Overview

January 2026 began cold and mostly dry, with spells of crisp winter sunshine and widespread frost at night. During the second half of January, a strong southerly displaced North Atlantic jet stream directed a succession of low-pressure systems toward the country from the southwest. Repeated frontal rainbands moved up from the south, giving prolonged spells of heavy rain, concentrated over the south and east of the country. The cumulative effect of the prolonged wet spell for the south and east caused significant flooding in places. A notable event during this period was Storm Chandra, named by the UK Met Office, which rapidly deepened to the south of Ireland on Monday 26th. As it tracked north late on the 26th into Tuesday 27th, it brought strong winds and widespread heavy rainfall. The month finished with further bands of rain or showers, mainly affecting the south and east

River flows in January mirrored rainfall patterns with particularly high river flows recorded in the east and southeast of the country. Elsewhere, river flows generally decreased when compared to December 2025. Similarly, lake levels decreased at 90% of lake sites monitored with only 6% above the long-term normal range. Groundwater levels decreased at 82% of the monitoring sites with 33% above the long-term range. Out of the five spring flows monitored, 4 were in the 'normal' range and 1 was 'below normal'.

Rainfall

January 2026 rainfall values were above average in most places, wettest in the south and east. The majority of monthly rainfall totals were above their 1991-2020 Long-Term Average (LTA). Percentage of monthly rainfall values ranged from 87% (the month's lowest monthly rainfall total of 90.5mm) at Shannon Airport, Co. Clare to 230% (the month's highest monthly rainfall total of 232.7mm) at Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford (its wettest January since 1996). The month's wettest day was also recorded at Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford with 37.3mm on Friday 30th (its highest daily fall for January since 1979). The number of rain days ranged from 22 days at Casement Aerodrome, Co. Dublin to 30 days at both Newport, Co. Mayo and Valentia Observatory, Co. Kerry. The number of wet days ranged from 16 days at both Athenry, Co. Galway and Mount Dillon, Co. Roscommon to 27 days at Valentia Observatory, Co. Kerry. The number of very wet days ranged from 1 day at Shannon Airport, Co. Clare to 9 days at both Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford and Valentia Observatory, Co. Kerry. It was the wettest January since 1948 and 2nd wettest on record at both Phoenix Park, Co. Dublin with 141mm (225% of its LTA) and Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin with 137.7mm (223% of its LTA). It was the wettest January since 1995 at Casement Aerodrome, Co. Dublin with 114.5mm (176% of its LTA). Oak Park, Co. Carlow has its wettest January since 2014 with 142.3 m (177% of its LTA) and both Cork Airport with 200.5mm (153% of its LTA) and Moore Park, Co. Cork with 143.7mm (131% of its LTA) had their wettest January since 2016.

River Flows

The average river flows for January decreased at 78% of the river monitoring stations compared to average flows observed in December 2025. Analysis of the monthly average flows at 140 river monitoring sites, identified, 27 (19%) as 'particularly high', 18 (13%) as 'above normal', 88 (63%) as 'normal', and 7 (5%) as 'below normal'. Monitoring stations with river flows classified above the long-term normal range were seen in the east and south-east where there was significant flooding in places (see Figure 6).

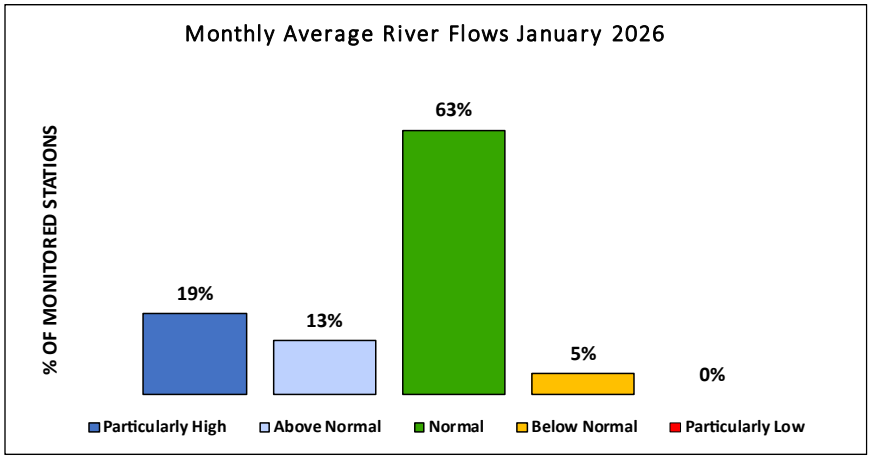


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of river flow monitoring sites within each of the percentile flow categories for January 2026

Lake and Turlough Levels

Average water levels for January decreased at 90% of the lake sites monitored compared to December 2025. Monthly average levels at 30 lakes and 2 turloughs were classified as being 'above normal' at 2 (6%), 'normal' at 22 (69%), 'below normal' at 7 (22%) and 'particularly low' at 1 lake (3%) [Shindilla, Co. Galway]

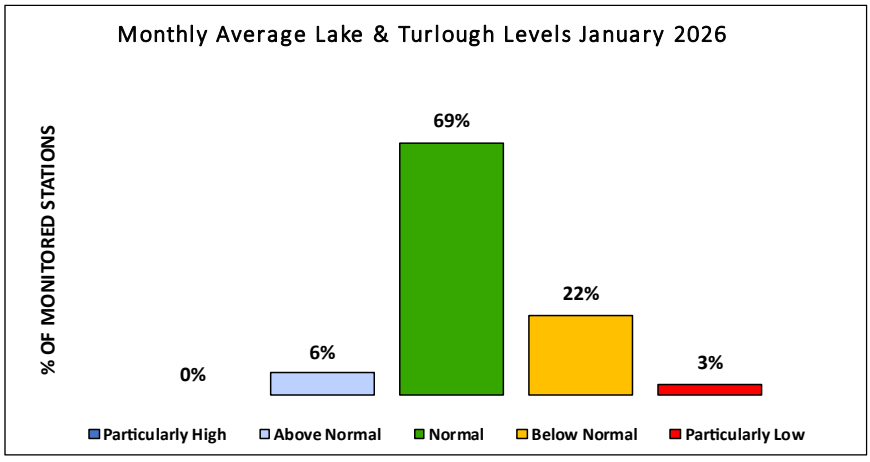


Figure 2: Percentage distribution of lake and turlough level monitoring sites within each of the percentile flow categories for January 2026

Groundwater Levels and Spring Flows

Groundwater levels for January were lower at 82% the monitoring wells compared to average levels observed in December 2025. Groundwater levels at 34 monitoring wells were classified as being 'particularly high' at 3 (9%), 'above normal' at 8 (24%), 'normal' at 14 (41%), and 'below normal' at 9 wells (26%).

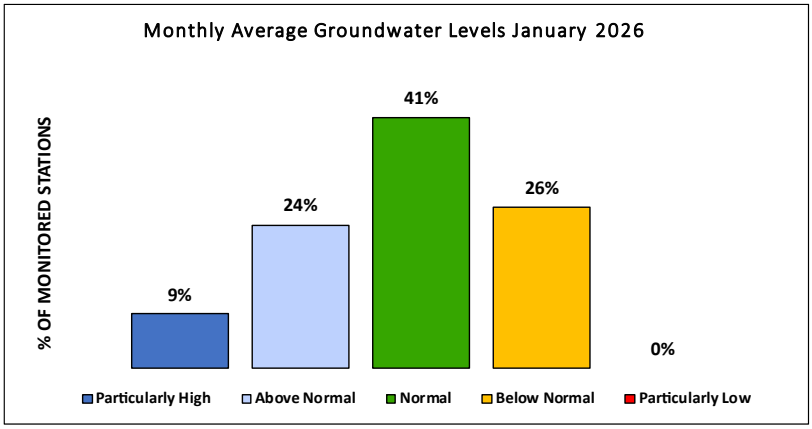


Figure 3: Percentage distribution of groundwater level sites within each of the percentile flow categories for January 2026

Spring outflows were also monitored at 5 EPA monitoring sites for January. The outflows from these springs were compared to previously recorded January flows and were classified as 'normal' at 4 springs, and 'below normal' at 1 spring.

