Overview

March 2026 was mild and relatively wet overall, driest in the south and southeast. Low pressure to the northwest and high pressure to the southeast brought a mobile Atlantic regime for much of the month with winds mostly between southerly and westerly. This led to periods of frontal rain or showers at times, sometimes heavy, but also periods where transient ridges of high pressure brought some dry days with pleasant spring sunshine.

Compared to February 2026, average river flows in March decreased at almost all of the 135 river monitoring stations assessed, with the greatest decreases observed in the southeast. However, 51% of the monthly average river flows remained above the normal long-term range, particularly in the midlands. Although lake levels decreased at 79% of lake sites monitored, 78% remained above the long-term normal range. Groundwater levels also decreased but remained within the normal or above normal range. Out of the five spring flows monitored, 2 were in the 'above normal' range and 3 were classified as 'normal'.

Rainfall

March 2026 rainfall values were above average in most places, driest in the south and southeast. The majority of monthly rainfall totals were above their 1991-2020 Long-Term Average (LTA). Percentage of monthly rainfall values ranged from 51% (37.2 mm) at Roches Point, Co. Cork to 156% (112.0mm) at Gurteen, Co. Tipperary. Monthly rainfall totals ranged from 37.2mm (51% of its LTA) at Roches Point, Co. Cork to 168.7mm (130% of its LTA) at Newport, Co. Mayo. The highest daily rainfall total was 35.2mm at Athenry, Co. Galway on Tuesday 24th *(its highest daily fall for March on record (length 35 years)).* The number of rain days ranged from 15 days at Phoenix Park, Co. Dublin to 26 days at both Newport, Co Mayo and Valentia Observatory, Co. Kerry. The number of wet days ranged from 7 days at Roches Point, Co. Cork to 20 days at a few stations. The number of very wet days ranged from zero days at both Roches Point, Co. Cork and Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford to 6 days at Newport, Co. Mayo

River Flows

The average river flows for March decreased at 98% of the river monitoring stations compared to average flows observed in February 2026. Analysis of the monthly average flows at 135 river monitoring sites, identified, 24 (18%) as 'particularly high', 44 (33%) as 'above normal', 61 (45%) as 'normal', and 6 (4%) as 'below normal'. Monitoring stations with river flows classified above the long-term normal range were seen mainly in the midlands (see Figure 6).

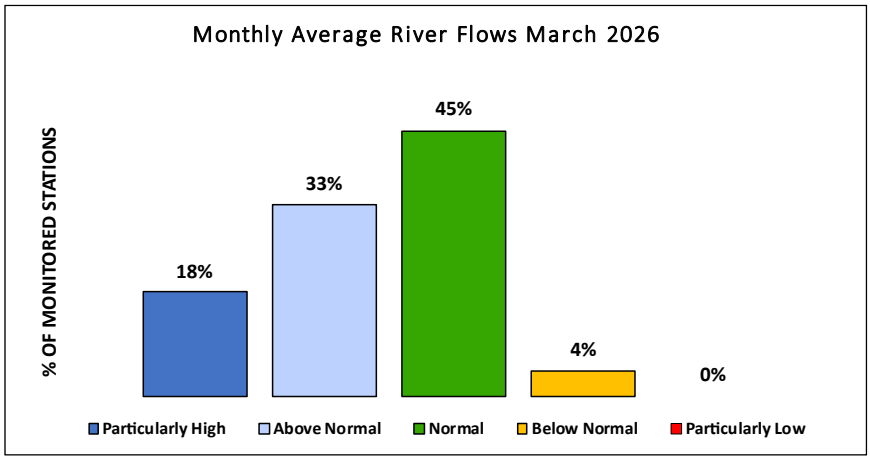


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of river flow monitoring sites within each of the percentile flow categories for March 2026

Lake and Turlough Levels

Average water levels for March decreased at 79% of the lake sites monitored compared to February 2026. Monthly average levels at 30 lakes and 2 turloughs were classified as being 'particularly high' at 5 (16%), 'above normal' at 20 (62%), 'normal' at 6 (19%), and 'below normal' at 1 lake (3%) [Blackrock Lock, Co. Leitrim].

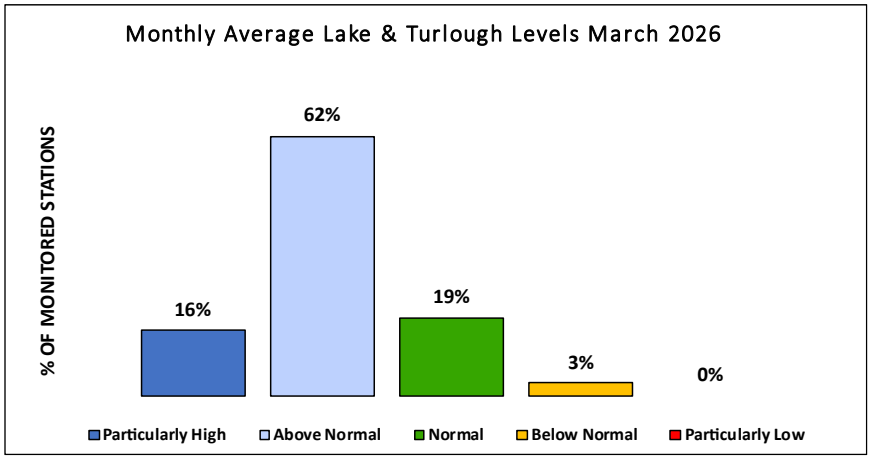


Figure 2: Percentage distribution of lake and turlough level monitoring sites within each of the percentile flow categories for March 2026

Groundwater Levels and Spring Flows

Groundwater levels for March were lower at 78% the monitoring wells compared to average levels observed in February 2026. Groundwater levels at 33 monitoring wells were classified as being 'particularly high' at 10 (30%), 'above normal' at 9 (27%), and 'normal' at 14 (43%) monitoring stations.

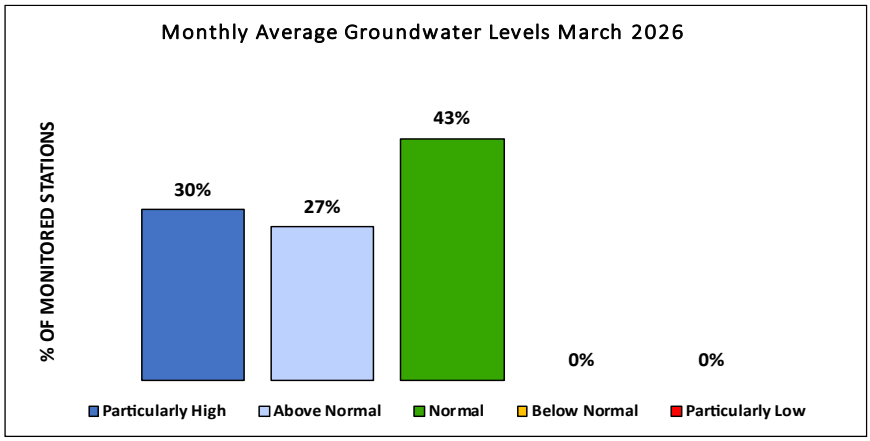


Figure 3: Percentage distribution of groundwater level sites within each of the percentile flow categories for March 2026

Spring outflows were also monitored at 5 EPA monitoring sites for March. The outflows from these springs were compared to previously recorded March flows and were classified as 'above normal' at 2 springs, and 'normal' at 3 spring sites.

