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A framework to assist Local Authorities  
in the assessment of submissions for the  
identification of new bathing waters



## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. We are committed to protecting people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation and pollution.

### The work of the EPA can be divided into three main areas:

**Regulation:** *We implement effective regulation and environmental compliance systems to deliver good environmental outcomes and target those who don't comply.*

**Knowledge:** *We provide high quality, targeted and timely environmental data, information and assessment to inform decision making at all levels.*

**Advocacy:** *We work with others to advocate for a clean, productive and well protected environment and for sustainable environmental behaviour.*

## Our Responsibilities

### Licensing

We regulate the following activities so that they do not endanger human health or harm the environment:

- waste facilities (*e.g. landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations*);
- large scale industrial activities (*e.g. pharmaceutical, cement manufacturing, power plants*);
- intensive agriculture (*e.g. pigs, poultry*);
- the contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms (*GMOs*);
- sources of ionising radiation (*e.g. x-ray and radiotherapy equipment, industrial sources*);
- large petrol storage facilities;
- waste water discharges;
- dumping at sea activities.

### National Environmental Enforcement

- Conducting an annual programme of audits and inspections of EPA licensed facilities.
- Overseeing local authorities' environmental protection responsibilities.
- Supervising the supply of drinking water by public water suppliers.
- Working with local authorities and other agencies to tackle environmental crime by co-ordinating a national enforcement network, targeting offenders and overseeing remediation.
- Enforcing Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment.

### Water Management

- Monitoring and reporting on the quality of rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters of Ireland and groundwaters; measuring water levels and river flows.
- National coordination and oversight of the Water Framework Directive.
- Monitoring and reporting on Bathing Water Quality.

### Monitoring, Analysing and Reporting on the Environment

- Monitoring air quality and implementing the EU Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive.
- Independent reporting to inform decision making by national and local government (*e.g. periodic reporting on the State of Ireland's Environment and Indicator Reports*).

### Regulating Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Preparing Ireland's greenhouse gas inventories and projections.
- Implementing the Emissions Trading Directive, for over 100 of the largest producers of carbon dioxide in Ireland.

### Environmental Research and Development

- Funding environmental research to identify pressures, inform policy and provide solutions in the areas of climate, water and sustainability.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

- Assessing the impact of proposed plans and programmes on the Irish environment (*e.g. major development plans*).

### Radiological Protection

- Monitoring radiation levels, assessing exposure of people in Ireland to ionising radiation.
- Assisting in developing national plans for emergencies arising from nuclear accidents.
- Monitoring developments abroad relating to nuclear installations and radiological safety.
- Providing, or overseeing the provision of, specialist radiation protection services.

### Guidance, Accessible Information and Education

- Providing advice and guidance to industry and the public on environmental and radiological protection topics.
- Providing timely and easily accessible environmental information to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making (*e.g. My Local Environment, Radon Maps*).
- Advising Government on matters relating to radiological safety and emergency response.
- Developing a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan to prevent and manage hazardous waste.

### Awareness Raising and Behavioural Change

- Generating greater environmental awareness and influencing positive behavioural change by supporting businesses, communities and householders to become more resource efficient.
- Promoting radon testing in homes and workplaces and encouraging remediation where necessary.

### Management and structure of the EPA

The EPA is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and five Directors. The work is carried out across five Offices:

- Office of Environmental Sustainability
  - Office of Environmental Enforcement
  - Office of Evidence and Assessment
  - Office of Radiological Protection
  - Office of Communications and Corporate Services
- The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members who meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and provide advice to the Board.

# A framework to assist Local Authorities in the assessment of submissions for the identification of new bathing waters.



July 2016

## **Abstract:**

This document presents a framework to assist local authorities in their assessment of submissions for the identification of new bathing waters in accordance with the requirements of the Bathing Water Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008) which transpose Directive 2006/7/EC.

In Ireland, Local authorities are the designated national bodies with responsibility for identification of bathing waters. They may choose to identify bathing waters without recourse to this document however it is recommended that the criteria outlined in this document are taken into account when considering submissions for new bathing waters received from the public.

