

Better Farming for Water Campaign

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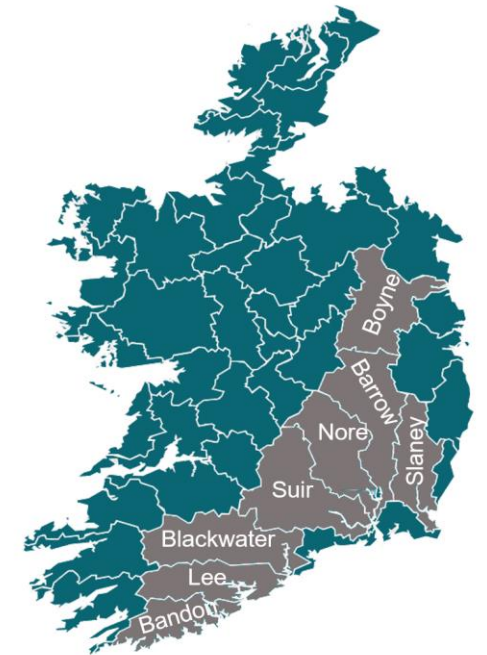


Key Aspects of the Better Farming for Water Campaign

- Teagasc requested to lead a national campaign to improve water quality
- Whole of industry, **multi actor** campaign
- **Building on existing initiatives**
- **8-Actions for change**
- **8 priority catchments**
 - Boyne, Barrow, Nore, Slaney, Suir, Blackwater, Lee, Bandon-Ilen

BFFW campaign 8-Actions for Change

Nutrient Management	
01	Reduce purchased nitrogen (N) & phosphorus (P) surplus per hectare 
02	Ensure soil fertility is optimal for lime, phosphorus and potassium 
03	Ensure application of fertiliser and organic manure at appropriate times and conditions 
Farmyard Management	
04	Have sufficient slurry and soiled water storage capacity 
05	Manage and minimise nutrient loss from farmyards and roadways 
Land Management	
06	Fence off watercourses to prevent bovine access 
07	Promote targeted use of mitigation actions such as riparian margins, buffer strips & sediment traps to mitigate nutrient and sediment loss to water 
08	Maintain over-winter green cover to reduce nutrient leaching from tillage soils 



Aim of the campaign



To support and accelerate the adoption of actions on all farms to improve all water bodies (where agriculture is a significant pressure) to good or high ecological status

BFFW Campaign Steering Group

Head of Water Quality KT

Bandon-Ilen/Lee

Suir

Slaney

Boyne

Nore

Barrow

Blackwater

7 Catchment Action Plans

6 Catchment Coordinators

Catchment Implementation Group – Oversight Committee

Catchment Implementation Group – Delivery Team

BFFW Catchment Implementation Group - Oversight Committee

Purpose

- Develop, oversee and coordinate the implementation of Catchment Action Plans
- Ensure that actions are delivered effectively, collaboratively, and in alignment with campaign goals and objectives
- Monitor progress against targets and provide reports
- Identify and address barriers to implementation

BFFW Catchment Implementation Group

- Oversight Committee

Lead Industry / Stakeholder in the Catchment	
Role	Organisation
Chair	Independent farmer/industry/stakeholder
Secretariat	Catchment Coordinator
Lead industry/stakeholder representative	Sustainability manager or equivalent
Regulators	Local Authority/DAFM/etc.
Advisory	Teagasc RM, Lead advisor/Specialist, ACA
Farmers	Dairy/Beef/Tillage/Pigs/Poultry
Agri-Food Industry stakeholders	Dairy/Beef/Tillage/Pigs/Poultry
Catchment Scientists	LAWPRO

BFFW Catchment Implementation Group

- Delivery Team

Purpose

- Work collaboratively with all stakeholders on improving water quality
- Carry out the actions as prescribed in the Catchment Action Plan
- e.g. farm visits, farm plans, FFW EIP applications, farmer information meetings, etc.
- Provide regular reports on progress to the organisations representative on the Oversight Committee

BFFW Catchment Implementation Group

- Delivery Team

Area	Organisation
Regulators	Local Authorities & DAFM
Advisory	ASSAP – Teagasc/Co-op/MII Teagasc Enterprise Advisors Private advisors
Other Initiatives	Community Animators Rivers Trusts

