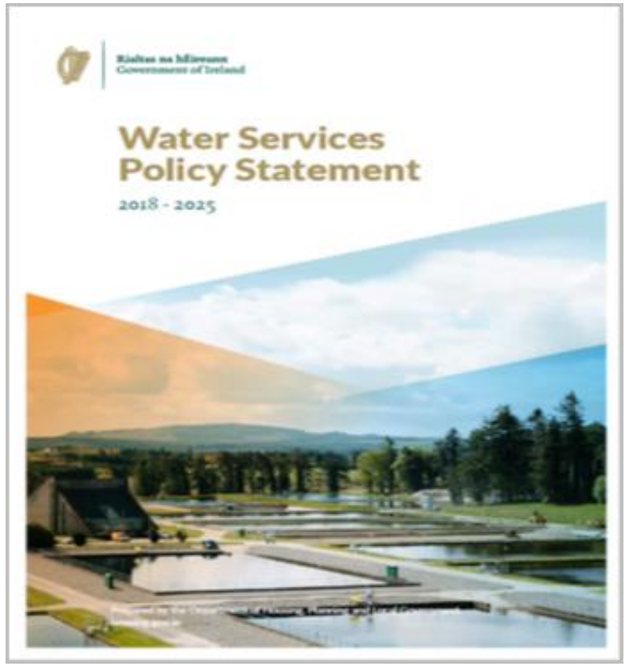
Strategic Funding Plan

CRU
Allowed Revenue

Non-Domestic, Excessive domestic use paid through Tariffs

Normal Usage
Domestic paid by the Dept

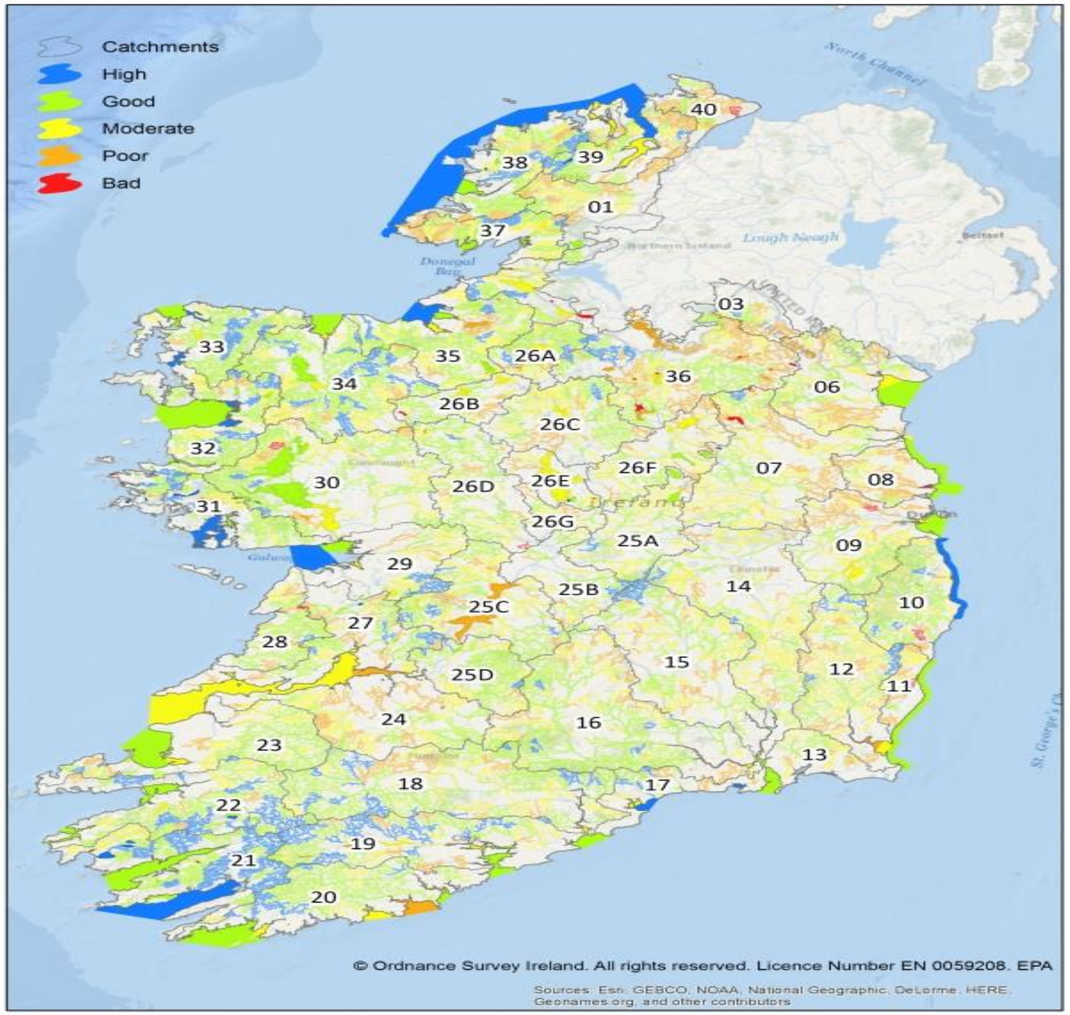


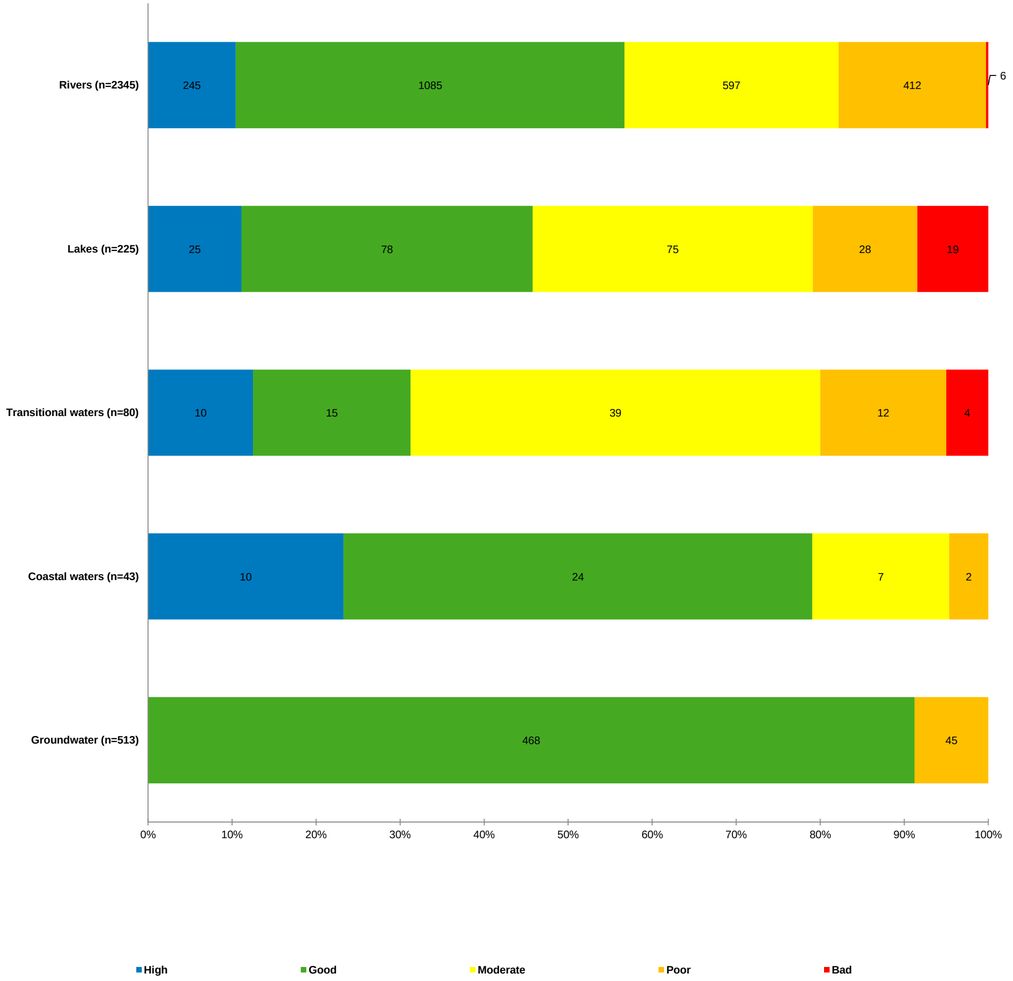


River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021

- Mandated by the Water Framework Directive
- Published April 2018
- Part of Ireland’s commitment to achieving good ecological status in its waters

River Basin Management Plan Context – Water Quality Status





Programme of Measures

Including:

- Urban waste water
- Agriculture
- Water abstractions
- Water and Planning guidance
- Drinking water source protection
- Domestic waste water treatment systems
- Physical condition of surface waters

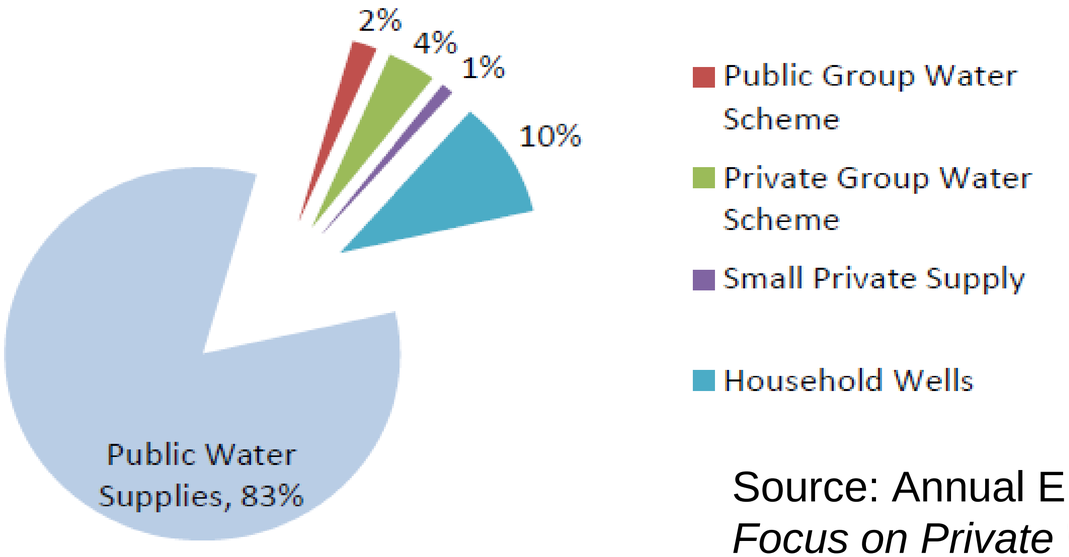
River Basin Management Plan

Work programme for Third-cycle 2022-2027

Dec 2018 - Jun 2019	Dec 2019 – Jun 2020	Dec 2020	Dec 2020- Jun 2021	Dec 2021
Consult on Timetable	**Interim SWMI**	**Draft plan**	**Consult on draft plan**	**Final plan published**
Public consultation on the timetable and work programme for the Third-cycle River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027	Publish an interim overview of Significant Water Management Issues in Ireland (SWMI). Identifies the issues to be addressed in the 3rd RBMP	Publish draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027	Public consultation on the draft plan, including opportunity to comment on the prioritization of water bodies, objectives, and measures proposed.	Publish finalised River Basin Management Plan for the period 2022 to 2027

The Rural Water Sector

- **Drinking Water** - Group Water Schemes, Small Private Supplies and Household Wells.



Source: Annual EPA Reports on Drinking
Focus on Private Water Supplies 2016.

- **Waste Water** - Circa 30% of households in rural Ireland depend on individual waste water treatment systems mostly septic tanks.
- Outcomes not as good as for public supplies and treatment

Review of rural water services investment needs

Report of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Future Funding of Domestic Water Services - April 2017

April 2018 - Minister established Working Group

Strand 1

- Composition and distribution of funding for the Multi-annual Rural Water Programme from 2019 to 2021 (€75m).

- Approved by Minister – announced early February 2019. Group water schemes – new and upgraded, connection of schemes to public supply, private wells, septic tanks

Strand 2

- More complex longer-focus issues - the future resourcing of the rural water sector

- Future administrative structures – report with Group

Protecting Ireland’s Marine Environment

- Marine Planning Policy Statement
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive

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Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- The Marine Strategy Framework Directive requires Member States to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES), while setting environmental targets and threshold values that will contribute to achieving that objective.

- Regional and transboundary coordination and cooperation is a requirement of MSFD.

