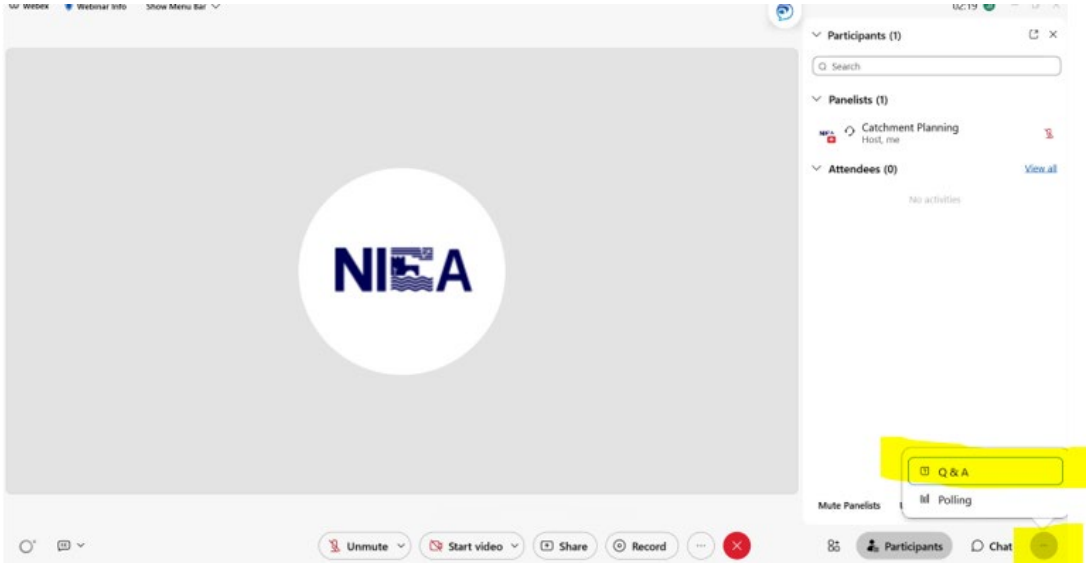
Thank you for joining

- The webinar will start shortly
- There is no sound until we start the webinar
- Presentation will be recorded and available on our webpage soon
- Q&A location screenshot below - use this for questions as chat will not be monitored
- https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/node/51826



Pre-launch information session for Water Quality Improvement Strand (Environment Fund) 2024/ 25

NIEA Water Management Unit
Integrated Catchment Planning Team
catchmentplanning@daera-ni.gov.uk

***Sustainability** at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.*

NIEA Northern Ireland Environment Agency
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

An Agency within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Outline

A. Introduction – what is the fund & timeline
B. Problems with water environment
C. Preferred locations
D. Themes of fund
E. What to consider for your application
F. Examples of activities

The small print

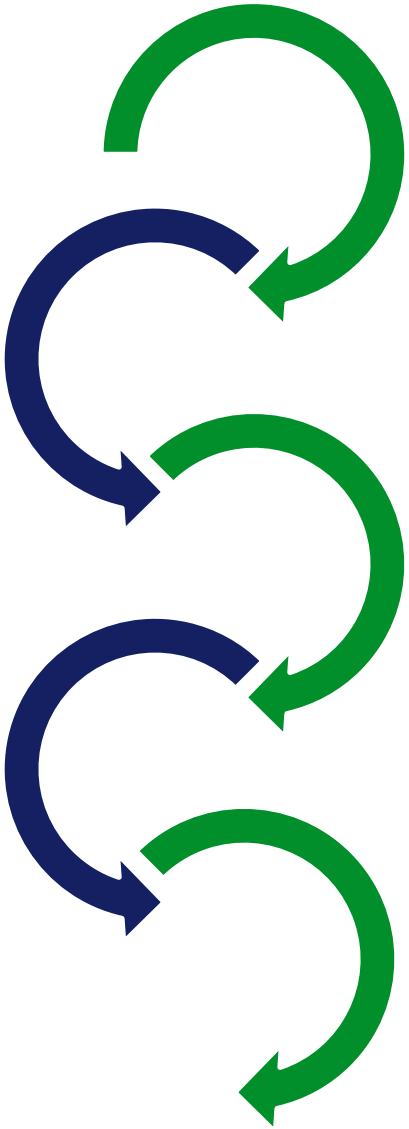
- The awarding of any funding is subject to departmental budgets being approved. No letters of offer will be issued until the budget has been approved.
- This means no commitment is being made to fund projects at this stage.
- Any costs incurred in submitting an application will not be re-imbursed.
- Any dates mentioned in this presentation are subject to funding being approved.