Rainfall

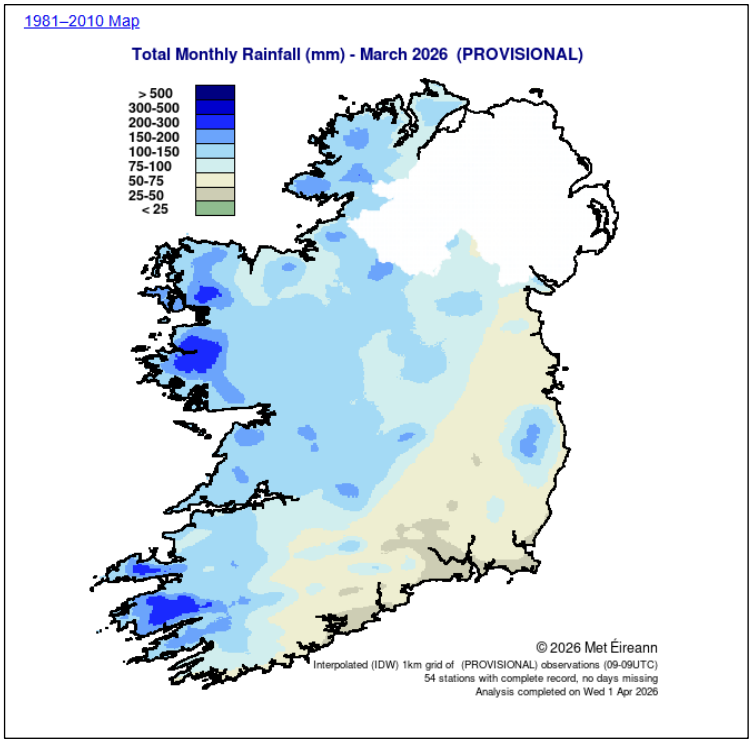


*Figure 4: Rainfall map for Ireland March 2026 (**Source: Met Eireann.ie**).*

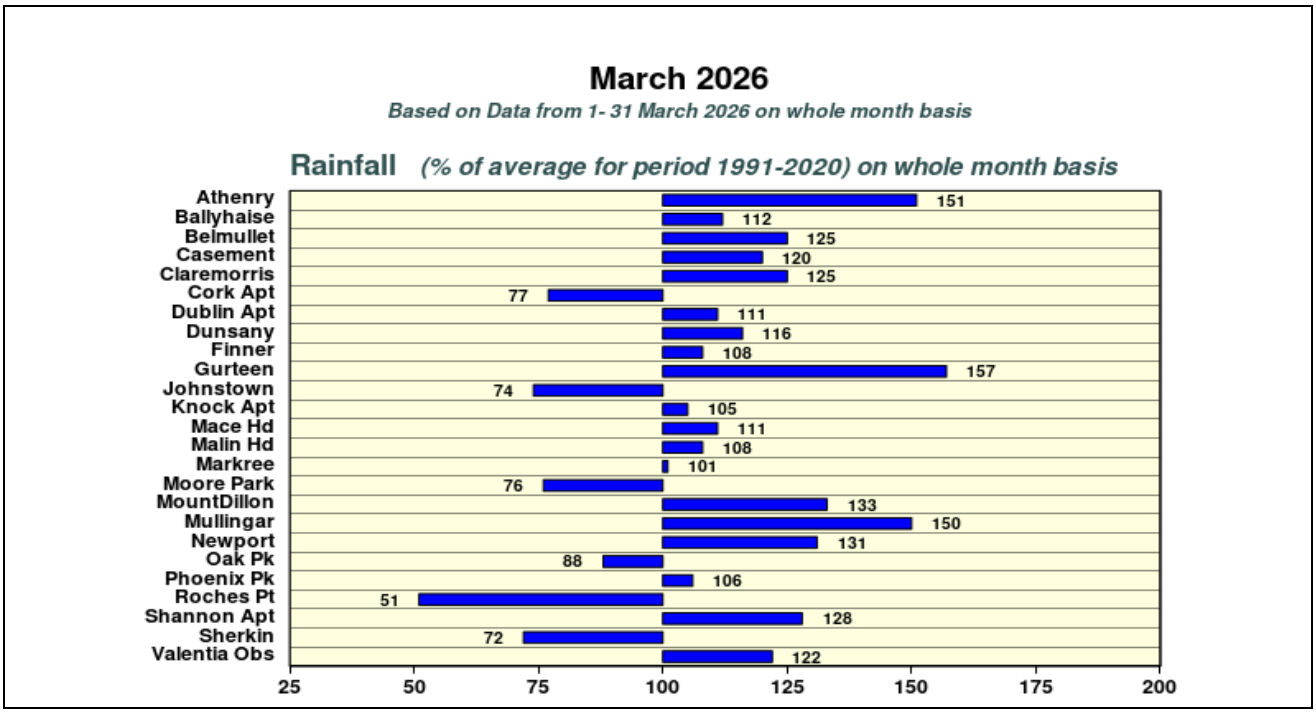


*Figure 5: Summary of rainfall at synoptic stations for March 2026, figures indicate the percentage difference from the Long-Term Average rainfall for this month **(Source: Met Eireann.ie).***

