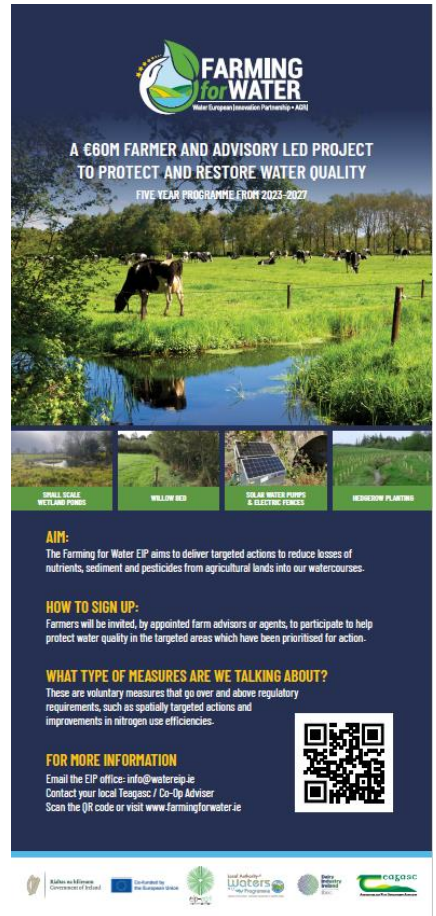




Implementation Insights from the Farming for Water EIP

Background

- Delivered under EIP-AGRI, bringing together farmers, researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders to develop practical solutions
- Locally led initiative with €50m supporting “right measure, right place” delivery
- Built on the ASSAP advisory network and guided by River Basin Management Service (formerly LAWPRO) evidence-based targeting
- Strong collaboration between advisors and the FFW EIP team underpins delivery, project partners River Basin Management Service, Teagasc and DII.
- Funded by DAFM and the EU (€50m), with €10m operational support from DHLGH
- Additional DHLGH funding secured for research and innovation in 2026.



**FARMING
for WATER**
Water European Innovation Partnership - AGRI

A €60M FARMER AND ADVISORY LED PROJECT
TO PROTECT AND RESTORE WATER QUALITY
FIVE YEAR PROGRAMME FROM 2023-2027

AIM:
The Farming for Water EIP aims to deliver targeted actions to reduce losses of nutrients, sediment and pesticides from agricultural lands into our watercourses.

HOW TO SIGN UP:
Farmers will be invited, by appointed farm advisors or agents, to participate to help protect water quality in the targeted areas which have been prioritised for action.

WHAT TYPE OF MEASURES ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?
These are voluntary measures that go over and above regulatory requirements, such as spatially targeted actions and improvements in nitrogen use efficiencies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Email the EIP office: info@wateraip.ie
Contact your local Teagasc / Co-Op Adviser
Scan the QR code or visit www.farmingforwater.ie

Logos: Rialtas na hÉireann, Co-funded by the European Union, Local Authority Waters Programme, Dairy Industry Ireland, Teagasc



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Co-funded by
the European Union