**This document is not intended to be a legal interpretation / opinion of the requirements of the Bathing Water Regulations.**

## **Objective**

The 2008 Bathing Water Regulations ([SI No. 79 of 2008](#)), as amended ([SI No. 351 of 2011](#)), set out specific requirements on the part of local authorities to evaluate submissions for the proposed identification of new bathing waters. The objective of this document is to provide a framework to facilitate such assessments in a uniform and systematic manner.

## **Disclaimer**

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained in this publication however neither the former Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) – now the Dept. of Communications, Climate Action, and Environment, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the author, or other staff involved in the review of these guidelines accepts any responsibility whatsoever for loss or damage occasioned, or claimed to have been occasioned, in part or in full, as a consequence of any person acting or refraining from acting, as a result of a matter contained in this publication. Any part, of this publication may be reproduced without permission, provided the source is acknowledged.

## DECLG / EPA Opinion

The opinion of both DECLG and EPA is that any water where bathing regularly occurs, and which is monitored by a local authority for the purposes of the protection of public health, should preferably be identified as a bathing water under the terms of Bathing Water Regulations 2008. This is particularly so where appropriate access and facilities have been provided.

It is acknowledged that, in addition to the currently identified bathing waters (140 as of June 2016), there are a large number of monitored waters where bathing takes place which would not necessarily meet the requirements of the Bathing Water Regulations, e.g. on bather numbers or the availability of facilities. This is particularly so in the case of waters which are being monitored for the purposes of community led initiatives such as Green Coast Awards.

Such waters, though often monitored voluntarily at the minimum frequency for bathing water assessment, are generally of a very high standard and the potential tourism benefits of their inclusion as identified bathing waters may far outweigh the effort required to manage them in accordance with the Bathing Water Regulations.

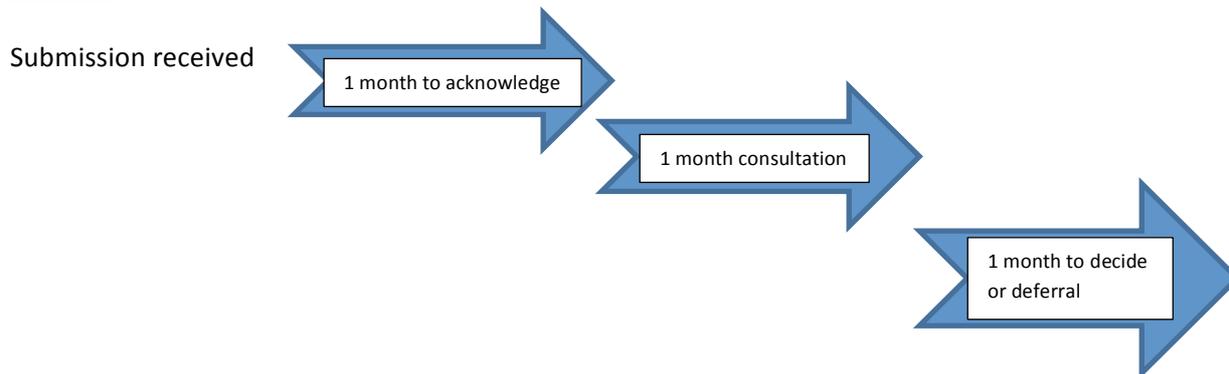
In such cases these should be incorporated in the category of 'other monitored waters' while applying the same bacterial thresholds as are set out in the 2008 Bathing Water Regulations and agreed HSE warning thresholds and public notification .

## **1. Identification process and timescale for assessing public submissions**

- a) The EPA's document entitled "*Public advice on identifying new bathing waters*" requests that applications should preferably be made using the template set out in that document and should be submitted to the relevant local authority environment section (or as otherwise indicated by local authorities). Submissions received by local authorities should be acknowledged within **1 month of the date of receipt**.
- b) The existing timeframe public submissions has typically been quite short (e.g. typically only during June / July) however, where practicable, local authorities are encouraged to give consideration to public submissions for new bathing waters received at other times of the year .
- c) If the information supplied does not meet the local authorities requirements they should request from the submitter any additional information considered necessary and the application placed on hold by the local authority until such information is received or the request for identification is withdrawn by the applicant.
- d) The local authority should provide confirmation that a submission has been received and provide the opportunity for this to be viewed by any interested parties **for a period of 1 month** following acknowledgement of receipt. Preferably this should be by electronic means, e.g. on their website, but this may not always be practicable and consideration needs to be given to the confidentiality of any information provided. Local authorities should facilitate the receipt and review of comments received from interested parties. If possible, this should be done as above however alternative arrangements are acceptable providing these are made known to the public at the time of notification of the submission.

