

August 2026

**Small Wastewater
Treatment Plants
National Plan: Supporting
Communities while
Protecting our Natural
Environment**
Issues Paper

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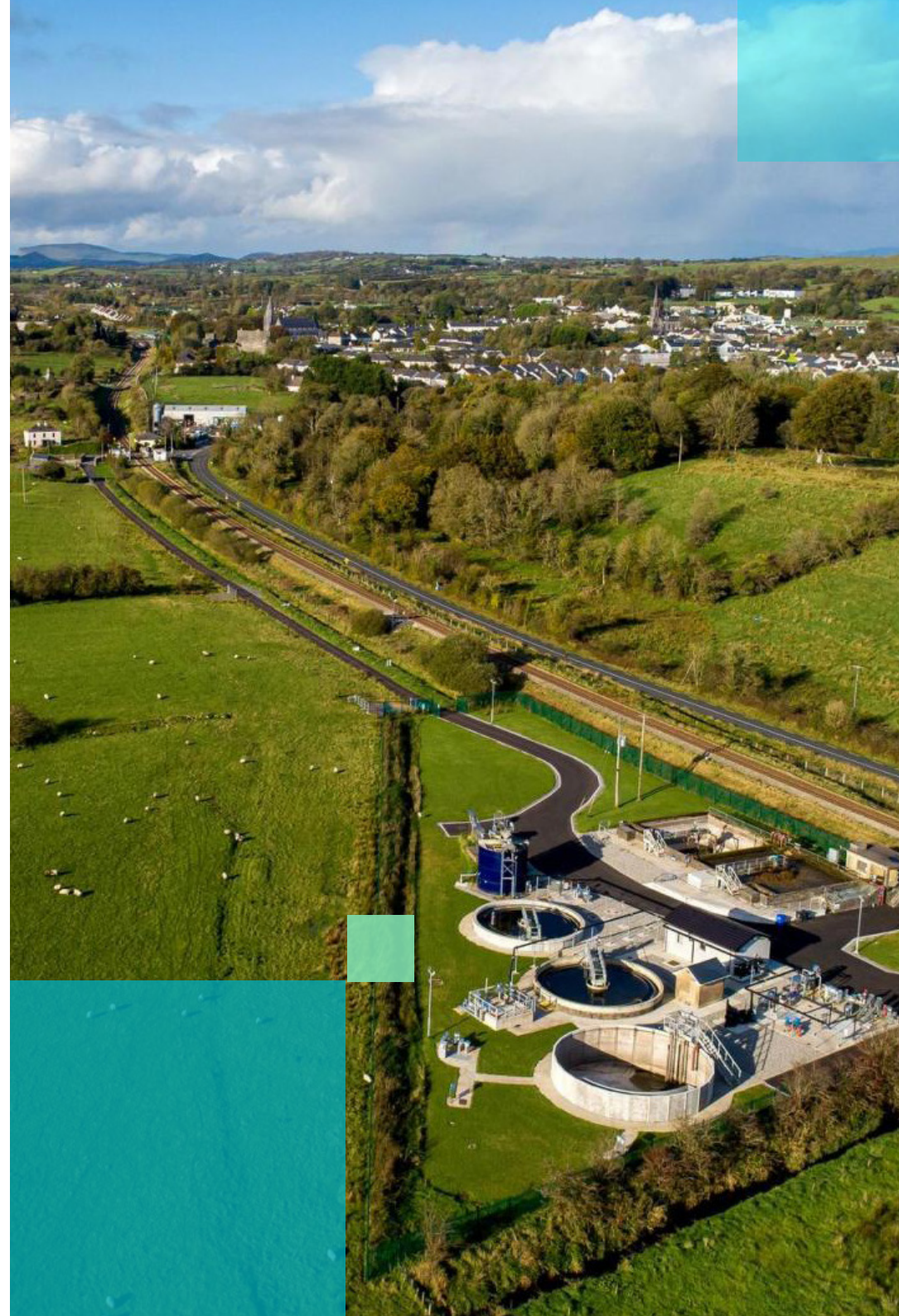
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1.1 Overview

Wastewater treatment plants serving small communities collectively make up a large part of Ireland's wastewater infrastructure. Uisce Éireann are currently developing the *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* to improve how wastewater services in small communities across Ireland are provided for and managed in the medium and long-term. This Plan will develop a national level strategy to identify where and what upgrades are needed, how they should be assessed, and how investment can be targeted where it will have the greatest benefit.

The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* will support the future growth and development of homes and business in small communities while also protecting our rivers, lakes and coastal waters.



