

## Summary of break-out groups – Collaborative Working

### Q1. How can you contribute to delivery of water quality in your area?

- Report issues and pollution, being eyes and ears on the ground.
- Many organisations keen to build links and start new projects with partners.
- Councils, Rivers Trusts and others working in INTEREG projects and Catchment Care.
- UFU working in the Ballinderry and Derg catchments to deliver improvements in land use practise and drinking water quality, keen to start more projects.
- Demonstration farms to encourage good environmental practise.
- Anglers working with AFBINI on fish research.
- Citizen science projects such as invertebrate monitoring, conductivity, pH, dissolved oxygen, wildlife monitoring and electrofishing.
- Developing skills and community effort (Rivers Trust training, Riverfly).
- Litter picks and surveys, linking with Live Here Love Here for changing behaviour and education and also funding (Lagan Rivers Trust received funding for a boat with funding from LHLH for in-river clean-ups).
- Investigative high resolution work through volunteer effort, capturing live data (example Glas-na-Bradán).
- Tool pool so groups can share resources for projects (Rivers Trusts can provide assistance).
- Knowledge sharing between groups.
- Gain funding and deliver projects on the ground.
- Record data centrally through CEDAR, Riverfly UK, NBN gateway etc. to benefit other groups.
- AFBINI and DAERA research into best agricultural practise.
- AFBINI delivering telemetry projects for water quality.
- Education programmes such as classroom hatcheries and River Watch.
- Waterways Ireland, improvements to leisure craft discharging in waterways.
- RSBP, NIW and NIEA partnership on blanket bog restoration.
- Control of invasive species.
- RSPB working with c.400 farmers on agri-env schemes.
- Rivers Agency and Inland Fisheries often go beyond minimum mitigation for environmental improvement.
- NIW campaign on 'bag it and bin it', non-flushable products, have trained 20 environmental champions.

### Q2. In what ways can NIEA work with you to deliver water quality improvements in your area?

- Programme of measures, disconnect with local issues.
- Newsletters on updates.
- Continued support and refresher training for citizen science projects such as Riverfly.
- Information about funding sources and promotion of links to sources such as Rural Network NI, Community NI.
- Shared information about projects.
- Transparency of Rivers Trusts.

- Improved speed of data sharing and easier web-based data sources rather than email requests.
- Demonstrations of webmapper and data sharing.
- Land use improvements such as restoration of riparian zone and bogs, forestry (whole life cycle), sedimentation (buffer strips). Agricultural pressure vs environment.
- Slurry – unsustainable use and NAP still a problem.
- Agricultural sector expanding but needs to be sustainable both economically and environmentally.
- Live log of pollution events and updates.
- Provide wish list of areas NIEA would like focus on.
- Feel inclusive and encouraged.
- Weir removal – set up possible group.
- Future for CAP.
- Control of high P manures – farmers should demonstrate need through soil testing.
- Extension of slurry spreading – only in exceptional circumstances.
- Improve areas set aside to increase biodiversity.
- Border areas, match up mapping from 2 sets of data.
- Website is difficult to navigate.
- Improved timescales for application and delivery of Environment and Challenge Fund.
- More samples points to detect pressures.
- App to report pollution.
- Reliable information.
- Guidance.
- Loughinisland performance of WWTW.
- Joint approach.

### **Q3. What content would you like for the 2017 conference?**

- Clear purpose and circulation of background information in advance.
- External speakers, UK and wider.
- Best practise examples of river restoration and UFU environmentally friendly farming.
- Example citizen science projects.
- Choice of site visits eg. Ballymoney.
- Video clips of projects.
- Time and space for networking and promotion of projects - posters, promotion stands.
- Provide delegates list.
- Brexit update from DAERA and UFU (agriculture, subsidies and biodiversity issues).
- Project updates eg. SCAMP pesticides, NIW.
- Information on other regulation such as higher agreements external to EU.
- Overall pollution statistics and prosecutions.
- Saturday all day conference, better turn out in day rather than evening.
- Central location, outside Belfast.
- Funding bodies invited to attend.