Rainfall

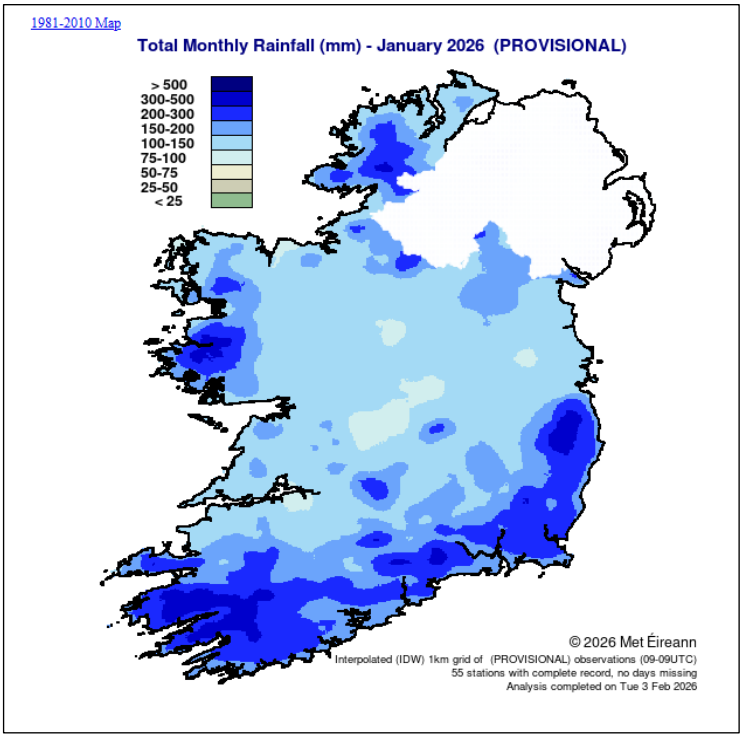


*Figure 4: Rainfall map for Ireland January 2026 (**Source: Met Eireann.ie**).*

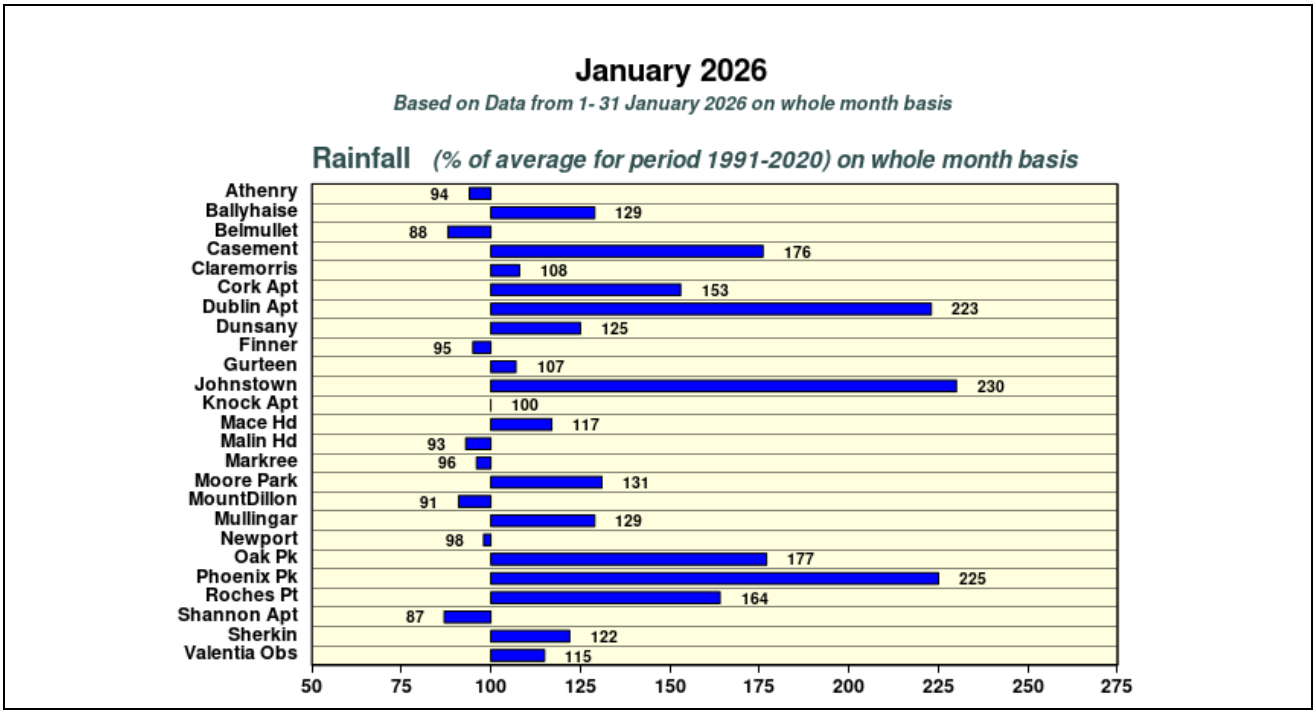


*Figure 5: Summary of rainfall at synoptic stations for January 2026, figures indicate the percentage difference from the Long-Term Average rainfall for this month **(Source: Met Eireann.ie).***