1.2 Introduction

1.2.1 Background

Uisce Éireann has a responsibility to ensure that all its customers (households and businesses) receive a safe and reliable water supply and have their wastewater collected, appropriately treated and returned safely to the environment. Uisce Éireann operates a network of wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs)¹ across Ireland and is also responsible for maintaining the public sewer network. These treatment plants vary in size due to the extent and population of the areas they serve.

Investment in wastewater infrastructure benefits communities around the country by supporting growth and development, enhancing water quality and protecting the environment.

Wastewater discharges from WWTPs operated by Uisce Éireann must be authorised by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This approval can take the form of registration of discharges serving up to 150 population equivalent (PE), a Certificate of Authorisation (CoA) serving populations less than 500 PE or a Wastewater Discharge Licence (WWDL) serving populations greater than 500 PE.

These approval processes are in place to protect our water environment. They ensure that nutrients, organic matter and other pollutants are controlled or prevented from entering our waters, in line with EU and national environmental standards, helping to reduce pollution and safeguard water quality.

Uisce Éireann is responsible for over 1,000 WWTPs across Ireland, with approximately 800 of these being small WWTPs serving communities of less than 1,000 PE or approximately 350 houses.



SMALL WWTPS UNDER 1000 POPULATION EQUIVALENT (PE)

Small wastewater treatment plants serve a population equivalent (PE) of less than 1,000 — meaning they treat the organic waste produced by less than 1,000 PE (or up to 350 homes).



SIGNIFICANT PRESSURES

Significant pressures are those that either cause or are likely to cause an unsatisfactory water body status and measures therefore need to be taken in order to mitigate the impact(s) of these pressures. (Water Action Plan 2024).

Small WWTPs represent the majority of wastewater treatment plants operated by Uisce Éireann by number, and while they account for only 4% of the total treated load, they can still cause local water quality impacts.

Pressures to our waterbodies typically arise from a range of sectors and activities, including agriculture (e.g. nutrient runoff, sediment loss), wastewater discharges (both urban and domestic systems), forestry operations, hydromorphological alterations (such as drainage, channel modification, or barriers to fish

¹ WWTPs are referred to as Waste Water Works within the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations

passage), urban runoff, and industrial emissions. Identification of significant pressures is a critical step in the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) process, as it enables targeted action to address the root causes of water quality issues.

Sustained and targeted investment by Uisce Éireann is delivering clear and measurable improvements in water quality across Ireland, with pressures from urban wastewater (UWW) continuing to decline. The third RBMP (2022–2027) identifies UWW as a significant pressure in 197 water bodies, including just 63 associated with small WWTPs. This represents a substantial improvement from the previous RBMP (2018–2021), where 293 water bodies were affected, including 130 linked to small WWTPs. This positive trend highlights the effectiveness of ongoing investment and interventions and demonstrates strong national progress in reducing wastewater-related pressures and protecting water quality.

Upgrade projects for WWTPs in small communities are often complex and therefore, disproportionately expensive given the populations served. Solutions are typically designed site by site, which has not always been the most efficient approach, because many projects face similar challenges that can hinder project design and construction. On average, WWTP upgrade projects can take 5-7 years to complete. A national plan is needed to provide a clearer, more consistent way of identifying where upgrades are needed and how investment should be prioritised, so that Uisce Éireann can more

effectively support communities and protect the environment.

The aim of this Issues Paper is to help the public and other interested stakeholders to understand why Uisce Éireann is preparing a National Plan for small WWTPs. It explains the context for this work, outlines the main challenges and associated opportunities presented by the Plan to address these, and describes the process being followed to develop the Plan. It also invites feedback to help inform the next stage of work, including the environmental assessments that will support the Plan.

This work matters because small WWTPs play an important role in supporting everyday life in communities across Ireland. When these systems do not have the capacity they need, or where they are affecting local waters, this can create challenges for existing homes and businesses, schools, health facilities, other community services and could delay or even prevent new housing developments. A clear national approach will help Uisce Éireann plan upgrades more effectively, provide greater certainty for communities, support sustainable growth and better protect rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters.