River Flows

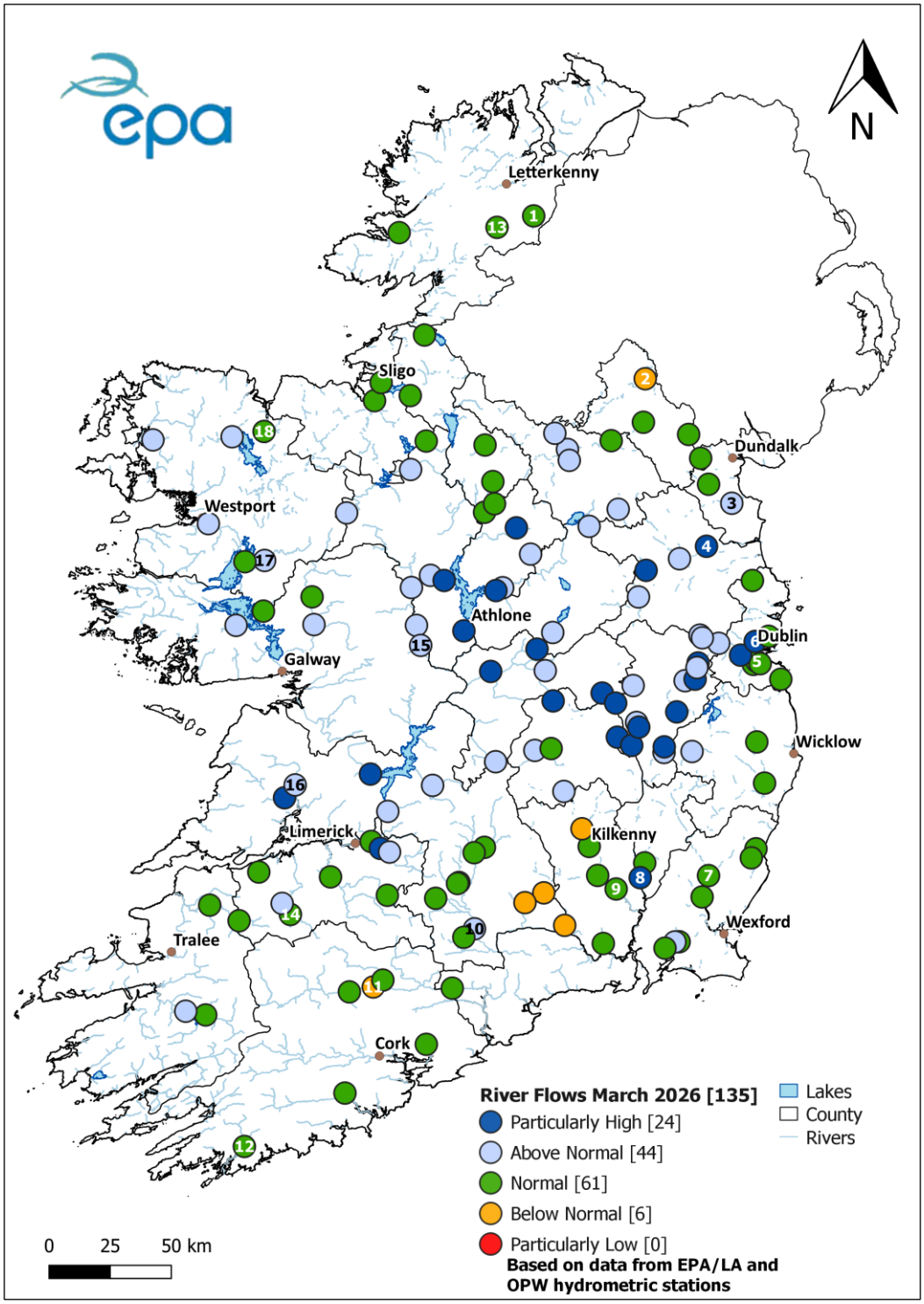


Figure 6: Monthly average river flows for March 2026 relative to historic monthly average flows expressed as percentile of the long-term values of monthly flow. Numbered sites are represented in the hydrographs below. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW).***

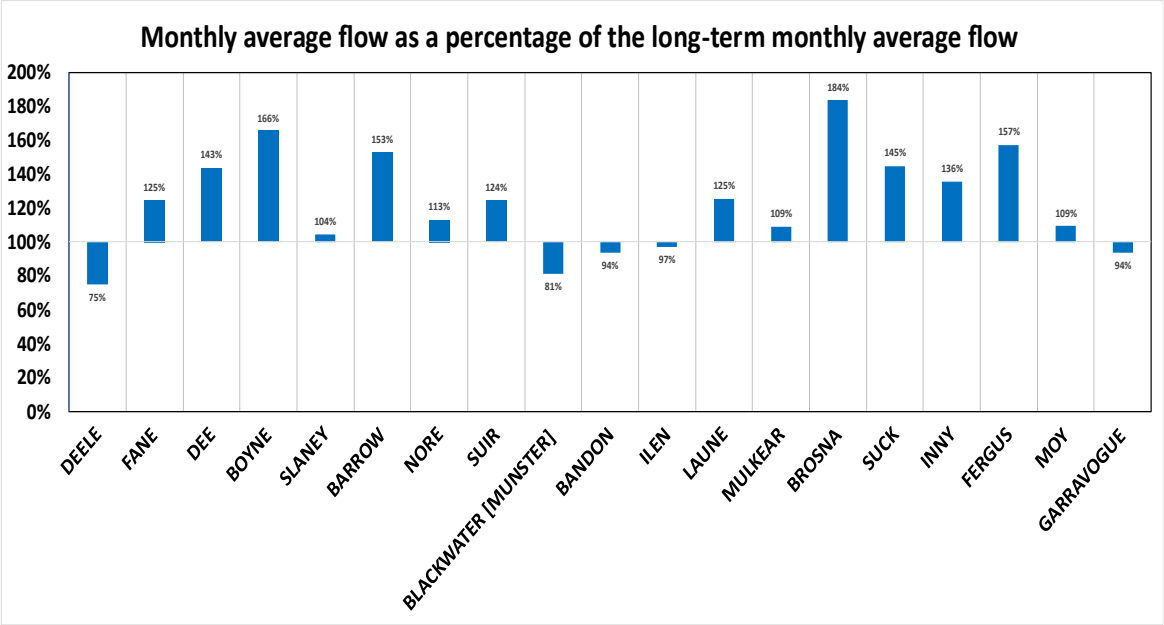
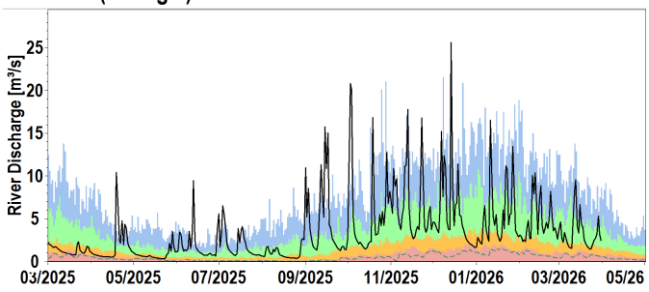


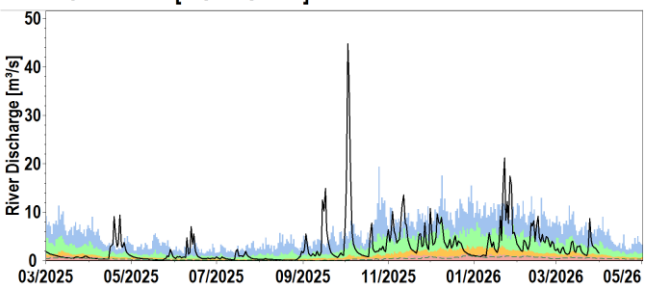
Figure 7: March 2026 average flows as a percentage of the long-term monthly average flow for this month at a selected number of stations. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW)***

Flow hydrographs for selected rivers.

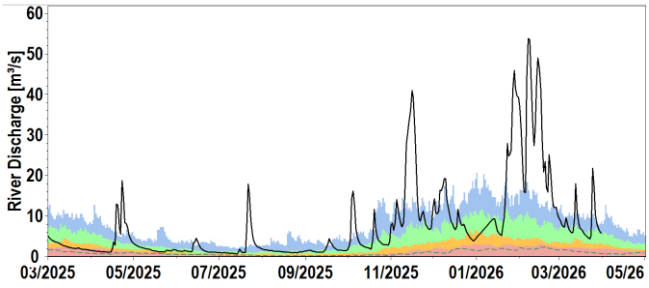
1. DEELE (Donegal)



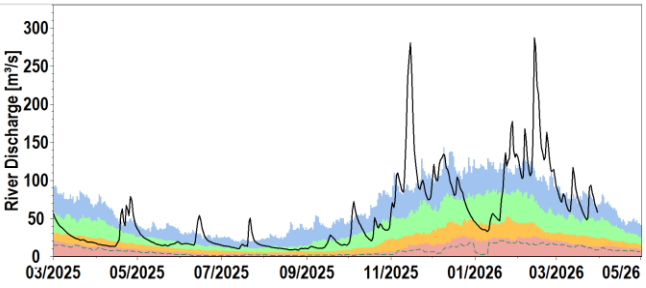
2. BLACKWATER [MONAGHAN]



