

Lady's Island Lake – harnessing a community for long term restoration

EPA Water Conference
Salthill, 2026

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Background to Lady's Island Lake



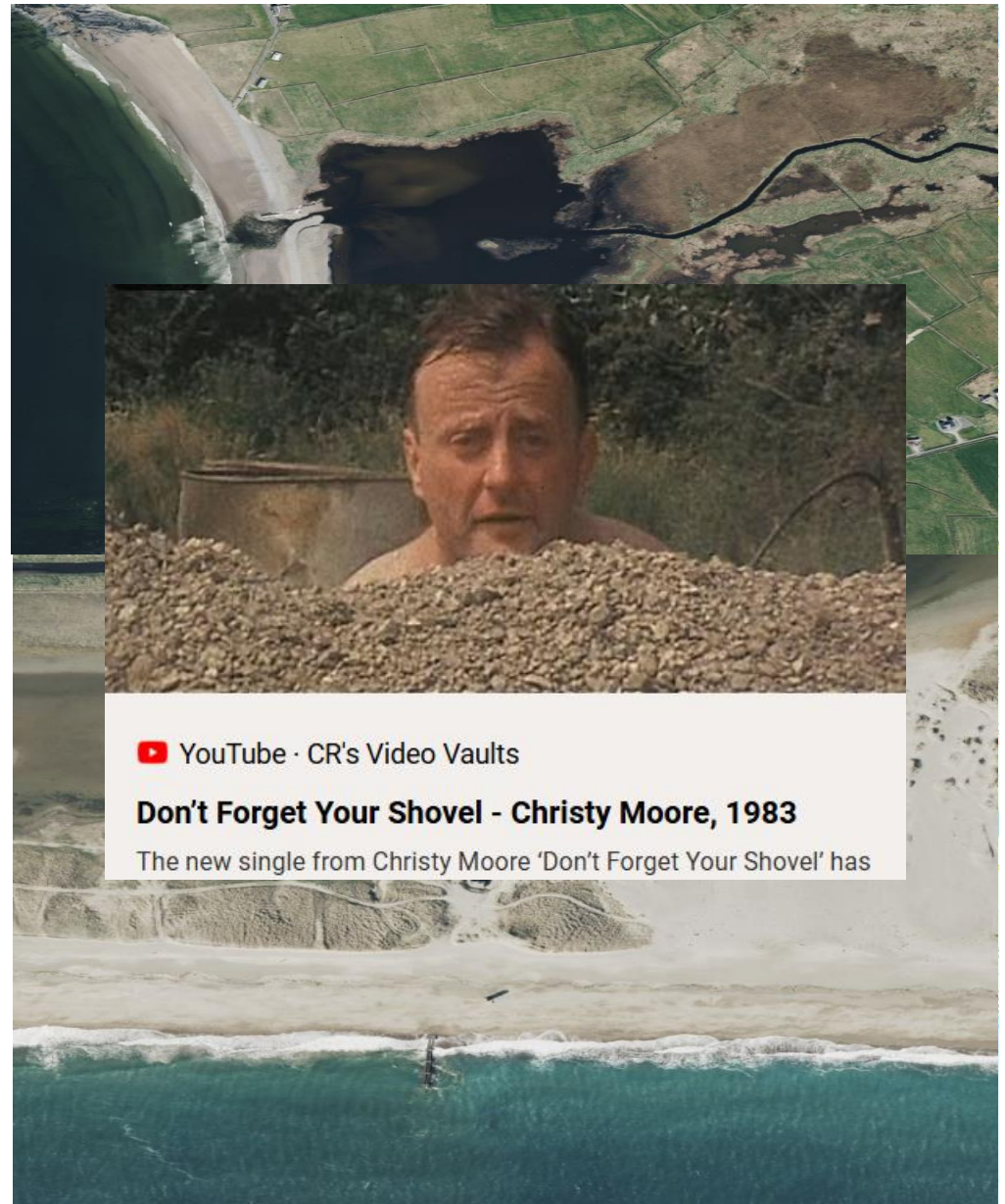


Setting the scene



Part of the problem, part of the solution

- One of Ireland's most ecologically significant coastal lagoon systems
- Special Area of Conservation & Special Protection Area (4 tern species)
- EPA – Transitional Water Body
- WFD (2019-2024) – Poor Ecological Status
- PAA under the existing WAP
- 300ha
- 19.16km² catchment
- 3.8km long
- 1.8km wide
- Artificial outlet