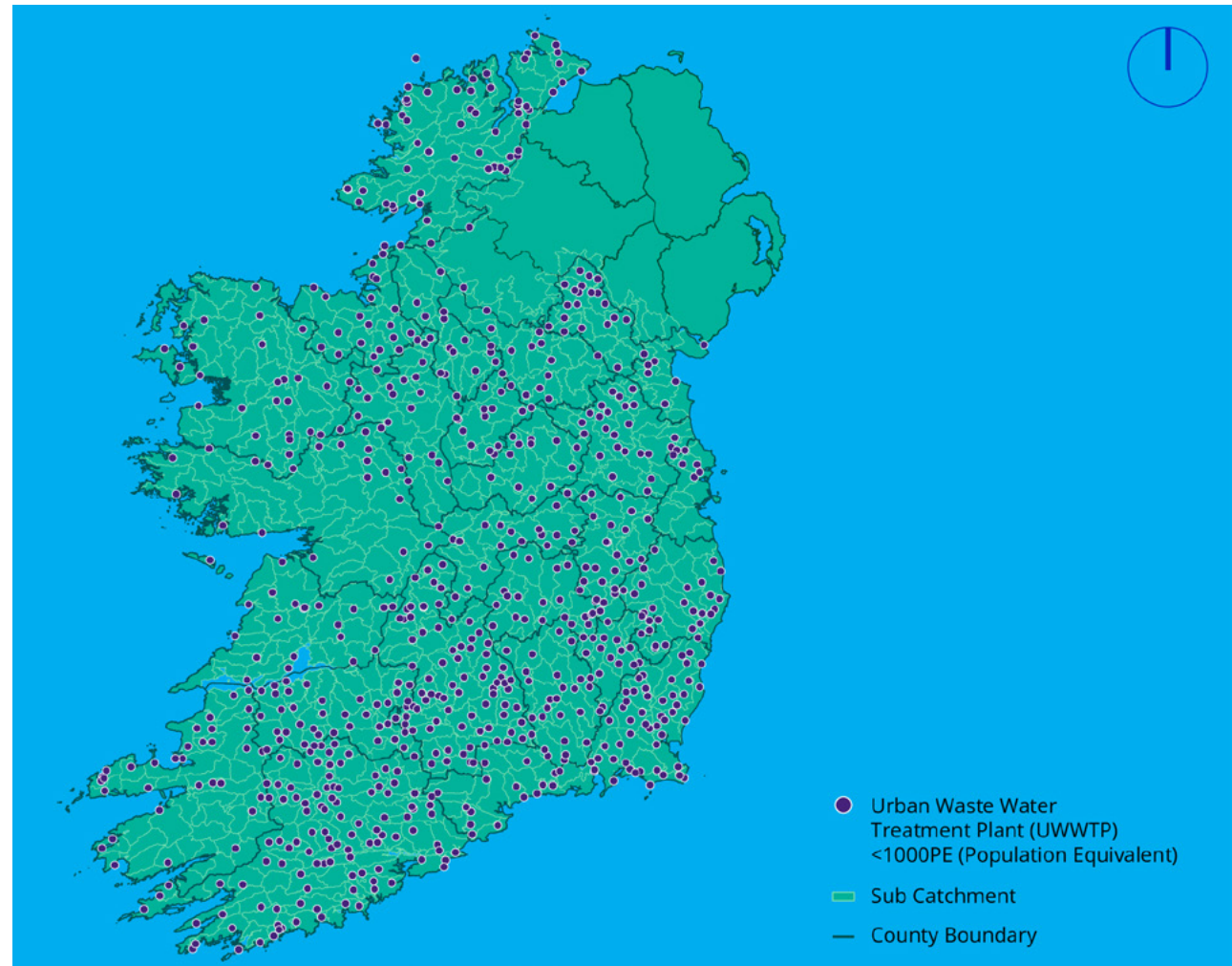


1.3 Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment

Much of Ireland's existing water infrastructure was built to serve a much smaller and scattered population. As a result, the existing wastewater infrastructure (particularly in rural areas) has not **expanded** to keep pace with the level of population growth the country has experienced. Furthermore, WWTPs serving small communities have a history of **underinvestment** which can lead to the accelerated aging of infrastructure that cannot keep up with new regulations or population growth.

Rural regeneration, as set out in the National Planning Framework, is creating new opportunities for housing and community growth across Ireland. As these areas expand, more wastewater must be collected, treated and safely returned to the environment. Uisce Éireann is supporting this growth by maintaining and upgrading a wide network of WWTPs in rural communities. These plants operate in a range of local environments, and we are continuing to invest in them to ensure they can support sustainable development while protecting water quality.

Uisce Éireann is developing a **national plan** to guide how **wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) serving small communities (less than 1,000 population equivalent)** are planned, assessed and managed into the future.



