

**National Water Resources Plan -  
Draft Framework Plan  
Technical Appendices**

**Appendix A  
Consultation**

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### **Data Disclaimer:**

This document uses best available data at time of writing. Some sources may have been updated in the interim period. As data relating to population forecasts and trends are based on information gathered before the Covid 19 Pandemic, monitoring and feedback will be used to capture any updates. The National Water Resources Plan will also align to relevant updates in the National Planning Framework.

## 1.1 Introduction

Public consultation and stakeholder engagement is a key element in ensuring stakeholders and members of the public have an opportunity to contribute to the development of plans and projects in Ireland. Irish Water is undertaking an accessible, meaningful, and accountable consultation and engagement process with stakeholders and members of the public throughout the development of the National Water Resources Plan (NWRP).

The early involvement of stakeholders ensured the views of the public and stakeholders were taken into consideration throughout the development of the NWRP and in the preparation of the environmental reports. The environmental reports that accompany this draft Framework Plan are the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report and the Natura 2000 Impact Statement (NIS) as part of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process. A sample Case Study of the Draft Framework Plan methodology applied to a number of Water Resource Zones (including sample environmental review information) will also be provided as supporting material for consultation two. However, this is for illustrative purposes only and does not form part of the consultation during this phase.

## 1.2 NWRP Consultation Approach

The consultation approach involves a number of key stages in the development of the NWRP, as follows:

- NWRP introduction;
- Consultation one – Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report;
- Consultation two – NWRP – Draft Framework Plan and associated environmental reports;
- Consultation on the four Draft Regional Water Resources Plans (RWRP) and associated environmental reports.

This approach recognises that we will be engaging with stakeholders throughout the process and allows the opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the NWRP, and outlines to stakeholders how they can influence the NWRP. It ensures continuous communication and engagement with environmental authorities, interested parties and the general public as the plan progresses. It also provides an opportunity to communicate the purpose and relevance of the NWRP, how it is being developed, and outlines how and when they can contribute to the NWRP.

### 1.2.1 NWRP Introduction

In October 2017, a dedicated NWRP webpage went live on the Irish Water website at [www.water.ie/nwrp](http://www.water.ie/nwrp), introducing the NWRP and the Consultation Roadmap. The NWRP Consultation Roadmap, as seen in Figure 1-1, set out the process in developing the plan and detailed the two stages where formal consultation would be undertaken in the development of the NWRP.



**Figure 1-1 NWRP Consultation Roadmap**

As well as the launch of the webpage in October 2017, an email informing the environmental authorities and interested parties, introducing the NWRP and highlighting the upcoming consultation on the SEA Scoping Report was issued. This email also outlined when consultation would be undertaken throughout its development, highlighting when stakeholders would have the opportunity to feed into the process. This stage of stakeholder engagement introduced the NWRP, outlined the main objectives of the plan and provided details on how to contact the NWRP team through the dedicated information service.

### **1.2.2 Consultation on the Strategic Environmental Assessment**

The first stage of formal consultation was to inform the development of the SEA and NIS (the environmental reports that accompany the NWRP). Consultation One commenced on Thursday 9 November 2017, ran for six weeks with the publication of the SEA Scoping Report (see Figure 1-1), and concluded on Friday 22 December 2017. Members of the public, interested parties and environmental authorities were invited to contribute to the development of the NWRP, as part of the SEA and AA process, through public consultation.

In particular, feedback was sought on the SEA Scoping Report and we invited comments and suggestions for consideration when developing the NWRP.

The following consultation questions were prepared to guide stakeholders in making a submission:

1. Do you have any suggestions that you would like Irish Water to consider in the preparation of its NWRP?
2. Section 2.1 in Chapter 2 of the SEA Scoping Report outlines the objectives of the NWRP. Do you have any comments on these objectives?
3. Irish Water has reviewed plans, policies and programmes relevant to the NWRP in Chapter 3 of the SEA Scoping Report. Are there any others that should be considered?
4. Chapter 4 of the SEA Scoping Report<sup>1</sup> sets out the current baseline environment conditions and future trends. The environmental issues are summarised in Table 4.4. Do you have any comments on these?
5. Chapter 5 of the SEA Scoping Report sets out the environmental objectives that will be used to assess the NWRP and its potential effects on the environment. Table 5.1 summarises these objectives. Have you any comments on these?
6. How would you like Irish Water to communicate with you as the plan progresses?

