**PEACEPLUS Programme 2021-2027**

**Investment Area 5.3: Water Quality Improvement – Cross-Border Catchment Management.**

**Priority Actions and Locations across the Programme Area**

**Overview:**

Projects applying under Theme 5 (Supporting a Sustainable and Better Connected Future), Investment Area 5.3, should demonstrate how they will contribute to the **objective** enable a cross-border, collaborative approach to management and improvement of water body status to address the requirements of the Water Framework Directive in selected cross border catchments located within the Programme Area; and Water bodies. It will promote sustainable water management. It will **result** inthe development and management of cross border water status[[1]](#footnote-1) as well as catchment management programmes, designed to enable freshwater bodies in cross border river basins to achieve good or high status; and an increased percentage of shared waters in the Programme Area with good or high status.

The following table outlines the catchments and actions which will be prioritized in assessing applicants to the PEACEPLUS Investment Area 5.3: Water Quality Improvement – Cross-border Catchment Management. These are linked directly to government priorities in both jurisdictions and European Commission priorities. Projects should demonstrate how they plan to achieve results in catchments which have been identified as priorities in the Programme Area. These priorities have been agreed with the relevant government departments. The table represents the core designated areas. There may be other areas which are central to the catchment and related water quality, or form part of a Region Wide project. Accountable Departments are open to considering proposals that go beyond these. However, early engagement with Programme Officials during development of project proposals is recommended to ensure alignment with national and local priorities. Applicants should consider how they will contribute to the achievement of the output and result indicators through focusing on priorities outlined within this document.

***Please note that these priorities will require approval by the PEACEPLUS Programme Monitoring Committee, and as such, may be subject to changes up to the time of the official launch of the Call for Applications later this year. SEUPB is sharing this information to allow partnerships to continue to develop their applications with as much information as possible.***

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| No | Potential interventions (Actions) | Proposed Locations (Areas) | Pressures |
| 1 | A pilot/pilots for nature-based solutions or innovative nature based solutions to restore catchments including: peat restoration, water management measures to reduce runoff (sediment loss) and nutrient loss to waterways and to reduce impacts from flooding, e.g. green infrastructure | Roe, Strule, South Down, Lagan and Belfast Local Management Areas (LMA); Burnfoot/ Skeoge catchment  Erne catchment  Locations selected for potential intervention 2 | Deterioration and stagnation in ecology status of surface waters; impact on water-dependant protected areas (Special Areas of Conservation, drinking water, shellfish); catchments with potential significant flood risk (nutrient/ sediment runoff) |
| 2 | An operational strategy for dealing with nutrients (soil, organic manures and chemical fertilisers, digestate, sewage sludge) and transboundary movements in cross border catchments to include elements such as flow of nutrients, tracking systems, innovative solutions for optimum use of nutrients for sustainable utilisation of all nutrients | Erne catchment;  This can include neighbouring cross-border catchments, e.g.   * Blackwater LMA; Carlingford and Newry LMA; Newry, Fane, Glyde and Dee catchment * Finn catchment; Derg and Mourne LMA   as necessitated by cross-border nutrient movements. | Diffuse pressures associated with agricultural land use.  Diffuse and point-source pressures associated with agricultural land use and sewage. |
| 3 | Initiatives which result in a measurable change in behaviours/ mind set of landowners | See locations selected for projects 1 & 2;  Lough Macnean | n/a |
| 4 | A project legacy initiative which will develop or enhance community-focused environmental learning resources to improve understanding of cross border catchment from environmental, cultural, social or economic views; and /or improve amenity value through nature recovery networks. | See locations selected for projects 1 & 2 | n/a |

1. Water status includes water *quantity* and *quality* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)