1.3.1 Key Issues for small wastewater treatment plants

The current approach to planning, upgrading, and regulating small wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) presents a number of systemic challenges that limit efficiency, delay delivery, and constrain development. While individually these plants are small in scale and contribute 4% of the overall national collected load, they collectively represent a significant portion of national infrastructure (i.e. two thirds) that must be assessed and where required, be modernised to meet environmental standards and support population growth. The following section outlines the key challenges that can be addressed through a series of opportunities presented by this Plan to enable a more strategic, efficient, and scalable approach to upgrading small WWTPs in the medium and long term.

Challenge 1: Inefficiencies from Bespoke Design Approaches

Historically, upgrades to small WWTPs have been delivered on a site-by-site basis, with bespoke engineering solutions developed to address specific issues. While this approach can respond effectively to localised challenges, it has led to inefficiencies across the entire asset base as similar problems are repeatedly solved from scratch.

Opportunities:

- To identify environmental and delivery constraints early, reducing risk at project stage; and

- To enable the use of standard designs and specifications and repeatable delivery models which reduces reliance on project-specific solutions.

Challenge 2: Unsustainable Authorisation Timeframes

The current regulatory and authorisation processes for upgrading small WWTPs present a significant constraint. This slow pace is not sustainable and creates a major bottleneck in delivering essential infrastructure improvements. Considerable time and effort are required to progress full applications for numerous small sites and so this risks the delivery of other critical projects. These issues have been reflected recently in the government's work on "Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan ²" where a specific Action 11 calls out 'Reform processes applied to critical infrastructure within agencies/ regulators.

Opportunity:

- With a view to a possible simplification provision in the WWDA Regulations for all WWTPs less than 1,000 PE, Uisce Éireann will engage with the Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government (DHLGH) regarding further regulatory reform. Uisce Éireann will further examine in particular whether the environmental assessment process could move from a predominantly site-by-site approach to a risk-based, tiered assessment model that focuses regulatory effort on locations where a greater risk of environmental impact exists.

Challenge 3: Historical Underinvestment

There are approximately 800 small WWTPs nationally that have historically been overlooked in strategic planning and investment prioritisation. This has resulted in a substantial cumulative backlog of WWTPs, struggling to treat the organic load produced, and are complex to manage and resource-intensive to resolve.

Opportunity:

- To expedite delivery of upgrades to small WWTPs where standard design is considered appropriate.

Challenge 4: Investment Prioritisation Imbalance

Despite their large number, small WWTPs have consistently been deprioritised in favour of larger WWTPs. Investment decisions have understandably focused on assets with the greatest overall impact. However, as a result, critical improvements at smaller sites are often delayed or deferred, potentially constraining local development, limiting housing growth, and increasing the risk of environmental non-compliance over time.

Opportunities:

- To support more timely investment in small WWTPs across the country enabling better protection and improvement of the water environment; and
- To strengthen engagement and collaboration with regulators, local authorities, communities and elected representatives.

² [Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan.pdf](#)

1.3.2 Aims

The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* sets out a national approach to improving WWTPs in smaller communities. Its purpose is to provide a clearer and more consistent way of identifying where upgrades are needed, how they should be assessed, and how investment can be targeted where it will have the greatest benefit.

By addressing common challenges earlier and at national level, the Plan can help reduce delays, improve transparency and provide greater certainty for communities, local authorities and regulators. This can provide benefits such as support better planning for new homes, schools, health facilities and local businesses, while also improving environmental outcomes by helping to protect water quality, reducing pollution entering rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters, and safeguard sensitive habitats and protected areas.



PLANNING

Uisce Éireann plans wastewater services within a national framework aligned with EU and Irish legislation, national policy, and long-term strategic plans. These frameworks guide how infrastructure is assessed, prioritised and delivered.

Engagement is a core part of this process. Uisce Éireann undertakes statutory public consultation, including SEA and AA processes, and provides opportunities for input at key stages of plan development.

Alongside this, a forward planning approach is taken — engaging early and proactively with stakeholders to identify issues, incorporate feedback, and ensure plans are informed, transparent and fit for future needs.

The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* will also be supported by environmental assessment and consultation to help ensure that environmental protection is built into the Plan from the start. This is known as a **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**. It is required under European and Irish law and is part of ensuring that environmental protection is built into the plan from the start. In addition to an SEA, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is also required. An AA is a scientific and legal evaluation required under the EU Habitats Directive. It will assess whether our proposed plan will negatively impact the integrity of protected European conservation sites, known as Natura 2000 sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas).

