

# Waters of



## Island Demonstration Catchment

Public Meeting, Ballymoe

28<sup>th</sup> September 2022



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



# Meeting Format



- ~ **1 hr meeting**
- ~ **30 minutes presentations**
- ~ **30 minutes discussion/ Q&A**

**Hosted by:**

Cormac McConigley, Project Ecologist, Waters of LIFE

Paul Duffy, GIS & Data Manager, Waters of LIFE

Conor Ruane, Community Water Officer, LAWPRO

Tom Carolan, Community Water Officer, LAWPRO

Francis Deery, Catchment Scientist, LAWPRO



# Waters of

# LIFE

## Context and Overview of Waters of LIFE

Cormac McConigley, Project Ecologist

28<sup>th</sup> September 2022



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# Presentation Topics



Island River, Ballymoe Bridge - (Francis Deery, LAWPRO)

- What are the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan?
- What is Water Quality Status?
- Why is High Status Important?
- What is an EU LIFE Integrated Project?
- What does the Waters of LIFE Integrated Project Aim to achieve and how?

# What is the Water Framework Directive

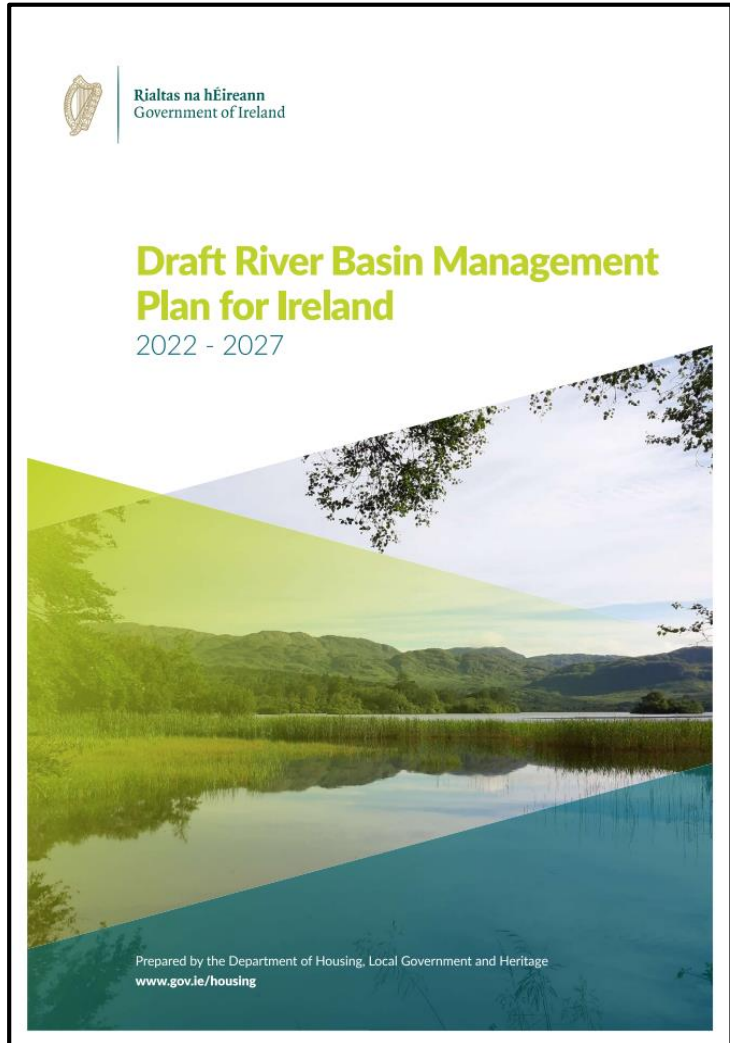
- Legislation introduced by the EU in 2000
- Required all member states to assign status to all water bodies in their territories
- Identify the main pressures impacting on these waterbodies
- Develop a plan to address the pressures on a sectoral basis to achieve the objectives of the WFD
- Main objectives of the Water Framework Directive
  - **Protect** High status where it exists
  - **Prevent** deterioration in status
  - **Restore** all waterbodies at less than Good Status to at least good status by 2027



Springfield River, Blacker's Bridge - (Francis Deery, LAWPRO)



# River Basin Management Plan



- Member states are required to prepare a River Basin Management Plan or Plans outlining how it will meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
- This plan is updated every six years.
- Ireland 3<sup>rd</sup> River Basin Management Plan 2022 to 2027 is due to be adopted later this year.
- This plan highlights a worrying decline in surface water status in Ireland and outlines measure it considers necessary to address this.
- The Waters of LIFE project is one of the measures outlined in the plan in respect of High Status water bodies.



