



# Better Farming for Water Campaign

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# Key Aspects of the Better Farming for Water Campaign

- Teagasc requested to lead a national campaign to improve water quality
- Whole of industry, **multi actor** campaign
- **Building on existing initiatives**
- **8-Actions for change**
- **8 priority catchments**
  - Boyne, Barrow, Nore, Slaney, Suir, Blackwater, Lee, Bandon-Ilen

## BFFW campaign 8-Actions for Change

### Nutrient Management

- 01 Reduce purchased nitrogen (N) & phosphorus (P) surplus per hectare
- 02 Ensure soil fertility is optimal for time, phosphorus and potassium
- 03 Ensure application of fertiliser and organic manure at appropriate times and conditions

### Farmyard Management

- 04 Have sufficient slurry and soiled water storage capacity
- 05 Manage and minimise nutrient loss from farmyards and roadways

### Land Management

- 06 Fence off watercourses to prevent bovine access
- 07 Promote targeted use of mitigation actions such as riparian margins, buffer strips & sediment traps to mitigate nutrient and sediment loss to water
- 08 Maintain over-winter green cover to reduce nutrient leaching from tillage soils



# Aim of the campaign



*To support and accelerate the adoption of actions on all farms to improve all water bodies (where agriculture is a significant pressure) to good or high ecological status*

# BFFW Campaign Steering Group

Head of Water Quality KT

*Bandon-Ilen/Lee*

*Suir*

*Slaney*

*Boyne*

*Nore*

*Barrow*

*Blackwater*

**7 Catchment Action Plans**

**6 Catchment Coordinators**

**Catchment Implementation Group – Oversight Committee**

**Catchment Implementation Group – Delivery Team**

# BFFW Catchment Implementation Group - Oversight Committee

## Purpose

- Develop, oversee and coordinate the implementation of Catchment Action Plans
- Ensure that actions are delivered effectively, collaboratively, and in alignment with campaign goals and objectives
- Monitor progress against targets and provide reports
- Identify and address barriers to implementation

# BFFW Catchment Implementation Group

## - Oversight Committee

| Lead Industry / Stakeholder in the Catchment |                                          |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Role                                         | Organisation                             |
| Chair                                        | Independent farmer/industry/stakeholder  |
| Secretariat                                  | Catchment Coordinator                    |
| Lead industry/stakeholder representative     | Sustainability manager or equivalent     |
| Regulators                                   | Local Authority/DAFM/etc.                |
| Advisory                                     | Teagasc RM, Lead advisor/Specialist, ACA |
| Farmers                                      | Dairy/Beef/Tillage/Pigs/Poultry          |
| Agri-Food Industry stakeholders              | Dairy/Beef/Tillage/Pigs/Poultry          |
| Catchment Scientists                         | LAWPRO                                   |

# BFFW Catchment Implementation Group

## - Delivery Team

### Purpose

- Work collaboratively with all stakeholders on improving water quality
- Carry out the actions as prescribed in the Catchment Action Plan
- e.g. farm visits, farm plans, FFW EIP applications, farmer information meetings, etc.
- Provide regular reports on progress to the organisations representative on the Oversight Committee

# BFFW Catchment Implementation Group

## - Delivery Team

| Area              | Organisation                                                                 |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Regulators        | Local Authorities & DAFM                                                     |
| Advisory          | ASSAP – Teagasc/Co-op/MII<br>Teagasc Enterprise Advisors<br>Private advisors |
| Other Initiatives | Community Animators<br>Rivers Trusts                                         |