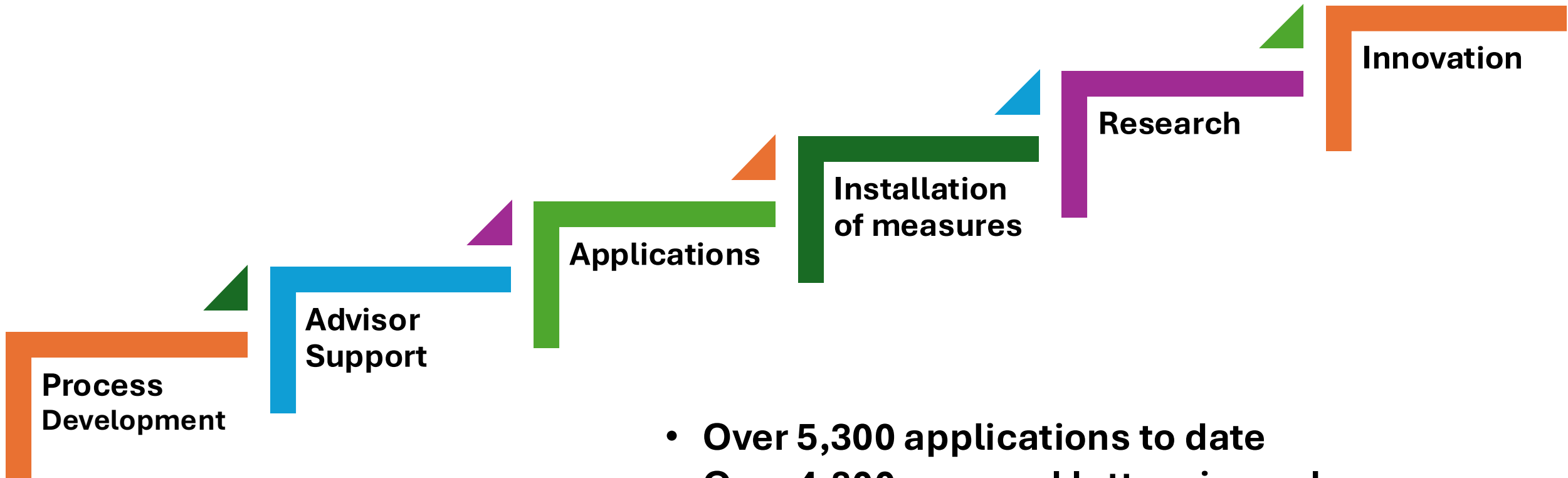


Local Authority
Waters
Programme
vibrant communities | catchment assessment | healthy waters



teagasc
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Path to Delivery



- Over 5,300 applications to date
- Over 4,800 approval letters issued
- Over 34,000 approved water quality actions

Process Development

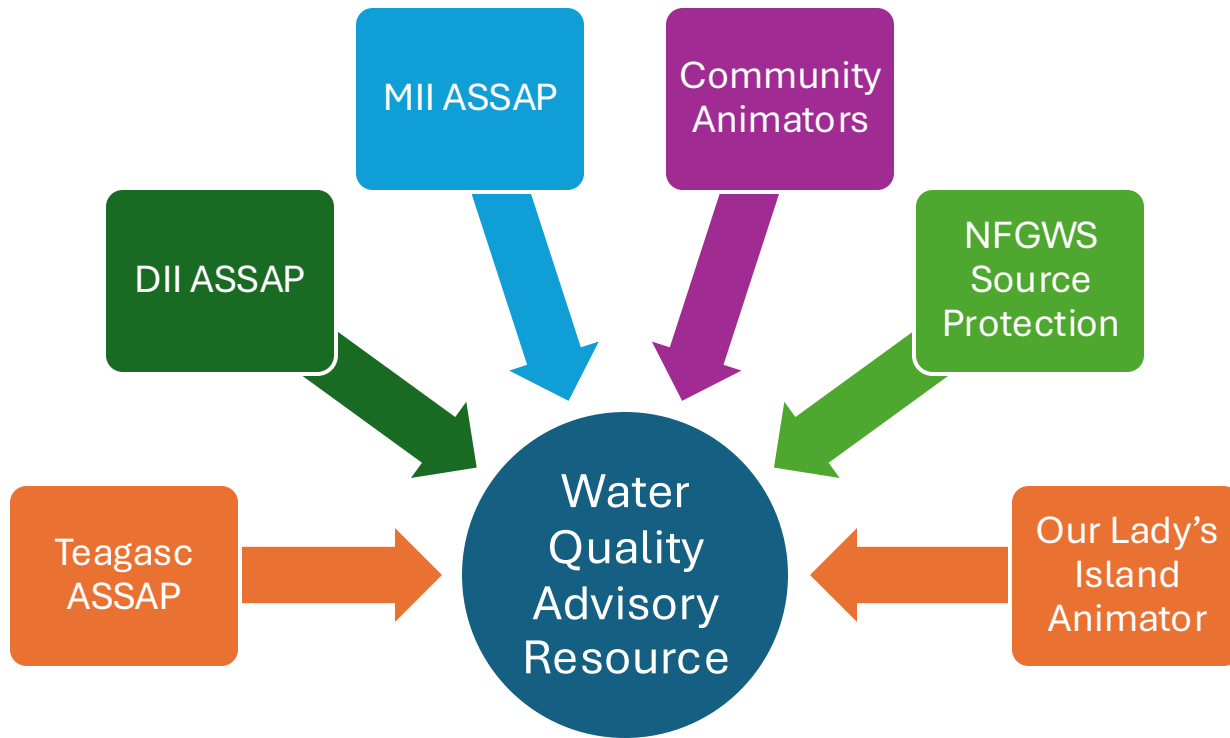


- New system developed with ongoing advisor and farmer feedback
- Variable engagement across advisory team (early vs late adopters)
- Evolving process impacted 2024 applications and subsequent implementation
- Concept sound, but required practical testing at each stage
- External controls had to be built from scratch, with double funding risks adding complexity

Key Findings

- A collaborative approach delivers clear benefits and strengthens buy-in across the advisory team.
- Incorporating feedback important for engagement but brings an administrative burden and time delay.
- Early, end-to-end testing of all process elements is critical to minimise delays at each stage.
- Timely finalisation of processes is necessary to build and sustain application momentum.