# What is Water Quality Status?

Status reflects how clean the water is and the health of the habitat

<i>European Union Water Framework Directive</i>
High (Q5, Q4-5)
Good (Q4)
Moderate (Q3-4)
Poor (Q3,Q2-3)
Bad (Q2 or less)





# Why is High Status Important?

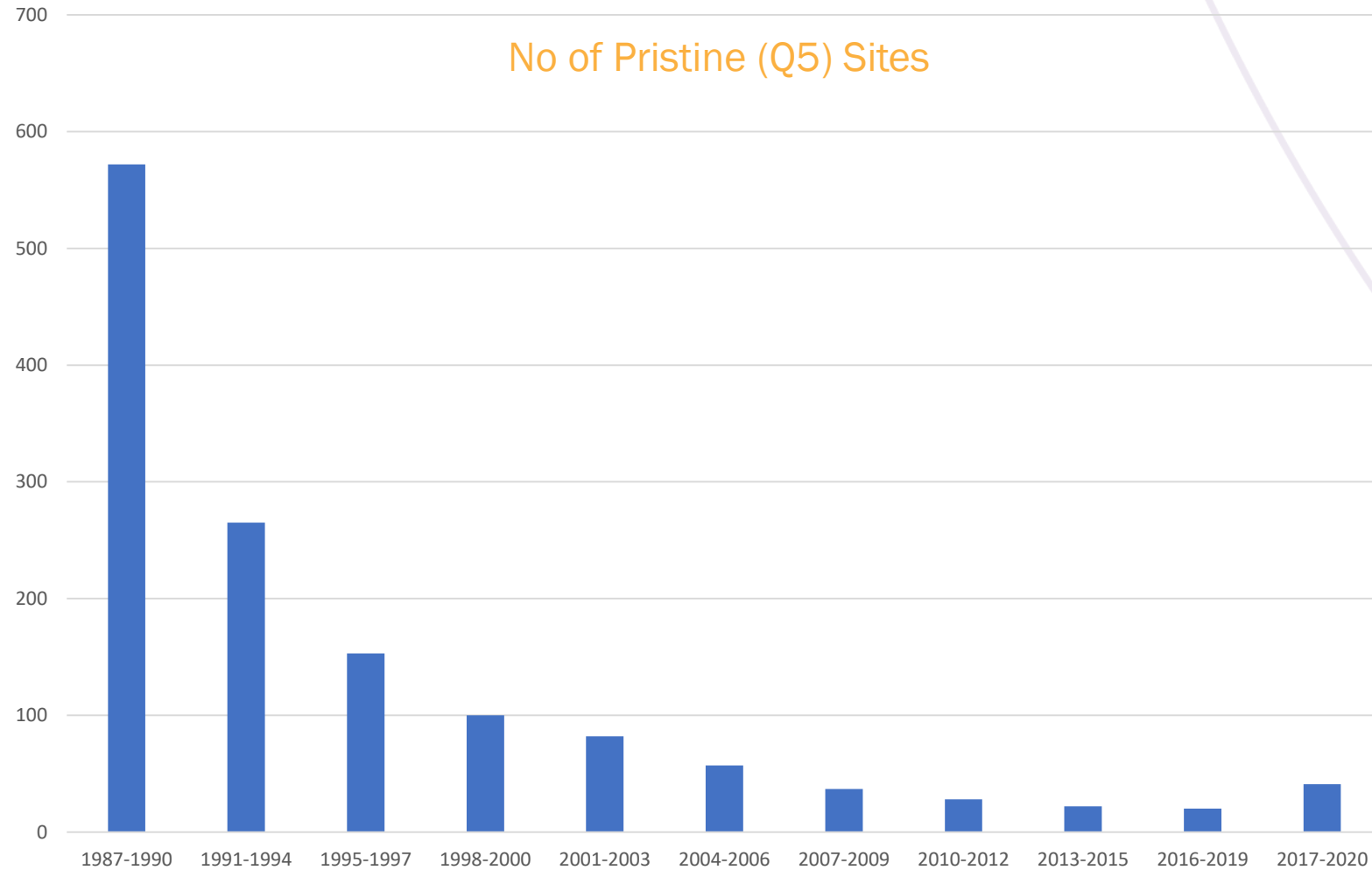
- Source of clean drinking water that require minimal treatment
- Health and wellbeing through connection with the natural environment
- Sense of place and pride in local community
- Supports angling and angling tourism
- Reservoirs of Biodiversity that can be absent from lower status waters
- Habitat for rare and endangered species such as Fresh Water Pearl Mussel