# Overview of delivery – 6 Pillars

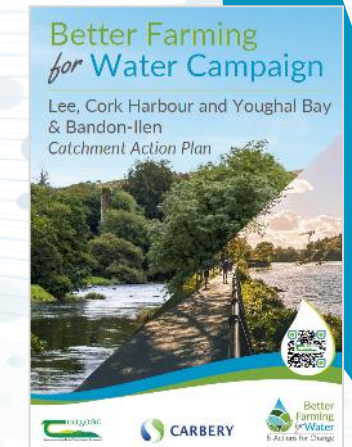
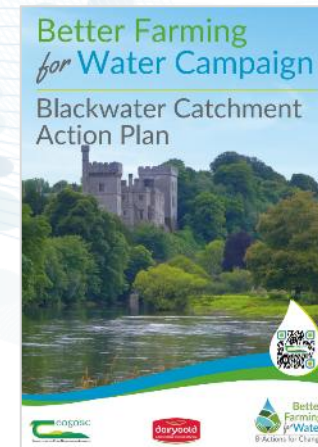
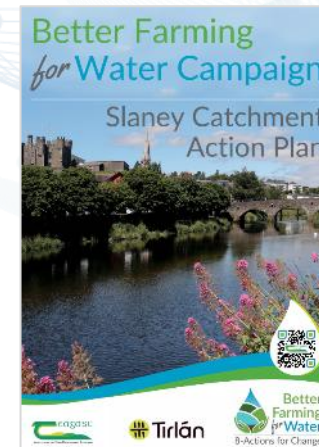
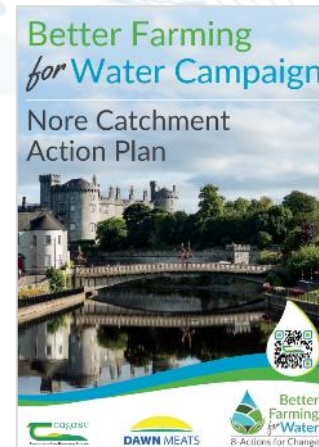
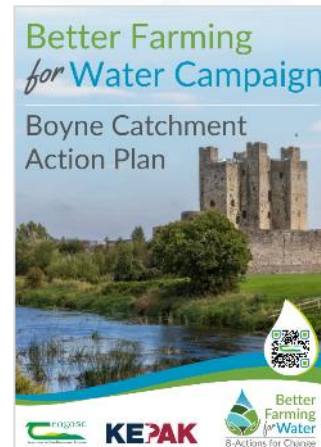
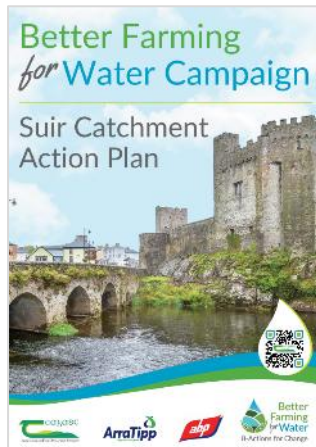
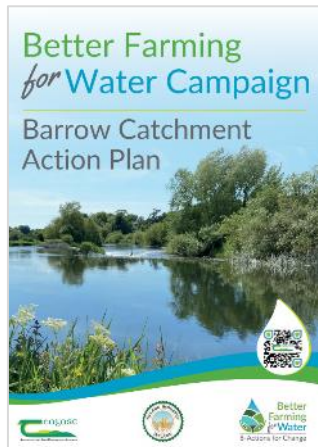


# Pillar 1



Stakeholder Engagement  
through a Multi-Actor Approach

- Establishment of 7 Catchment Implementation Groups
- Catchment Action Plan for each catchment
- Plan covers 6 Pillars and comprehensive characterisation of each catchment
- All stakeholders have a role to play