“Cutting of the lake”

Coastal Lagoons: Ecology and Restoration (CLEAR)

Coastal Lagoons: Ecology and Restoration (CLEAR)

Authors: Brendan O'Connor, Geoff Oliver, Tony Cawley, Cilian Roden, Philip Perrin, Rutger de Witt, Kevin McCaffrey and Aisha O'Connor

- January 2025
- Hydrodynamics, impact of excess nutrients & sediment surveys
- Outline of remedial techniques

Wexford's Lady's Island Lake 'severely
damaged' by excess nutrients



Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate, Environment & Energy

- 11 June 2025
- CLEAR report Discussion
- NPWS
- Authors of CLEAR report
- Wexford County Council
- 7 recommendations
 - ✓ WCC lead
 - ✓ Duncannon EIP & Lough Carra LIFE
 - ✓ Restoration plan
 - ✓ Funding
 - ✓ Multi agency
 - ✓ Agri-environmental scheme
 - ✓ Regulations, standards & practices



Polluted Wexford lake gets €700,000 in funding to support water quality management plan

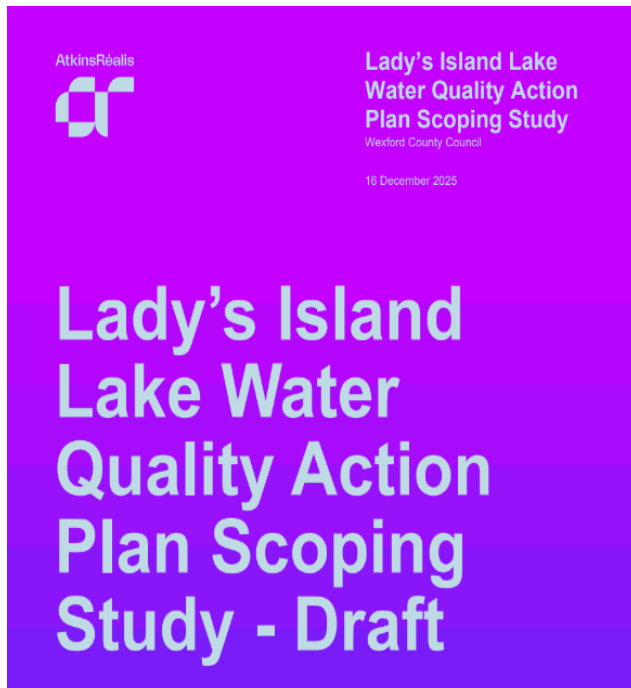
Our journey so far...

- July – Strategic oversight Group
- Donal Daly overview
- Draft water quality action plan
- Business case submitted to DHLGH in November
- Approval of funding for Senior Executive Scientist & clerical officer
- 5-year project





- Scope & alignment with current legislation
- Stakeholder engagement
- Catchment characterisation
- Scientific evidence, source apportionment & data gaps
- Measures, funding & monitoring
- Communication & accessibility



- Recommendations
- Phased timeline
- Communication strategies
- Identification of CSA's
- Sediment legacy
- Monitoring programme
- Alternative funding sources
- Stakeholder engagement