- e) The local authority should consult with Irish Water in relation to any proposed inland waters where identification as bathing water could potentially impact on their use as a drinking water supply and also in relation to any proposed inland or coastal waters which may be impacted by wastewater discharges from treatment plants or sewer networks. In its response Irish Water should advise the local authority as to any potential impacts from existing or planned water / waste water infrastructure, and the timeline for any improvement programs.
- f) Following the consultation period, and based on any correspondence or comments received, the local authority should make their decision on acceptance or rejection of the submission **within 1 month** of the close of the consultation period.
- g) The submission should preferably be reviewed against the criteria set out in this document or such other criteria as may be determined by the local authority. Where these criteria differ from those set out in the Annex to this document the reasons for this should be conveyed to the submitter.
- h) Where a local authority defers its final decision pending monitoring and evaluation of water quality or formal risk assessment (e.g. by Irish Water Safety) this should be conveyed to the submitter and the decision making process continued whenever such information becomes available.
- i) Where the submission meets the necessary requirements for acceptance as a new identified bathing water this should be conveyed to both the submitter, to Irish Water (if relevant), and to EPA Bathing water unit [bathingwater@epa.ie](mailto:bathingwater@epa.ie) at the earliest opportunity. The EPA will liaise with the local authority in respect of the provision of any GIS data and the preparation of bathing water profiles as necessary.
- j) Where the submission does **not** meet the criteria set out in Section 2 for acceptance as a newly identified bathing water the local authority should consider its inclusion as an 'other monitored water' to ensure the public health of any prospective bathers. Monitoring of such waters should be undertaken at no less than the minimum required frequency as set out in the Bathing Water Regulations.
- k) Where an application to designate either as a new identified bathing water or 'other monitored water' is accepted the local authority should communicate this as widely as possible to inform potential users. This can be done e.g. via website notices, local newspapers / newsletters, as well as on information boards at the bathing water itself.
- l) Where an application for identification either as an identified bathing water or as an 'other monitored water' is rejected by the local authority all factors relating to the grounds for the rejection should be clearly set out and communicated to both the submitter, Irish Water (if relevant), and the EPA Bathing Water unit at the earliest opportunity.
- m) **Where practicable**, local authorities should give consideration to reviewing any submissions for identification of new bathing waters received prior to the issue of this documentation particularly if there have been any significant changes to factors which may have influenced the overall decision, e.g. increased usage or provision of facilities such as toilets , car parking etc.

**Timeline:**



## 2. Assessment criteria

The following assessment criteria are set out solely on the basis of good practice. They are not intended or designed to be exclusive and where alternative criteria are applied by the local authority the details of this should be recorded and provided to the submitter.

### 1. Location

It is important that the proposed bathing area be readily accessible to the anticipated number of visitors per day at peak periods without causing environmental damage to the shore side environment, in particular any sand dunes, machar, other vulnerable environmental habitats or species e.g. shore-nesting bird sites.

Where the proposed bathing area falls within a region of designated natural heritage e.g. defined as an SAC, NHA, SPA, Natura 2000, or other similarly protected area consideration needs to be given to the purpose of such designation and to the impact on any species or habitat similarly protected. The opinion of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (Department of Arts Heritage and Gaeltacht) should be sought where the proposed bathing water is within or adjacent to a designated area.

Areas requiring access through private lands should be avoided unless permission can be obtained from the landowner.

### 2. Beach users / Bather numbers

The advice to applicants specifies a requirement for at least **2** beach usage surveys to be undertaken on separate days.

