

Minute of the 19th Meeting of the National Technical Implementation Group for WFD



9 March 2022



Location: Virtual

Date: 9 March 2022 **Time:** 14:00-16:00

Chairperson: Mary Gurrie, EPA

Attendance:

DHLGH: Marie Archbold, Graham McGovern, Eimear O’Keefe

EPA: Patrick Byrne, Jenny Deakin, Mary Gurrie, Eva Mockler, Patrick Morrissey, Shane O’Boyle, Emma Quinlan, Suzanne Wylde

LAWPRO: Ruth Hennessy, Fran Igoe, Margaret Keegan, Carol McCarthy, Gary O’Connell, Maeve Ryan, Bernie White

Mark Adamson (OPW), Ken Bucke (Forest Service/DAFM), Karl Cashen (Tipperary CoCo), Kevin Collins (Forest Service/DAFM), Barry Deane (NFGWS), Anne Goggin (DHLGH), Silke Hartmann (NIEA/DAERA), David Joyce (CCMA/Cork), Dymphna Kehoe (DAFM), Mairead Kenny (An Bord Pleanála), Joanne Livingstone (NIEA/DAERA), Ronan Matson (IFI), Noreen.McCleery (NIEA/DAERA), Daireann McDonnell (Waterways Ireland), Evin McGovern (MI), Peter McGroary (SFPA), Deborah Meghan (Coillte), Noel Meehan (ASSAP/Teagasc), Billy O’Keefe (TII), Paula Treacy (Waterways Ireland)

Agenda:

1. Welcome, introductions and minutes of previous meeting
2. Updates on progress, issue arising for NTIG to consider
 - i.DPLGH
 - ii.LA Waters Programme
 - iii.ASSAP
 - iv.EPA
3. Heavily Modified Water Bodies – designation and public consultation - EPA
4. Drainage of agricultural lands – evidence and issues with management – LAWPRO
5. Next meeting – June 2022