What is the water quality improvement strand?

- Annual fund – runs per financial year
- To fund projects that help improve our aquatic environment
- for constituted not-for-profit organisations and councils
- will cover up to 85 % of total project cost – i.e. match funding of 15 % is required
- Minimum: £5,000 and maximum: £30,000.
- Funding period: spring 2024 - February 2025
- No advance payments –
  you can only invoice completed works/ activities

- In 2023/24 12 projects were awarded funding with a total amount of £260k.

Approximate timeline



Launch of fund: early January 2024

Closing date for applications: early March 2024 (~2 months)

Assessment of applications by NIEA (~2 months)

Awarding of funding (subject to budget approval) – spring 2024

Projects to be completed and invoiced – February 2025

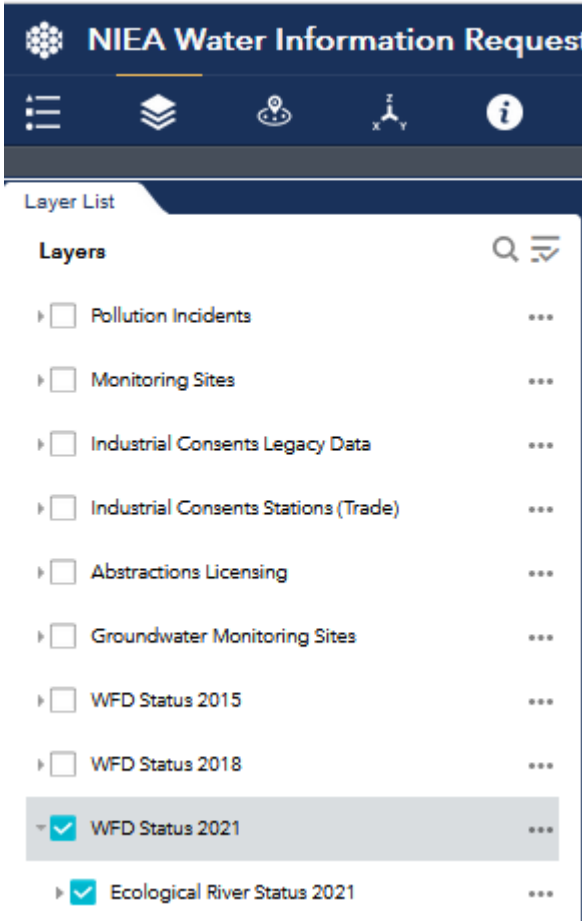
Problems with water environment

Health assessment (called classification status) December 2021

Surface water	2015	2021
ecology	32 % at 'good or better' status	31 % at 'good or better' status

- Improvements are off-set by deteriorations

Groundwater	2015	2021
chemistry	68 % at 'good' status	71 % at 'good' status



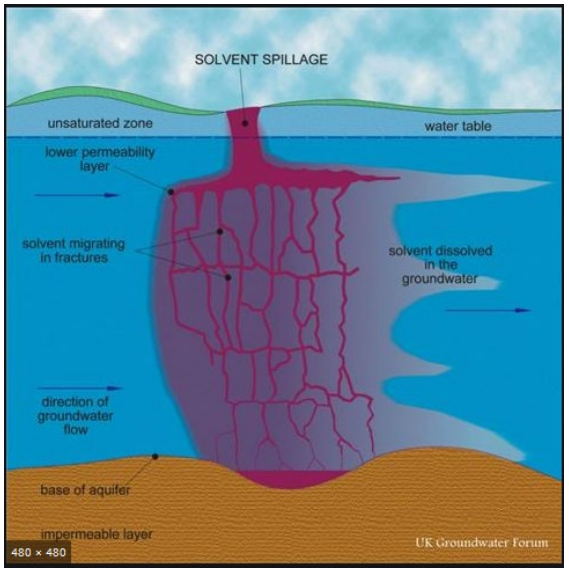
Water Information Request Web Viewer: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/daera-map-viewers