1.3.3 How will the plan be developed?

The Plan will be developed using information on how small WWTPs are currently performing, the capacity they have available, future planned growth, the condition of the rivers, lakes, estuaries or coastal waters that receive their discharges and the environmental objectives of those receiving waters. This will help identify where problems arise, such as those identified in the EPA's list of priority areas³, where upgrades or transfers may be needed, and where investment can have the greatest benefit for communities and the environment with consideration for in flight projects.

The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* will be developed in line with Irish and European environmental law, including requirements designed to protect water quality, habitats and wildlife. This will help ensure that the Plan supports national and international environmental objectives while also providing a clearer and more consistent basis for future upgrades to small WWTPs.



³ [Priority areas list](#) | [Environmental Protection Agency](#)

1.4 Legislative and Policy Context

1.4.1 Urban Wastewater Legislation

Europe's Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWT Directive) shaped wastewater policy across Europe for more than 30 years, focusing mainly on collecting and treating wastewater from towns, cities and industry. The recast Directive, updated in 2024 builds on this by also placing greater emphasis on human health and sustainability. Member states are legally required to transpose this legislation into national law by July 2027. While the updated directives may not come into effect before the completion of this plan, the project team will make informed assumptions based on the new Directive. The final Plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure it meets Ireland's obligations under the revised directive. In assessing what upgrades may be needed at small WWTPs, the plan will adopt the "combined approach". This approach is a requirement of Ireland's wastewater discharge authorisation regulations.

This means looking at two things together: the standards WWTPs are required to meet, and the condition and needs of the water body receiving the discharge. Where necessary, the stricter standard will apply. This helps ensure that upgrade solutions protect local waters, support environmental goals and are tailored to local conditions.

1.4.2 Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) establishes a catchment-based approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of rivers, lakes, transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater. It adopts the 'polluter pays' principle and integrates the requirements of a number of other EU directives for the protection of the water environment. It seeks to develop a holistic approach to sustainable water use, balancing social and economic factors with the need to protect and improve our environment.



CATCHMENT-BASED APPROACH

A catchment-based approach means assessing water quality across the full area that drains into a river, lake, estuary or coastal water. This helps identify all the different pressures affecting that water body, so solutions can be targeted where they will have the greatest benefit.

The WFD is implemented through RBMPs which assess the current status of inland and coastal water bodies and set out plans and Programme of Measures to achieve at least "Good" status and the objectives set for each water body.

Uisce Éireann's key objectives in relation to the WFD are the implementation of measures to reduce the impact of our wastewater discharges and abstractions. Where an urban wastewater discharge is the single significant pressure impacting on a water body, compliance with their respective CoA and licence requirements should ensure that the water body achieves its assigned environmental objectives.

The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* is, therefore, consistent with the aims of the WFD as it will directly address small WWTPs which are significant pressures impacting their receiving water bodies by developing a plan to streamline the delivery of upgrades to these WWTPs.

1.4.3 River Basin Management Plan

Ireland's third RBMP Water Action Plan (WAP)⁴ 2024 identified a number of measures for Uisce Éireann to progress over the lifetime of the WAP. The development of the *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment*, including the Environmental Assessment Methodology (EAM), will assist in the achievement of a number of these. Of the approximately 800 small WWTPs, c.72 were identified as significant pressures, with an established process for progressing projects to address these which is well underway. The remaining c.678 are not significant pressures causing water body level impacts but have various challenges of compliance, overloading and service risk which need to be addressed in order to protect the water bodies into which they discharge. The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* will, therefore, help to achieve the RBMP's main objective which is to target 'the right measures in the right places to both restore and protect all water bodies'. The development of the fourth cycle Water Action Plan is underway with a projected publication date of December 2027.



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY (EAM)

The EAM will set out the step-by-step process (with environmental justification) followed within the Plan to determine the upgrade requirements for each small WWTP to meet environmental standards and future growth.

1.4.4 Habitats Directive

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) placed an obligation on all Member States of the EU to establish the Natura 2000 network and requires the protection of defined habitats and species. The network is made up of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) established under the EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC). The Directives were transposed into Irish national regulations and have been subsequently revised and consolidated in the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations) 2011.

SACs are designated for the conservation of Annex I habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II species (other than birds). SPAs are designated for the conservation of Annex I birds and other regularly occurring migratory birds and their habitats. A number of these habitats and species, particularly those that are water dependent, can be impacted by wastewater discharges. Article 6 of the Habitats Directive requires member states to establish necessary conservation measures to protect sites and to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of (or restore) natural habitats and species.

As a public authority, Uisce Éireann has duties under these regulations "to take the appropriate steps to avoid, in European Sites, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as disturbance of species for which the areas have been designated in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats Directive."