As a general rule of thumb it is suggested that waters being proposed for identification should, **at peak periods** during the course of the bathing season, have **at least 50 beach users / at least 10 -15 bathers** over the course of any day for smaller / more remote bathing areas and **at least 100 beach users / at least 20-30 bathers** per day for larger / more accessible areas. These figures are considered as a minimum and more stringent criteria on numbers may be applied by the local authority where this is considered appropriate, especially for waters close to population centres.

**In this context ‘bathers’ are considered to be anyone in contact with the water whether physically immersed, swimming, or simply paddling in the shallows.**

The number of peak period users set out in the *“Public advice on identifying new bathing waters”* is as above depending on the size and location of the proposed bathing water but this is largely a rule of thumb as it is unrealistic to set absolute limits. If these guide values were to be used empirically to evaluate some existing bathing waters then some of the excellent, but more remote waters, e.g. in the west of Ireland might never have been identified.

UK beach surveys suggest that only around 10% of beach users will actually come in contact with the water however an An Taisce survey in 2010 showed this to be as high as 40% in some locations. A recent survey commissioned by EPA (2016) also supports a generally high level of water usage. Even if bathing is only practiced by children or a few hardy adults if it is practiced regularly enough, e.g. more than 2-3 times a week, then the area should be considered as fulfilling the potential to be classified as an identified bathing water. This is especially so if there is a known local or historic tradition of its use for this purpose.

**Note:** The Bathing Water Directive does not recognise inland or coastal waters used for recreational purposes other than contact bathing. Water sports such as surfing, kayaking, or other recreational uses do not in themselves provide reason for identification as ‘bathing water’ unless supported by evidence of bathing within its normal context such as paddling, swimming, or similar water contact.

In such circumstances consideration should be given to classifying these locations as an ‘other monitored water’ for the purposes of protection of public health.

While the requirement for mandatory water quality monitoring exists during the bathing season (June 1<sup>st</sup> – Sept 15<sup>th</sup>) it is recommended that local authorities monitor the quality of any bathing waters regularly used for water sports activities outside of the bathing season and provide this information to the public via beach noticeboards or other suitable communication channels.

### 3. Car parking and Facilities

**Signage:** In many rural areas it is not uncommon to see road signs marked Trá indicating an accessible beach. Where such signage is in place it is often historic and as such should be interpreted as indicating an area where bathing may have been practiced for some time, albeit by the local community.

**Parking:** It is highly desirable that the proposed bathing area be able to cope adequately with the pressures of the numbers of visitors in relation to available car parking facilities without causing traffic obstructions, undue nuisance, noise, or litter pollution.

Where no physical parking area is available it is likely that roadside parking will take place. This should not impede the use of the roadway by other road users or be likely to result in environmental damage to roadside verges, and dunes, or other vulnerable areas.

**Picnic Facilities:** The provision of any beach-side picnic facilities, particularly if provided by the local authority, should be considered as actively promoting the use of the beach area and potentially its use by bathers.

**Toilets:** Ideally, toilet facilities should be available for beach users during the bathing season either as fixed or mobile facilities (e.g. Porta-Loos). These should be adequately serviced to ensure a high standard of cleanliness and hygiene and that they do not impact on any receiving waters. The lack of

any toilet facilities does not preclude against the identification of any location but could result in potential faecal contamination of beach sands or other nearby vegetated areas.

**Litter:** While the “bring it in – bring it out” approach is commendable it is seldom a wholly satisfactory solution to litter management. Adequate provision of litter management facilities and services is an important factor. This is particularly so when picnicking facilities have been provided as these will generally result in waste such as disposable barbeques / beer cans / soft drinks bottles etc.

**Animal Restrictions:** Consideration should be given by the local authority as to whether there are, or require to be, any limitations on access by animals e.g. for dog walking, horse riding etc.

#### **4. Commercial impacts**

The impact of visitor numbers on any commercial facilities in the area should be considered. While any degree of tourist-based revenue generated from increased trade is likely to be welcomed by local businesses, it requires an adequately developed commercial sector to provide this.

If there are no commercial premises in the proximity of the proposed bathing water this affords the opportunity for casual traders and in such circumstances measures would need to be taken to ensure their compliance with legislation governing food hygiene and appropriate waste management.