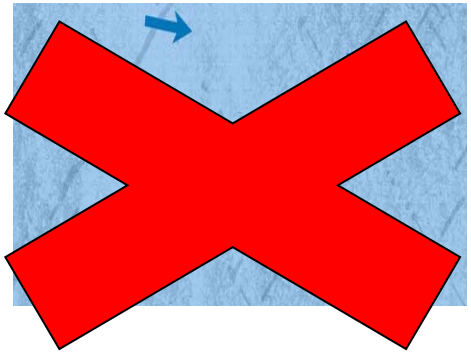
Where does a pollutant go? Source-pathway-receptor model

source

pathway

receptor





B. Problems

Different types of measures

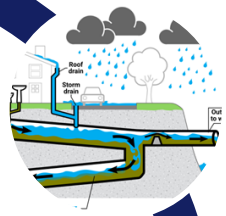
Linkages broken – measuring dealing with pathway

Linkages cannot be broken – measures dealing with source

B. Problems

Pressures on water environment

Point sources



Diffuse sources

B. Problems

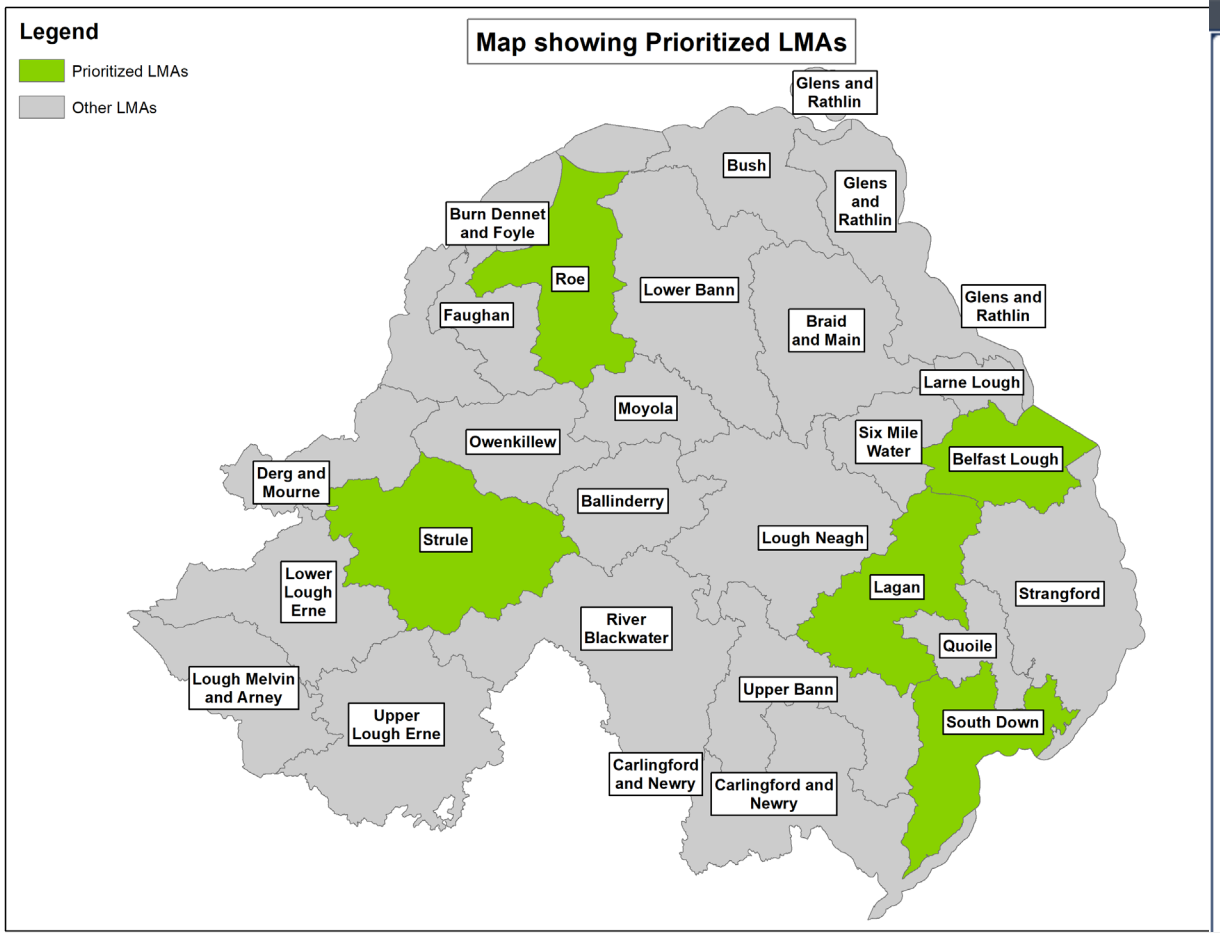
Preferred location for projects

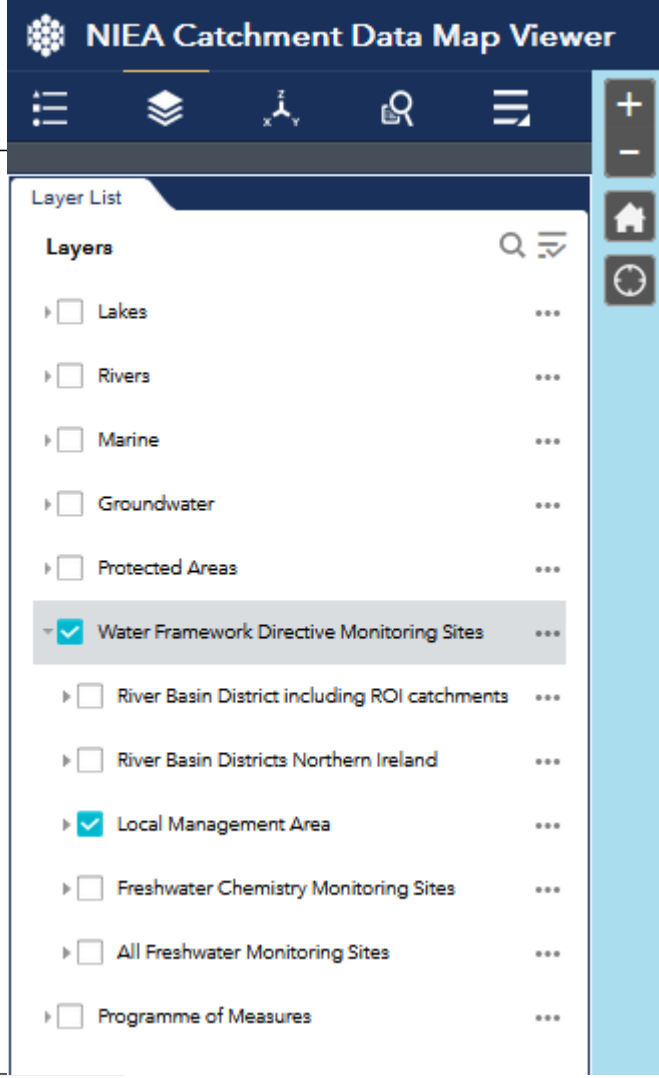
- Local Management Areas: Roe, Strule, South Down, Lagan and Belfast Lough
- Protected Areas
- Areas of potential significant flood risk

Environment Fund – Water Quality Improvement Strand
Environmental Priorities 2024-25
Section 2.0

