



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# The Right Measure, in the Right Place.

## Draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland

2022 - 2027

Prepared by the Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage  
[www.gov.ie/housing](http://www.gov.ie/housing)



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## About the Plan

# What is the river basin management plan (RBMP)?

Under the EU Water Framework Directive, Ireland is required to produce a river basin management plan every 6 years to protect and improve water quality. The next plan will cover the period 2022-2027. This vital plan will set out the environmental objectives for water quality to be achieved by 2027 and identify the measures that will protect and restore our rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters, to ensure those objectives are achieved. The plan will also identify the bodies responsible for implementing these measures.

A copy of the draft plan, along with further supporting documentation, is available on the consultation page of the Department's website at [www.gov.ie/draftRBMP](http://www.gov.ie/draftRBMP)



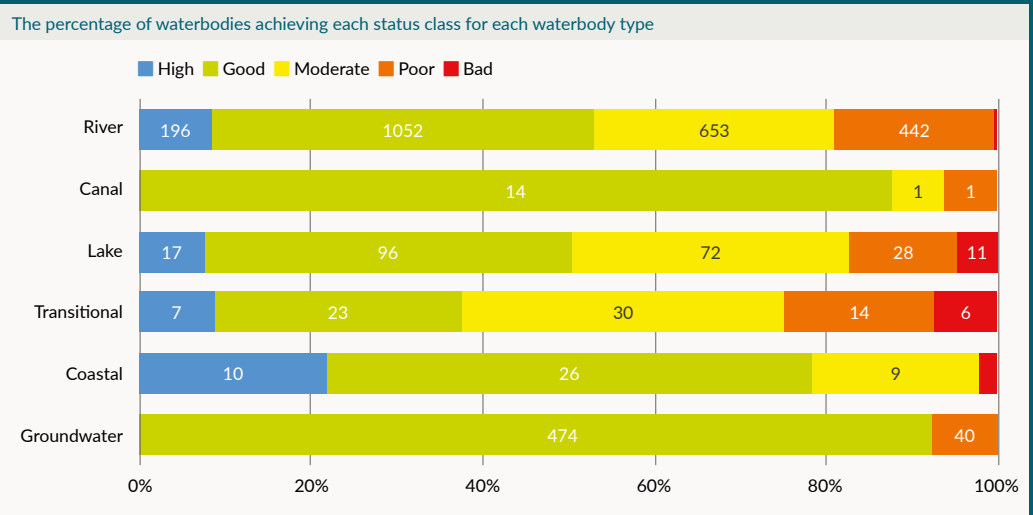


## Why it is Important

# Why is this plan important?

Water quality matters for protecting the environment, public health and the economy. The environment cannot flourish with polluted waters. Exposure to poor water quality, be it in bathing waters or in a river, threatens public health and well-being. Ireland's economy has vibrant sectors such as agri-food, ICT, pharmaceutical and tourism, with over 200,000 jobs dependent on access to clean water resources and safe drinking water supplies.

Despite many years of action, water quality in Ireland's rivers is still declining in certain areas. The latest EPA data shows that just 53% of surface waters (rivers, lakes and estuaries) are in 'good' or 'high' ecological status.



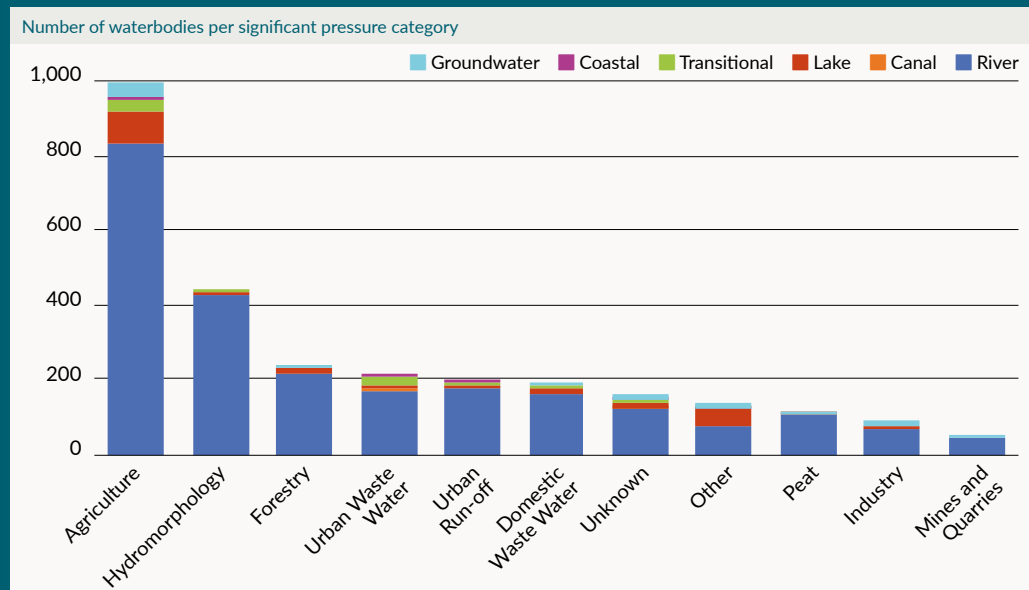


# What are the significant pressures on our waters?

The WFD requires an assessment of pressures on water bodies that are causing 'less than good' water quality status. For this, the third-cycle of River Basin Management Plans, 1,603 water bodies are 'At Risk' of not meeting their WFD objectives. 46% of these water bodies are impacted by a single significant pressure. The remaining 54% are impacted by more than one significant pressure.