#### **5. Local community support**

It would be helpful if the submission indicated the extent to which there has been any formal communication with those persons or community groups most likely to be affected by increased visitor numbers and that consensus for the identification as a bathing water has been agreed among the respective parties.

#### **6. Water Quality**

Submitters are requested to provide any information on water quality (if possible) or any potential pollution sources however it may be unrealistic to expect that this will generally be the case. In the absence of information on water quality / potential pollution sources the local authority should make its own arrangements for monitoring of a proposed location to provide a baseline on which to gauge the likely water quality / pollution impacts. Comparisons with waters of similar typology / pressures may be sufficient to provide a subjective assessment.

Where no water quality data exists it is recommended that at least 5 samples be taken in accordance with the BWD requirements, over a period of no more than four months to establish a baseline to indicate likely water quality. Samples should be taken in conditions which would be likely to be reflective of the ‘normal’ water quality. At least 16 samples are required for formal classification under the BW Regulations. Monitoring could be continued as an ‘other monitored water’ until enough data is available.

In general, most un-impacted coastal waters would be expected to be of at least ‘Good’ quality (as defined by the BW Regulations 2008) however where no data is available it may be practicable to assess the likelihood of potential pollution impacts from detailed examination the information

provided by the applicant coupled with the use of local authority / EPA GIS mapping / Google maps etc., and any other knowledge of potential pollution impacts such as WWTPs / CSOs / agricultural run-off from within the local authority network.

Local authorities should use their expertise and knowledge of potential pollution sources such as wastewater discharges / local streams to evaluate potential bathing water microbial risks in conjunction with Irish Water. Potential pollution sources, such as surface water streams or other discharges, should also be sampled to determine any possible microbiological impacts.

## 7. Signage / Other information

Consideration needs to be given to the level and quality of any existing signage and to the practicality and cost of providing additional signage to meet current bathing water standards. This should include consideration of the challenges and practicalities of updating signage in the event of potential Short Term Pollution events or instances where bathing restrictions are required to be applied.

## 8. Safety

**Safety is a key consideration, not only in respect of the management of safe access to the bathing water, but also in respect of issues such as traffic management on access routes or in car parks etc.**

A further consideration is the safety of local authority staff, or their agents, likely to be engaged in the sampling of water quality.

While an assessment of wind and tidal conditions will generally feature as part of the risk assessment done by samplers each time the site is visited, consideration needs to be given to the potential risks posed by strong tidal currents, in particular rip currents, and the nature of the seabed since sampling is required to be undertaken at depths of at least 1 metre (where practicable).

Areas within estuarine environs may be subject to strong currents particularly at periods of spring tides.

Lifeguard provision is not legislated for in the identification of bathing water however Irish Water Safety ([www.iws.ie](http://www.iws.ie)) can provide local authorities with a formal risk assessment of the proposed location and their recommendations regarding the provision of e.g. suitable safety equipment, the necessity for lifeguard cover, and how this may be provided.

**Local authorities are strongly encouraged to avail of this service before making their final assessment.**

## 9. Planned infrastructure / WWTP developments

It is important to consider both the potential positive and negative impacts of any known (or proposed) environmental, urban, or infrastructural changes on the proposed bathing area. This would include e.g. Mobile Home / Caravan parks developments, wastewater infrastructure, and urban regeneration. While improvements in WWTP networks / services could bring about improvements in water quality substantial urban development may have a detrimental effect if

facilities are not capable of meeting the additional pollution demand. Liaison with Irish Water will be required where WWTP infrastructure proposals may affect the overall outcome of the assessment.

## 10. Costs

It is recognised that the monitoring of existing bathing waters presents a very real challenge for some local authorities and that the inclusion of additional bathing waters is only likely to exacerbate this situation - particularly where a local authority already monitors a range of additional 'other waters'.

As such, consideration will require to be given to the overall costs associated with the provision of signage, safety equipment, lifeguards (should risk assessment or LA protocols deems this necessary), and the sampling / analysis costs of including additional waters in existing monitoring programs. Where monitoring is already being undertaken, e.g. for Green Coast award schemes, these sites could be classed as 'other monitored waters'.