# Pillar 2

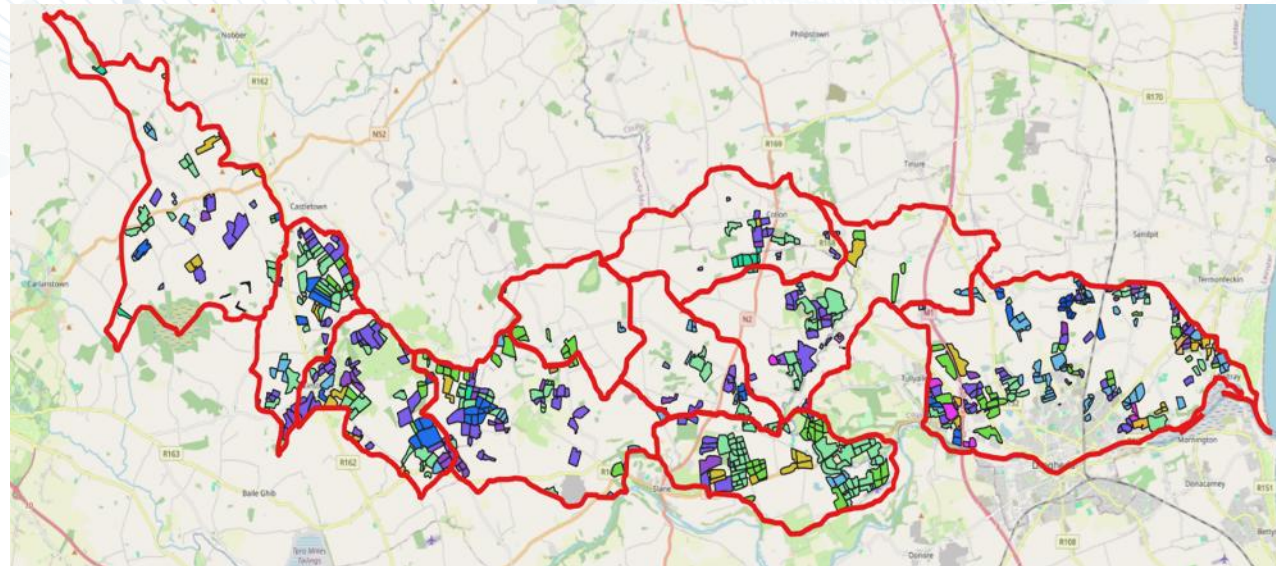
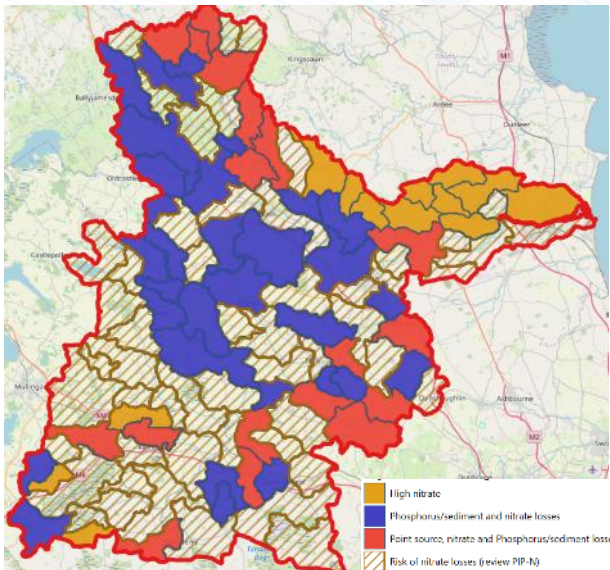


## Building Awareness

*by acquisition and utilisation of water quality data*

Use of freely available EPA Water Quality and DAFM LPIS information for

- Characterisation of catchment – target water bodies (WB's) for action
- Identification of different pressures – N, P, sediment, point source
- Align with other activities – LAWPRO referrals/LA inspections etc.
- Quantify farmer numbers & enterprise in target WB's – target messaging
- Identify farms for visits based on risk of impact