River Flows

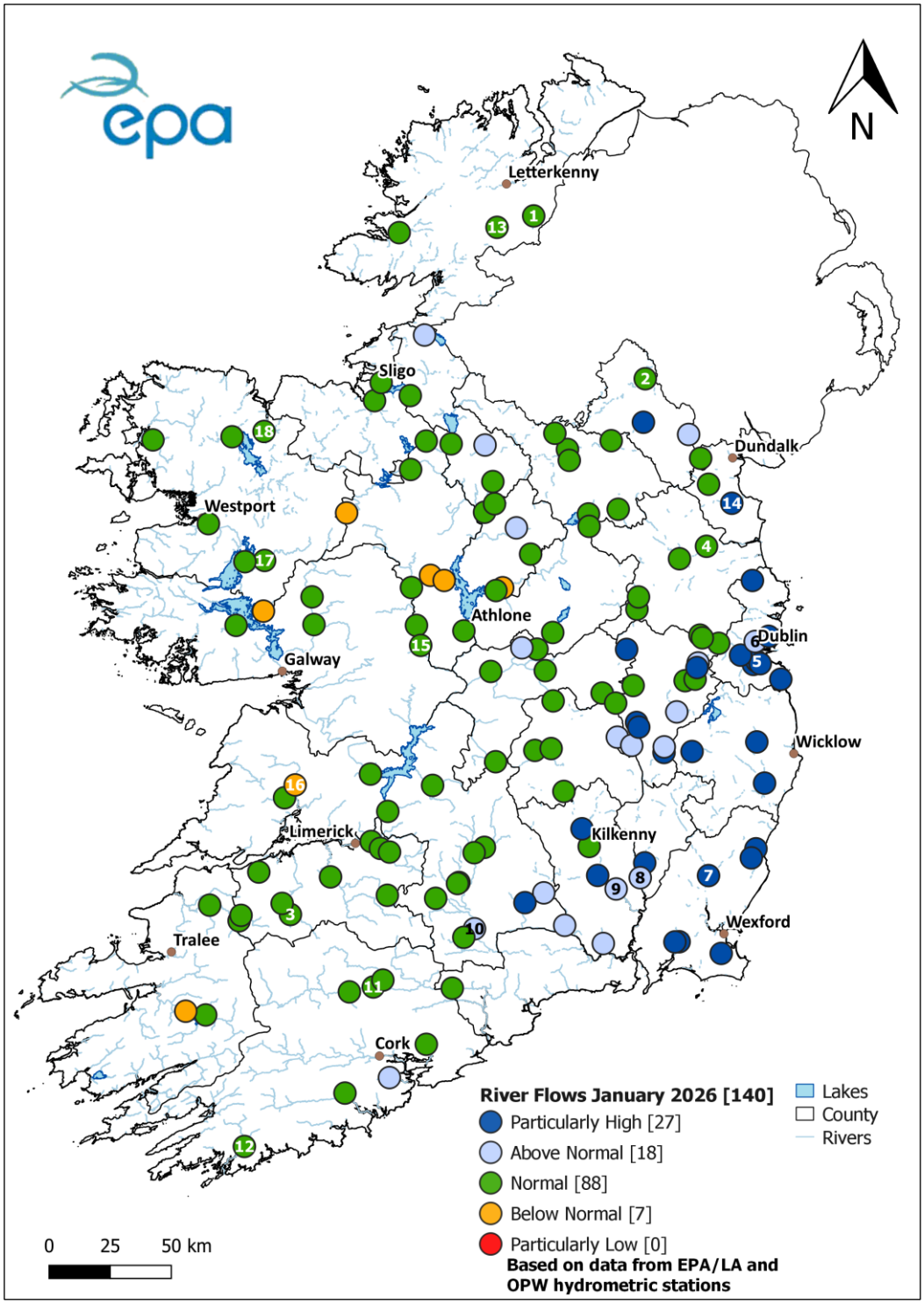


Figure 6: Monthly average river flows for January 2026 relative to historic monthly average flows expressed as percentile of the long-term values of monthly flow. Numbered sites are represented in the hydrographs below. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW).***

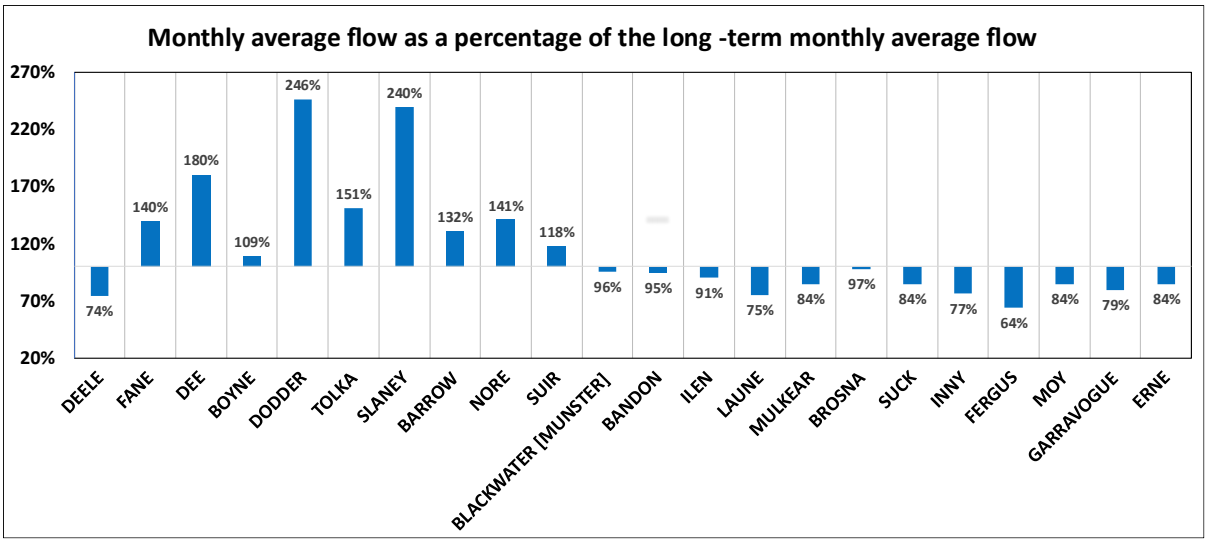
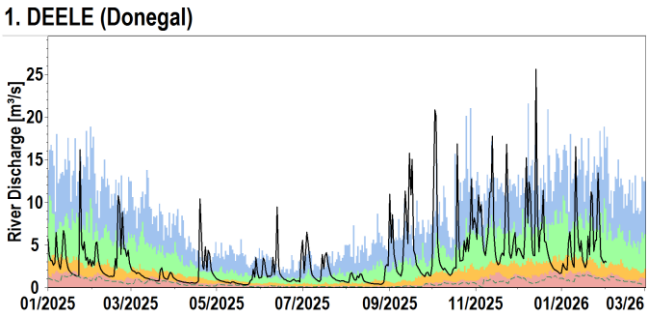
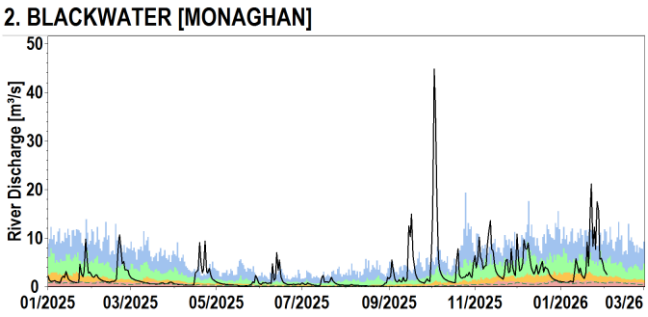
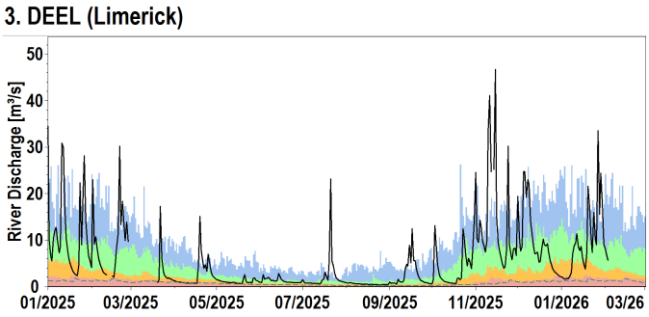


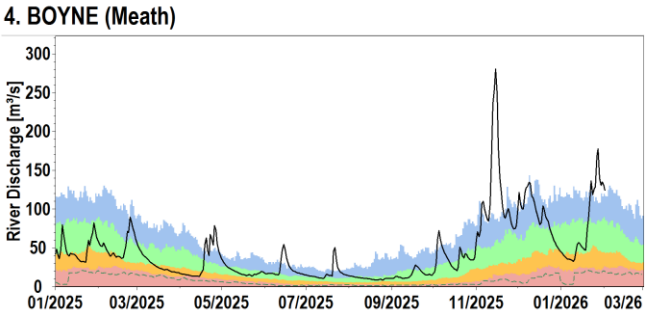
Figure 7: January 2026 average flows as a percentage of the long-term monthly average flow for this month at a selected number of stations. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW)***

Flow hydrographs for selected rivers.

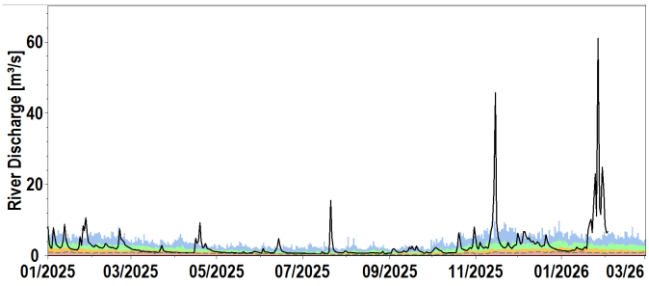




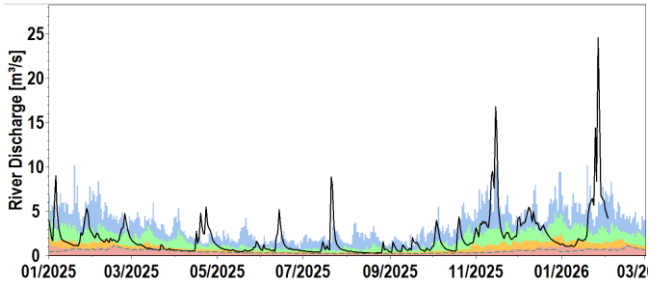




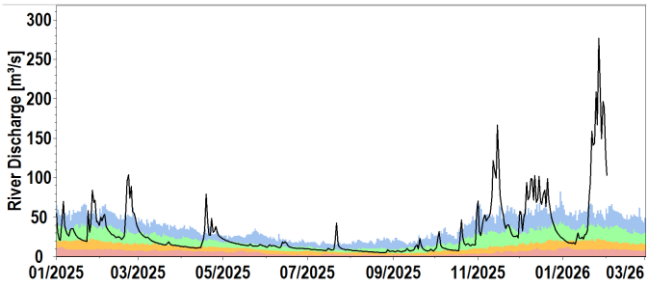
5. DODDER (Dublin)