Advisory Support



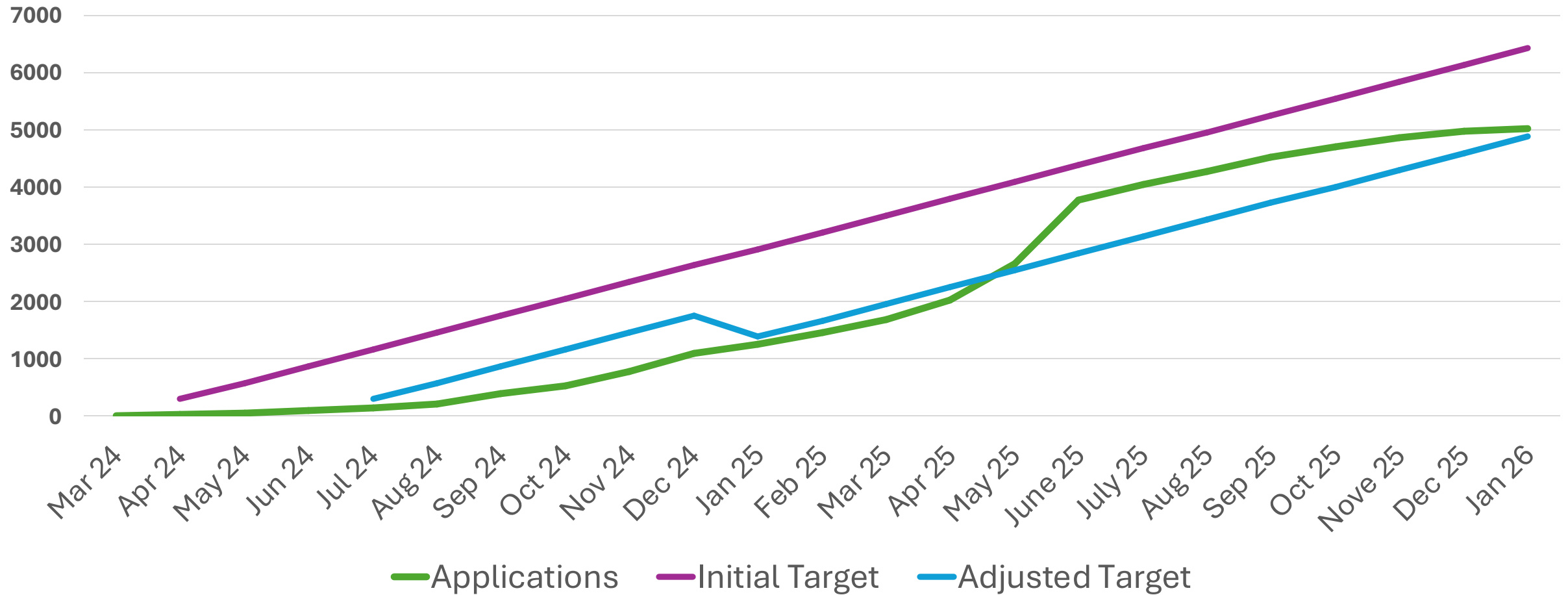
- ASSAP Advisory team established farmer trust.
- Critical resource in the delivery of the project.
- Advisor confidence is crucial in recommending measures.
- Significant scientific resource required to upskill the team.
- Sharp learning curve for all.
- New process, new measures.
- Staggered advisor engagement, and expansion of advisory team leads to repetition of training.