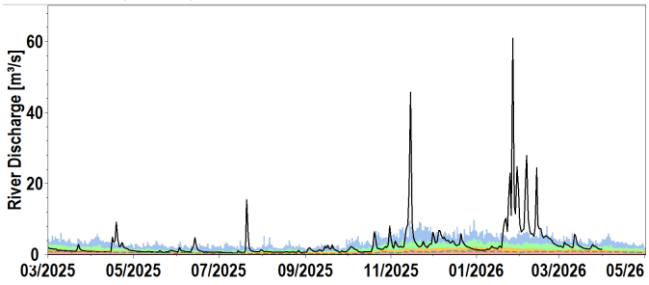
3. DEE (Louth)



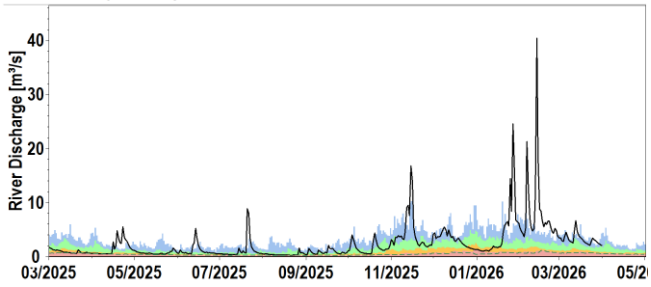
4. BOYNE (Meath)



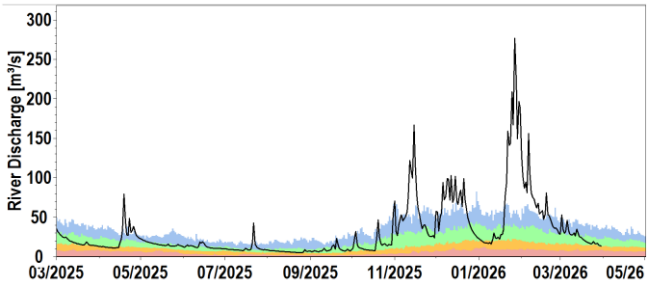
5. DODDER (Dublin)



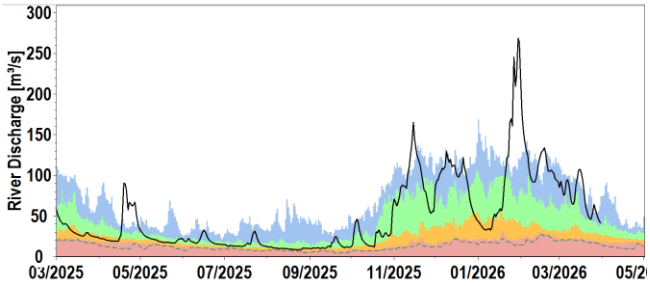
6. TOLKA (Dublin)



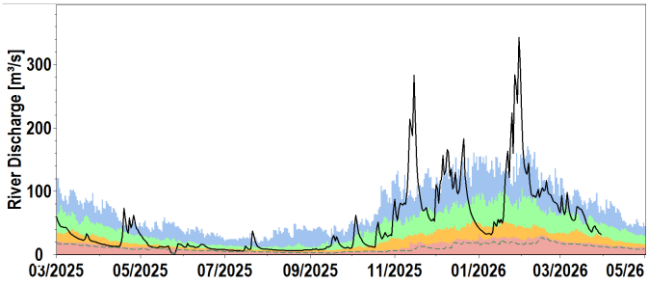
7. SLANEY (Wexford)



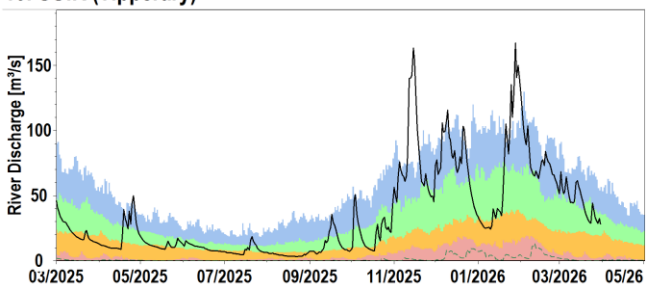
8. BARROW (Carlow)



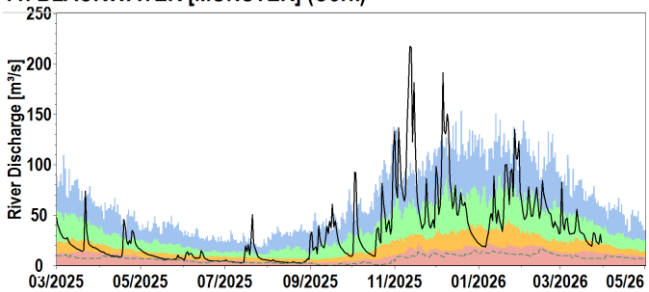
9. NORE (Kilkenny)



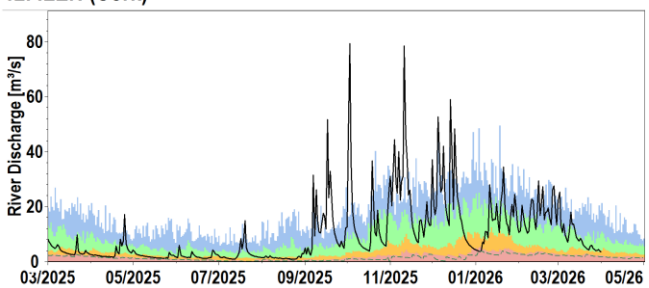
10. SUIR (Tipperary)



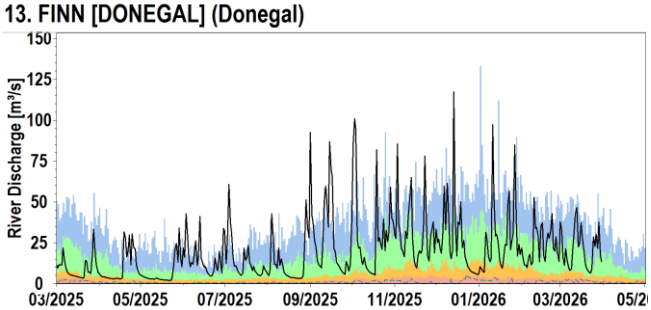
11. BLACKWATER [MUNSTER] (Cork)



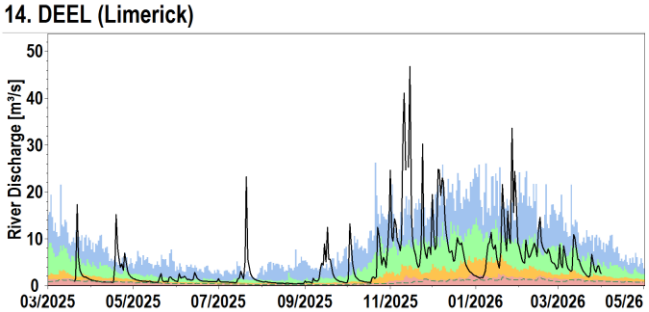
12. ILEN (Cork)