C. Preferred locations

Local Management Areas



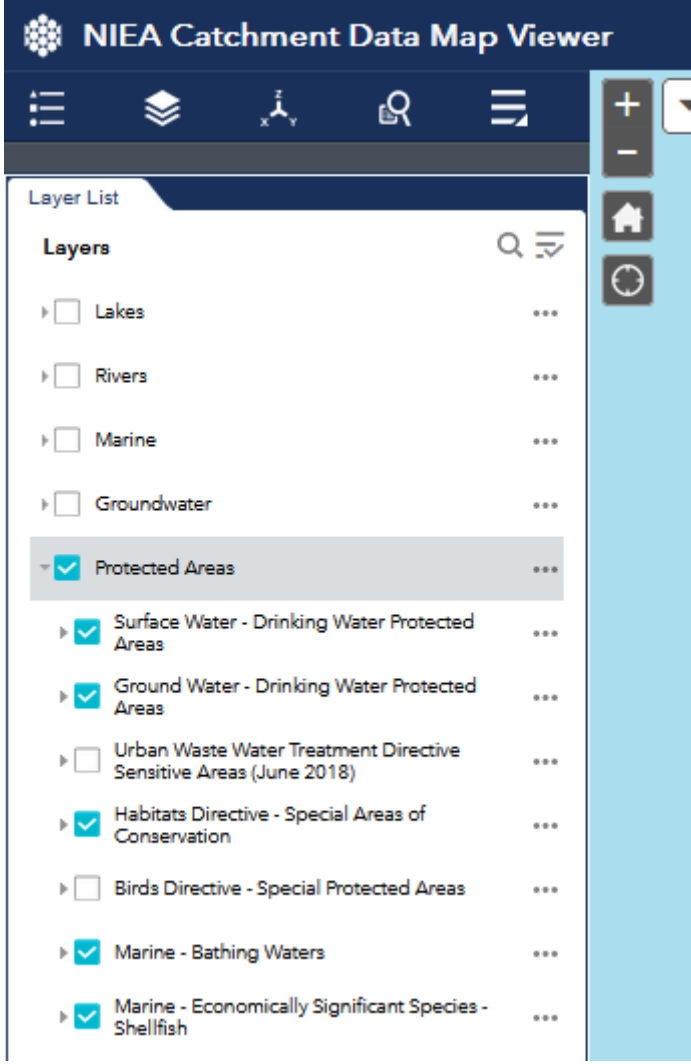


- Digital download: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/local-management-areas-digital-datasets
- NIEA Catchment Data Map Viewer: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/daera-map-viewers

C. Preferred locations

Protected Areas

- Important: protected area has to be water-dependent: either surface water or groundwater
- Drinking Water Protected Areas (DWPA) – includes Lough Neagh
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Bathing Waters
- Shellfish Waters



- Digital download- SAC: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/special-areas-conservation-digital-datasets
- NIEA Catchment Data Map Viewer: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/daera-map-viewers

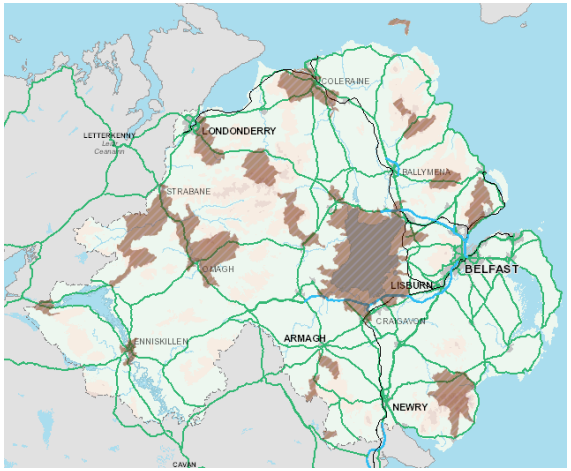
C. Preferred locations

Protected Areas – demonstration of map viewer

- NIEA Catchment Data Map Viewer: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/daera-map-viewers

- Note on Drinking Water Protected Areas (DWPA)
  2 options: groundwater and surface water

groundwater DWPA



surface water DWPA

C. Preferred locations

Areas of potential significant flood risk (APFSR)

Figure 1-3: Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk (APSFR) and Transitional Areas of Potential Signifi
Flood Risk (TAPSFR) as defined through the NIFRA 2018

- Figure 1.3 of FRMP: https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/infrastructure/second-cycle-ni-flood-risk-management-plan-may-2022.pdf
- Individual APSFR: https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/second-cycle-northern-ireland-flood-risk-management-plan-2021-2027

Chapter 5 - Belfast APSFR
PDF (7.5 MB)

Chapter 5 - Londonderry APSFR
PDF (7.1 MB)

Chapter 5 - Newry APSFR
PDF (6.9 MB)

Chapter 5 - Lurgan APSFR
PDF (4.4 MB)

Chapter 5 - Glengormley and Mallusk APSFR
PDF (5.4 MB)

Chapter 5 - Larne APSFR
PDF (4.7 MB)

Chapter 5 - Bangor APSFR
PDF (4.7 MB)

Chapter 5 - Portadown and Craigavon APSFR
PDF (5.5 MB)

Chapter 5 - Omagh APSFR
PDF (6.7 MB)

Chapter 5 - Newtownabbey APSFR
PDF (6.2 MB)

Chapter 5 - Carrickfergus APSFR
PDF (5 MB)

Chapter 5 - Ballymena APSFR
PDF (5.5 MB)

C. Preferred locations

Themes for funding

- Connecting people with the aquatic environment to achieve behavioural change
- Conservation, protection and restoration of our aquatic environments
- Nature-based solutions, particularly for climate change mitigation and adaptation

Environment Fund – Water Quality Improvement Strand
Environmental Priorities 2024-25
Section 3

Overview of assessment criteria (1 of 3) – eligibility criteria

No appeal process – decision of panel is final

- Not-for-profit organisation
- Registered, or in the process of registering on the government funding database https://govfunding.nics.gov.uk/
- Match funding or contributions in-kind clearly outlined

E. Application

Overview of assessment criteria (2 of 3) - technical

- Does the project clearly fit into the key themes for this fund?
- Does the project have a clear objective to improve the water environment, most prominently water quality?
- What, if any additional benefits will the project achieve?
- Level of community involvement including awareness raising and encouraging behaviour change.
- Do the costs represent value for money?