# Pillar 3



## Upskilling

Farmers, advisors, teachers, industry professionals and students

Requirement to increase knowledge & understanding of water quality

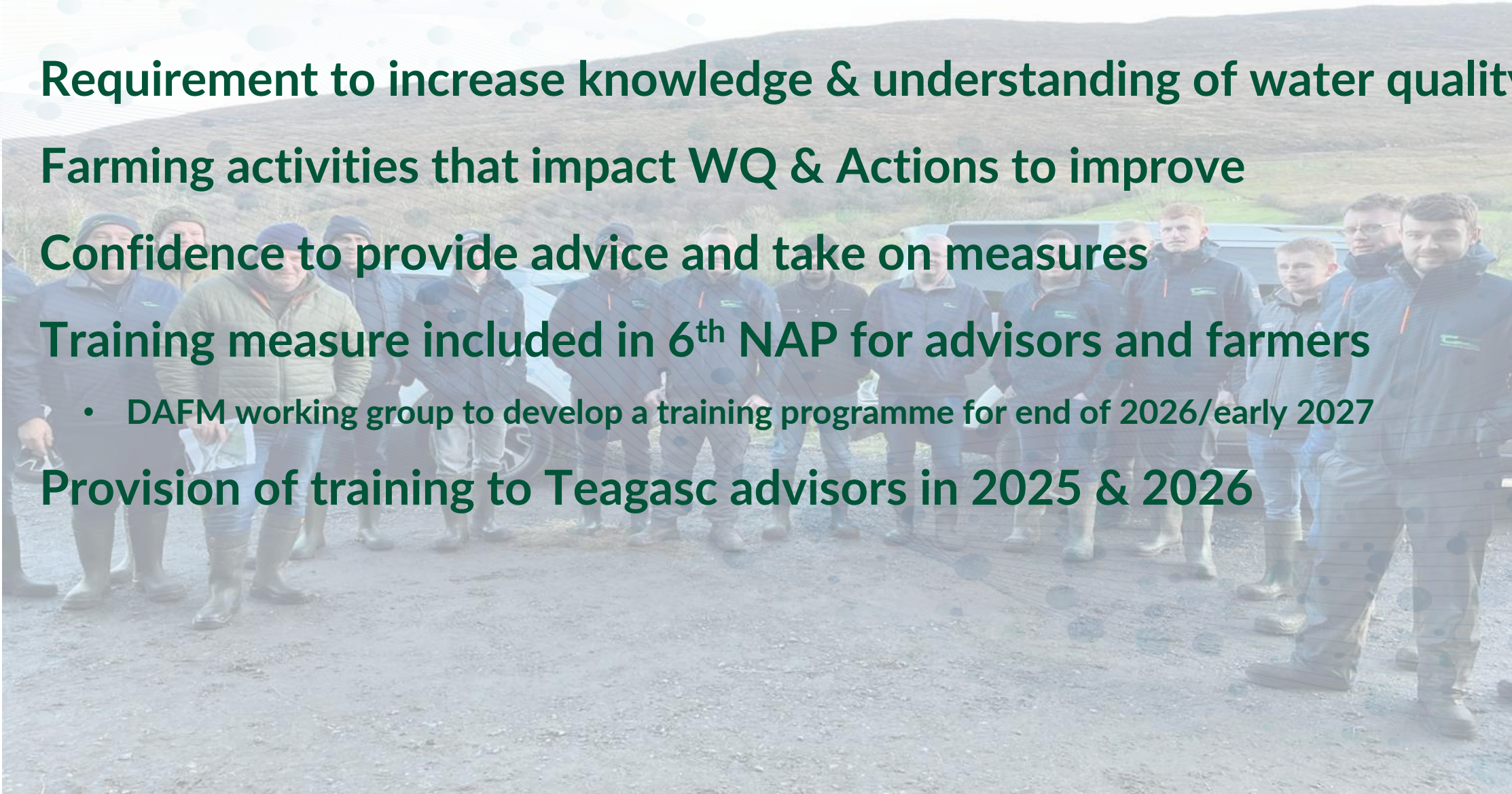
Farming activities that impact WQ & Actions to improve