The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* is consistent with Uisce Éireann's duties relating to the Habitats Directive as the sensitivity of risk to the receiving environment for each small WWTP will be assessed within the EAM to ensure that the conservation objectives of protected habitats or species will not be compromised as a result of any proposed upgrade works.

⁴ <https://www.water.ie/projects/strategic-plans/urban-wastewater-sectoral-action-plan>

1.4.5 The 2025 – 2035 National Development Plan

The National Development Plan outlines how record investment of €11.7 billion for the water and wastewater sector will be spent over the next 5 years to meet new housing targets. With record levels of investment, the Department of Public Expenditure Infrastructure Public Service Reform and Digitalisation (DPER) delivered the Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan in December 2025, setting out a national vision for the transformative reform for the delivery of critical infrastructure in Ireland.

1.4.6 Uisce Éireann's Hierarchy of Plans

Strategic Direction (WSSP)

Uisce Éireann's Water Services Strategic Plan 2050 (WSSP) sets the long-term direction for wastewater services in Ireland. Its objectives are to protect and restore the environment, support communities and the economy, and ensure services remain sustainable into the future.

These objectives are delivered through implementation plans, guiding how wastewater services are managed day to day — including the treatment of approximately 1.2 billion litres of wastewater and the operation of over 26,000 km of sewer network.

National Wastewater and Drainage Plan (NWWDP)

The National Wastewater and Drainage Plan (NWWDP), currently in development, will provide a long-term, whole-system framework for wastewater services across Ireland.

Investment Delivery (Strategic Funding Plan)

Investment in wastewater services is delivered through the Strategic Funding Plan (SFP), which sets out the measures and funding arrangements over a five-year period.

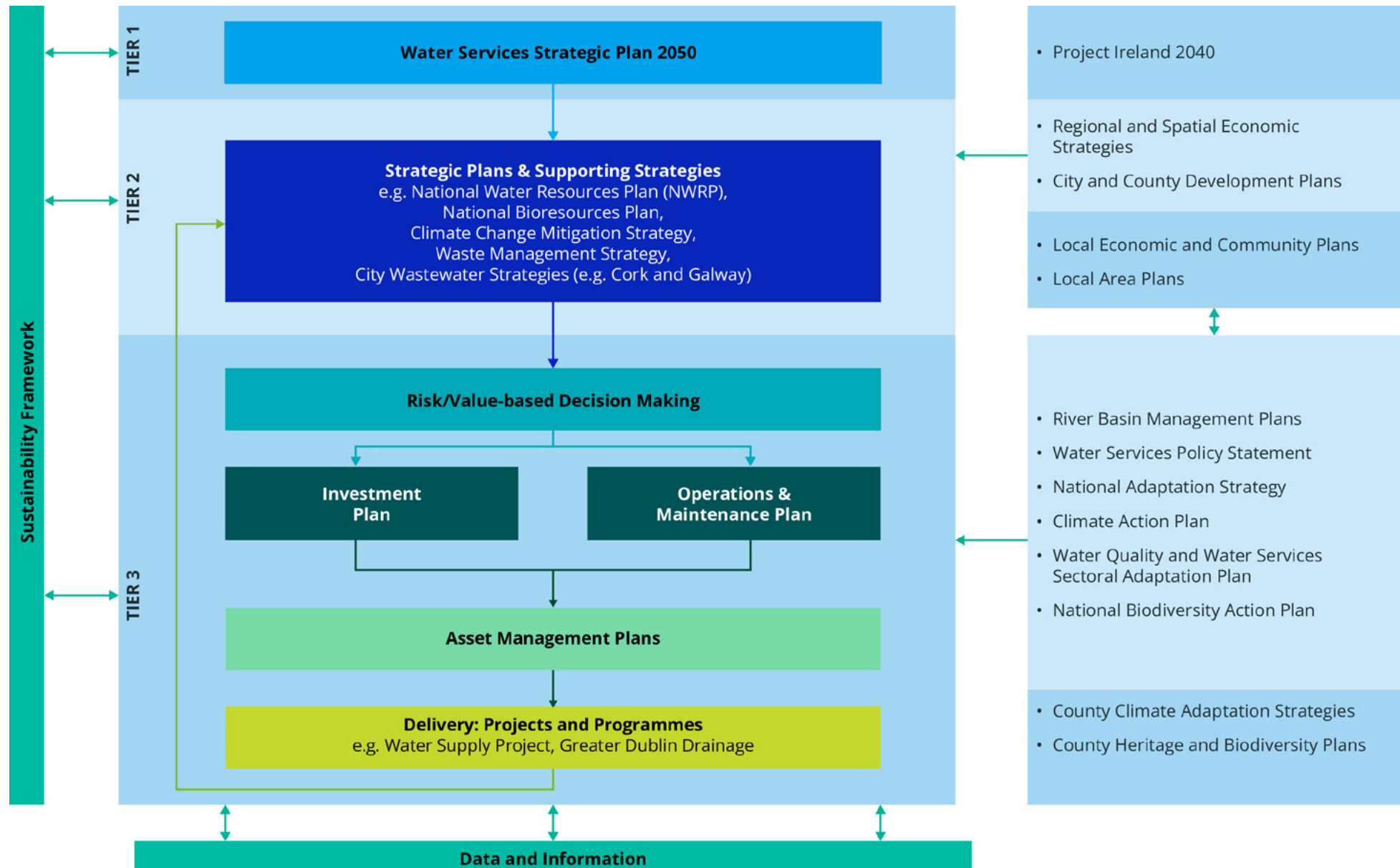
The current SFP covers 2025 to 2029 and is approved by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Targeted Approach for Small WWTPs