*(This is particularly the case with Q5 or Pristine Waters)*



# What's Been Happening to Our Pristine Rivers?





# What is an EU LIFE Integrated Project?

- The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action.
- The objective of LIFE is to contribute to EU environmental and climate policy and legislation by co-financing projects with European added value.
- LIFE began in 1992 and to date there have been five phases of the programme.
- LIFE has co-financed some 4600 projects, with a total contribution of approximately 6.5 billion Euros to the protection of the environment.
- EU LIFE Integrated Projects support authorities in EU Member States to implement regional/national plans such as the River Basin Management Plan.

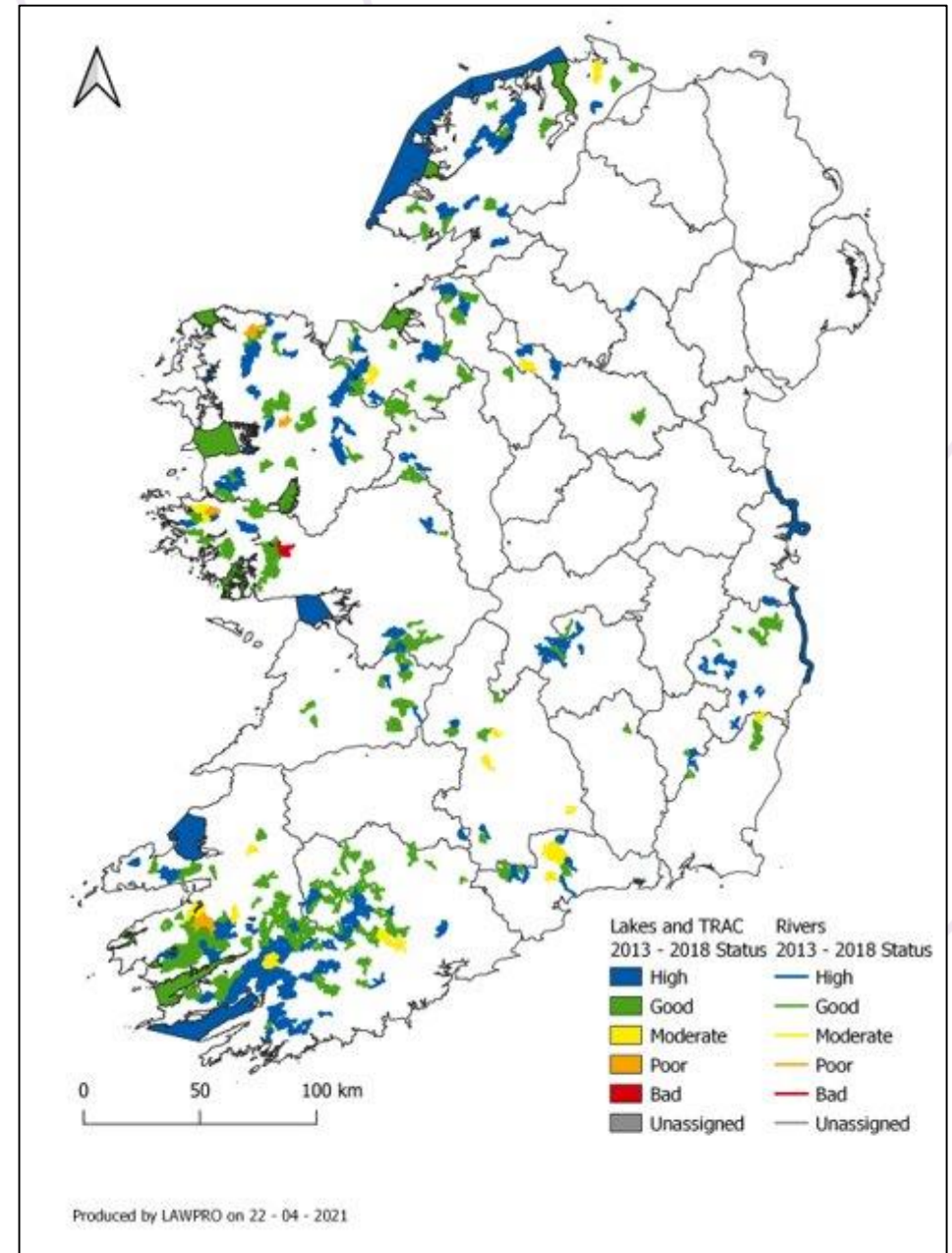




# Waters of LIFE Integrated Project

- The main objective is to protect and restore **High Status Objective River Waters Bodies**  
*(High Status Objective = Rivers that are at high status or that have recently fallen from high status)*
- Ireland has 319 High Status Objective Waters Bodies of these only 140 are currently at high status. The others need to be restored.

