



Collaboration and knowledge sharing in applying to EIP-AGRI: An Irish case-study

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Outline

- Collaboration for sustainable farming
- EIP-AGRI in Ireland
- Case-study, findings, and implications

Collaborative governance

- Diverse stakeholders working together in policy and regulatory **decision-making processes** (Westerink, 2017)
- **Agri-environmental policy:**
 - Previous policy too prescriptive (Uthes and Matzdorf, 2013)
 - Including different perspectives in decision making (Toderi et al. 2017)
 - Locally relevant responses (Prager, 2015)
- **Likely to be part of next CAP**
- **EIP-AGRI – an opportunity to build understanding of collaborative approaches in practice**

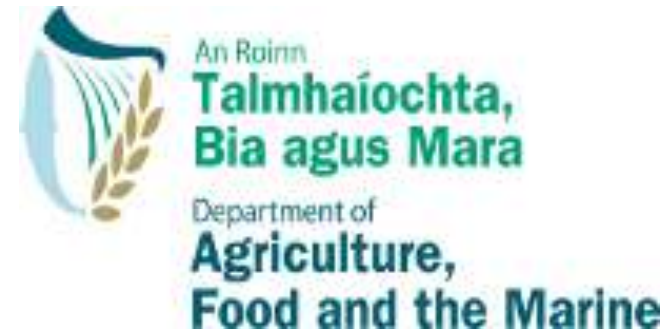
EIP-AGRI

- European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability
- The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
- Multi-actor Operational Groups - “farmers, researchers, advisors and businesses”
- Innovative projects to enhance “productivity and sustainable resource management” (EAFRD Regs, Article 56)



Ireland's EIP Initiative

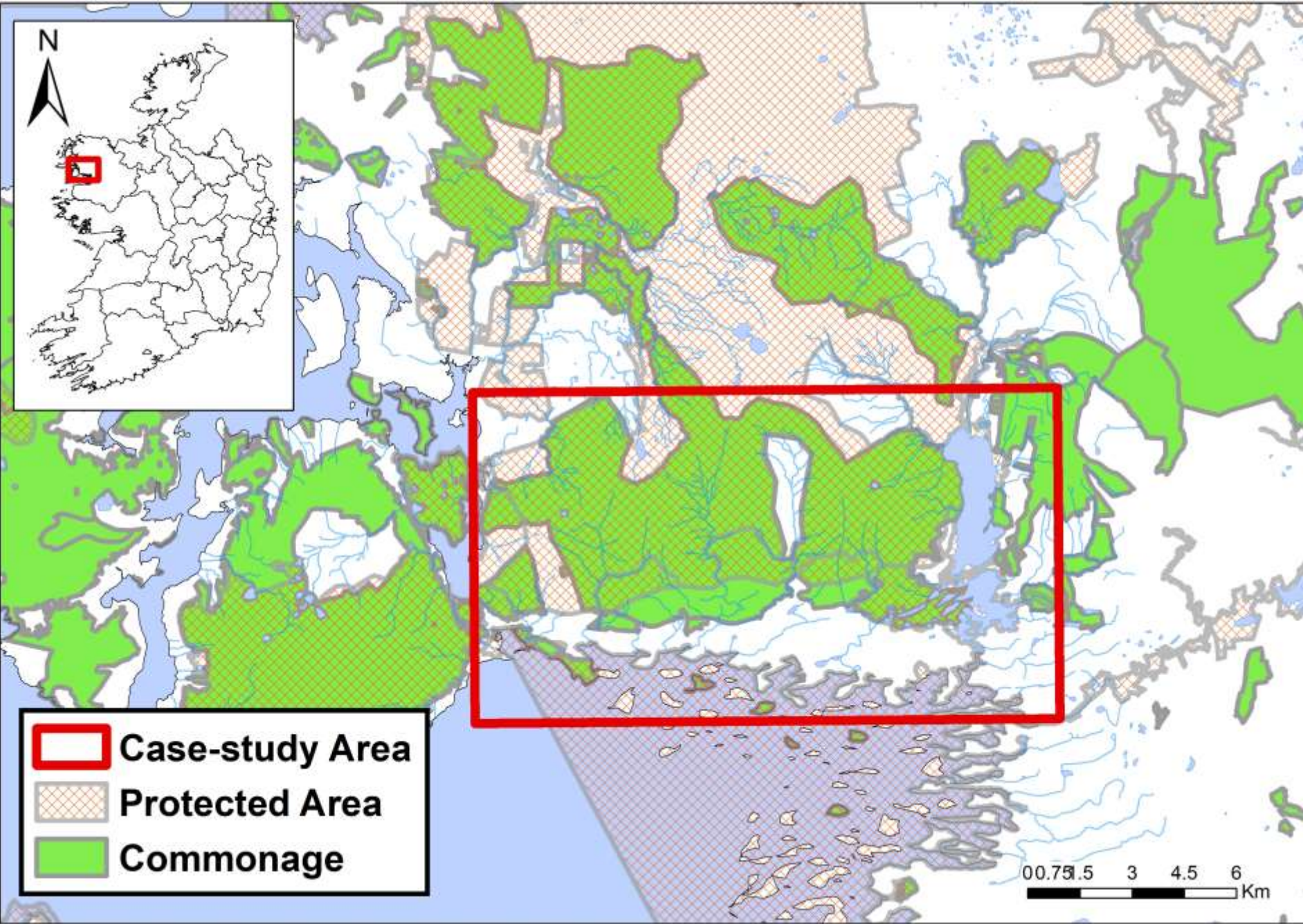
- 2 open calls 2016/2017 - €24m
- Operational Groups invited to propose pilot projects
- Competitive application process
 1. Expression of Interest (42 shortlisted)
 2. Extended application from shortlisted projects (21 funded)