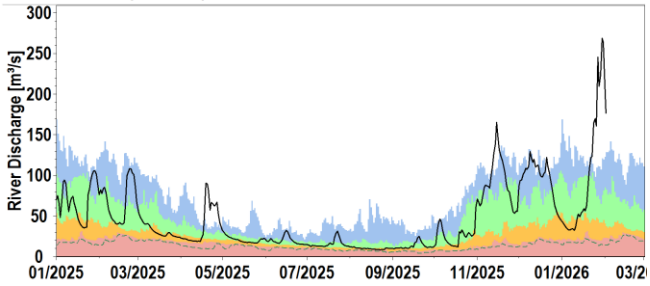
6. TOLKA (Dublin)



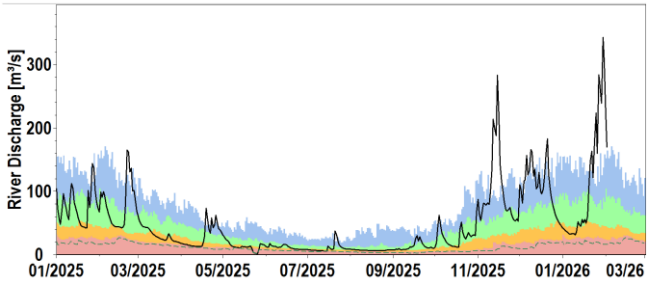
7. SLANEY (Wexford)



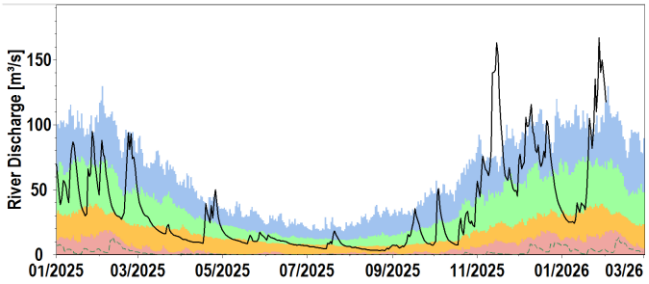
8. BARROW (Carlow)



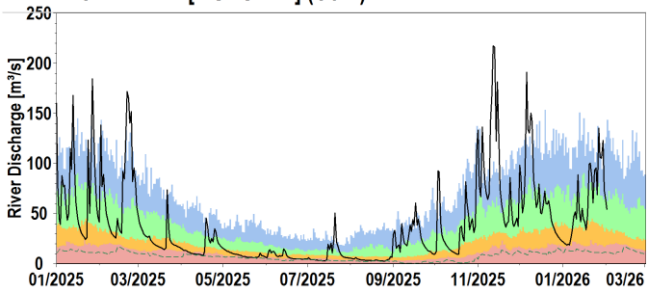
9. NORE (Kilkenny)



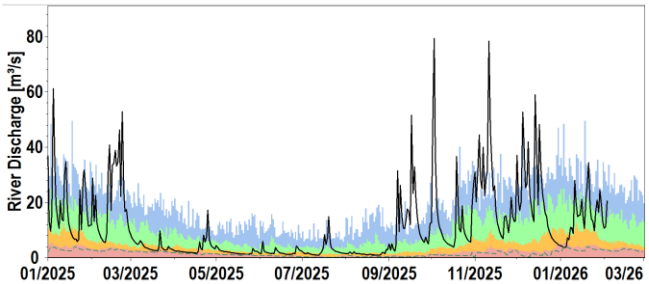
10. SUIR (Tipperary)



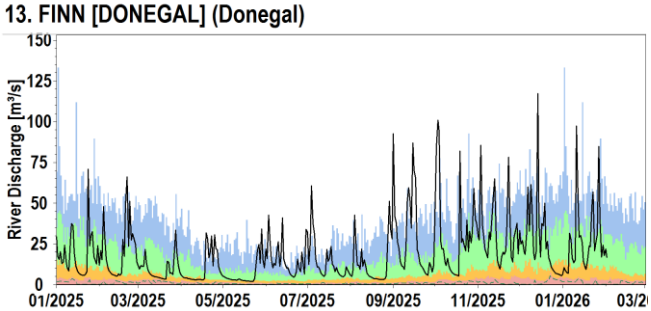
11. BLACKWATER [MUNSTER] (Cork)



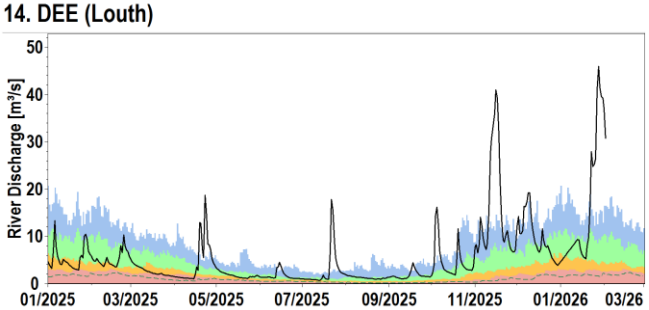
12. ILEN (Cork)



13. FINN [DONEGAL] (Donegal)



14. DEE (Louth)



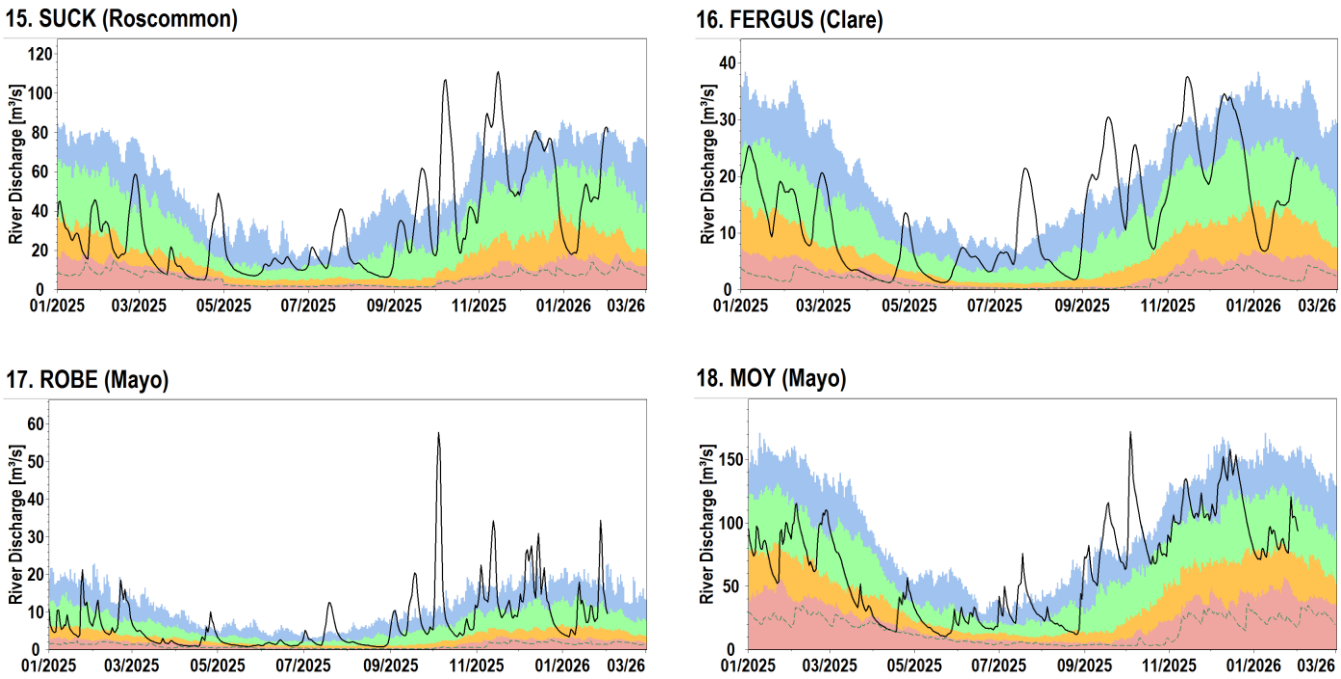


Figure 8: Daily average river flows measured in cubic metres per second relative to historic daily average flows expressed as percentile of the long-term values of each day and long-term minimum flows. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW).***