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MSFD Descriptors (criteria) for determining GES

Biological diversity 1	Non-indigenous species 2	Population of commercial fish/shellfish 3	Elements of marine food webs 4
Eutrophication 5	Sea floor integrity 6	Alterations of hydrographical conditions 7	Contaminants 8
GES 11 Descriptors	Contaminants in fish and seafood for human consumption 9	Marine litter 10	Introduction of energy including underwater noise 11

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Implementation update MSFD

- **6-year cycles** with delivery deadlines every 2 years; Cycle 2 **(2016-2022)**. Each cycle requires:
  - *an Initial Assessment of environmental status of our maritime area (EEZ) and the setting of appropriate targets and indicators to measure, maintain or achieve GES*
  - *A monitoring programme*
  - *A programme of measures to achieve GES*
- Ireland has commenced cycle 2 with the formation of a National Steering Group and Thematic Working Groups, **launched in April** this year.

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Implementation of MSFD Cont/…

Timetable:

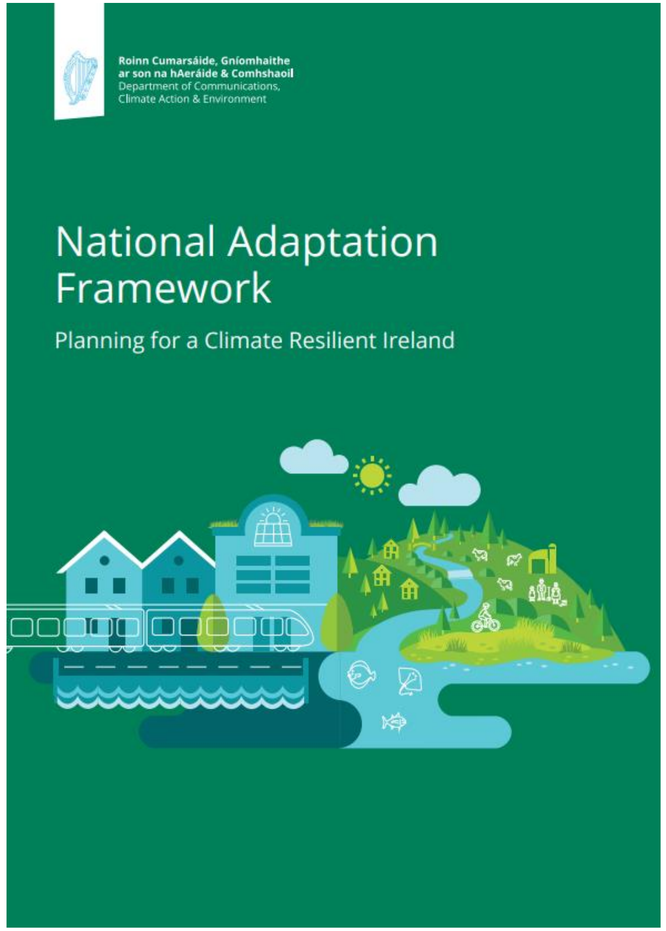
- *Revision of definition of GES, environmental targets and indicators –* ***April 2020***
- *Revision of monitoring programme –* ***December 2020***
- *Revision of Programme of Measures -* ***October 2022***

Climate: National Adaptation Framework

- All-of-Government approach

- Addresses 12 adaptation sectors

- D/HPLG: Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Water Quality & Water Services Infrastructure



Climate Adaptation Plan

- Establish our current climate baseline
- Understand possible future impacts
- Give strategic direction to sector
- Mainstream climate in decision-making

Some Priorities

- Irish Water Transformation Programme
- Plan to implement Government decision (July 2018) to establish Irish Water as a standalone publicly owned, commercial, regulated utility.
- Progress on implementing key reforms (excess use, rationalisation of charges etc)

Future Strategic Issues

- Responding to Climate Change
- Compliance with Directives (and reformed WFD)
- CAP reform
- 3rd River Basin Management Plan
- Brexit issues?

Update on EU Cases

Urban Waste Water (Case C-427/17)

Stage: judgment delivered on 28 March 2019

Main issue(s): collection systems, treatment and prior-authorisation

Programme of actions submitted to EU Commission in May 2019

Drinking Water

Stage: letter of formal notice

Main issue(s): Compliance with trihalomethane (THM) parametric value in drinking water and procedures for informing consumers on the quality of drinking water

Water Framework Directive

Stage: second letter of formal notice

Main issue(s): approach taken to transposing the Water Framework Directive

Response submitted to the EU Commission in May 2019

Update on EU Cases

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Stage: Letter of Formal Notice

Main issues(s): Failure to meet deadlines for 2nd Cycle actions

Response submitted to EU Commission March 2019

Optimism for future of water services

- People
- Policy
- Funding
- Structures