Operational Groups



EIP-AGRI
 European Innovation Partnership
 for Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation



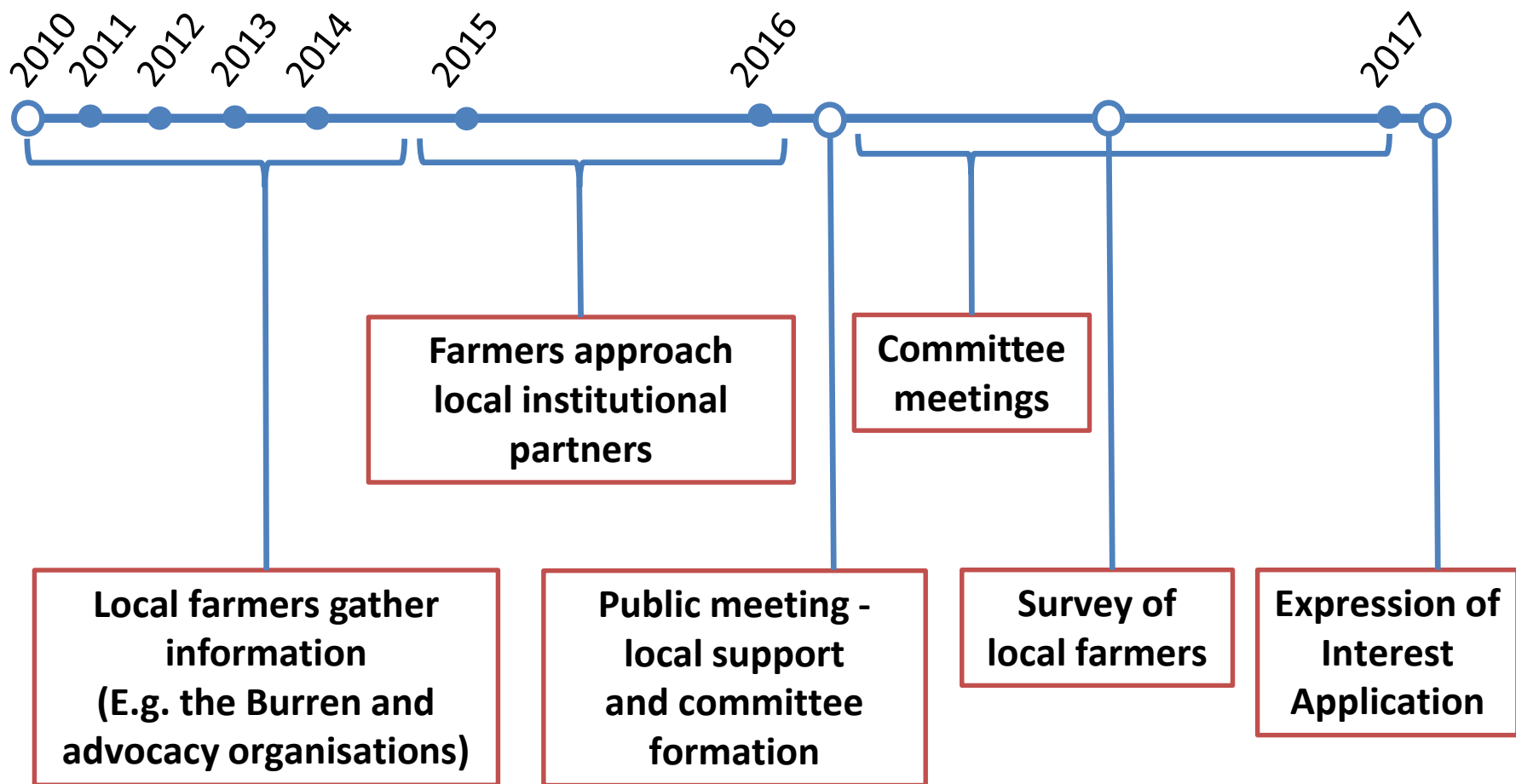


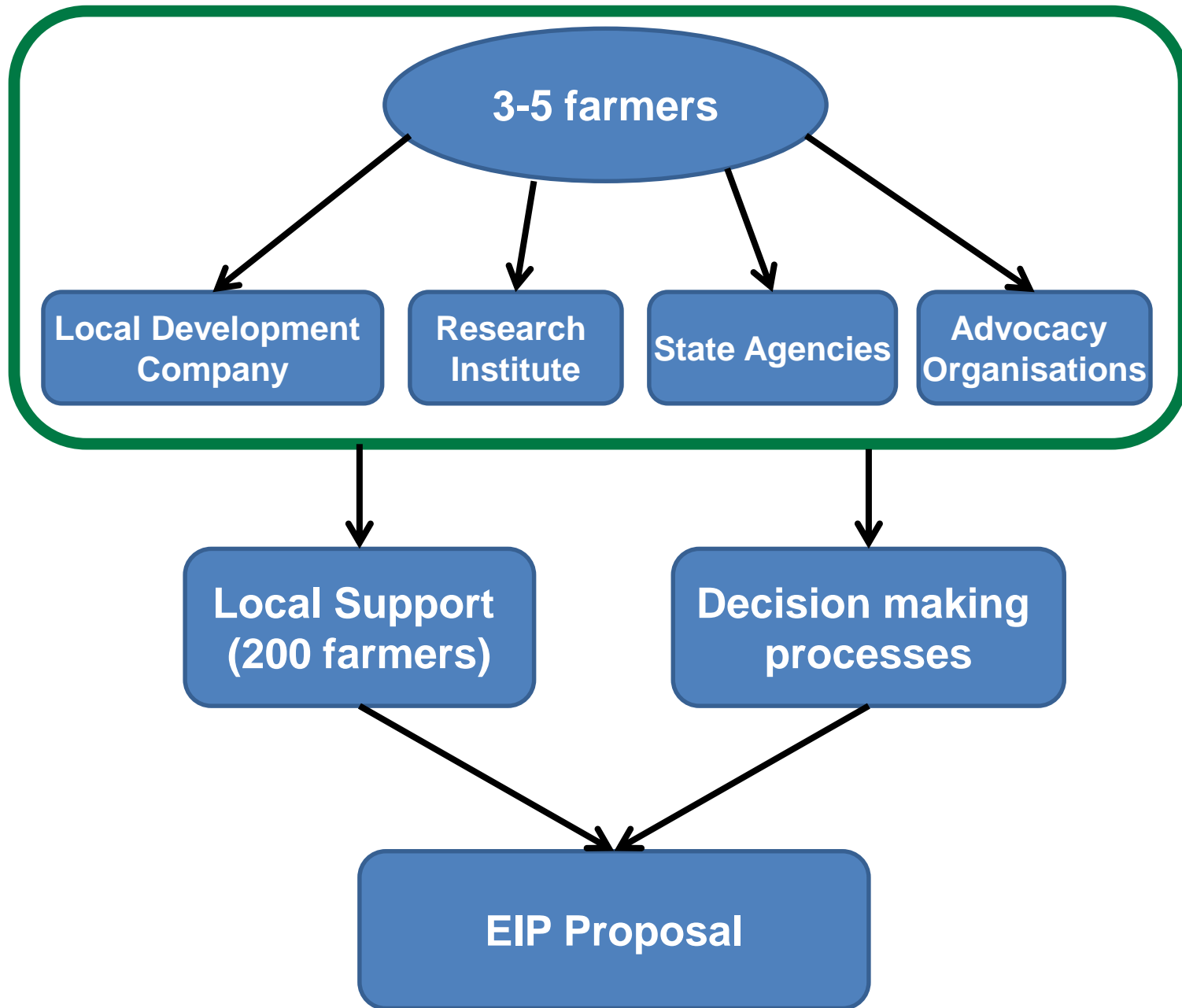
Proposal Overview

- Sustainable upland management
 - Cooperative shepherding; Invasive species; River bank protection
- Protect or enhance
 - Upland peats; Biodiversity; Water quality
- Shortlisted but not funded

Tracing the process

- 47 in-depth interviews
- Group formation and Expression of Interest
- Perspectives of interviewees
- Small group of people led the process





Lead farmers

“I went to the Burren in Clare a few years ago. That’s what [the EIP] is based on. It is very farmer-focused, if the farmer isn’t happy then we can change it, which is very appealing, because until now that wasn’t the case.

We wanted the EIP because it’s not penalty-based. It’s supposed to be driven by advice and working with all these agencies.”

Farmer 1

Lead farmers

- Impressed with other working examples (e.g. the Burren)
- Knowledge input
- Collaborate with regulators
- Improve farmland conditions
- Income – existing payments and public goods

Decision-making

- Facilitated by Local Development Company (LDC)
- Good working relationships with farmers – trusted locally.
- Skills to facilitate a collective decision-making process