13. FINN [DONEGAL] (Donegal)



14. DEEL (Limerick)



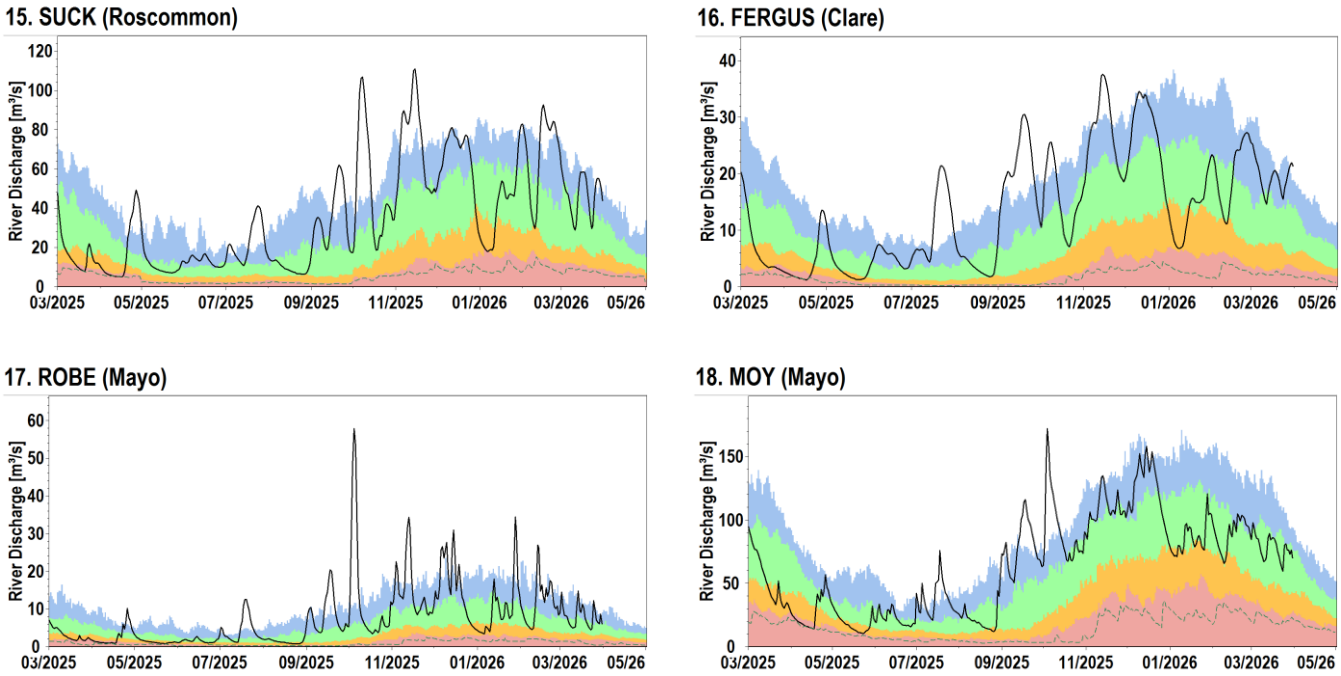


Figure 8: Daily average river flows measured in cubic metres per second relative to historic daily average flows expressed as percentile of the long-term values of each day and long-term minimum flows. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA, OPW).***

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

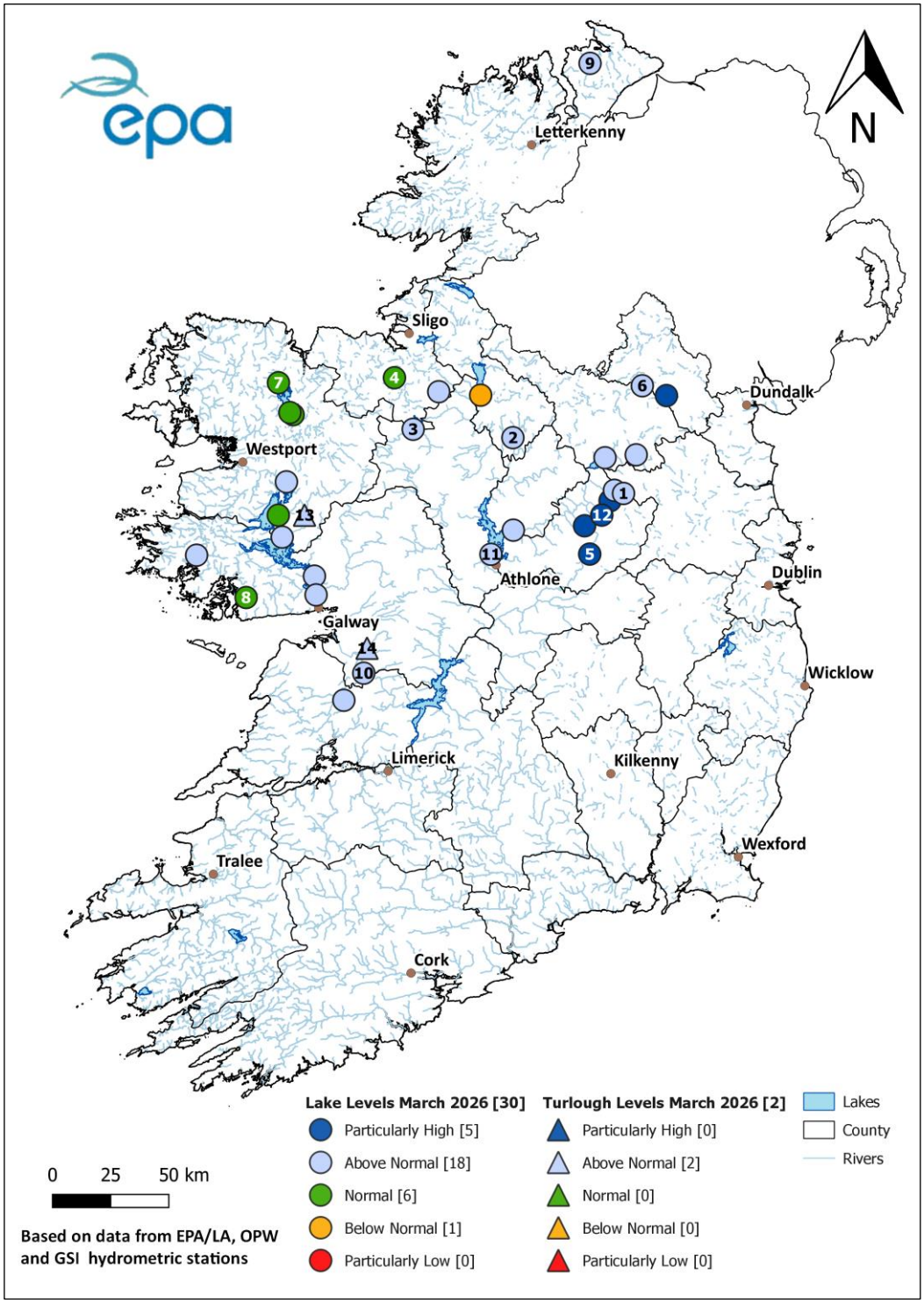
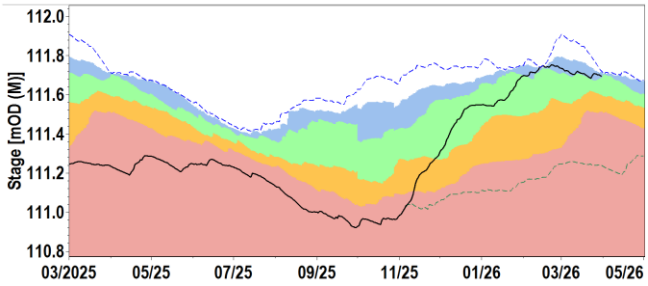


