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# Nitrates Action Programme and new measures from 1/1/2021

- **Background**
- New Measures for Implementation 1/1/2021 (SI 605 2017 and SI 529 2020)
- Consultation on the next Nitrates Action Programme

# Water Quality



## Drivers for action

- Water quality is not improving
- Agriculture can negatively impact water quality
- Cost to the farmer as valuable nutrients lost to water

## Pressures from Agriculture

- Fertiliser use increasing , Nitrogen and Phosphorus pressures
- Livestock numbers increasing/Land use effects
- Pesticides/Sediment

## Priorities:

1. Meet the WFD water quality standards
2. Control agricultural emissions to all water bodies

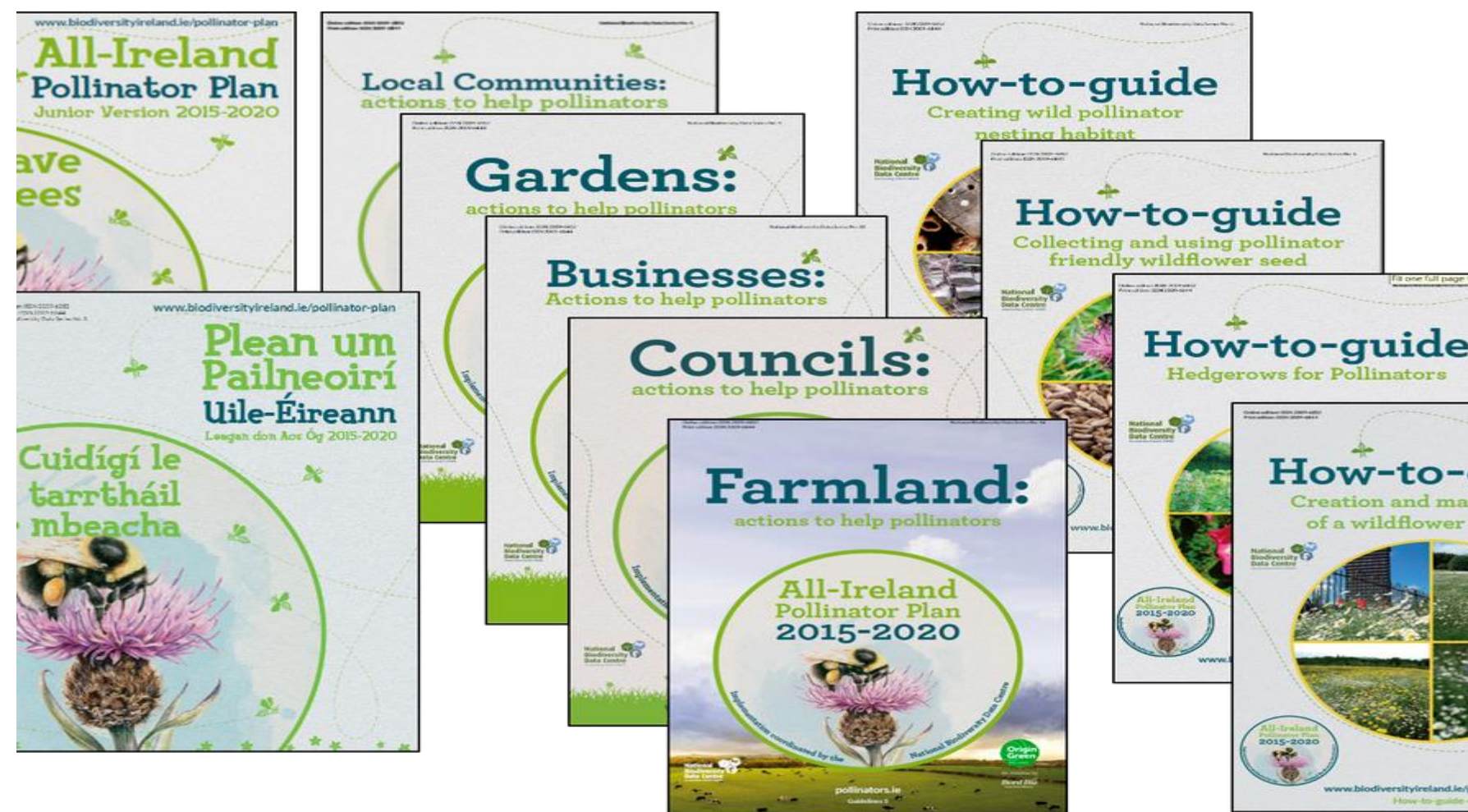




# Strategic priorities

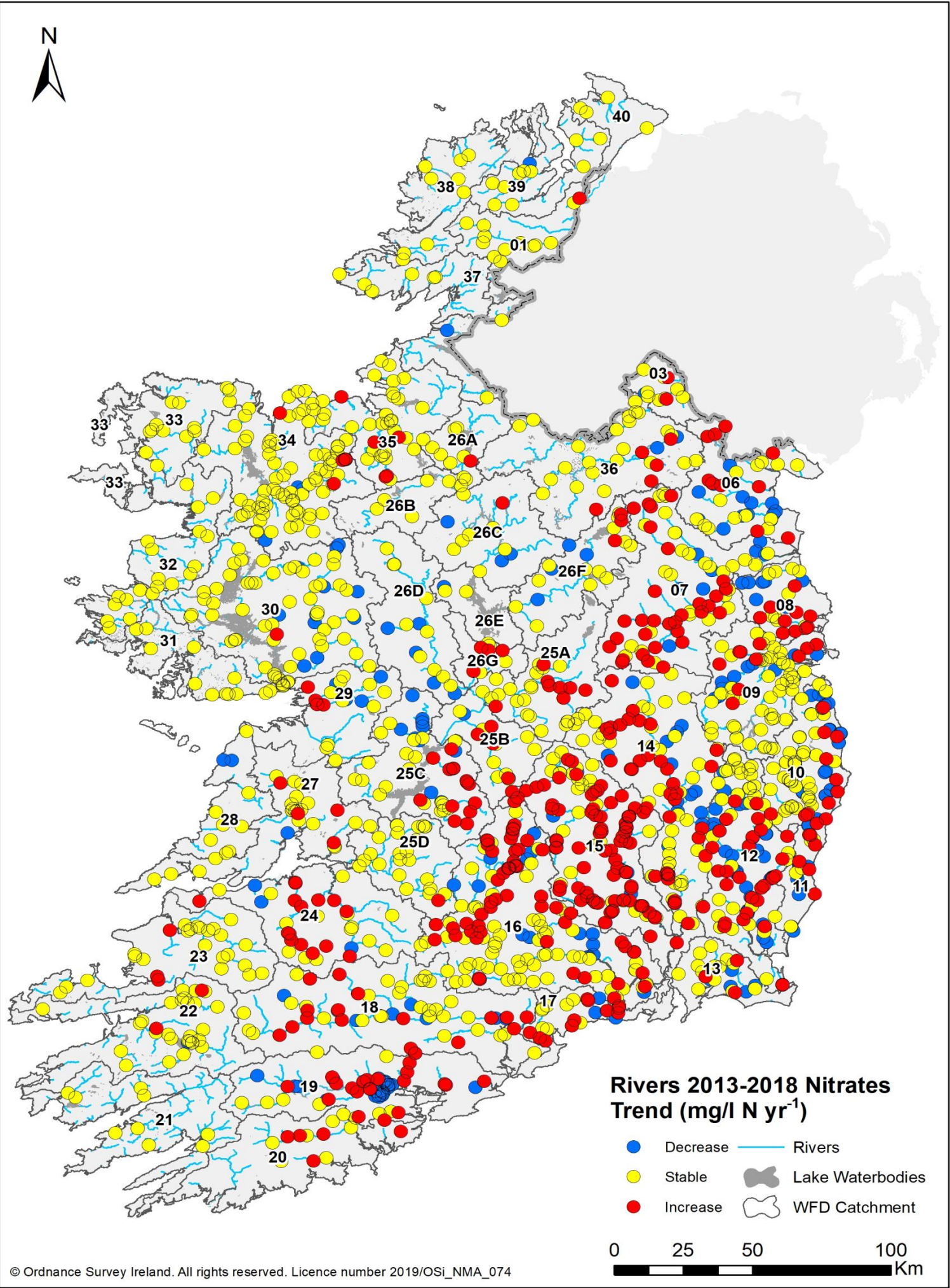


- Green Deal
- Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies

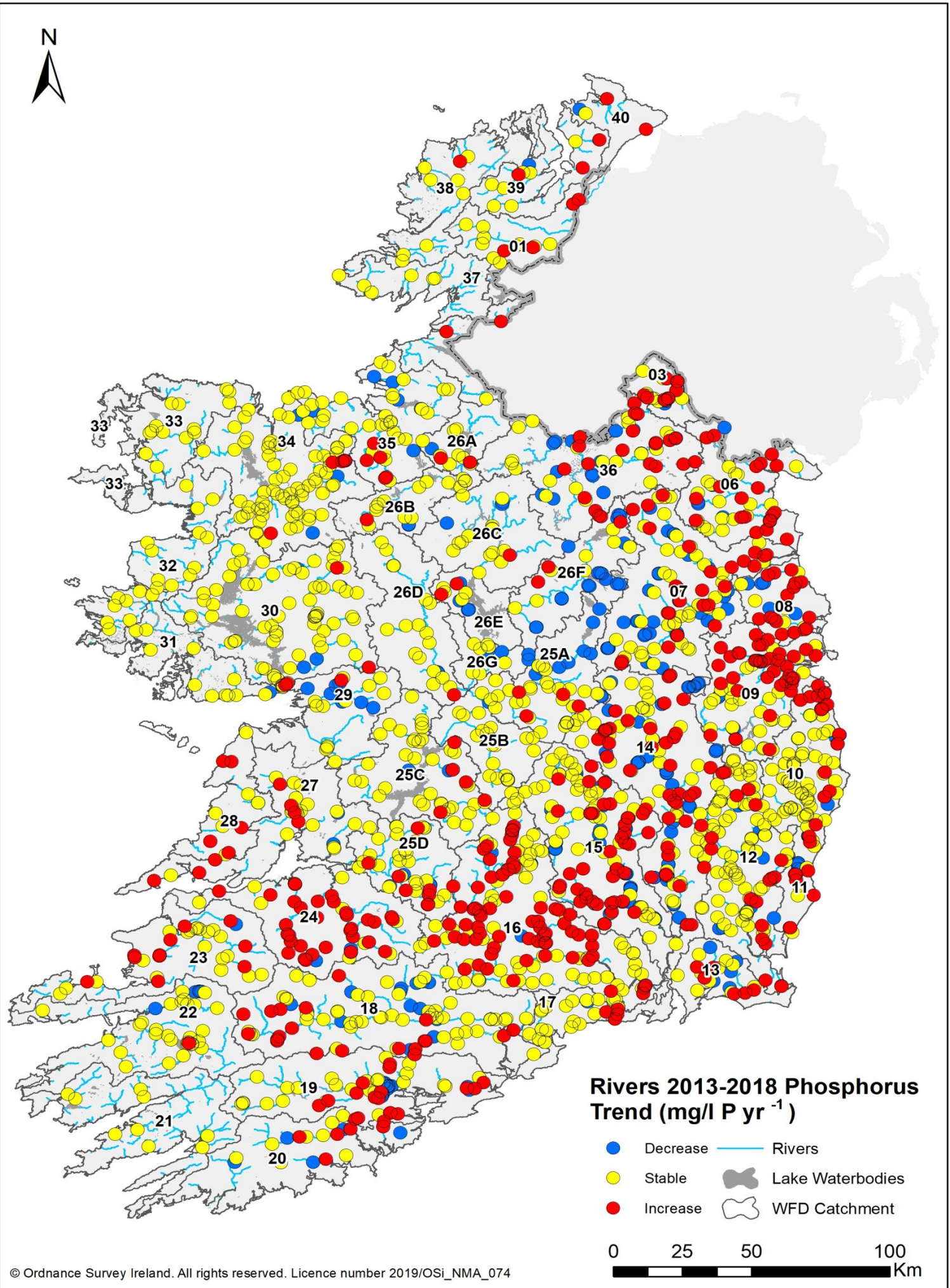
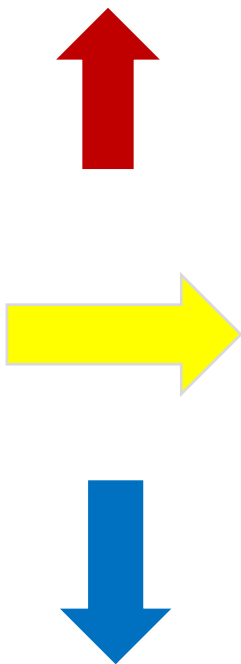