Explanation – Classes						
Particularly Low **<95%tile daily average flow**	**Below Normal** **>95%tile <70%tile daily average flow**	**Normal** **>70 %tile <30%tile daily average flow**	**Above Normal** **>30%tile 10%tile daily average flow**	**Particularly High** **>10%tile daily average flow**	**Daily Mean Flow**	**Lowest Daily Mean Flow**

Lake and Turlough Levels

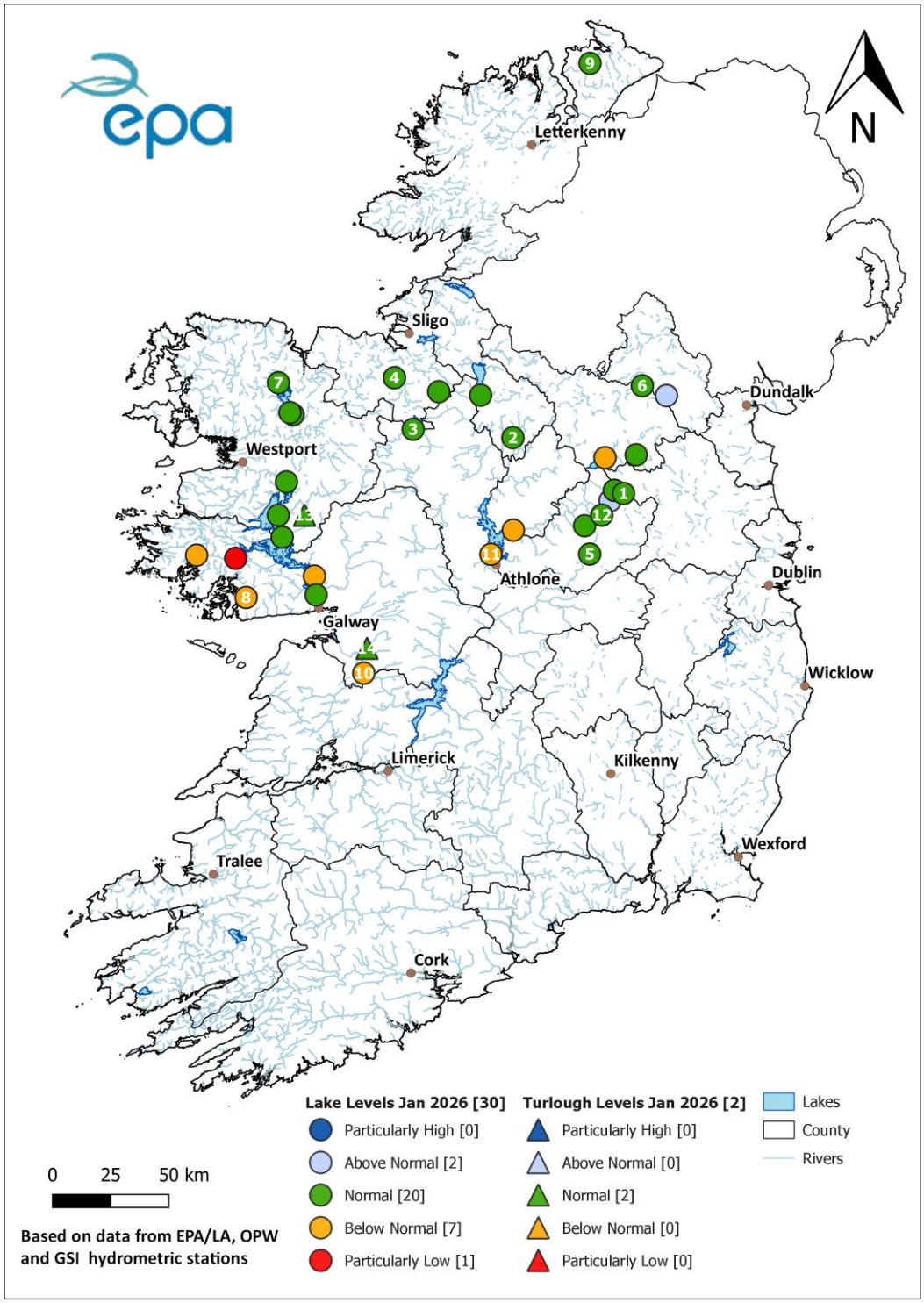
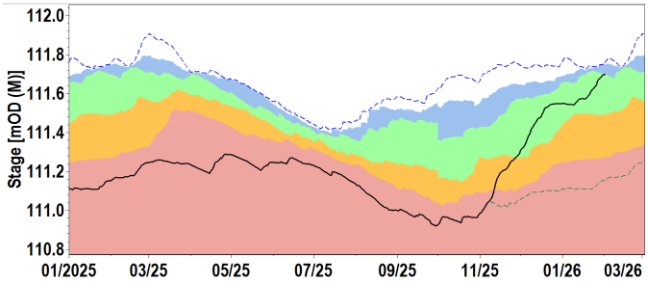


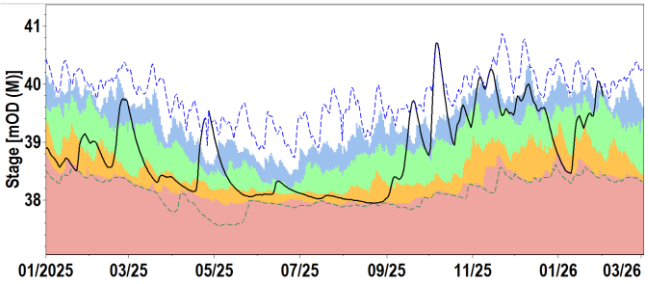
Figure 9: Monthly average lake & turlough levels for January 2026 relative to historic monthly average levels expressed as percentile of the long- term values for this month. Numbered sites are represented in the hydrographs below. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW and GSI).***

Water level hydrographs for selected lakes and turloughs

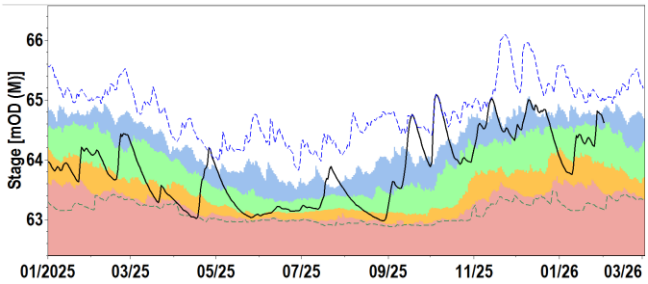
1. L. BANE (Meath)



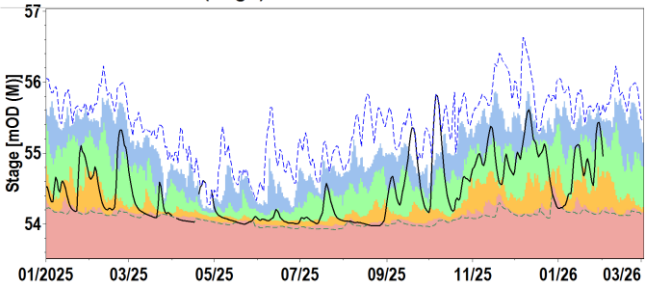
2. LOUGH RINN (Leitrim)