Key Findings

- Higher than anticipated support required.
- Constant need for support due to turnover of advisory team.
- Significant draw on the scientific team which delayed other scientific deliverables including approvals.
- Future resourcing models need to account for sustained advisory and technical support over the lifecycle

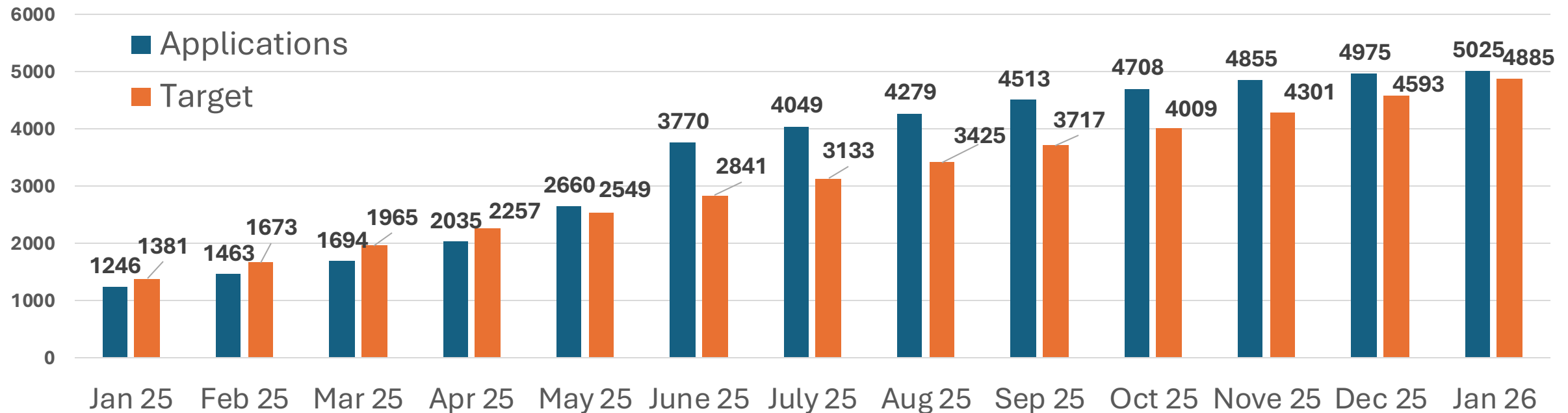
Applications

FARMING FOR WATER APPLICATIONS



Applications

APPLICATIONS VS TARGET FOR 2025



Key Findings

- Allowances need to be made for project establishment and advisor training before ambitious targets set.
- Baselines should be reestablished once the required conditions are met.
- Achieving targets may require ongoing innovation in both processes and measure design.
- Once momentum is achieved, appetite for measures increases, average 3 times the assumed value.

Measures Installation

- Focus for majority of 2025 was on application targets.
- Requirement for advisor support for implementation was underestimated.
- The balance between applications and implementation was not achieved in 2025.
- Demonstration farms play a key role.
- Communications Subgroup established to produce information is to assist in the implementation of complex physical measures.
- Tranche system will focus advisory resource towards measures.



Key Findings

- Focus on applications alone will negatively impact implementation
- Complex measures will not be implemented without significant advisor support
- Capacity for the support workload must be incorporated into advisor deliverables
- Detailed guidance is required for many non-physical measures including videos, documentation etc.

Research

- Inaugural Research Hub meeting held in May 2024.
- The Research Hub brings together expertise from multiple institutions, including UCC, TCD, ATU, Teagasc, ACP, and DKIT.
- Development of research projects directly impacted by implementation, opportunities across 2024 and early 2025 limited.
- Delays in mapping measures also make identifying opportunities difficult
- Projects currently assessing 10 individual measures and 2 project assessing efficacy of combined of measures.
- New Nitrogen focussed project in the Slaney for 2026, as well as a social/ behavioural study with DKIT.
- New water monitoring in Our Lady's Island will commence in July.



Key Findings

- Innovative approach bringing mutual benefits for EIP Project and Researchers.
- Time required to establish the Research Hub, agree structure and agree deliverables.
- Slow implementation had a direct impact on the ability to identify research opportunities.
- Availability of data also key to identifying projects.

Recommendations

Standardise & Prepare

- Refine EIP systems into usable templates
- Provide clear early guidance on measures

Pilot First

- Establish pilot area with limited applications
- Test end to end process early

Support & Resource

- Resource ongoing advisor support
- Supplement approval resource

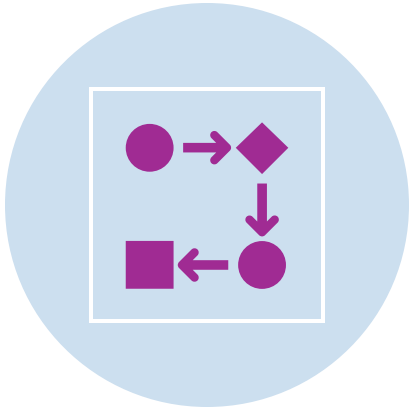
Balance & Deliver

- Balance applications vs implementation, consider tranches
- Reduce expired measures and missed opportunities

