

# Minute of the 21st Meeting of the National Technical Implementation Group for WFD



31 August 2023



	<p><b>Location:</b> Online</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 31 August 2023 <b>Time:</b> 10:00-12:30</p> <p><b>Chairperson:</b> Mary Gurrie, EPA</p>
	<p><b>Attendance:</b></p> <p>DHLGH: Marie Archbold, Donal Cronin</p> <p>EPA: Sinéad Barrett, Patrick Byrne, Matthew Craig, Darragh Cunningham, Jenny Deakin, Mary Gurrie, Anthony Mannix, Eva Mockler, Caroline Murphy, Keiron Philips, Emma Quinlan, Wayne Trodd, Suzanne Wylde</p> <p>LAWPRO: Anthony Coleman, Ruth Hennessy, Fran Igoe, Margaret Keegan, Eoin McAleer, Jimmy McVeigh, Gary O’Connell, Niamh Rogan, Bernie White</p> <p>Mark Adamson (OPW), Imelda Averill (DCC), Claire Coleman (UÉ), Kevin Collins (Forest Service/DAFM), Barry Deane (NFGWS), Oonagh Duffy (TII), Joanne Gaffney (BIM), Cathal Gallagher (IFI), Conor Galvin (OPW), Anne Goggin (DHLGH), Silke Hartmann (NIEA), Dymphna Kehoe (DAFM), Karl McDonald (FSAI), Evin McGovern (Marine Institute), Joe McGuinness (Louth CoCo), Aaron McNulty (DAFM), Noel Meehan (ASSAP/Teagasc), Michelle Moloney (SFPA), Áine O’Connor (NPWS), Philip O’Dea (Coillte), Vera O Donovan (BIM), Paula Treacy (Waterways Ireland)</p>
	<p><b>Agenda:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome, introductions and minutes of previous meeting</li> <li>2. Standing updates <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i.DHLGH</li> <li>ii.LA Waters Programme</li> <li>iii.ASSAP</li> <li>iv.EPA</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Waterways Ireland Long Term Plan and consultation on Bye-Laws – links with water quality</li> <li>4. Forestry Programme 2022-2027 – implications for water quality</li> <li>5. Marine updates</li> <li>6. AOB and next meeting</li> </ol>

1.	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes were agreed for the NTIG meeting held in February 2023.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Updates</b> <p><b>DHLGH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notes available on OneDrive.</li> </ul> <p>ACTION: Consider a session on the national hydromorphology work programme for the third cycle at a future meeting.</p> <p><b>DHLGH (Water of Life)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Framework of Best Practice Measures and Guidelines for the Protection and Restoration of High Status River Water Bodies is now published and available on the project website.</li> <li>The development of the results based payment scheme is ongoing with a focus on agriculture and forestry. A series of four workshops were held throughout May and June of this year with key experts and decision makers, to gain learnings with previous EIP schemes. Workshop outputs will support scheme development which will be a co-design process with larger groups including landowners from demonstration catchments. Key issues highlighted were hydromorphological pressures and nutrients. Importance of riparian vegetation noted but unclear how to score element.</li> <li>Characterisation of demonstration catchments carried out by LAWPRO. External assistance required - ongoing tender within Islands catchments focusing on a full hydromorphological assessment and restoration plan. Land assessment potential mapping for nature based solutions currently out for tender.</li> <li>Stakeholder advisory group established and met in May.</li> <li>Project issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff recruitment. Senior scientist recruited and five catchment scientists and agricultural scientists will be hired in the next month or so. Currently seeking funding for a communication officer.</li> <li>Data sharing between partners and public bodies.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>ACTION. Consider a longer session focusing on project progress at a future meeting.</p> <p><b>LA Waters Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report and presentation available on OneDrive.</li> </ul> <p><b>ASSAP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation available on OneDrive.</li> </ul> <p><b>EPA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of EPA reports were published since the last NTIG meeting and all are available on our website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bathing water quality in Ireland report for 2022 published in May. 97% of our bathing waters met or exceeded the minimum standard of sufficient, with 79% at 'excellent quality'. (<a href="https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/bathing-water-quality-in-ireland-in-2022.php">https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/bathing-water-quality-in-ireland-in-2022.php</a>)</li> <li>Water Quality in Ireland, an Indicator report for 2022 published In June. Key findings included that there were no significant changes in the biological quality of rivers and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

lakes during 2022. Nutrient concentrations remain too high - Nitrate elevated in 40% of river sites and 20% in TRAC, mainly around the south and south east area while Phosphate elevated in 28% of river sites and 36% of lakes. Nutrient loads to the marine environment are increasing since 2013. (<https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/Water-Quality-2022-Indicator-Report-Web.pdf>).