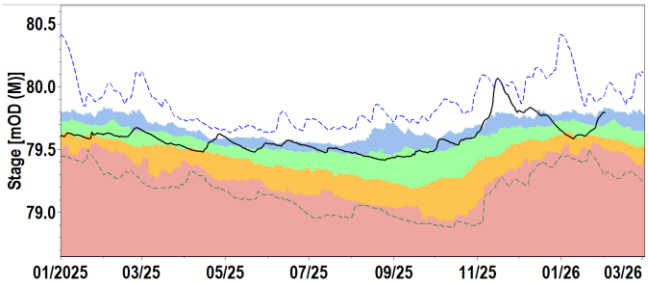
3. L. GARA (Sligo)



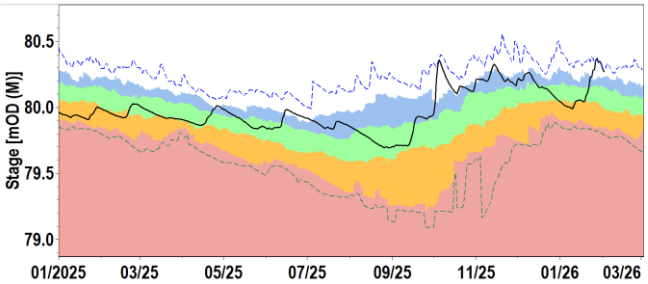
4. L.TEMPLEHOUSE (Sligo)



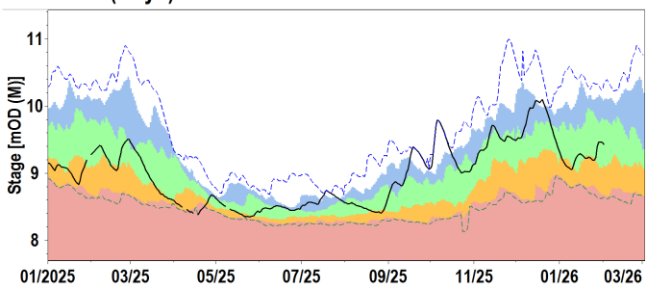
5. L.ENNELL (Westmeath)



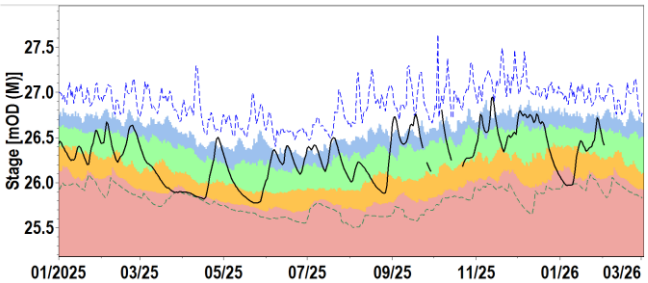
6. CORAGH LOUGH (Cavan)



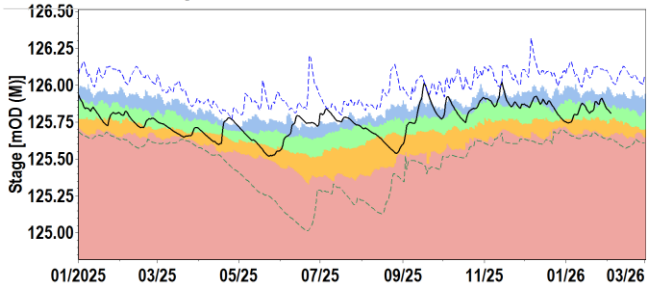
7. L.CONN (Mayo)



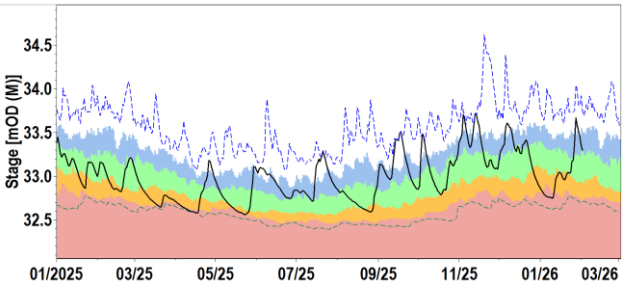
8. GLENICMURRIN LAKE (Galway)



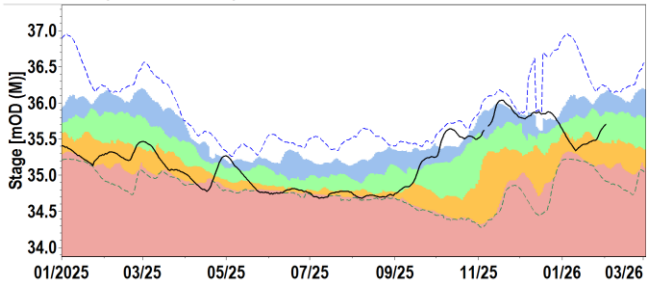
9. L.FAD(W) (Donegal)



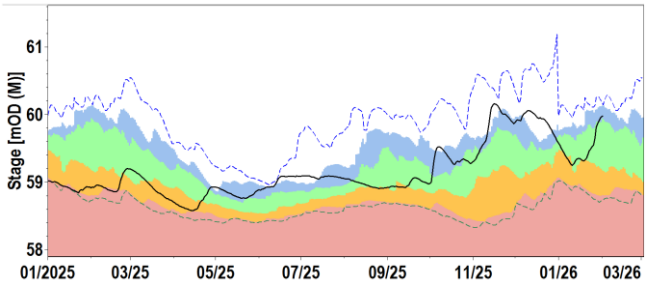
10. L.CUTRA (Galway)



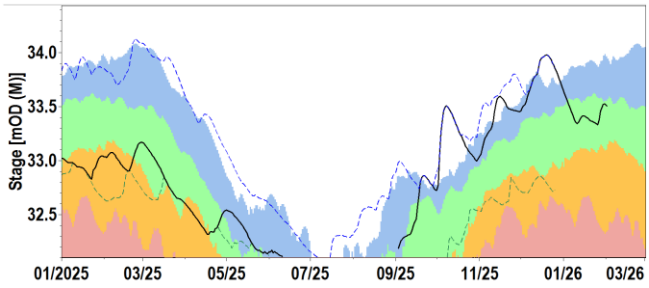
11. L.REE (Roscommon)



12. L.DERRAVARAGH (Westmeath)

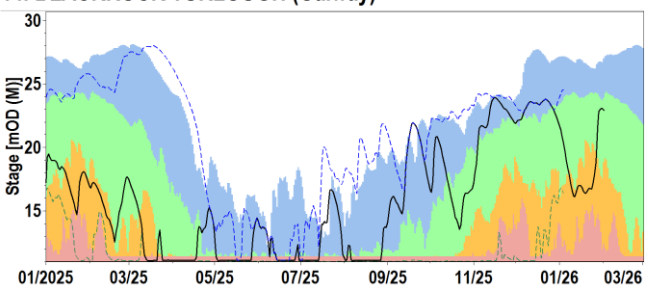


13. SKEALOGHAN TURLOUGH (Mayo)



** Modelled long-term percentiles

14. BLACKROCK TURLOUGH (Galway)



** Modelled long-term percentiles

Figure 10: Observed daily mean lake and turlough levels (black trace) measured in meters above ordnance datum compared to the 10%tile, 30%tile, 70%tile and 95%tile for each month for the period of record and observed long-term maximum and minimum levels. Note historic percentiles for turloughs are based on modelled data. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW, GSI, TCD, IT Carlow).***

Explanation - Classes							
Particularly Low <95%tile daily average level	Below Normal >95%tile <70%tile daily average level	Normal >70 %tile <30%tile daily average level	Above Normal >30%tile <10%tile daily average level	Particularly High >10%tile daily average level	Daily Mean Level mOD	Highest Daily Mean Level mOD	Lowest Daily Mean Level mOD