Overview of delivery – 6 Pillars

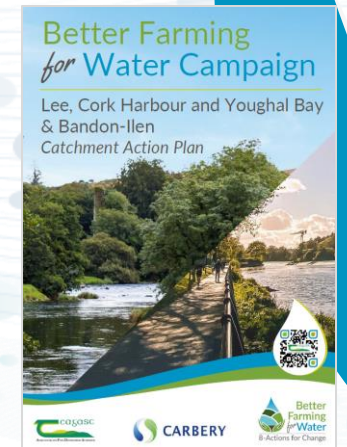
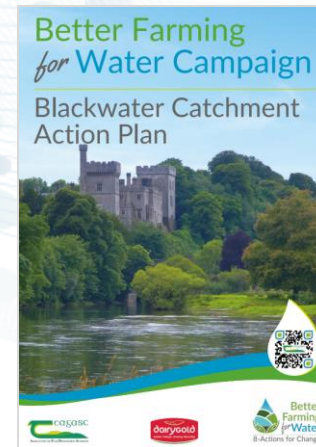
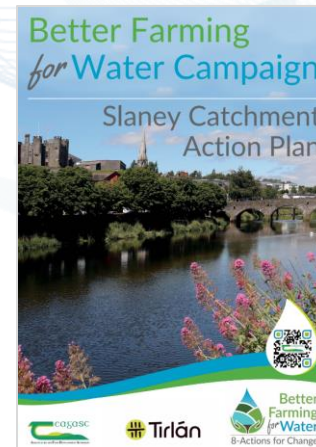
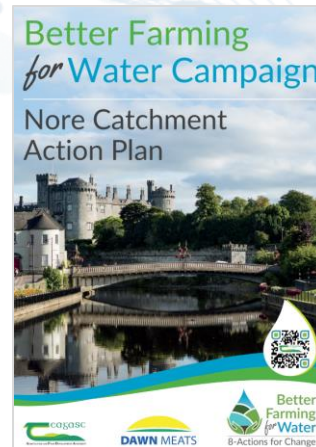
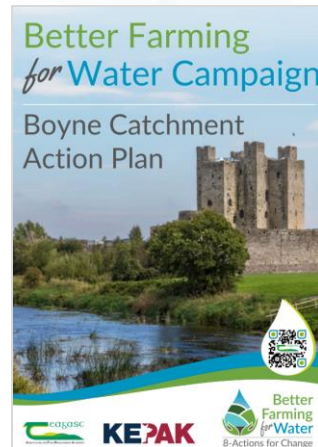
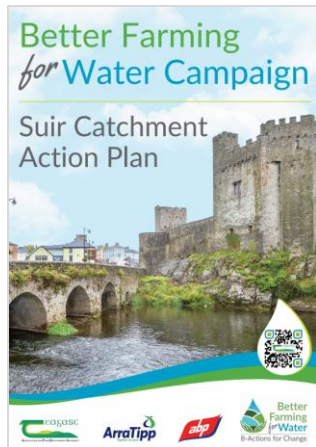
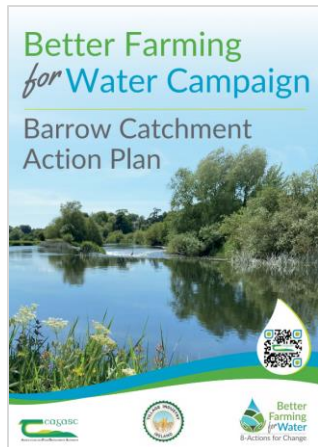


Pillar 1



Stakeholder Engagement
through a Multi-Actor Approach

- Establishment of 7 Catchment Implementation Groups
- Catchment Action Plan for each catchment
- Plan covers 6 Pillars and comprehensive characterisation of each catchment
- All stakeholders have a role to play