# Trends in nutrient concentrations



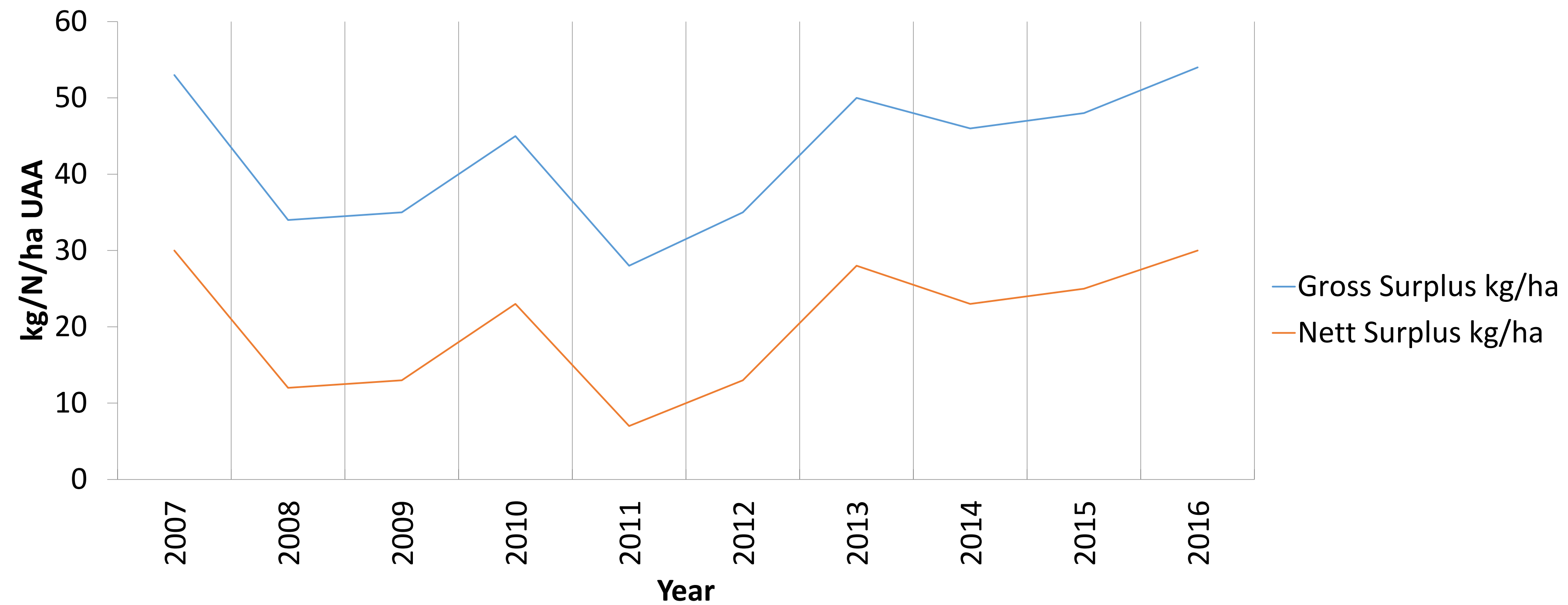
River nitrate changes



River phosphorus changes



# Gross/Nett Nutrient (Nitrogen) Budget



# Supporting Water Quality



- Water Framework Directive.
- Nitrates Directive is the main Agricultural measure which aims to protect waters from sources of N and P from agricultural sources.**
- Sustainable Use Directive aims to protect waters from contamination by pesticides used on farms.
- Strategic Management Requirements for CAP payments.
- ACP, ASSAP
- GLAS, TAMS, KT, RDP, EIPs

NPH	Farms in 2018		Area (ha)		Bovines	
0	30,081	23%	799,336	17%	30,208	0%
≤ 130	79,666	60%	2,634,476	58%	3,135,542	46%
131-170	11,780	9%	515,234	11%	1,396,177	20%
> 170	11,668	9%	632,614	14%	2,277,799	33%
Total	133,195		4,581,660		6,839,727	



# The Nitrates Regulations

- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) is the lead authority for the Nitrates regulations (SI 605 2017)
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine implements and operates the Nitrates Derogation (SI 65 2018).
- Current National Action Programme 2018 -2021





# Nitrates Derogation Review

- A review of Irelands nitrates derogation has been completed.
- The review examined further opportunities for derogation farmers to improve efficiencies and continue to reduce their environmental footprint with particular regard to water, climate and air quality.