Groundwater Levels and Spring Flows

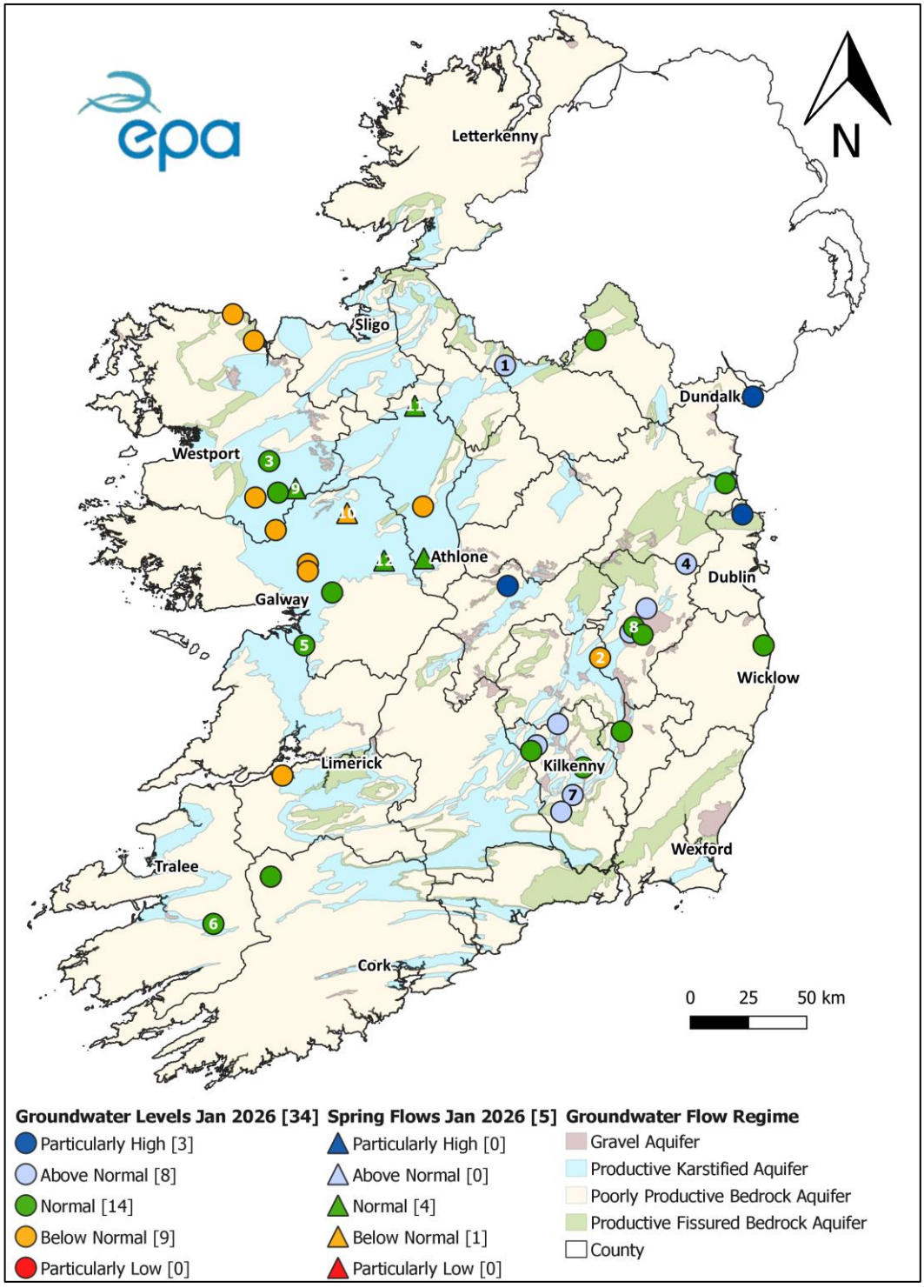
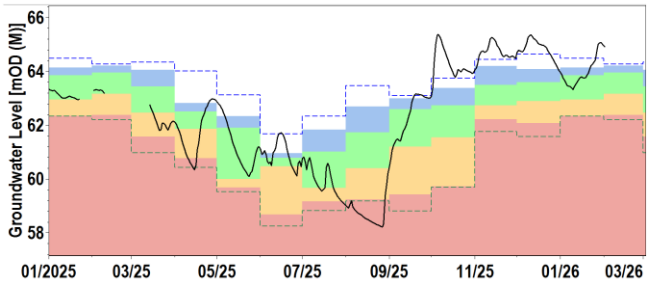


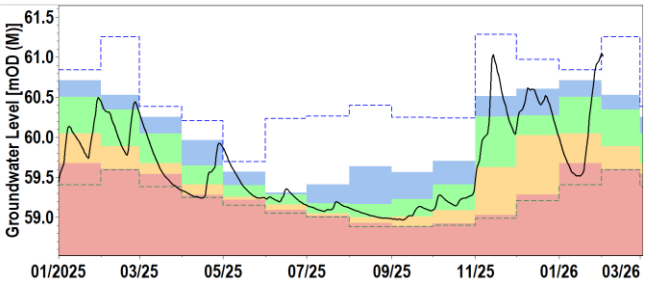
Figure 11: Groundwater level and Spring Flow status for January 2026, relative to historic monthly groundwater levels. Numbered sites are represented in the hydrographs below. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA).***

Groundwater and spring hydrographs

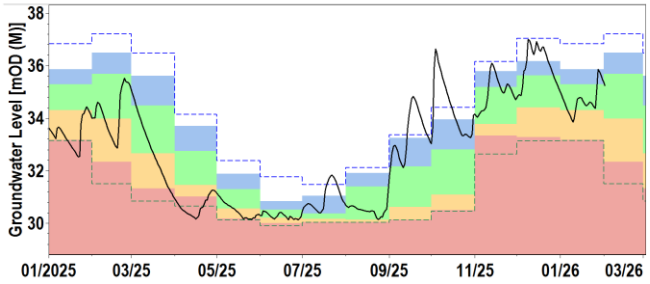
1. BAWN BOY WORKHOUSE (Cavan)



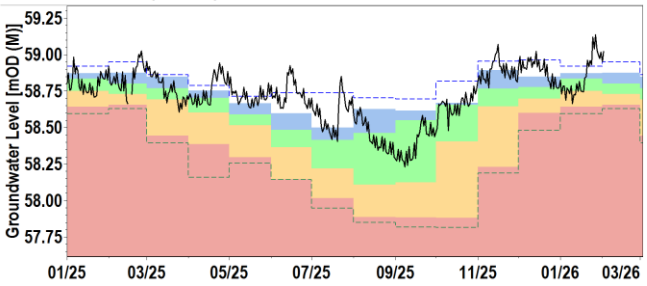
2. VICKERSTOWN (Laois)



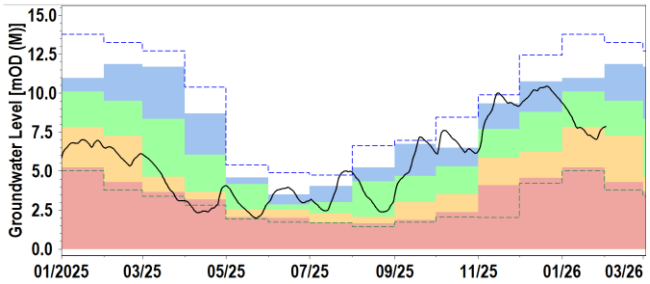
3. MAYO ABBEY (Mayo)



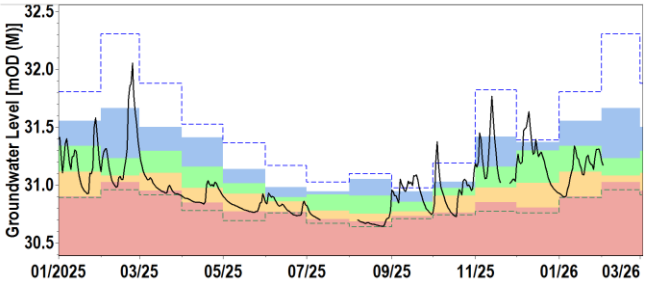
4. RW1 - DEEP (Meath)