Confidence to provide advice and take on measures

Training measure included in 6<sup>th</sup> NAP for advisors and farmers

- DAFM working group to develop a training programme for end of 2026/early 2027

Provision of training to Teagasc advisors in 2025 & 2026



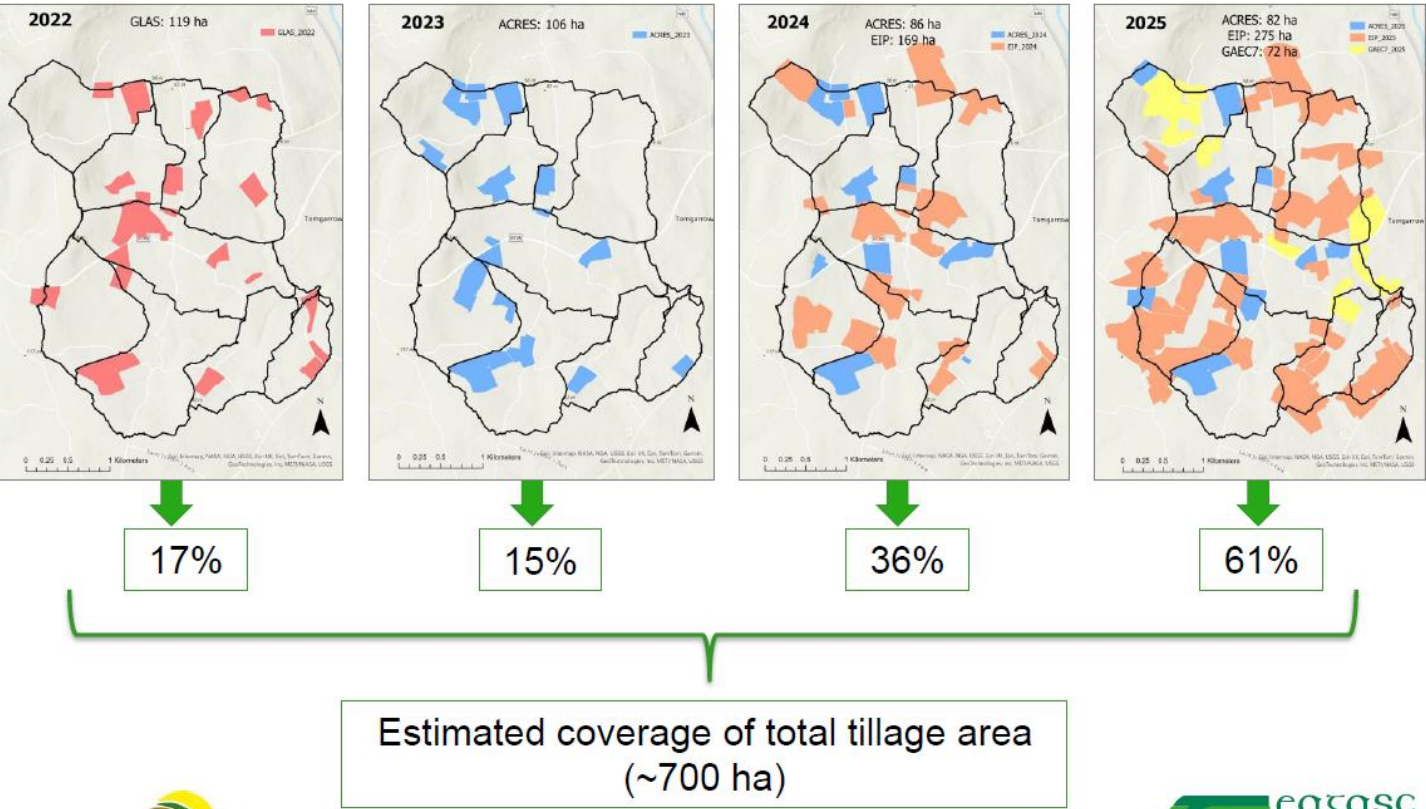
# Pillar 4



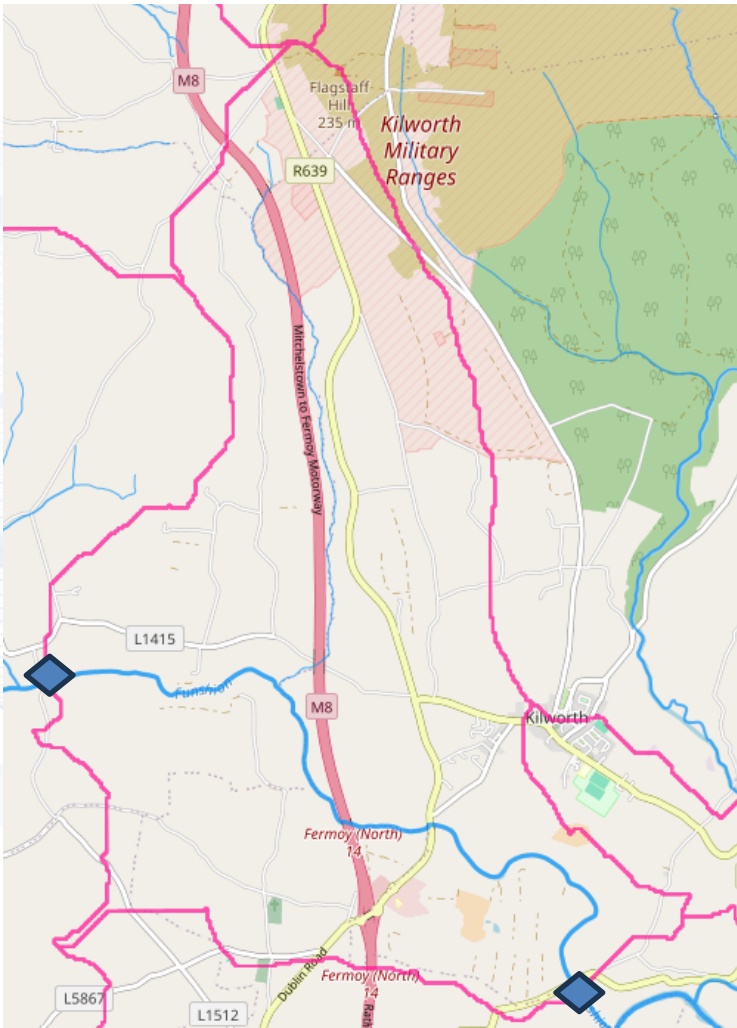
## Research Programme

A supporting Research Programme to identify and develop effective mitigation actions