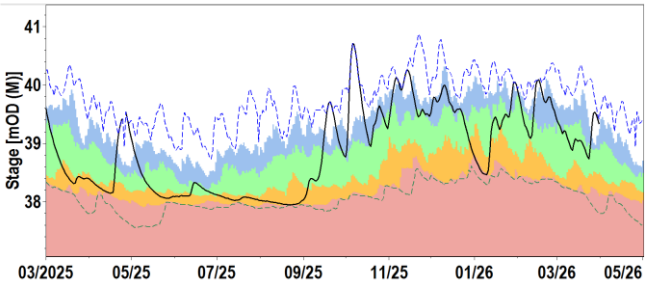
Figure 9: Monthly average lake & turlough levels for March 2026 relative to historic monthly average levels expressed as percentile of the long- term values for this month. Numbered sites are represented in the hydrographs below. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA,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

Water level hydrographs for selected lakes and turloughs

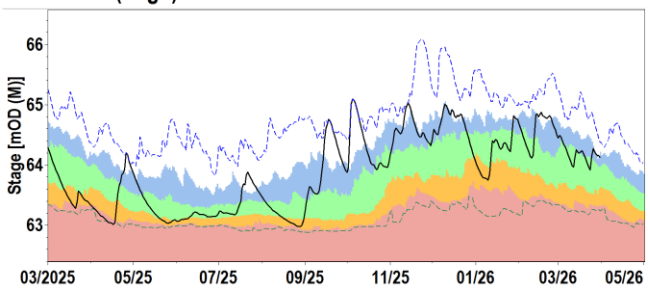
1. L. BANE (Meath)



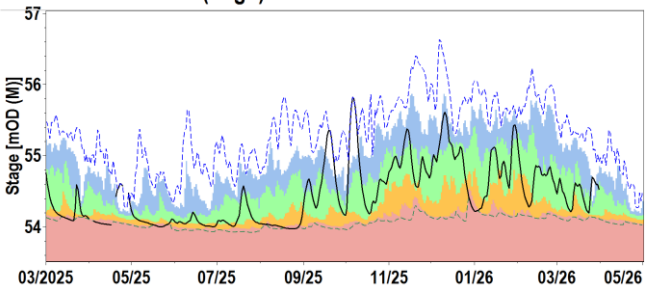
2. LOUGH RINN (Leitrim)



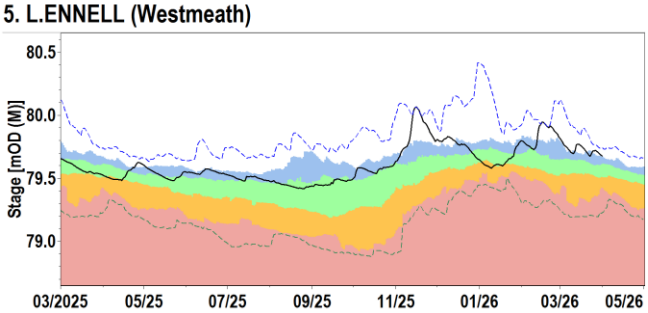
3. L. GARA (Sligo)



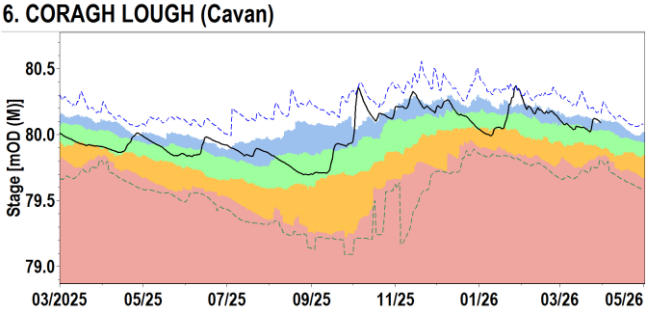
4. L.TEMPLEHOUSE (Sligo)



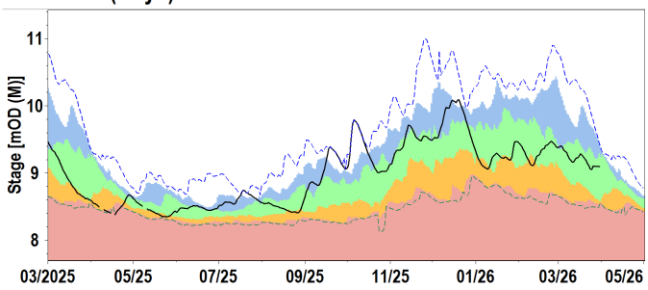
5. L.ENNELL (Westmeath)



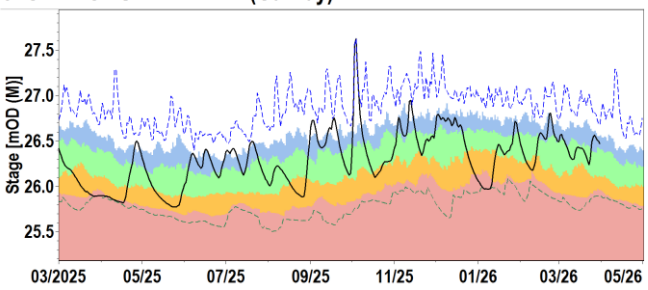
6. CORAGH LOUGH (Cavan)



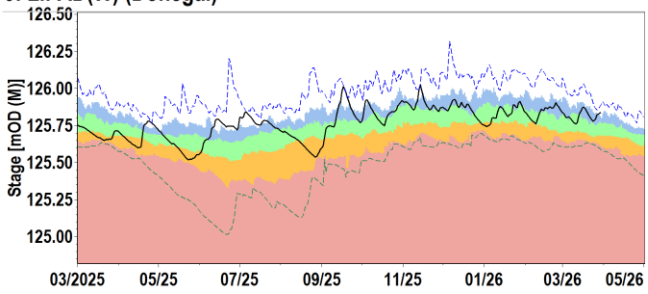
7. L.CONN (Mayo)



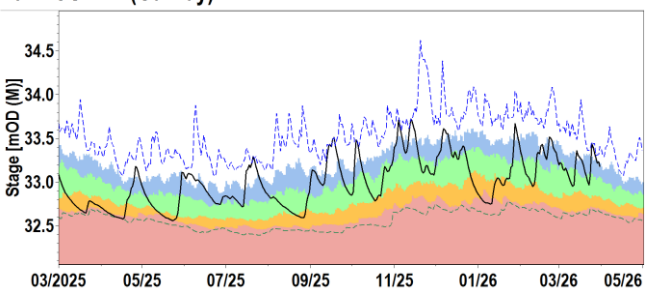
8. GLENICMURRIN LAKE (Galway)



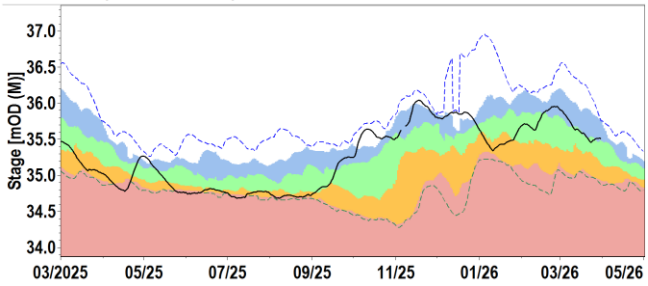
9. L.FAD(W) (Donegal)