The *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* sits within this broader framework but focuses specifically on small plants.

It recognises that small WWTPs face distinct challenges in terms of scale, risk profile, and delivery, and provides a more targeted and practical approach to addressing the needs of smaller communities.





1.5 Work to date

1.5.1 This Issues Paper

This Issues Paper has been prepared to help the public and other interested stakeholders understand why Uisce Éireann is developing the *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment*. It explains the context for this work, outlines the main challenges and opportunities involved, and sets out the process being followed to develop the Plan.

The paper also explains how Uisce Éireann is preparing the environmental assessment work needed to support the Plan, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), an Appropriate Assessment (AA) and an Environmental Assessment Methodology (EAM). These assessments will help ensure that the Plan is informed by environmental evidence, reflects legal requirements and supports sustainable development.

Uisce Éireann is now seeking feedback on this Issues Paper, as well as on the SEA Scoping Report and AA Screening Report. This consultation is intended to help shape the next stage of work by identifying any additional issues, opportunities or considerations that should be considered as the National Plan and supporting environmental reports are developed.

The consultation will be undertaken for 8 weeks from 25th August 2026 to 20th October 2026, during which time the consultation documents can be viewed and downloaded at www.water.ie/smallcommunitiesww



1.5.2 What is happening now?



1.5.3 How to comment on this Issues Paper

You can make a submission on this Issues Paper by email or post before the consultation closes. Details of the closing date and postal address are provided in the consultation information for this document.

Email: smallcommunitiesww@water.ie

Post: Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan, Enterprise Fund Business Centre, Ballyraine, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, F92 AF43

The consultation questions are intended to help guide responses, but you are welcome to comment on any aspect of the Issues Paper, the SEA Scoping Report or the AA Screening Report that you consider important.

The consultation terms of reference and guiding questions below are provided to support informed feedback and highlight the key themes Uisce Éireann would particularly welcome views on.

All submissions received during the consultation will be reviewed and considered as the environmental reports and draft *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* are prepared. Feedback from individuals will be reported anonymously, while submissions from organisations will be attributed to them.

1.5.4 Next Steps

Once the consultation period has ended, Uisce Éireann will review the feedback received and use it to inform the next stage of work. This will include further development of the environmental reports and the preparation of the draft National Plan. The final *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* is expected to be published in Spring 2027.

1.5.5 Consultation Terms of Reference

The following prompts are provided to assist respondents in preparing their submissions. They reflect key themes within the Issues Paper and SEA Scoping Report and are intended to guide, but not limit, responses.

Section 1: About the Plan

Q1. Overall input

Do you have any suggestions that Uisce Éireann should consider when developing the *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment*?

Section 2: Key Issues and Scope

Q2. Key challenges

Do you agree with the key issues identified in the Issues Paper?

- Are there any additional issues we should consider?

Q3. Scope of the Plan

Do you have any comments on the proposed scope of the Plan, including:

- Small wastewater treatment plants
- Geographic coverage
- Types of receiving environments

Section 3: SEA Scoping Environment Questions

Q4. Do you have any comments on the approach to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment*?

Q5. Section 3 of the SEA Scoping Report, sets out the current baseline environment conditions and future trends. The key considerations for the environmental assessment of the *Small Wastewater Treatment Plants National Plan: Supporting Communities while Protecting our Natural Environment* and the proposed scope of the assessment is summarised in Section 3.20 of the SEA Scoping Report. Do you have any comments on these?