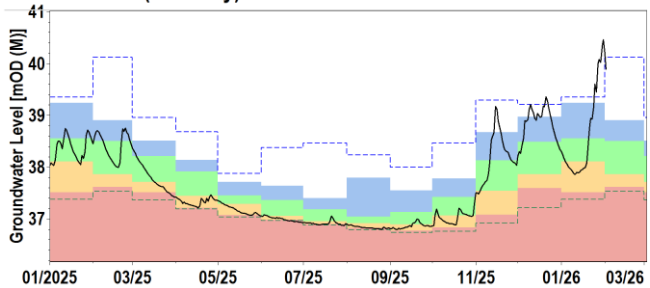
5. KILLINY (Galway)



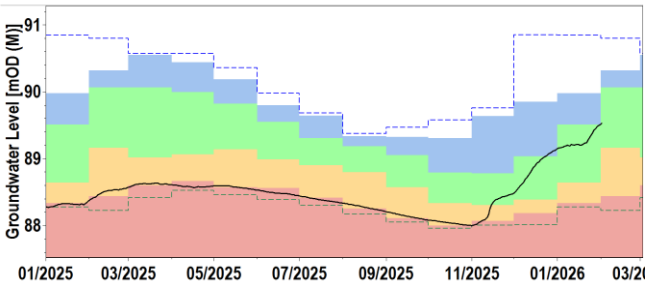
6. FBH9 - FLESK (Kerry)



7. RATHDUFF (Kilkenny)



8. POLLARDSTOWN FEN - MB 30 (Kildare)



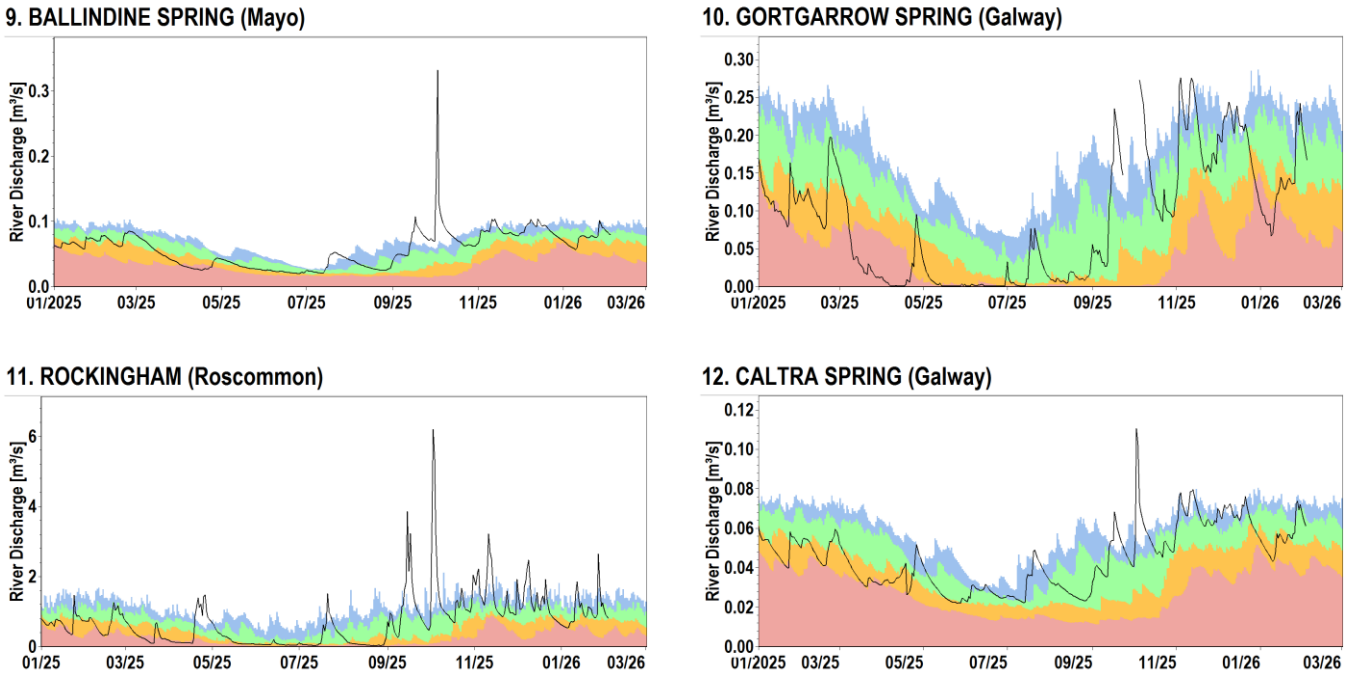


Figure 12: Daily mean groundwater levels (black trace) measured in meters above ordnance datum compared to the 10%tile, 30%tile, 70%tile and 95%tile for each month for the period of record and long-term maximum and minimum levels. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA)****.*

Explanation - Classes							
Particularly Low **<95%tile monthly average level**	**Below Normal** **>95%tile <70%tile monthly average level**	**Normal** **>70 %tile <30%tile monthly average level**	**Above Normal** **>30%tile <10%tile monthly average level**	**Particularly High** **>10%tile monthly average level**	**Daily Mean Level mOD**	**Highest Month Mean Level mOD**	**Lowest Month Mean Level mOD**

Glossary of terms

Aquifer Type	An aquifer is an underground body of water bearing rock or unconsolidated materials (gravel or sand) from which groundwater can be extracted in useful amounts. For the purposes of this report, they have been grouped into four aquifer categories as follows: ➢ Karstic (Rk and Lk) aquifers; ➢ Gravel (Rg and Lg) aquifers; ➢ Productive fractured bedrock (Rf and Lm) aquifers; ➢ Poorly productive bedrock (Ll, Pl and Pu) aquifers.
Long term average (LTA)	The arithmetic mean calculated from historic record. For rainfall, the period 1981 to 2010 is used. For other parameters, such as groundwater levels, lake levels and river flow the period may vary according to data availability.
mOD (M or P)	Groundwater levels or lake levels above ordnance datum. In most cases this is relative to mean sea level at Malin (M) but in some cases is relative to Poolbeg (P).
Long-term monthly average	The arithmetic mean calculated from historic record of all monthly averages.
Percentile Level/Flow	Level or flow that is equalled or exceeded the stated percent of the time, e.g. 30%tile is the level or flow that is equalled or exceeded 30 percent of the time.
Very Wet Days	A very wet day is a day with 10.0 mm or more of rainfall.
Wet Days	A wet day is a day with 1.0 mm or more of rainfall.
Absolute Drought	An absolute drought is a period of 15 or more consecutive days to none of which is credited 0.2 mm or more of precipitation.
Partial Drought	A partial drought is a period of at least 29 consecutive days, the mean daily rainfall of which does not exceed 0.2 mm
Dry spell	A dry spell is a period of 15 or more consecutive days to none of which is credited 1.0mm or more of precipitation (i.e. daily tot < 1.0mm).

Description of flow and level percentile classifications

Particularly High	>10%tile exceedance	Monthly level or flow that can occur 10% of the time
Above Normal	>30%tile <10%tile exceedance	Monthly level or flow that can occur 20% of the time
Normal	>70%tile <30%tile exceedance	Monthly level or flow that can occur 40% of the time
Below Normal	>95%tile <70%tile exceedance	Monthly level or flow that can occur 25% of the time
Particularly Low	<95%tile exceedance	Monthly level or flow that can occur 5% of the time

Useful links

Access to EPA/LA Hydrometric data on HydroNet

Access to provisional water level only data from OPW hydrometric stations on waterlevel.ie/

Access to archived water level and flow data from OPW hydrometric stations on waterlevel.ie/hydro-data

Access to turlough and borehole level data from GSI hydrometric stations on gwlevel.ie

Access to this month's Met Éireann and historic weather statements.