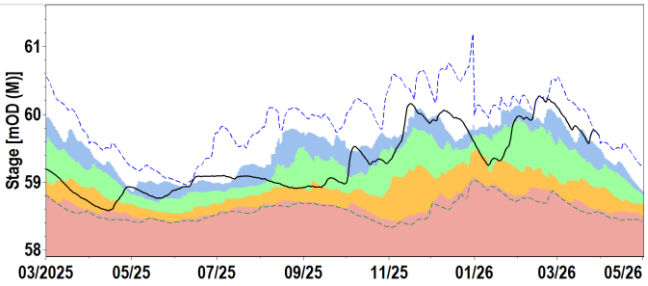
10. L.CUTRA (Galway)



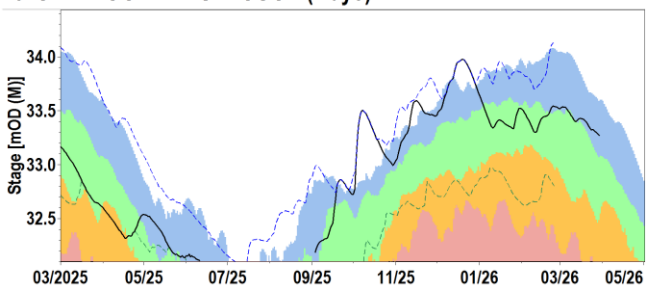
11. L.REE (Roscommon)



12. L.DERRAVARAGH (Westmeath)

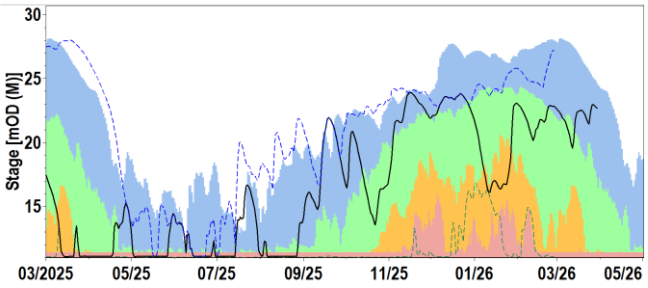


13. SKEALOGHAN TURLOUGH (Mayo)



** 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

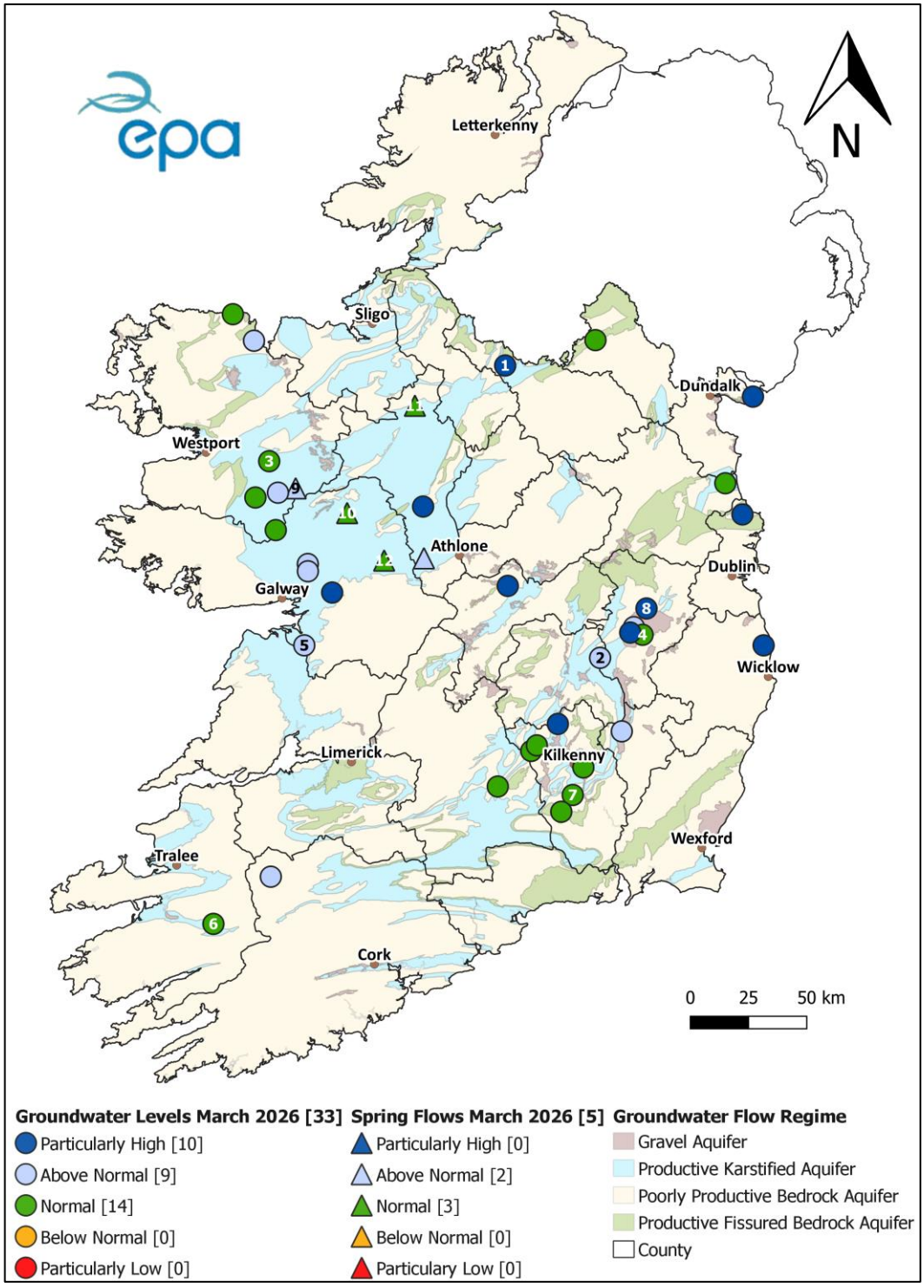
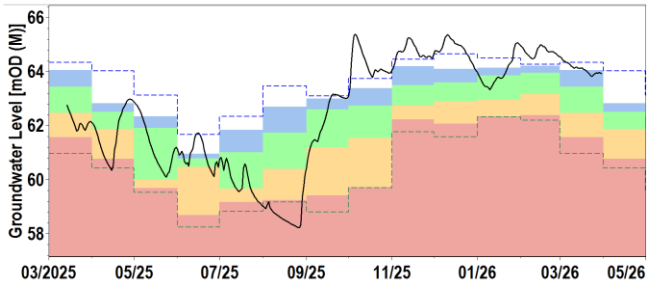


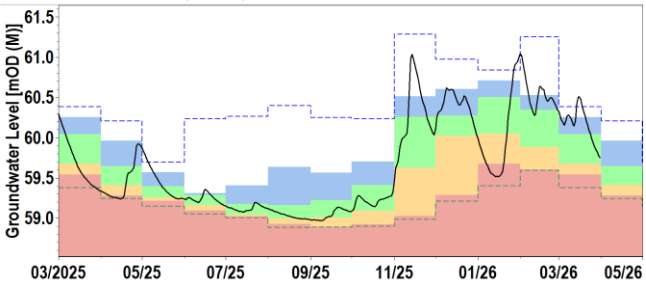
Figure 11: Groundwater level and Spring Flow status for March 2026, relative to historic monthly groundwater levels. Numbered sites are represented in the hydrographs below. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA).***