Test & Innovate

- Prioritise early implementation
- Encourage innovation for wider impact

Innovation



PROCESS



PROJECTS



MEASURES

Process - Catch Crop Pilot

- Streamlined process to allow applicants in N risky areas to apply for Catch Crops without a RWMP.
- Utilised the wider Teagasc advisory team with the measure offered during BISS process in 2025.
- Referred to the ASSAP advisor to convert an expression on interest to an application for EIP Funding.
- Created a significant workload for Teagasc ASSAP advisors and EIP team against the sowing deadlines.
- Strong delivery: ~1,200 applications / 30,000 ha
- Deadlines supported implementation and financial control
- 2026 targeting refined to priority catchments where greatest N reduction is required.

Research:

- Supports ongoing research by Teagasc ACP.



Process - Stranooden GWS

- An alternative delivery model was developed to enhance farmer engagement and streamline measure implementation
- The GWS Manager acts as the primary advisor, identifying suitable measures and submitting applications on behalf of farmers
- The GWS also operates as the contractor, delivering installation, monitoring, and ongoing maintenance of physical measures
- Payment structures are split, with non-physical measure payments issued directly to farmers and physical measure payments made to Stranooden GWS
- Eligibility criteria, assessment processes, and verification standards remain aligned with the Measures Guidance booklet
- The approach builds on and leverages existing GWS structures and relationships

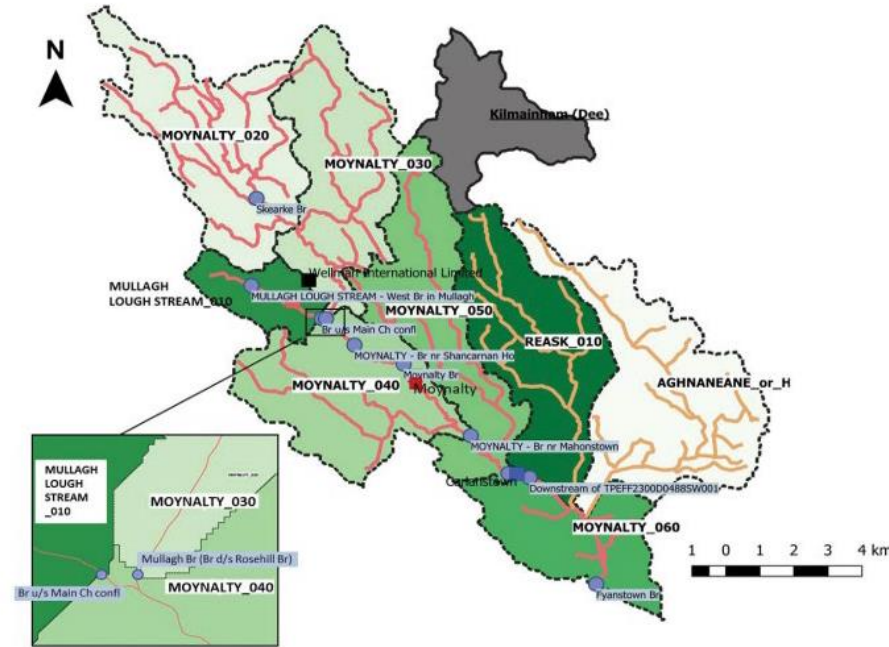
Research:

- Overall experience of the EIP – DKIT through Research Hub
- Implementation of measures vs standard route



Projects - Moynalty Project

- Catchment approach is a key part of the Farming for Water EIP.
- Moynalty project was the first of these initiatives in 2024, led by Lakeland Dairies. The Moynalty catchment includes 9 waterbodies and forms part of the River Boyne catchment in north-west County Meath and Cavan border.
- The initiative brings together the Farming for Water EIP, ASSAP, River Basin Management Service, Teagasc advisors, Teagasc Better Farming for Water campaign, local farmers and advisors and Dairy, Meat, and Tillage industry stakeholders.
- The collaborative approach aims to improve water quality within the Moynalty catchment.



Moynalty Catchment Map

Source: River Basin Management Service



*Visit of the CAP Strategic Plan
Monitoring Committee May 2026*

- To date, 53 farmers are participating in Farming for Water initiatives within the Moynalty catchment.