Decision-making

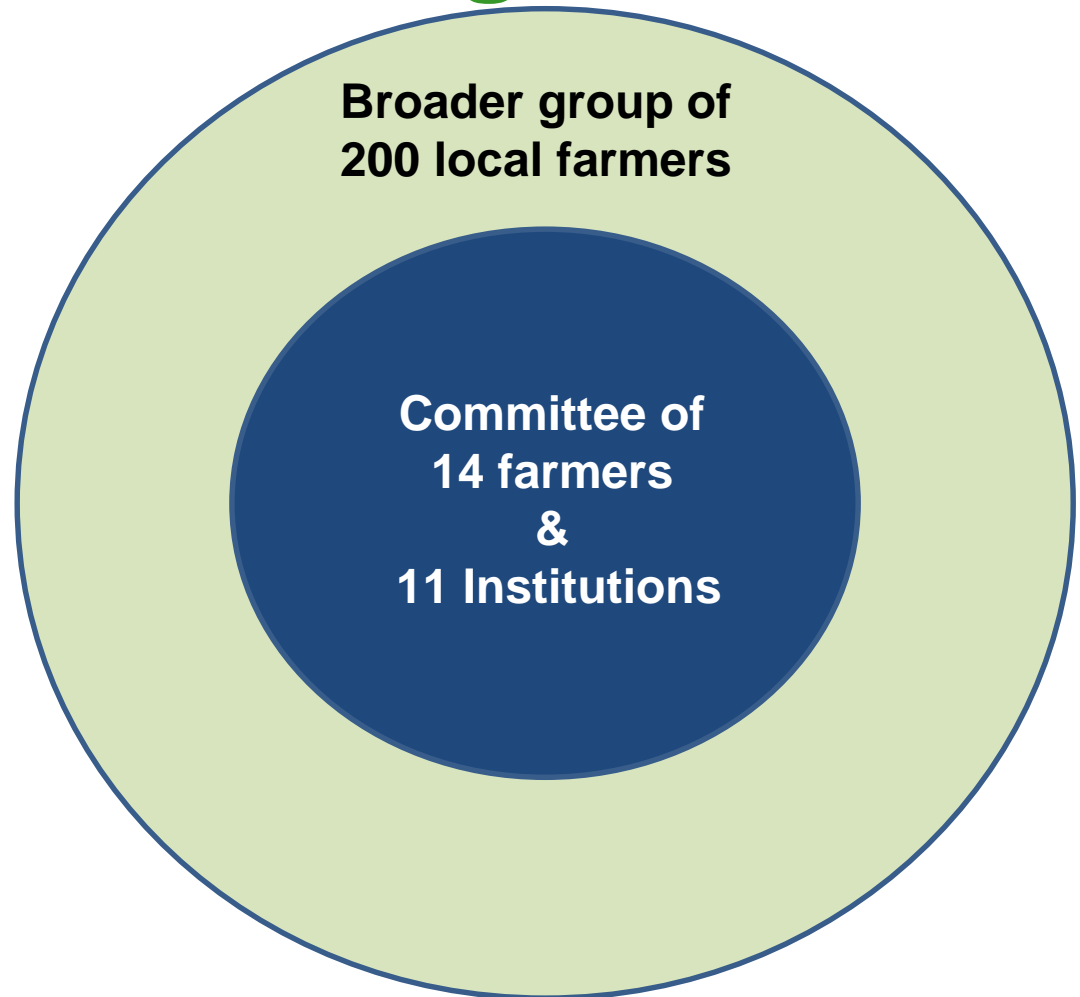
“Any decisions are to be made with consensus, with agreement. There are never to be any decisions made outside of the group of farmers.”

There are strong agencies [involved] with a lot of expertise, but the farmers are the key group”