### Catch crop area sown via Agri-Environmental Schemes Castledockrell 2022-2025



### Funshion\_080 : Nitrate Research



# Pillar 5



**Knowledge Transfer**  
*A strong Knowledge Transfer programme*

## 3 levels of KT intervention

### Level 1: Catchment scale

Farm walks and events providing information and advice on catchment issues  
Catchment scale communications and

### Level 2: Sub – catchment scale

Farm walks and events providing more targeted information and advice on sub catchment issues  
Sub - catchment scale communications and messaging – general advisory service

### Level 3: Water – body scale (individual farmer)

Individual farm visits targeting specific actions – ASSAP and general advisory service

# Pillar 6



## Communications Plan

A strong Communications Plan with the target audiences



### 5 Top Tips for July

#### Farm Roadways

Install bunding at bridges to ensure runoff from farm roadways cannot enter the farm drainage network

#### Water Bars

Install waterbars on farm roadways to prevent rainwater converging close to drains - divert to fields instead

#### Catch Crops

Early sowing date is key to good establishment. Order seed early and take note of crop rotations when choosing species

#### Forage Crop Buffers

Ensure 3m uncultivated margin around all boundaries and 4m along all waters. Adhere to lieback requirements

#### Liming Plan

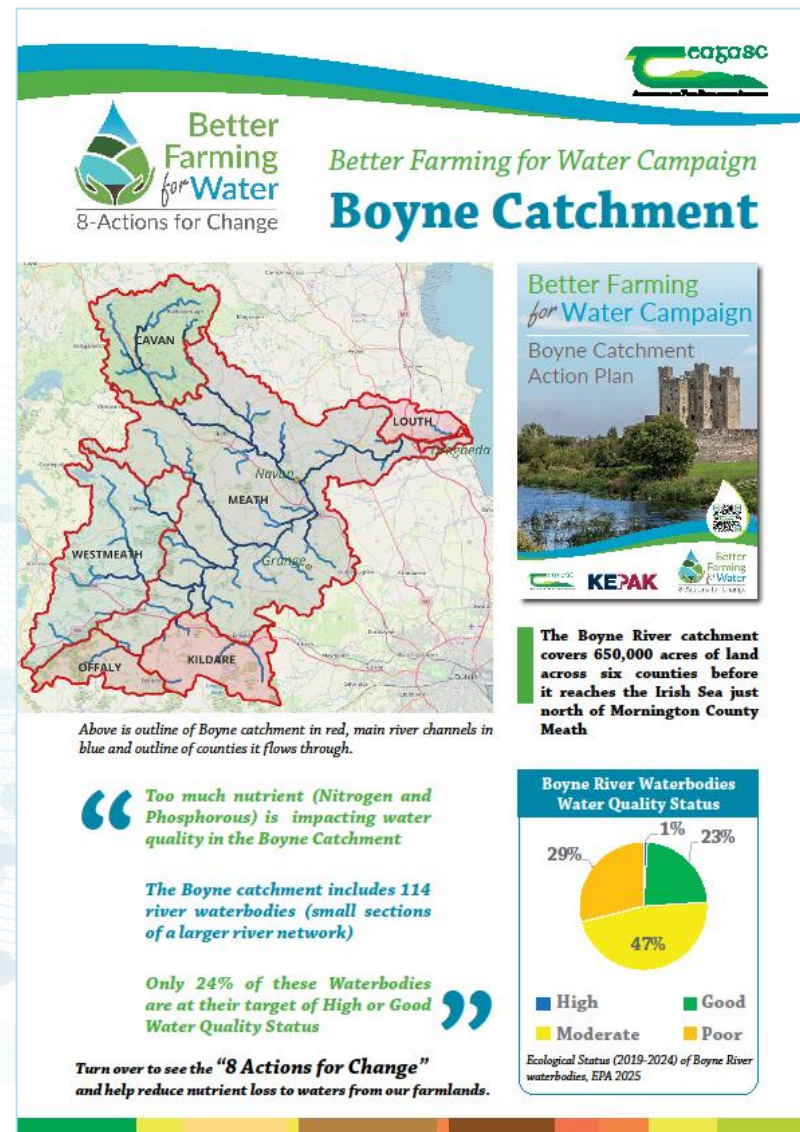
Review your lime plan, order quantities required and prepare to spread in the autumn