While costs can be a critical consideration in some cases the additional sampling / analysis costs of classification as an identified water should not be seen as a major factor as increases in the number of monitoring locations could e.g. be balanced by reductions in the frequency of monitoring of existing consistently high quality locations.

It is acknowledged that there is no direct correlation between Local authority budgets / expenditure and tourist-related revenue and that the ancillary costs of providing additional bathing waters may be challenging to reconcile however overall local authority expenditure, whether as capital or revenue, should be balanced against the likelihood of increased local and regional tourist spend as a result of formal identification of a location as a bathing water and the promotion of its water quality.

Such costs should not, in themselves, be the limiting factor in the assessment of any proposed bathing area

### Overall assessment:

Each of the above factors above is rated on a scale of 1- 5 where 1 = Not suitable / Low / Expensive and 5 = Very suitable / High / Inexpensive.

Local authorities should review the submission in line with the general advice provided above and make their own assessment of the relative strengths of each of the 10 criteria. The weighted score is the product of the local authorities overall rating of each of the criteria (A) x the Weighting factor for each (B). It is proposed that a weighted score of **at least 65** is required for accepting the proposed location as an EU 'identified' bathing area and **at least 50** for its acceptance as an 'other monitored water'.

**Local authorities may apply other criteria however these should be fully justified in the event of the rejection of any submission.**

Factor	Rating (A) (1-5)	Weighting (B) (1-5)	Weighted score (A x B)	Comments
Location		3		
Beach users / Bather numbers		4		
Car Parking / Facilities		2		
Commercial impacts		1		
Local Support		1		
Water Quality		5		
Signage		2		
Safety		5		
Planned Developments		1		
Costs		3		
<b>Overall weighted score</b>				
Deferred pending additional data			Y / N	
Accepted as an EU identified BW			Y / N	
Accepted as 'other monitored water'			Y / N	
Rejected			Y / N	
<b>General summary of the proposal and assessment outcome</b>				

Signed:

Position:

Date:

## Annex B - De-listing of any existing EU-identified bathing water

The Bathing Water Regulations 2008 make **no** formal provision for the de-listing of locations which have previously been monitored and reported as EU-identified bathing waters. Where local authorities wish to de-list any previously identified bathing water from future monitoring programs this will require the agreement of both EPA and DECLG before implementation.

De-listing will **not** be approved solely on the grounds of poor water quality. Waters of poor quality are required under the Bathing Water Regulations to be improved by means of appropriate management measures involving the identification and remediation of possible pollution sources.

In any request for delisting of a bathing water local authorities should indicate the extent to which they have consulted the following on any proposal for de-listing of an existing EU identified bathing water:

- Local environmental and civic groups including public representatives
- Neighbourhood and community representative groups
- Local tourist office or other local tourism bodies
- Owners / Operators of on-beach facilities or beachside businesses, in particular cafes and shops that may be affected by the de-listing of the bathing water

Consultations must make it clear that in the event of de-listing that bathing water quality would no longer necessarily be monitored, that the bathing water may lose existing levels of protection, and future improvements may not be made. Full details of such discussions, recommendations, or public concern should be made available to the DECLG Bathing water section (Wexford) and the EPA Bathing water unit who will assess the proposal and provide their opinion on the proposal.

Notification of the intent to de-list any existing bathing water is required to be placed at the bathing water, on other community notice boards, and on local authority websites during the previous bathing season with contact details for those who wish to comment. All responses should be logged to show if there is any public support for de-listing the bathing water.

### Criteria for which de-listing may be considered acceptable:

- **Clear evidence of low usage**  
This should be supported by at least 3 user surveys conducted at peak times during the bathing season. Surveys should be carried out at times and in weather conditions when high numbers of users would normally be expected.
- **Evidence of the withdrawal of existing facilities to support or promote bathing (such as lifeguards, picnic areas, showers, other facilities).**  
Local authorities should provide sufficient reason as to why existing facilities have been withdrawn to the point that they now impact on bathing usage.
- **Water Safety issues**  
Where safety issues have been raised by local or national bodies (such as Irish Water Safety) and which impact on the suitability of the bathing water for continued EU identification.
- **Damage to bathing area foreshore / associated facilities**  
Where extensive damage has occurred due to weather related impacts, such as storm damage, flooding, or other natural events, that will materially and significantly alter the characteristics of the bathing water or its foreshore to the point that it impacts on the long term suitability of the water for bathing or recreational use.