In order to generate awareness of and participation in the consultation, a range of communications tools were used to promote the consultation, including:

- NWRP webpage on the Irish Water website in English and Irish;
- Consultation information leaflet available in English and Irish;
- NWRP infographic;
- Press release to national and local media;
- Newspaper advert;
- Social media; and
- Correspondence and briefings to:
  - Elected representatives;
  - Local authorities;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.water.ie/projects-plans/our-plans/nwfp/321060AS-REP-016-0002-01-SEA-Scoping-Report-Dec17.pdf>

- Interested parties; and
- Media.

There were 17 written submissions received during this consultation, 15 from organisations and two from members of the public. An overview of the feedback in the submissions received is presented in the NWRP Consultation one report. All feedback received was reviewed by the NWRP team, and relevant feedback informed the development of this NWRP. An overview of how feedback has influenced the NWRP is detailed in the accompanying SEA Environmental Report.

We are committed to continuously engaging with stakeholders and encourage feedback throughout the development of the NWRP.

### 1.2.3 Pre-consultation engagement on the NWRP

Feedback received during the consultation suggested further engagement with different organisations regarding different aspects of the NWRP to be undertaken before completion of the NWRP to allow stakeholders to feed into its development, prior to Consultation two.

The environmental authorities and other interested stakeholders were invited to pre-consultation workshops where the working draft NWRP and associated environmental reports were presented. These workshops gave the environmental authorities a platform to contribute once again to the development of the draft NWRP before its publication.

The purpose of these workshops was to present an overview of the NWRP with particular focus on the Options Assessment Methodology to the environmental authorities. The workshop also brought stakeholders through a specific case study to explain how the options methodology process works. Feedback received during the workshop was considered in the preparation of the NWRP.

### 1.2.4 Consultation two

Consultation two is a statutory public consultation and seeks feedback on the NWRP - draft Framework Plan, associated SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement. A sample Case Study of the Draft Framework Plan methodology applied to a number of Water Resource Zones (including sample environmental review information) will also be provided as supporting material for the Phase 1 consultation. However, this is for illustrative purposes only and does not form part of the consultation during this Phase. The consultation period will run for ten weeks from December 2020.

Members of the public, interested parties and environmental authorities are invited to make a submission on the development of the NWRP – draft Framework Plan. The following consultation questions were prepared to guide stakeholders in making a submission:

1. Do you have any suggestions that you would like Irish Water to consider as part of the Draft National Water Resources Plan Framework?
2. Do you have any suggestions that you would like Irish Water to consider as part of how we assess supply/ demand balance, water quality, quantity and resilience?
3. The Draft National Water Resources Plan Framework sets out Irish Water's methodology to find high level solutions to address short, medium and long term issues. Do you have any comments on our methodology?
4. Do you have any comments on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report and associated Natural Impact Statement (NIS) which accompanies the Draft National Water Resources Plan Framework?
5. The project roadmap has been updated. Do you have any comments or feedback on this?
6. How would you like Irish Water to communicate with you as the NWRP progresses?

Submissions will not be individually responded to but will be summarised in a Consultation Report which will be published on [www.water.ie/nwRP](http://www.water.ie/nwRP).

All submissions made on the draft Framework Plan and associated environmental reports will be reviewed and relevant feedback incorporated into the Final Framework Plan and associated SEA Statement. Submissions from individuals will be reported anonymously and feedback from organisations will be attributed to them.

A number of communication tools were developed to promote the consultation and to further engage the environmental authorities and encourage public participation in the consultation process. In order to publicise the consultation period, the following communications tools were used:

- Update to the NWRP webpage on the Irish Water website in English and Irish;
- Information leaflet available in English and Irish;
- NWRP infographic;
- Press release to national and local media;
- Newspaper advert;
- Hard copies of the draft Framework Plan, environmental reports, Non-technical Summary and consultation leaflet made available at planning counters nationally;
- FAQs;
- Freephone number 1800 46 36 76;
- Social media; and
- Correspondence and briefings to:
  - Elected representatives;
  - Local authorities;
  - Environmental authorities;
  - Interested parties; and
  - Media.

Feedback from the Consultation two on the Draft Framework Plan will be reviewed by the NWRP team, and relevant feedback will inform the development of the Final Framework Plan.

A sample Case Study of the draft Framework Plan methodology applied to a number of Water Resource Zones (including sample environmental review information) will also be provided as supporting material for the consultation two. However, this is for illustrative purposes only and does not form part of the consultation during this phase.

We will present Four Draft Regional Water Resources Plans during 2021. The NWRP will comprise the Final Framework Plan and Four Regional Water Resources Plans once they are adopted by Irish Water.