Step up for Better Water Quality

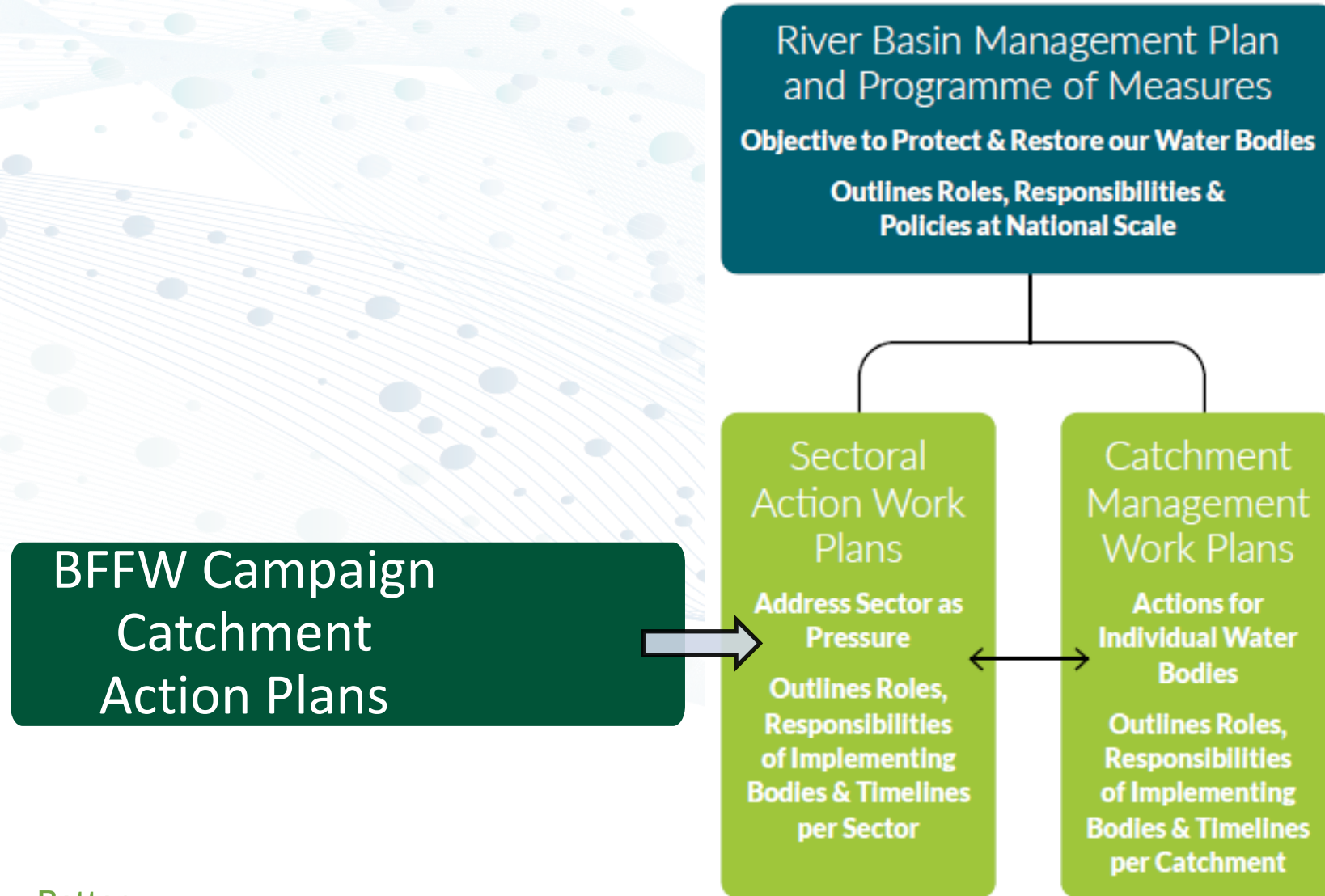


8 Fact Sheets – one for each action  
Good news stories  
IFJ monthly article

<https://teagasc.ie/environment/water-quality/better-farming-for-water/>



# Alignment with National Water Quality Policy



## Summary:

- Campaign delivering across 6 pillars
- 8 Actions – applicable and actionable across all farms
- Integration of WQ messages into day-to-day advice
- Multi actor approach – industry buy in
- Communications – of issues and solutions and successes
- Targeted approach
- Alignment of campaign with national WQ policy