- **Environmental issues**

In the event of an area being designated under the Birds Directive, Habitats Directive or Natura 2000 then consideration should be given to the impact of the Bathing Water on the species and habitats being protected by the designation. In the event of the designation protecting rare, fragile and threatened species or habitat then de-listing could be considered.



## AN GHNÍOMHAIREACHT UM CHAOMHNÚ COMHSHAOIL

Tá an Gníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (GCC) freagrach as an gcomhshaoil a chaomhnú agus a fheabhsú mar shócmhainn luachmhar do mhuintir na hÉireann. Táimid tiomanta do dhaoine agus don chomhshaoil a chosaint ó éifeachtaí díobhálacha na radaíochta agus an truaillithe.

## Is féidir obair na Gníomhaireachta a roinnt ina trí phríomhréimse:

**Rialú:** Déanaimid córais éifeachtacha rialaithe agus comhlíonta comhshaoil a chur i bhfeidhm chun torthaí maithe comhshaoil a sholáthar agus chun díriú orthu siúd nach gcloíonn leis na córais sin.

**Eolas:** Soláthraimid sonraí, faisnéis agus measúnú comhshaoil atá ar ardchaighdeán, spriocdhírithé agus tráthúil chun bonn eolais a chur faoin gcinnteoireacht ar gach leibhéal.

**Tacaíocht:** Bímid ag saothrú i gcomhar le grúpaí eile chun tacú le comhshaoil atá glan, táirgiúil agus cosanta go maith, agus le hiompar a chuirfidh le comhshaoil inbhuanaithe.

## Ár bhFreagrachtaí

### Ceadúnú

Déanaimid na gníomhaíochtaí seo a leanas a rialú ionas nach ndéanann siad dochar do shláinte an phobail ná don chomhshaoil:

- saoráidí dramhaíola (*m.sh. láithreáin líonta talún, loisceoirí, stáisiúin aistrithe dramhaíola*);
- gníomhaíochtaí tionsclaíoch ar scála mór (*m.sh. déantúsaíocht cógaisíochta, déantúsaíocht stroighne, stáisiúin chumhachta*);
- an diantalmhaíocht (*m.sh. muca, éanlaith*);
- úsáid shrianta agus scaoileadh rialaithe Orgánach Géinmhodhnaíthe (*OGM*);
- foinsí radaíochta ianúcháin (*m.sh. trealamh x-gha agus radaiteiripe, foinsí tionsclaíoch*);
- áiseanna móra stórála peitрил;
- scardadh dramhuise; agus
- gníomhaíochtaí dumpála ar farraige.

### Forfheidhmiú Náisiúnta i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil

- Clár náisiúnta iniúchtaí agus cigireachtaí a dhéanamh gach bliain ar shaoráidí a bhfuil ceadúnas ón nGníomhaireacht acu.
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar fhreagrachtaí cosanta comhshaoil na n-údarás áitiúil.
- Caighdeán an uisce óil, arna sholáthar ag soláthraithe uisce phoiblí, a mhaoirsiú.
- Obair le húdaráis áitiúla agus le gníomhaireachtaí eile chun dul i ngleic le coireanna comhshaoil trí chomhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra forfheidhmiúcháin náisiúnta, trí dhírú ar chiontóirí, agus trí mhaoirsiú a dhéanamh ar leasúchán.
- Cur i bhfeidhm rialachán ar nós na Rialachán um Dhramhthrealamh Leictreach agus Leictreonach (DTLL), um Shrian ar Shubstaintí Guaiseacha agus na Rialachán um rialú ar shubstaintí a idíonn an ciseal ózón.
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí an chomhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaoil.