Pillar 2

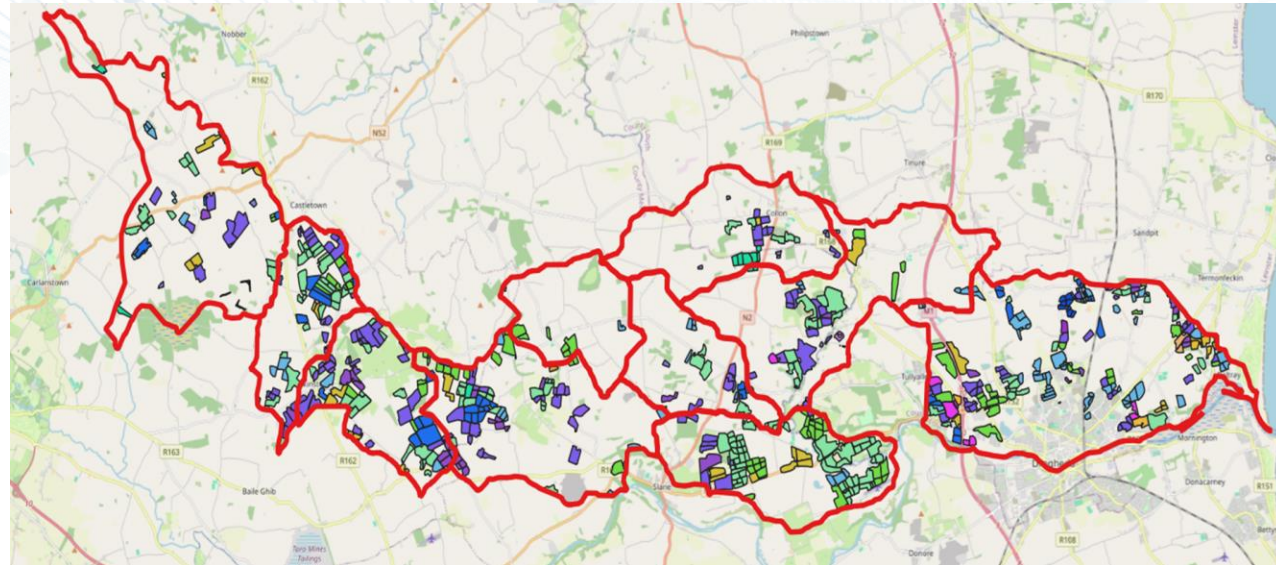
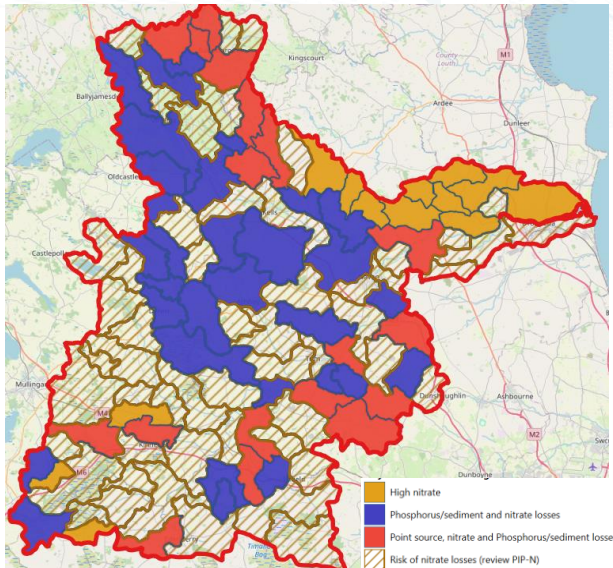


Building Awareness

by acquisition and utilisation of water quality data

Use of freely available EPA Water Quality and DAFM LPIS information for

- Characterisation of catchment – target water bodies (WB's) for action
- Identification of different pressures – N, P, sediment, point source
- Align with other activities – LAWPRO referrals/LA inspections etc.
- Quantify farmer numbers & enterprise in target WB's – target messaging
- Identify farms for visits based on risk of impact