Research: Spatially targeted buffer zones and riparian margins.

Projects - Our Lady's Island

- Strong cross-agency collaboration has been established between Wexford County Council, River Basin Management Service, Farming for Water EIP, Teagasc, and Tirlán
- A risk-based approach, led by WFD team, has prioritised farms with the largest land areas and highest N loss risk.
- 92% of the landowners in priority 1 & 2 now have EIP applications, which covers >70% of the risk area.
- Applications have been received from beef, tillage, and dairy enterprises with significant catch crop coverage.
- Drone monitoring of the lake will be carried out throughout the summer to track potential algal bloom development.
- The EIP team liaising closely with NPWS.

Research

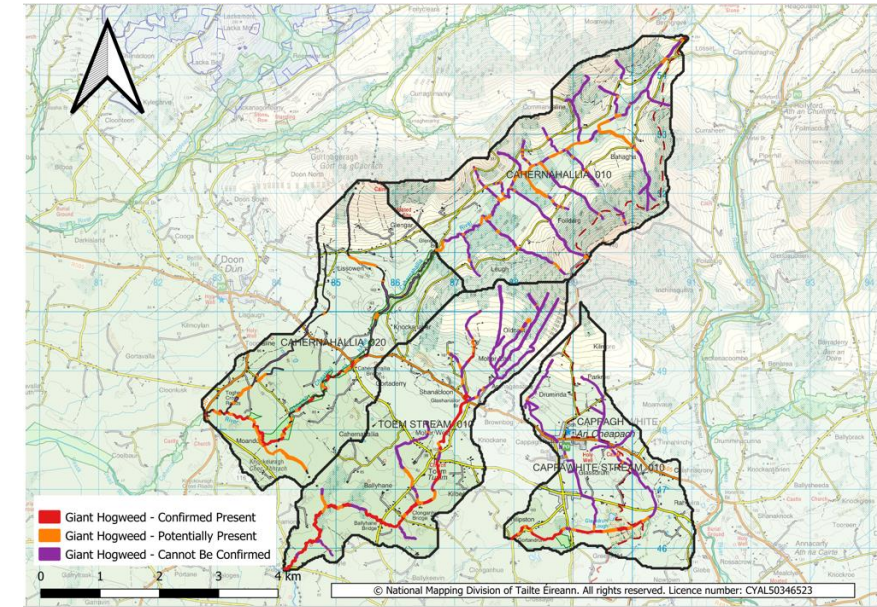
- Research and Innovation funding secured from DHLGH to trial WaterSense Water Stations on both sides of lagoon. Collaboration with Wexford County Council.



	Area Bands	Total Herd Nos.	Herd Nos. in EIP	% EIP Coverage	Catchment Area (%)
Priority 1	> 40 ha	10	9	90%	68%
Priority 2	20-40 ha	3	3	100%	7%
Priority 3	10-20 ha	13	2	15%	14%

Measures - Giant Hogweed Project

- Collaborative project between EIP & WFD teams, Tipperary County Council, Teagasc, ArraTipp and Community Animators.
- Focuses on the Toem, Cappawhite and Cahernahaila tributaries of the upper Mulkear/Dead River catchment
- Invasive species which poses water quality, biodiversity and health risks. Catchment approach key to successful eradication.
- ASSAP advisors engaging farmers to make EIP applications with Giant Hogweed treatment as a bespoke measure.
- A pilot phase was undertaken in 2025 involving multiple contractors, with a single contractor now delivering wide-scale treatment.
- Coillte will engage the same contractor to treat their forest.
- CWOs in the SE working with Riversdale community group and schools.
- TCC Biodiversity Officer securing regional funding for roadside areas.
- Engagement with STDC (South Tipperary Development Company) Rural Social Scheme and Ballyhoura Development Company for medium-longterm support/ training



Focus Area

*Source: River Basin
Management Service*



What next for the EIP?



Refocussing

Refining eligibility and applying ranking and selection criteria to further target measures.



Implementation

Working with Advisors to support farmers in implementation of approved measures.

Showcasing positive water quality action.



Data

Mapping implementation and spatial reporting of water quality actions.



Review

Assessment of project to date to provide learnings to inform future water quality actions nationally and the CAP.

Supporting the incorporation of water quality measures in industry actions.



Research

Exploring findings of current research projects and identifying additional opportunities.

Identification of most effective measures.



Innovation

Trialling innovative measures, processes and projects.

Thank you



**Want to improve water
quality on your farm?**
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