# Nitrates Derogation review

- Compulsory lime Programme (170 kg N/ha)
- Low Emission Slurry Spreading (170 kg N/ha)
- Reduction in Crude Protein in Concentrates (170 kg N/ha)
- Increased use of clover in swards
- Training
- Nutrient Use Efficiency (ASSAP/ACP Programmes)
- Grass measurement or Training on derogation farms
- Biodiversity Measures
- Land Eligibility



# Policy Timelines

- Climate Bill and Agriculture “AgClimatise” Strategy to be launched shortly
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of the River Basin Management Plan is to commence from January 2022, there will be a consultation of agriculture measures
- The next Nitrates Action Programme is to commence from January 2022
- Common Agricultural Policy from January 2021 (Transitional) and new Green Architecture from January 2023.
- **Key themes across all these policy interventions will be a reduction of nutrient losses – Nitrogen and Phosphorus**

# Measures for Implementation from 1/1/2021

Terms	Whole Farm Stocking Rate excluding N exports $\geq 170$ kg N/ha	Grassland Stocking Rate (GSR) excluding N exports
Definition	Organic N produced by grazing & non-grazing livestock/ holding area (grassland + arable).	Organic N produced by grazing livestock on the holding / grassland area
Use of LESS	Yes	
Liming programme	Yes	
CP 15%	Yes	
Fencing watercourses	Yes	Yes
Setback water troughs	Yes	Yes
Farm roadways	Applies to all farm (if farm roadways present on farms)	



# Annual nutrient excretion rates for livestock

- From 1/1/2021, the nutrient excretion rate for the Dairy Cow is 89kg (Organic N/ha)

# Farm Roadways

- **Note:** The following is applicable to all holdings regardless of stocking rate.

- **Prevention of direct discharge from farm roadways - Article 17.20**

*“There shall be no direct runoff of soiled water from farm roadways to waters from 1 January 2021. The occupier of such a holding shall comply with the minimum specification for farm roadways.”* (Current specification S199, July 2020).

- Definition as per SI 605 2017 “Waters”.
- In all cases where there is a possibility of direct runoff of soiled water from a roadway to waters, the relevant sections of roadway shall be cambered/oriented away from waters. This applies even where the roadway is currently flat (with no camber present). **Cambering is a prerequisite for compliance with the regulation (Article 17.20).** Additional options may subsequently be required so as to comply fully with the regulation



# Measures for Farms operating above 170kg Organic N

- Implementation is based on the previous year's SR, - 2020 SR in 2021
- Use of Low Emission Spreading of Slurry (LESS) (15<sup>th</sup> April 2021)
- Liming Programme
- Maximum Crude Protein of Concentrates for livestock at grass of 15% for period 1/4/2021 to 15/9/2021

# Exclusion of Bovines from Watercourses

- *Where bovine livestock have direct access to water from the holding, a fence shall be placed at least 1.5m from the top of the riverbank or water's edge (as the case may be) by 1 January 2021. It will be permissible to move livestock across a watercourse to an isolated land parcel where necessary, provided that both sides of the watercourse are fenced.*
- Scale OSi 1:5000

# Drinking Points

- **Set-back distance with supplementary drinking points (Article 17.19)**

“In the case of holdings identified in sub-Article 18, supplementary drinking points may not be located within 20m of surface waters from 1 January 2021”

- Supplementary drinking points may not be located within 20m of surface waters\* from 1 January 2021.
- Scale OSi 1:5000

\*watercourses



# Review of the Nitrates Action Programme

- The consultation phase for the next Nitrates Action Programme has commenced and the material and consultation document can be located at;

<https://www.housing.gov.ie/water/water-quality/nitrates/ministers-obrien-and-mcconalogue-launch-public-consultation-irelands>

- Closing date 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Second consultation planned for end Q1 2021



**Environment**

**Agriculture**