1.	<p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes were agreed for the NTIG meeting held in November 2021. 										
2.	<p>Updates: 2nd Cycle Implementation / Third Cycle Planning</p> <p>DHLGH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nitrates Action Programme: Update provided. Water and Planning Guidance: Contract awarded. Public consultation towards end of June/start of July with the aim to finalise by end of year. Draft River Basin Management Plan (RBMP): Public consultation to close end of month. Submissions will be reviewed, and owners of measures will be engaged with to agree details. Aim to finalise by Q4 this year. Waters of Life Project: Provided update on key actions. Website will be ready for live launch on the 29th April. Recruitment of core team and catchment staff underway. Outlined process for catchment selection (four selected so far, two more to be identified). <p>LA Waters Programme - see update notes on OneDrive</p> <p>ASSAP - see presentation on OneDrive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisors are continuing to visit farms and carry out assessments, with total number of farm visits up to end of 2021 reflective of restrictions. Water quality assessments done on 100 signpost farms (showcasing farms for sustainable farming). LAWPRO are providing support through their Local Catchment Assessment output. Farmer meetings ongoing with good attendance. ASSAP team are active in 122 Priority Areas for Action (PAAs). Provided examples of the type of measures currently being implemented (see presentation). Dairy co-op advisory team to increase number of advisors to 18 this year with a focus on catchment referrals for nitrogen (water bodies/areas with elevated N levels) to provide mitigation actions on N losses. <p><i>Table 1 Priority categories for Catchment Referrals for Nitrogen</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="347 1346 1378 1507"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority category description</th> <th>No. of water bodies</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Water bodies contributing high N within catchments of concern</td> <td>404</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. High PIP N areas in catchments of concern (not included above)</td> <td>733</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Water bodies with elevated N (outside catchments of concern)</td> <td>94</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. 20% reduction in use everywhere</td> <td>All other water bodies</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAFM/DHLGH funding announced for a Water Quality EIP – €60m over five years. Submitted to EU as part of the CAP strategic plan and currently awaiting approval. The aim is to provide funding to farmers to implement measures to mitigate impacts of agriculture on water quality. Early stages of development - ASSAP will keep NTIG members updated. <p>EPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated 2013-2018 RWB ecological status available on EPA geoportal and visible on WFD APP and EPA Maps. Includes extrapolated status of unassigned water bodies. See WFD update - assigning status to all unmonitored identified waterbodies - Catchments.ie - Catchments.ie. The next WQI report is due out later this year which will give updated status for data up to and including 2021. 	Priority category description	No. of water bodies	1. Water bodies contributing high N within catchments of concern	404	2. High PIP N areas in catchments of concern (not included above)	733	3. Water bodies with elevated N (outside catchments of concern)	94	4. 20% reduction in use everywhere	All other water bodies
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a framework for protecting drinking water resources in the catchment has commenced, with the support of a subgroup of the DHLGH-led Drinking Water Expert Group. Consultants have been contracted for technical support. Kick off meeting next week. • Public consultation on the designation review of Heavily Modified Water Bodies (HMWB) is open and closes 30th April (<i>Note: extended to the 15th May</i>). • The nature-based catchment management solutions and River Restoration (NbCM/RR) framework, and sediment risk maps, are near completion. Input and guidance from the Steering Group, made largely of members from the National Hydromorphology Working Group, has been very helpful. • The EPA water conference in the Galway Bay Hotel will take place on the 18th and 19th May. It will be a hybrid event with in-person and online options. (EPA Water Conference 2022 - 18 and 19 May, Galway - Catchments.ie - Catchments.ie). • Irish Wildlife Trust are hosting a special series of lunchtime webinars focusing on the Water Framework Directive (Webinars - Irish Wildlife Trust (iwt.ie)). • There are three live issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Sheep dip</i>. Ongoing toxic impacts this summer. A consultancy report on management of sheep dip is still being finalised. The EPA’s National Hazardous Waste strategy which has relevance is also in development. ○ <i>Norovirus</i>. The DHLGH shellfish roadmap has been delayed. EPA, with the support of consultants and key stakeholders, is carrying out a characterisation exercise to assess the pressures impacting on shellfish. It will be important that all the shellfish assessment processes are linked up in an integrated way alongside the WFD. ○ <i>Movement of organic manures, sludges and wastes</i>. Work has been delayed. A focus group is being established to look at enforcement and inspections under the GAP regulations and opportunities to link the two issues together will be explored.
<p>3.</p>	<p>Heavily Modified Water Bodies – designation and public consultation</p> <p><i>See presentation on OneDrive</i></p> <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAWPRO: Queried whether drainage district schemes were included in the review. EPA outlined that information on the extent and maintenance regimes of drainage district schemes is not available at a national scale (in contrast to the arterial drainage scheme data) and they have not therefore been included in this review. • Waterways Ireland: Happy to see classification (ecological potential) will be addressed as this will drive implementation of measures. Collaboration on implementation of measures is vital. Queried if measures are to be agreed for the third plan. DHLGH responded that the Minister will make the decision on the designations and from there, measures will be considered.
<p>4.</p>	<p>Drainage of agricultural lands – evidence and issues with management</p> <p><i>See presentation on OneDrive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAWPRO provided examples of issues encountered within PAAs regarding land drainage/reclamation, outlined possible gaps (knowledge, implementation, policy) and relayed feedback from Regional Operational Committees, notably challenges with implementation of EIA (Agriculture) Regulations. <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions touched on the requirement for resources, a joined up approach and a single entity to oversee this area. • LAWPRO commented that a process is needed that works with the existing regulatory supports. LAWPRO require guidance as to who they should refer such issues to when carrying out Local

	<p>Catchment Assessments. Resources are required to mitigate these issues. In addition, it was suggested that enforcement needs to be seen on the ground. DHLGH noted that measures have been outlined in the dRBMP with a view to strengthening controls with drainage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suggestion was made to collate the evidence, obtaining input from NTIG members (e.g. Forest Service experience with license inspections), and bring findings to the group with a view to raising it up through the governance structure. A stakeholder group was proposed to identify solutions to issues raised.
<p>5.</p>	<p>AOB and next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2022 (online - proposed)