**Lady's Island
Hydrogeological
Assessment - Phase 1
Report - DRAFT**

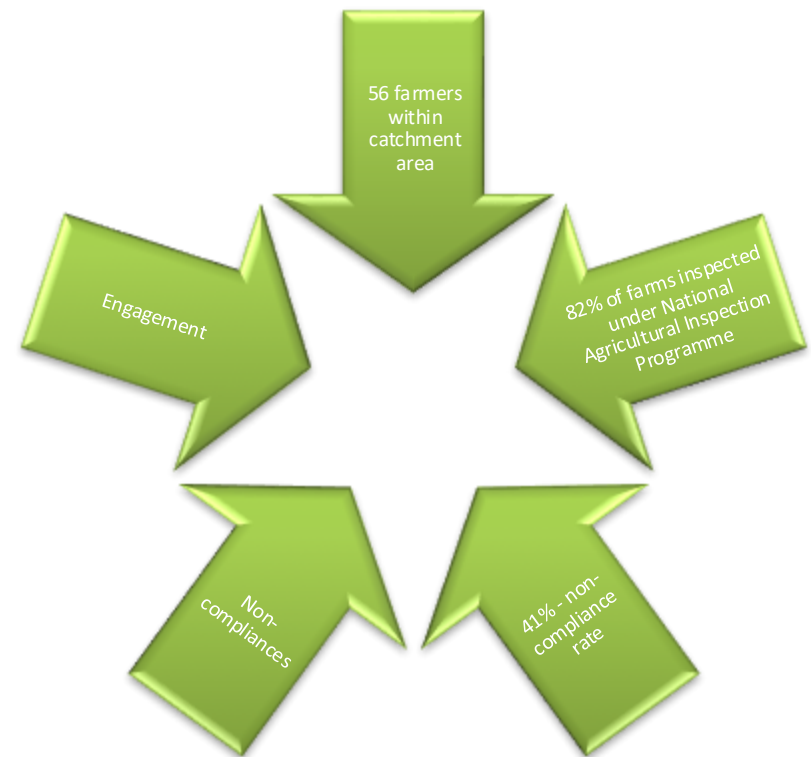
Hydrogeological
Assessment of Lady's
Island

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- Desk study review of data and information available in the public domain
 - Hydrogeological setting of the lake
 - How groundwater and the lake may interact
 - Data & knowledge gaps
 - Outline approaches on improving the characterization and understanding of nutrient delivery to the lake
 - Suitable mitigation measures
 - Recommended further work (Phase 2)





Implementation of NAIP





Implementation of National Inspection Plan for DWWTS

- 66 inspections to date
- 66.67% failure rate
- 11 discharging to surface waters
- 7 discharging to surface of ground

(approx. 300 DWWTS in the catchment)

- DWWTS campaign



**Joint Committee on Climate,
Environment and Energy
May 2026**



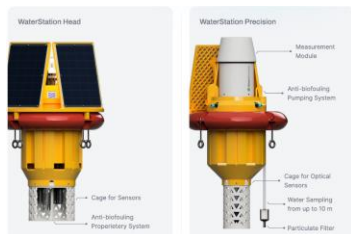
- Regular publication of ***nutrient-level data***
- Clear prioritisation of ecological and management objectives
- A dedicated restoration website for public access to information
- Enhanced public consultation and ongoing engagement with local groups
- Ensuring ecological expertise is central to decision-making
- Capital investment for measures identified in the CLEAR report, including potential wetland construction
- Coordination with the EU LIFE Strategic Nature programme
- Review of septic tank grant schemes to support water-quality improvements



Innovation through collaboration



- WaterSense
 - Real time water quality data intelligence
 - “Floating modular Lab”
 - July 2026
 - Farming for Water EIP
-
- Teagasc Research
 - Measures for water project
 - Kisha_010 stream



Summary

- Knowledge Transfer plays a key role for all – ASSAP
- Scoping study provides the framework
- Further catchment characterisation
- Stakeholder engagement – Key!
- Set the expectations & timeframes on a long-term basis
- Load reductions (what can we achieve with current measures)
- Thank you!