Status	No HSO Rivers
High	140
Good	155
Moderate	18
Poor	5
Bad	1

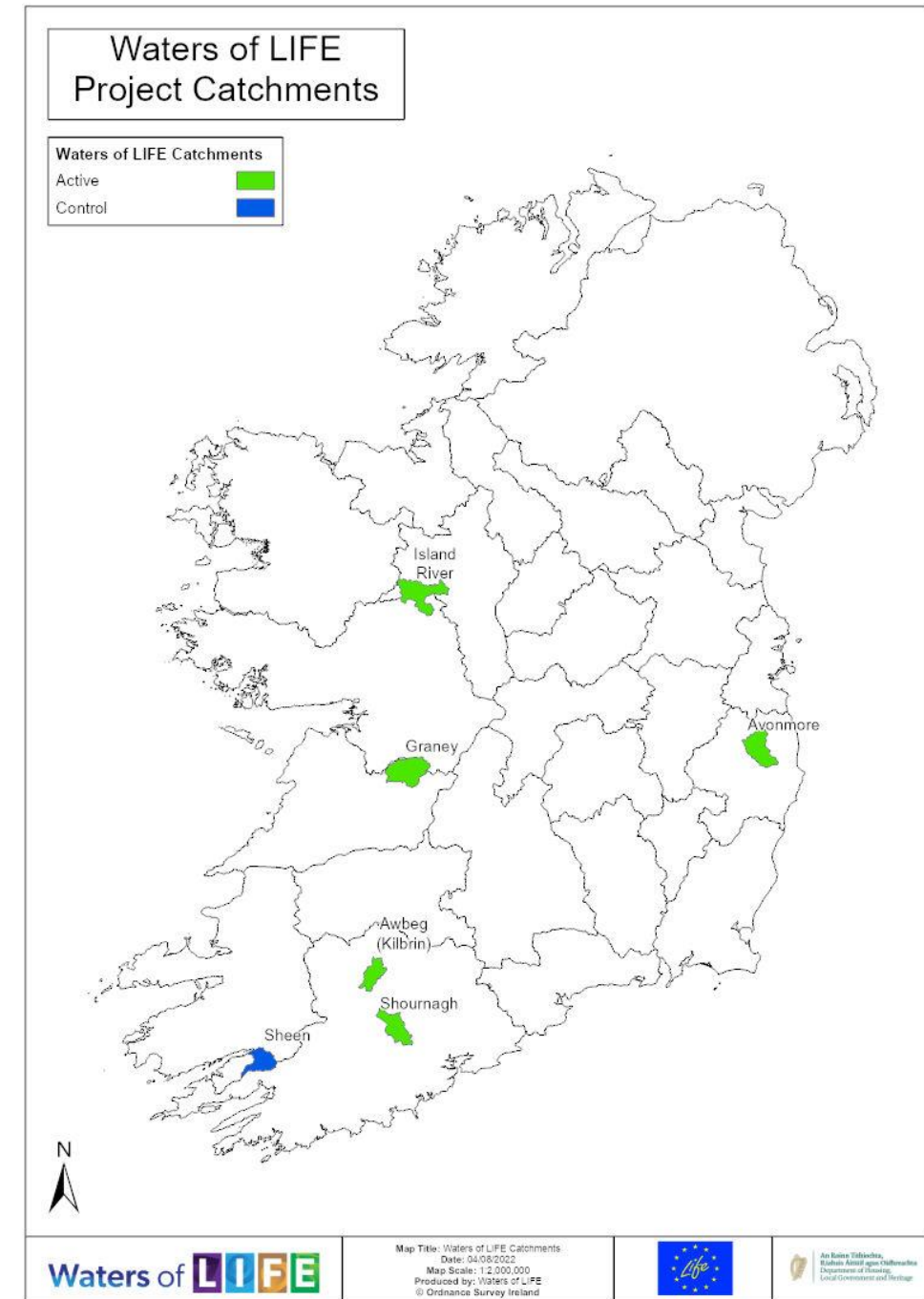


Distribution of HSO Water Bodies



# Waters of LIFE Integrated Project

- It aims to do this by
  - Improving our understanding of our 319 high status objective rivers, their landscape features and the causes of change in status
  - Selecting 5 active demonstration catchments and one control catchment.
  - Working with local landowners, communities and other stakeholders to co develop plans for these rivers – collaborative approach.
  - Testing measures to mitigate pressures
  - Incentivising land managers to take positive action for water quality by developing a results based agricultural payments scheme where agriculture is a pressure on water equality.



# Project Partners, Budget and Timeframe

## Partners

### Lead Partner

- Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage

### Other Partners

- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Teagasc
- Forest Service
- LAWPRO
- Coillte
- EPA
- Local Development Companies, including County Wicklow Partnership

## Budget

- €20.2m with EU contribution of €9.5m