### Bainistíocht Uisce

- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht aibhneacha, lochanna, uisce idirchriosacha agus cósta na hÉireann, agus screamhuise; leibhéil uisce agus sruthanna aibhneacha a thomhas.
- Comhordú náisiúnta agus maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar an gCreat-Treoir Uisce.
- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar Cháilíocht an Uisce Snámha.

## Monatóireacht, Anailís agus Tuairisciú ar an gComhshaoil

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht an aeir agus Treoir an AE maidir le hAer Glan don Eoraip (CAFÉ) a chur chun feidhme.
- Tuairisciú neamhspleách le cabhrú le cinnteoireacht an rialtais náisiúnta agus na n-údarás áitiúil (*m.sh. tuairisciú tréimhsiúil ar staid Chomhshaoil na hÉireann agus Tuarascálacha ar Tháscairí*).

### Rialú Astaíochtaí na nGás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn

- Fardail agus réamh-mheastacháin na hÉireann maidir le gáis cheaptha teasa a ullmhú.
- An Treoir maidir le Trádáil Astaíochtaí a chur chun feidhme i gcomhair breis agus 100 de na táirgeoirí dé-ocsaíde carbóin is mó in Éirinn.

### Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil

- Taighde comhshaoil a chistiú chun brúnna a shainathint, bonn eolais a chur faoi bheartais, agus réitigh a sholáthar i réimsí na haeraíde, an uisce agus na hinbhuanaitheachta.

### Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta

- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar thionchar pleananna agus clár beartaithe ar an gcomhshaoil in Éirinn (*m.sh. mórfheananna forbartha*).

### Cosaint Raideolaíoch

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéil radaíochta, measúnacht a dhéanamh ar nochtadh mhuintir na hÉireann don radaíocht ianúcháin.
- Cabhrú le pleananna náisiúnta a fhorbairt le haghaidh éigeandálaí ag eascairt as tasmí núicléacha.
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí thar lear a bhaineann le saoráidí núicléacha agus leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Sainseirbhísí cosanta ar an radaíocht a sholáthar, nó maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar sholáthar na seirbhísí sin.

### Treoir, Faisnéis Inrochtana agus Oideachas

- Comhairle agus treoir a chur ar fáil d'earnáil na tionsclaíochta agus don phobal maidir le hábhair a bhaineann le caomhnú an chomhshaoil agus leis an gcosaint raideolaíoch.
- Faisnéis thráthúil ar an gcomhshaoil ar a bhfuil fáil éasca a chur ar fáil chun rannpháirtíocht an phobail a spreagadh sa chinnteoireacht i ndáil leis an gcomhshaoil (*m.sh. Timpeall an Tí, léarscáileanna radóin*).
- Comhairle a chur ar fáil don Rialtas maidir le hábhair a bhaineann leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíoch agus le cúrsaí práinnfhreagartha.
- Plean Náisiúnta Bainistíochta Dramhaíola Guaisí a fhorbairt chun dramhaíl ghuaiseach a chosc agus a bhainistiú.

### Múscailt Feasachta agus Athrú Iompraíochta

- Feasacht comhshaoil níos fearr a ghiniúint agus dul i bhfeidhm ar athrú iompraíochta dearfach trí thacú le gnóthais, le pobail agus le teaghlaigh a bheith níos éifeachtúla ar acmhainní.
- Tástáil le haghaidh radóin a chur chun cinn i dtithe agus in ionaid oibre, agus gníomhartha leasúcháin a spreagadh nuair is gá.

### Bainistíocht agus struchtúr na Gníomhaireachta um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Tá an ghníomhaíocht á bainistiú ag Bord Iánamseartha, ar a bhfuil Ard-Stiúrthóir agus cúigear Stiúrthóirí. Déantar an obair ar fud cúig cinn d'Oifigí:

- An Oifig um Inmharthanacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Forfheidhmithe i leith cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Fianaise is Measúnú
- An Oifig um Cosaint Raideolaíoch
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáideacha

Tá Coiste Comhairleach ag an nGníomhaireacht le cabhrú léi. Tá dáréag comhaltaí air agus tagann siad le chéile go rialta le plé a dhéanamh ar ábhair inmí agus le comhairle a chur ar an mBord.



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