- Water quality monitoring report on nitrogen and phosphorous concentrations in Irish Waters 2022 was published at the end of June (<https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/water-quality-monitoring-n--p-report-2022.php>). This report included an annex which was an interim review of water quality using criteria set out by the Commission as a condition of Ireland's nitrates derogation. Additional measures will be required in the areas draining to those waters that were unsatisfactory according to the Commission's criteria. These measures are being considered by the Depts as part of an interim review of the Nitrates Action Programme.
- A technical document with supporting information for the interim water quality review as a condition of Ireland's derogation under the Nitrates Directive was also published in June (<https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/water-quality-monitoring-n--p-report-2022.php>), as well as a list of frequently asked questions that help to explain the report.
- Guidance videos for the WFD App are available and links to these videos were emailed to approved WFD APP users. Guidance videos on navigating EPA Water maps, using the PIP maps and finding water chemistry data are publicly available on the EPA youtube channel.
  - WFD APP: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFesobjWT1Fhs\\_X\\_raMpwutvQ4wBUOgNU](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFesobjWT1Fhs_X_raMpwutvQ4wBUOgNU)
  - PIP maps: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVEGin-2PKg>
  - Finding water chemistry data: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkB3nqua8Jo>
  - EPA Water Maps: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNNQtw\\_6ueI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNNQtw_6ueI)
- Update on live issues:
  - Sheep dip - Under the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (NHWMP) 2021-2027, by Q3 2023, DECC/DAFM have agreed to establish a national cross- agency forum to focus on the appropriate management of spent sheep dip to prevent environmental pollution and to agree a plan for a suitable national collection scheme for farm hazardous waste by Q4 2023.
  - Norovirus issues - The norovirus issues are being considered as part of the shellfish roadmap which is now being managed by the Marine Institute. (See Marine updates)
  - Land drainage - As discussed at the last meeting, this issue is best considered as part of the development of the control regime. The issue has also been included in the DAFM review of the EIA for agricultural regulations, alongside restructuring of landholdings (eg hedgerow removal) and use of uncultivated or semi natural lands for intensive agriculture.
  - Movement of organic manures and sludges – FSAI are completing their review. Further mapping of gaps to continue within 2023. EPA to look at pilot project to close gaps (e.g. licences/AER's/sludge registers etc.) with pig and poultry within the first tranche for this pilot, supported by NTIG/NAIPWG and other stakeholders. The approach will be extended to other sectors in 2024.

3.	<b>Waterways Ireland Long Term Plan and consultation on Bye-Laws – links with water quality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation available on OneDrive.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Forestry Programme 2022-2027 – implications for water quality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes available on OneDrive.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Marine updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation available on OneDrive.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>AOB and next meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A decision on the Sweetman v an Bord Pleanála status case is due by 31 September.</li> <li>• CSO published an ecosystem condition accounts report for rivers and lakes and is available at <a href="https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-ecarl/ecosystemconditionaccounts-riversandlakes2021/keyfindings/">https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-ecarl/ecosystemconditionaccounts-riversandlakes2021/keyfindings/</a>.</li> <li>• The abstraction register has been published and available at <a href="https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/epa-water-abstraction-register---august-2023.php">https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/epa-water-abstraction-register---august-2023.php</a>.</li> <li>• Presentations from the EPA Water Conference held in June are available on the EPA YouTube channel (<a href="https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFesobjWT1FgrTqDWEQnSpvCKc69y-2kn&amp;si=HoEM9mfzM3t8pegx">https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFesobjWT1FgrTqDWEQnSpvCKc69y-2kn&amp;si=HoEM9mfzM3t8pegx</a>).</li> <li>• NFGWS highlighted that the Rural Water Services Conference will be held on 7 September in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone (<a href="https://nfgws.ie/rural-water-services-conference-2023/">https://nfgws.ie/rural-water-services-conference-2023/</a>).</li> </ul>