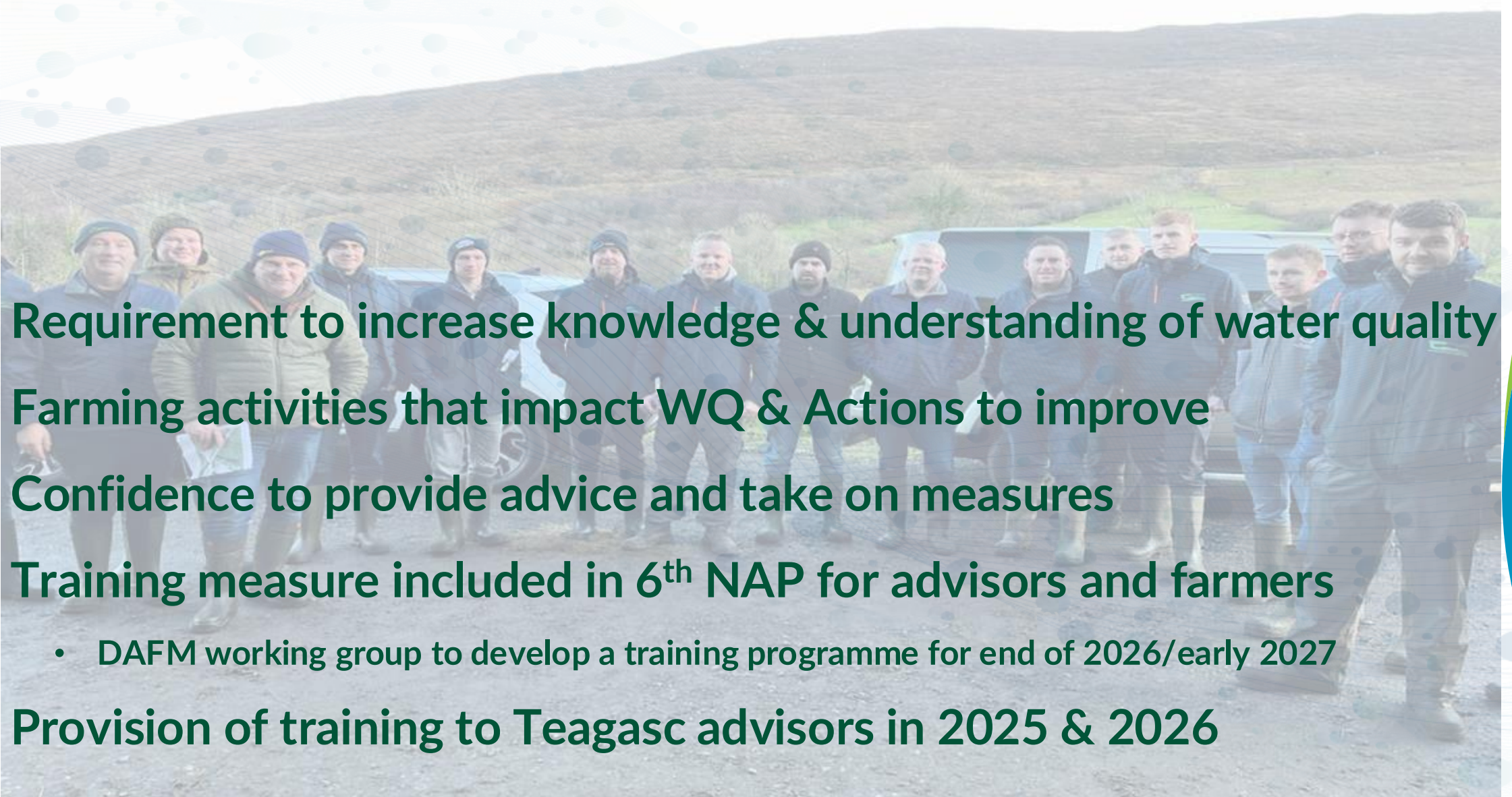


Pillar 3



Upskilling

Farmers, advisors, teachers, industry professionals and students



Requirement to increase knowledge & understanding of water quality
Farming activities that impact WQ & Actions to improve
Confidence to provide advice and take on measures
Training measure included in 6th NAP for advisors and farmers