E. Application

Overview of assessment criteria (3 of 3) – bigger picture

Does your project:

- provide support to other initiatives within a catchment, avoiding duplication and conflict
- raise awareness of water issues and address them
- form a part of wider consideration/ awareness of the surrounding landscape
- fall within a priority local management area, water-dependant protected site or area of potential significant flood risk?

E. Application

What to consider for your application

- Provide all evidence in application form to allow us assessment of application
- Consider what permissions and permits you will need
- Include screenshot from map viewers showing:
  - location of project
  - Health/ status of water body
  - Location within priority area (if applicable)
- Consider what is likely cause of problem (source)? How does it get to my local area (pathway)?
- What behaviours need to change to protect/ improve my local area?
- What change (big or small) can everyone in your community make? How is community involved?

Examples of activities

Bank Stabilisation	Litter Picking	Bog Restoration e.g. drain blocking	Reports/Plans Feasibility studies	Citizen Science, Awareness and Training
Signage/Water Literacy	Tackling diffuse pollution from land e.g. farm water quality restoration plan	Tree Planting - not on flood defences like earth embankments	Fenced off protection zones, headworks protection	Rain Gardens and Nature based SuDS
Fish Passage	Invasive Non-Native Species prevention, treatment and removal	Fish habitat improvement e.g. gravel installation	Wetland creation, restoration and/or protection	Slow the Flow Measures e.g. hard surface removal, woody debris
Natural Flood Management	Education / Awareness	Programme of events linked to your project	Rainwater Harvesting and Water re-use e.g. water butt	Measures to prevent soil erosion and nutrient run off

Environment Fund – Water Quality Improvement Strand
Environmental Priorities 2023-24

Table 1

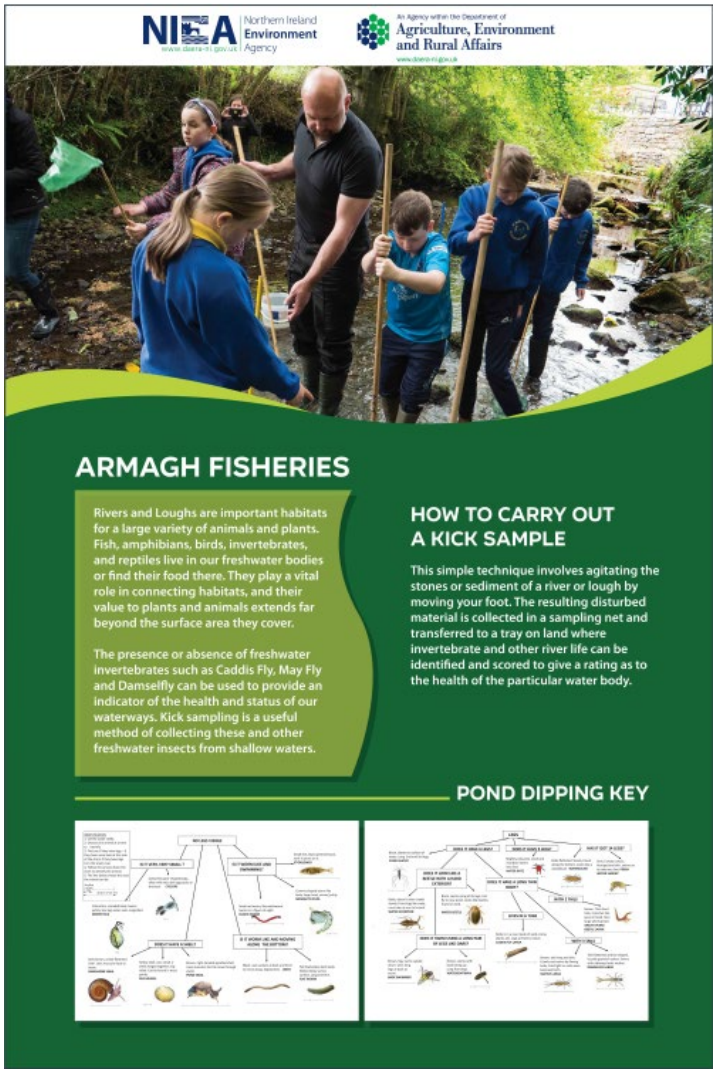
F. Examples

Examples of activities

Previous grantees include:

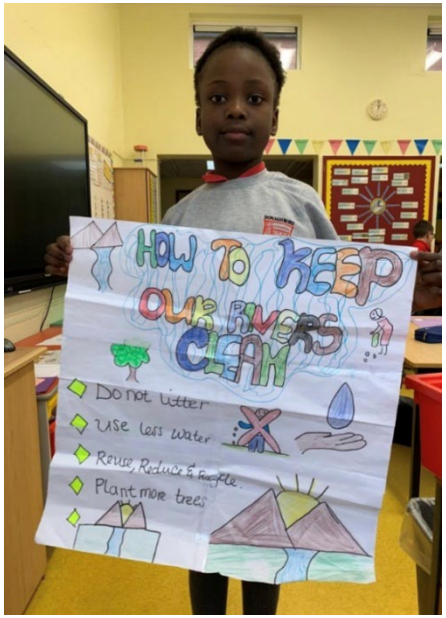
- River trusts
- Councils
- Angling clubs
- Community groups

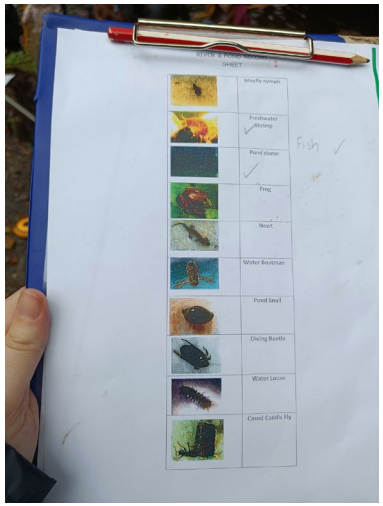
Armagh Fisheries & Angling Club

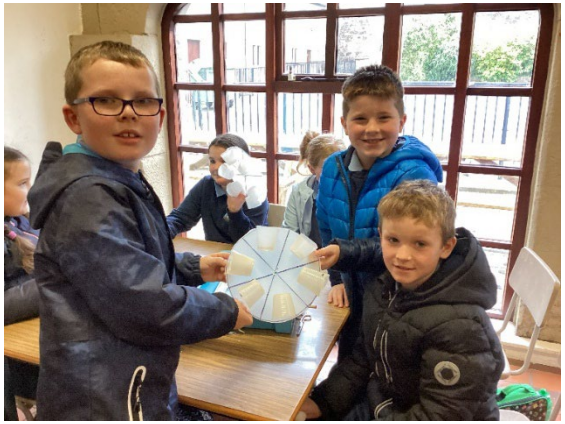


F. Examples

Speedwell Trust







F. Examples

Ballycastle angling club

Project:

- restored some of the adult salmon holding water in the Margy
- Had been lost due to excessive deposition and damage to in river structures

Before:

After:

Sea2it

A project focussing on cleanups, outflow and river stress safaris, including volunteers & behaviour change

E. Examples

Resources

- River restoration: https://www.therrc.co.uk/rrc
- Source-to-Tap: https://www.sourcetotap.eu/educators-citizen-scientists/
- Green clubs initiative: https://www.gaa.ie/my-gaa/community-and-health/green-clubs-sustainability/
- CatchmentCare: https://www.catchmentcare.eu/publications/
- NetRegs: https://www.netregs.org.uk/households/
- Tips and examples from similar fund run in Republic of Ireland https://lawaters.ie/app/uploads/2021/06/LEADER-A-guide-for-community-groups-working-with-Water-Biodiversity-and-Climate.pdf - check that your proposal complies with the eligibility criteria from the Environment Fund – Water Quality Improvement Strand

E. Examples

Questions

NIEA Water Management Unit
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catchmentplanning@daera-ni.gov.uk

Further information on the WQIS, including FAQ can be found on the link below:
https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/node/51826