The scientific analysis carried out for this plan shows a diverse range of pressures on water quality that includes agriculture, hydromorphology, forestry, urban waste water, peat extraction and septic tanks.

## Significant Pressures





## Proposed Measures

# What measures are in the draft plan?

Supporting the overall premise of putting ‘the right measure, in the right place’, the plan has adopted the following key principles.

**An increased level of ambition:** the third-cycle plan will have a high level of ambition encompassing all waterbodies with clear strategies to protect those that are still at good status or above and to improve water bodies that are at less than good status.

**Integrated Catchment Planning:** Building over time into fully integrated catchment management plans, initial catchment plans will be put in place for each of the 46 hydrometric catchments as sub-plans to the national Plan.

**Multiple benefits:** Many of the measures needed to protect and improve water quality can also deliver benefits for nature, air quality and climate change.

**Role Clarity and Collaborative Implementation:** there will be an increase in the level of coordination and collaborative work by all implementing bodies at national, regional and catchment levels, making optimal use of existing and enhanced governance structures and resources.

Influenced by the above principles, this Plan sets out over one hundred proposed measures to address our water quality issues. Further details on these measures are available at [www.gov.ie/draftRBMP](http://www.gov.ie/draftRBMP)





# What are the expected outcomes from the consultation?

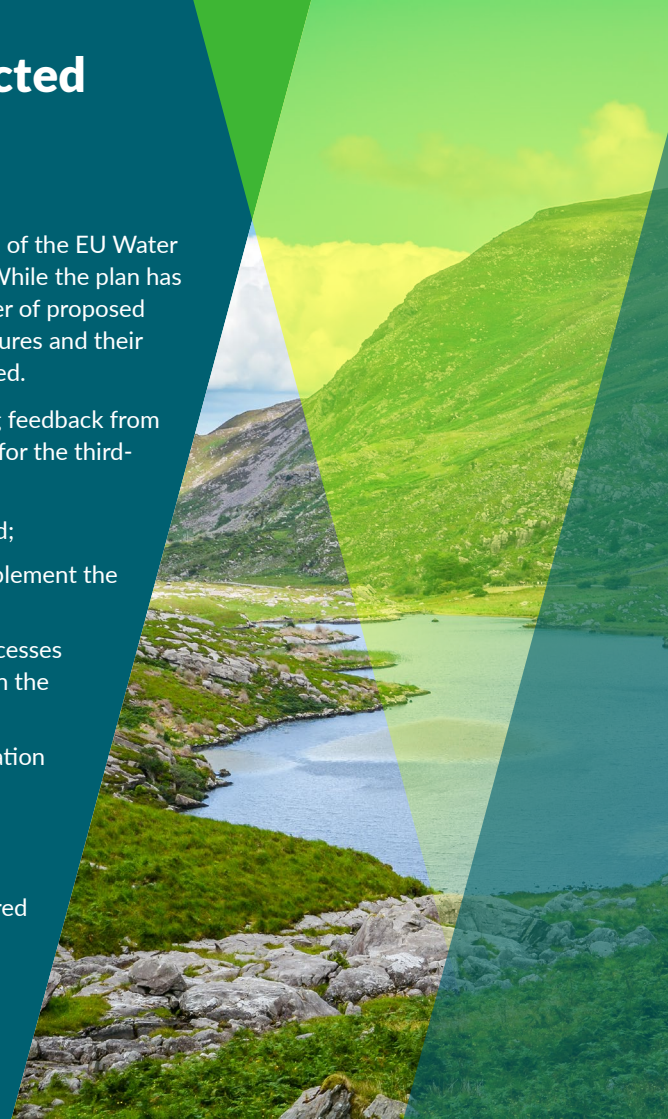
Achieving the environmental objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive will not be easy. While the plan has outlined the key principles and a number of proposed measures, the final programme of measures and their expected outcomes are yet to be decided.

Based on a number of factors, including feedback from the consultation process, the final plan for the third-cycle will take into account;

1. the scale of the measures required;
2. technical capacity available to implement the measures;
3. practical steps and legislative processes involved in delivering measures on the ground;
4. feedback from the public consultation process; and
5. an overall financing strategy for implementing measures.

The answers to these questions, delivered through the consultation process, will influence our level of ambition and timelines over which objectives can be sustainably delivered.

**Expected Outcomes**





Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# How do I submit my views on the plan?

The River Basin Management Plan process is founded on stakeholder and public participation and involvement. Key to improving this plan will be our engagements with stakeholders and with communities at both a national and a local level.

Details on how you can submit your views, including through an online survey, can be found on the consultation page of the Department's website at [www.gov.ie/draftRBMP](http://www.gov.ie/draftRBMP).

The **Local Authority Waters Programme** (LAWPRO) will deliver local level engagement and consultation on the Plan to gather the views of local communities. Details of these community engagements are available on [www.LAwaters.ie](http://www.LAwaters.ie), where you can also access their virtual consultation room and make your local submission.

Submissions received during this consultation process will be taken into account when preparing the final river basin management plan. The final plan will then be submitted to the Minister for approval and publication in 2022.

Have your say