Local Development Professional

Committee & meetings

- Farmer led committee
- Consensus decision-making

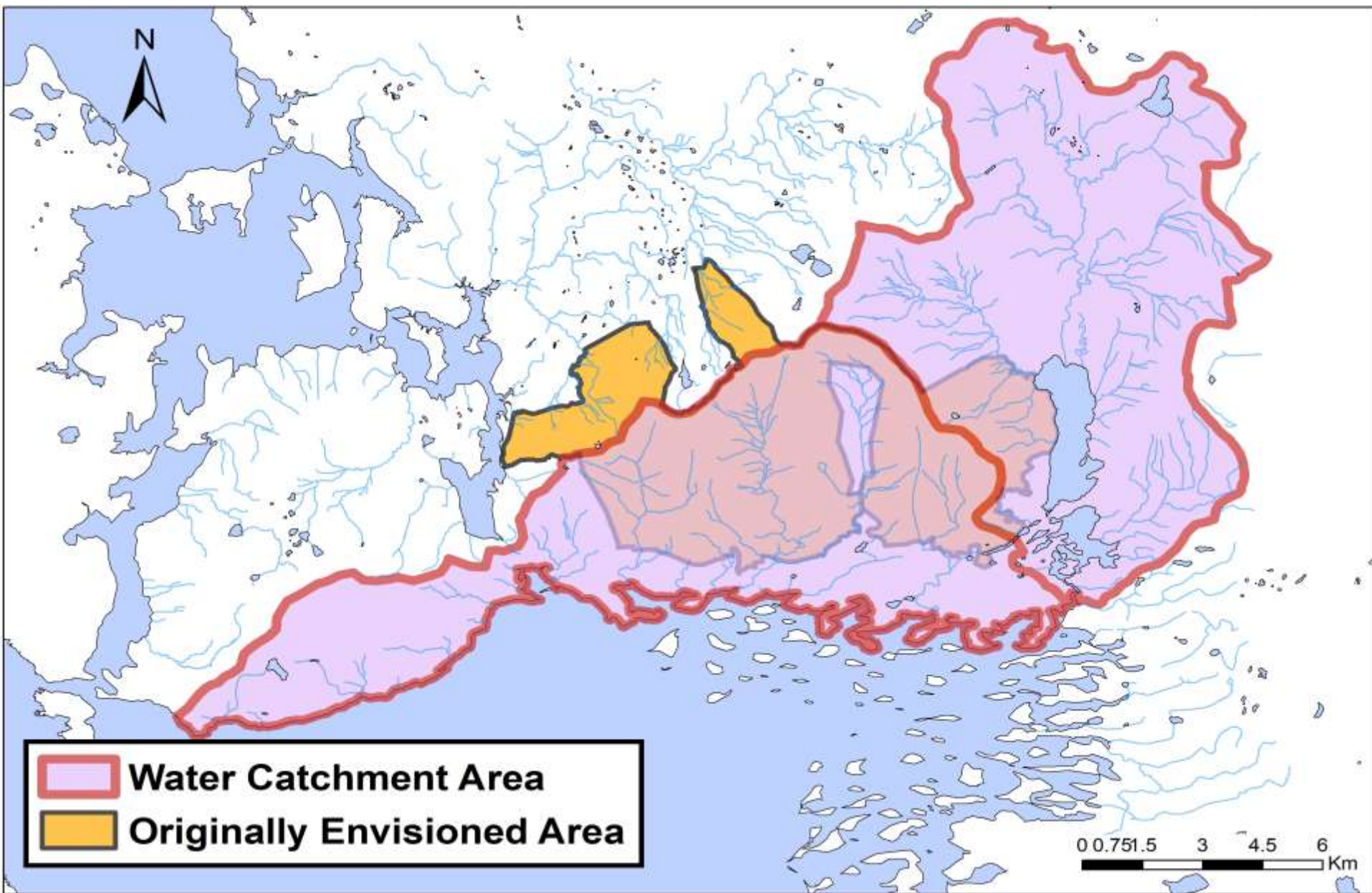


Survey – Summer 2016

- 200 surveys distributed to local farmers (approx. 70 returned)
- Gathered ideas: e.g. shepherding
- Creating a sense of inclusion

Local Research Institute

- Scientific knowledge
- E.g. align scheme boundaries with water catchment
- Upland management and water quality



Research Institute

“So the trick was to try and protect [local] rivers from changes that might happen either agriculturally or through climate change. Like if climate change is going to give us more catastrophic floods that are going to be ripping river banks.

That was the approach that I took when I started meeting the farmers, of course depending on where they chose... after a public meeting it became the watersheds that flowed south.”

Scientist

Take home messages

1. New sites of decision-making
2. Farmer and scientific knowledge
3. Core group - significant labour, time, and skills
4. Decision-making processes: locally adapted and managed; built on existing relationships; attuned to farmer concerns
5. Collaboration and input was itself major motivation

Policy implications

- Different places will have different labour, time and skills available
- How can policy support the development of relevant capacities and skills where they may be less developed?
- Locally adapted decision-making processes (social factors)

Improvements

- What if applications don't get funded?
 - DAFM should:
 - Provide substantial feedback
 - Remain engaged with groups
 - Outline possible next steps
- (Jones et al. 2019)

Thank you