



SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

Project Case Study: System for Bathing Water Quality Monitoring (SWIM)

THEME:

Managed marine protected areas & species

FUNDING

(ERDF+MATCH):

€1,032,233.05

MATCH FUNDERS:

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

LEAD PARTNER:

University College Dublin

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful

PROJECT CONTACT:

rosemarie.gannon@ucd.ie

Start Date: 01/01/2017

End Date: 31/12/2020



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EU SWIM PROJECT CLOSES AS A SUCCESS!

Just over two years ago, the EU SWIM Project was born out of the need for a predictive bathing water quality system. Such was the importance of this identified research gap, funding was provided by the EU's INTERREG VA programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

This successful cross-border programme, which includes 6 Northern Ireland beaches and 3 in ROI, has since developed a system for live bathing water monitoring, combining the expertise of lead partner, University College Dublin and Northern Irish project partners AgriFood Biosciences Institute and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

The initiative has successfully enabled bathers to check bathing water quality before they visit the beach, with a free downloadable app on their smartphones. On beach electronic signage boards also deliver up to date data including water quality and weather reports.

As a result of the combined effort of all partner organisations, EU SWIM Project has made a tangible difference to how bathing water quality is perceived by the general public. Importantly, the legacy of the project's scientific modelling will provide invaluable information for future development.

Environment Minister for Northern Ireland, Edwin Poots MLA said: "The SWIM pilot project is a fantastic example of how we can embrace the digital age and the use of smart phone technology. The system for live bathing water quality prediction for 6 beaches in Northern Ireland and 3 in the ROI, has been developed through the expertise of University College Dublin, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. My Department plans to continue to work in partnership with local coastal beach operators and others to ensure that many more of our wonderful beaches can utilize this technology; enabling day trippers and tourists alike to plan ahead with up to date information on water quality at their fingertips."

Darragh O'Brien, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in ROI said: "This innovative cross-border project is providing invaluable, real-time information on bathing water quality for the public on both sides of the border. The app and electronic signage are a fantastic asset for the swimming community and this project is making an important contribution towards keeping our bathing waters clean; in recent times this has a renewed importance as we all limit travel and we explore what our local environment has to offer in greater numbers than we ever did before."