- DAFM working group to develop a training programme for end of 2026/early 2027

Provision of training to Teagasc advisors in 2025 & 2026

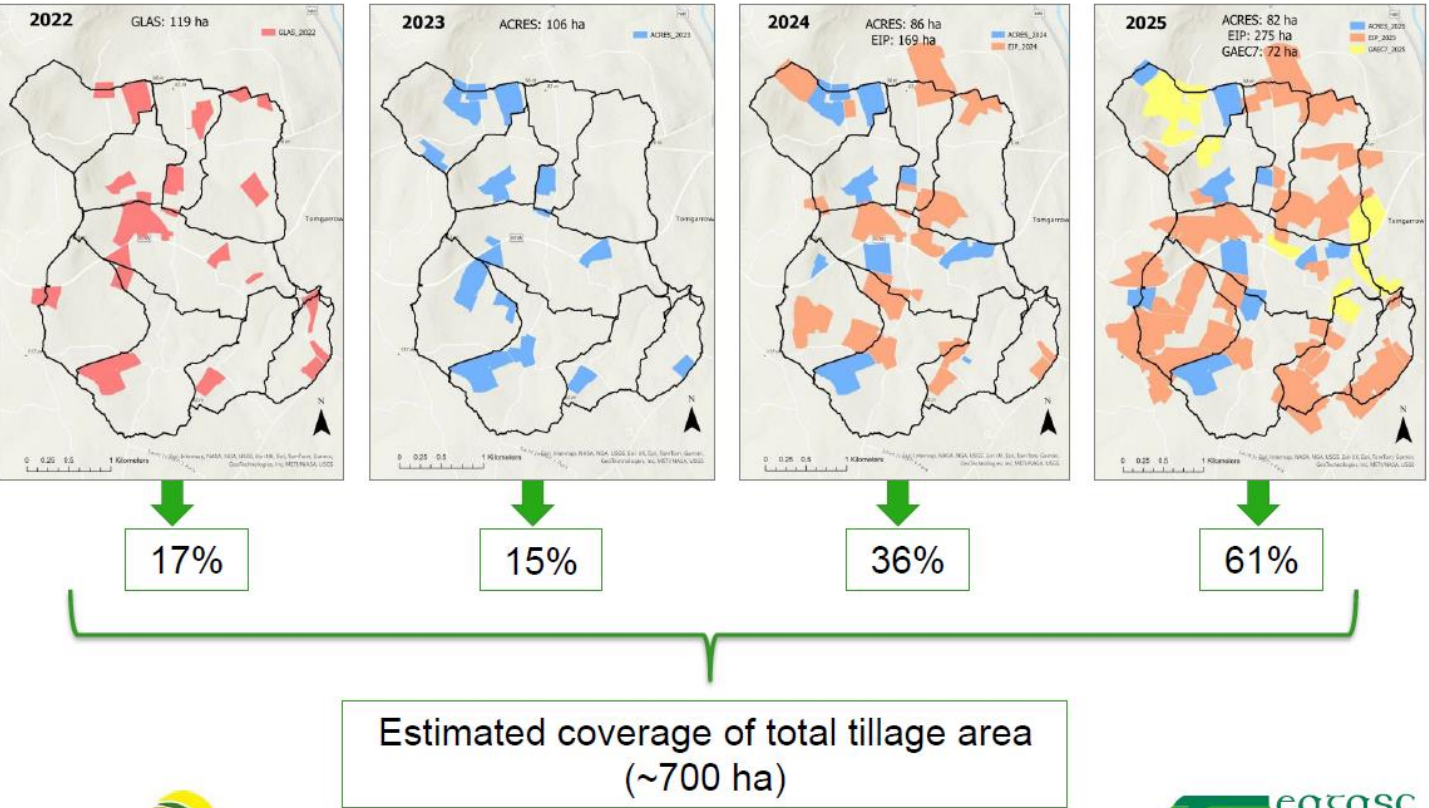
Pillar 4



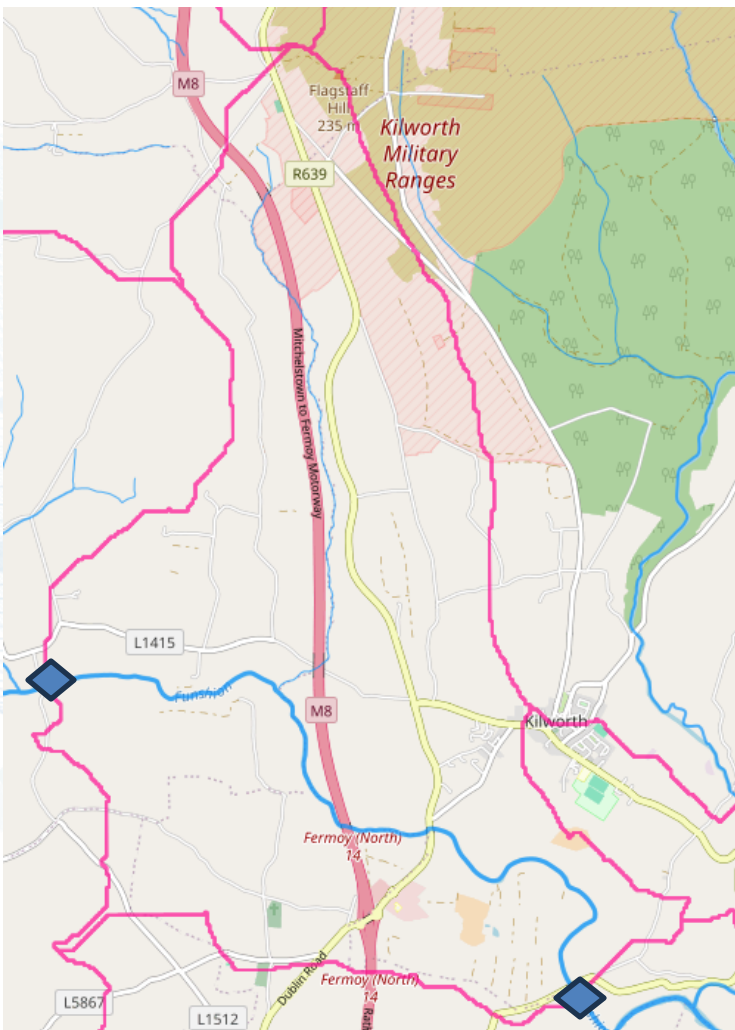
Research Programme

A supporting Research Programme to identify and develop effective mitigation actions

Catch crop area sown via Agri-Environmental Schemes Castledockrell 2022-2025



Funshion_080 : Nitrate Research



Pillar 5



Knowledge Transfer
A strong Knowledge Transfer programme

3 levels of KT intervention

Level 1: Catchment scale

Farm walks and events providing information and advice on catchment issues
Catchment scale communications and

Level 2: Sub – catchment scale

Farm walks and events providing more targeted information and advice on sub catchment issues
Sub - catchment scale communications and messaging – general advisory service

Level 3: Water – body scale (individual farmer)

Individual farm visits targeting specific actions – ASSAP and general advisory service

Text

Text

Pillar 6



Communications Plan

A strong Communications Plan with the target audiences



5 Top Tips for May

Silage Bales

Store Silage bales a minimum of 20 m from watercourse and max of 2 high



Clover Swards

Reduce chemical N application and let clover do the work



Silage effluent

Keep channels clear and ensure all silage effluent is collected in tank



Stream fencing & drinking points