Groundwater and spring hydrographs

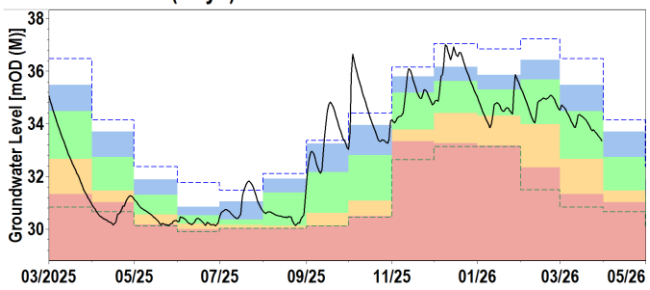
1. BAWN BOY WORKHOUSE (Cavan)



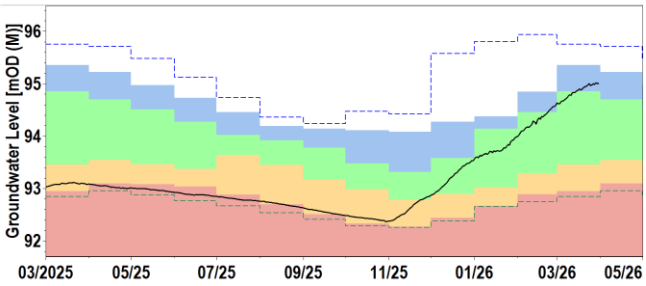
2. VICKERSTOWN (Laois)



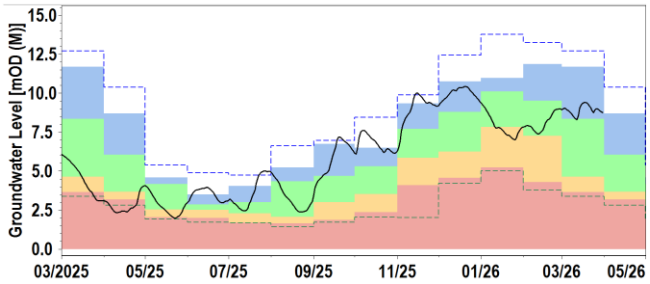
3. MAYO ABBEY (Mayo)



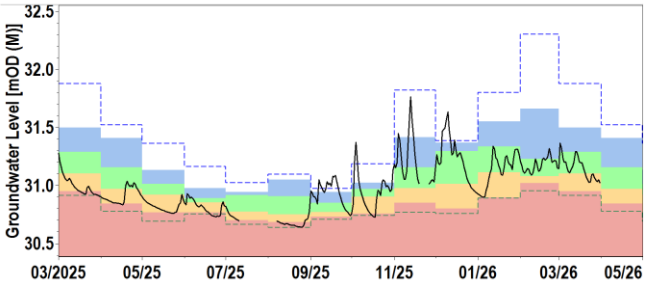
4. BROWNSTOWN (Kildare)



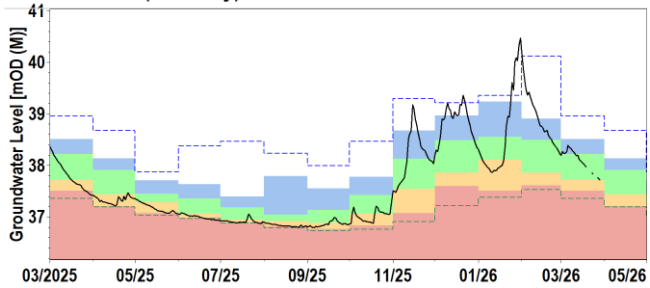
5. KILLINY (Galway)



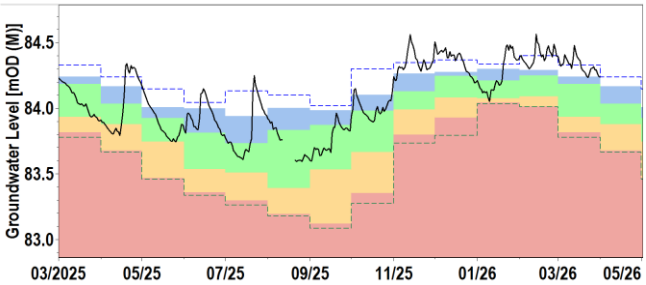
6. FBH9 - FLESK (Kerry)



7. RATHDUFF (Kilkenny)



8. Allen (Kildare)



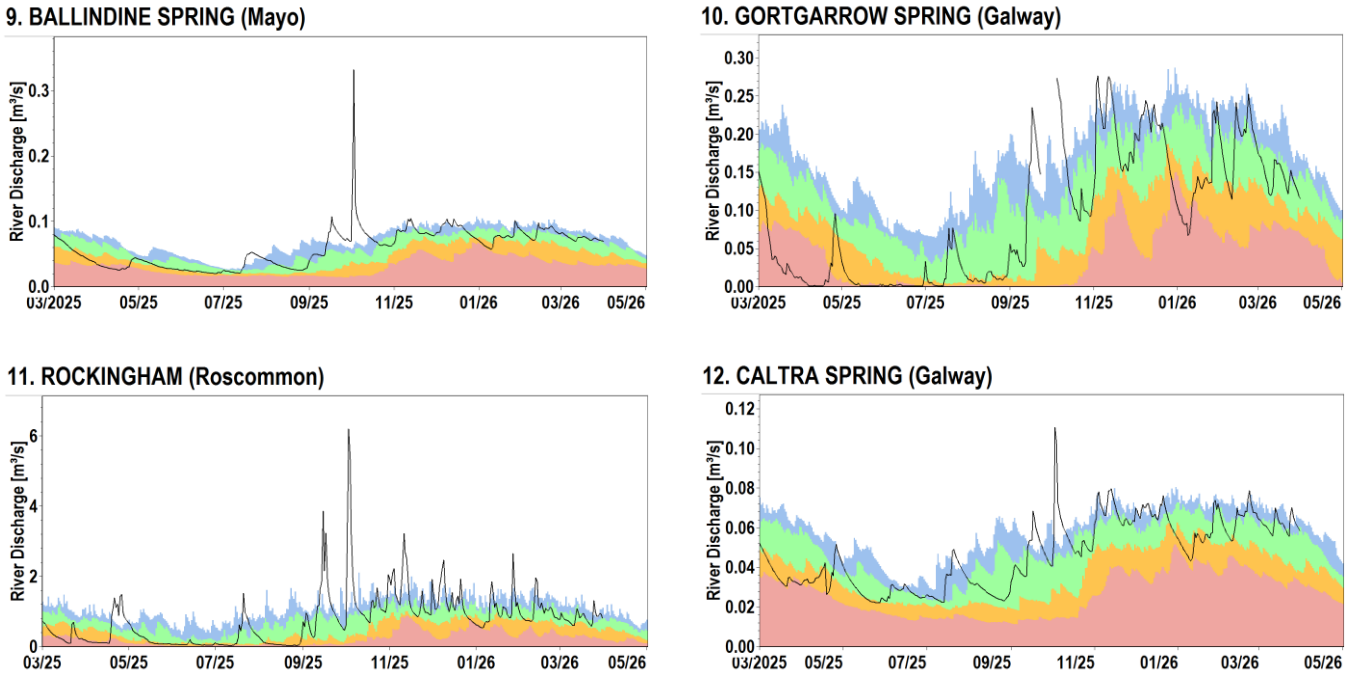


Figure 12: Daily mean groundwater levels (black trace) measured in meters above ordnance datum compared to the 10%tile, 30%tile, 70%tile and 95%tile for each month for the period of record and long-term maximum and minimum levels. All data are provisional and may be subject to revision ***(Source: EPA)****.*

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.