Q6. Are there any further plans, policies and programmes not identified in Section 4 or in Appendix B that should be considered?

Q7. Do you have any comments on the SEA approach to considering plan alternatives at this stage? If so, please discuss these and provide specific recommendations for changes if possible.



Q8. Are there any additional or specific plans or programmes that you feel should be considered within the cumulative impact assessment?

Q9. Plans and policies

Are there any other plans, policies or strategies that should be taken into account?

Section 4: Delivery and Local Knowledge

Q10. Solutions and priorities

What approaches or solutions should be considered for small wastewater treatment plants?

What should be prioritised when identifying investment needs?

Q11. Local input

Do you have any comments on specific locations, infrastructure, or environmental pressures that should be considered?

Section 5: Engagement

Q12. Future engagement

How would you like Uisce Éireann to communicate with you as the Plan progresses?

Guidance for Respondents

To support informed and helpful feedback, respondents may wish to consider the following points when preparing their submissions. These are provided as prompts only — respondents are not required to address all points.

Q1. Overall Input

You may wish to consider:

- The overall purpose of a national plan for small wastewater treatment plants
- Key priorities for delivering safe, sustainable and compliant wastewater services
- Opportunities to improve environmental outcomes or service delivery

Q2. Key Challenges and Issues

You may wish to consider:

- Current compliance challenges across small wastewater treatment plants
- Environmental risks, particularly in sensitive or protected receiving waters
- Operational and maintenance constraints associated with small and dispersed assets
- Future pressures, including population growth and climate change
- Any emerging risks (e.g. regulatory changes, cumulative environmental effects)

Q3. Scope of the Plan

You may wish to consider:

- Whether the proposed definition of small wastewater treatment plants is appropriate
- Whether the Plan should include all small plants nationally or focus on priority areas
- The range of receiving environments (e.g. rivers, lakes, coastal waters)
- Any specific geographic or regional considerations

Q4. Strategic Environmental Assessment Questions (SEA)

You may wish to consider:

- Key pressures on water quality and ecological status
- Impacts on biodiversity, including protected habitats and species
- Climate change risks, including flooding, drought and resilience of assets
- Cumulative impacts from multiple small discharges
- Risks to human health or amenity
- Relevant national or regional plans (e.g. River Basin Management Plans, Development Plans)
- Sectoral strategies or policies (e.g. climate, biodiversity, spatial planning)
- Any local or regional initiatives that should be taken into account
- Alignment with wider environmental and infrastructure policy objectives

Q5. Solutions and Priorities

You may wish to consider:

- Appropriate approaches to addressing challenges in small wastewater treatment plants, such as:
 - Upgrades or replacement of existing infrastructure
 - Rationalisation or consolidation of plants



- Nature-based or low-energy solutions
- How investment should be prioritised (e.g. environmental risk, compliance, growth)
- Opportunities for innovation, efficiency, or improved asset management

Q6. Local Knowledge and Input

You may wish to consider:

- Specific locations or areas where wastewater discharges are of concern
- Known environmental sensitivities (e.g. bathing waters, shellfish waters, Natura sites)

- Infrastructure constraints or capacity issues
- Local development pressures or planned growth

Q7. Engagement and Communications

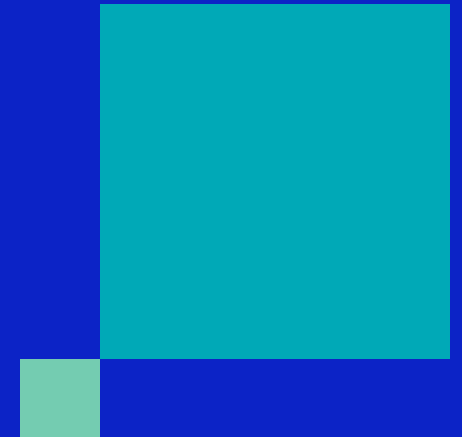
You may wish to consider:

- Preferred methods of communication (e.g. online updates, briefings, workshops)
- Frequency and level of engagement
- Accessibility of consultation materials and information

1.6 Conclusion

In summary, this Issues Paper sets out why a national approach is needed for small wastewater treatment plants, the challenges and opportunities involved, and the process Uisce Éireann is following to develop the Plan. The aim is to create a clearer, more consistent and evidence-based way of identifying upgrade needs, protecting local waters and supporting sustainable growth in smaller communities. Feedback received through this consultation will help inform the next stage of work and support the development of a National Plan that reflects both environmental priorities and community needs.





If you have any questions or need more information please contact us:

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