Fence off watercourses (min 1.5m) and provide alternative water supply for livestock



Sulphur Use

Ensure the 20Kg sulphur / Ha has been applied to max Nitrogen Use Efficiency



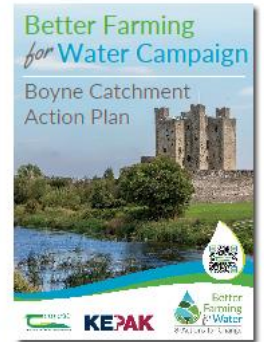
Step up for Better Water Quality



Better Farming for Water Campaign Boyne Catchment



Above is outline of Boyne catchment in red, main river channels in blue and outline of counties it flows through.



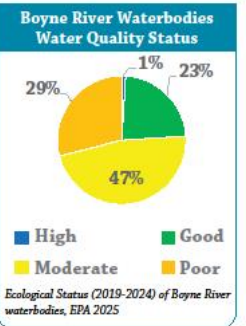
The Boyne River catchment covers 650,000 acres of land across six counties before it reaches the Irish Sea just north of Mornington County Meath

“Too much nutrient (Nitrogen and Phosphorous) is impacting water quality in the Boyne Catchment

The Boyne catchment includes 114 river waterbodies (small sections of a larger river network)

Only 24% of these Waterbodies are at their target of High or Good Water Quality Status

Turn over to see the “8 Actions for Change” and help reduce nutrient loss to waters from our farmlands.



8 Fact Sheets – one for each action
Good news stories
IFJ monthly article
<https://teagasc.ie/environment/water-quality/better-farming-for-water/>

Alignment with National Water Quality Policy



Summary:

- Campaign delivering across 6 pillars
- 8 Actions – applicable and actionable across all farms
- Integration of WQ messages into day-to-day advice
- Multi actor approach – industry buy in
- Communications – of issues and solutions and successes
- Targeted approach
- Alignment of campaign with national WQ policy