## Timeframe

- The project will run to March 2028, with practical implementation beginning in 2024.



County Wicklow Partnership



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



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



# Overview of Project Actions

- Carry out more detailed catchment assessments.
- Develop a catchment management plan for each of the active demonstration catchments
- Develop a water quality monitoring programme
- Develop the Results Based Agricultural Payments (RBAPS) Scheme in consultation with stakeholders
- Deliver training to advisors and landowners
- Develop information and awareness programme for schools, communities and other stakeholders.
- Draft detailed action plans in collaboration with landowners across all sectors.

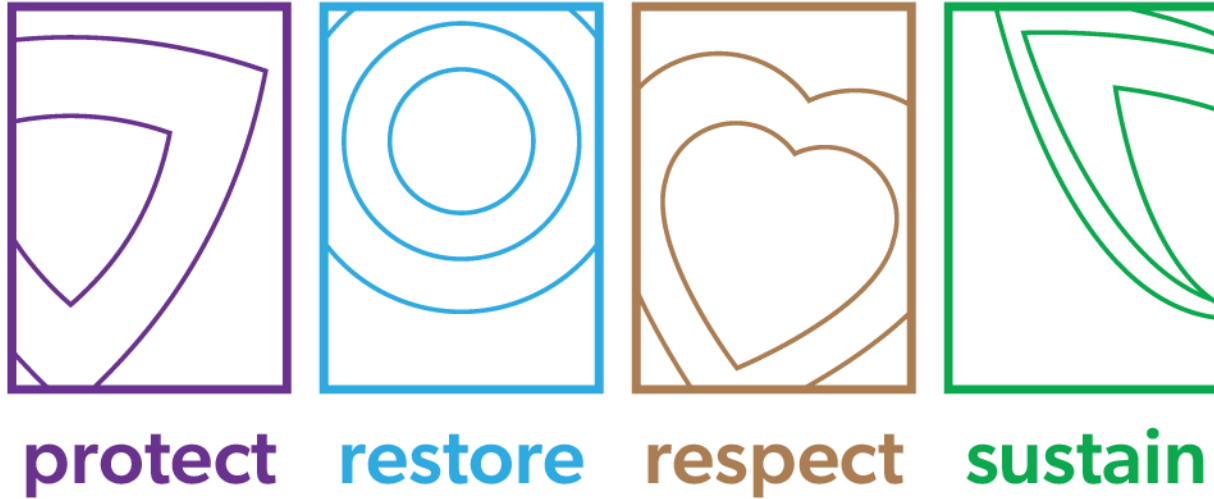
14 Implement measures and monitor effectiveness



Island River - (Francis Deery, LAWPRO)



Thank you for listening



*Credit all photographs: Francis Deery, LAWPRO.*



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*With the contribution of the LIFE programme of the European Union*