
Request for Research Tender on ***Optimising Water Quality Returns from the Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)***

Closing Date: Friday 21 February 2020

Queries to be addressed to:

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1. INTRODUCTION TO AN FÓRAM UISCE

An Fóram Uisce (The Water Forum) was established in June 2018 in accordance with the provisions of Part 5 of the Water Services Act 2017. An Fóram is the only statutory body representative of all stakeholders with an interest in the quality of Ireland's water bodies. The Water Forum consists of 28 members including representatives from a wide range of organisations with direct connection to issues relating to water quality and also public water consumers. Approximately 50 different organisations were involved in the nomination of members.

The Water Services Act 2017 provides the statutory basis for The Water Forum. The Water Forum has advisory roles in relation to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, Irish Water, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities and also the Water Policy Advisory Committee. The Act also provided for the dissolution of the Public Water Forum and the National Rural Water Services Committee with their functions being incorporated into The Water Forum.

The Water Forum provides an opportunity for stakeholders to debate and analyse a range of issues with regard to water quality, rural water concerns, issues affecting customers of Irish Water and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021. The Water Forum is an independent entity and has discretion to determine its own work programme and means of communicating its views and analysis. To this end, it has adopted its [Strategic Plan](#) for 2018-2021.

Professor Tom Collins, who had been the chair of the Public Water Forum and a former Chair of the National Rural Water Monitoring Committee, is the Chairperson and Mr Donal Purcell is Senior Executive Officer. The Water Forum is headquartered in Nenagh, County Tipperary.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

In accordance with the provisions of the Water Services Act 2017, The Water Forum is required to advise the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government in relation to water services and the water environment.

According to Ireland's River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, agriculture accounts for 53% of the pressures acting on Ireland's rivers and lakes and is by far the biggest single pressure on the country's water quality. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) supplies the broad framework of EU agricultural policy and is the mainstay of public subvention to agriculture through direct farm payments and other supports.

Single farm payments paid to farmers within the CAP are a critical component of farm income for many farmers in Ireland and are a major contributor to the ongoing viability of family farms and of the wider rural economy. At a macro-economic level, the continuation of a publicly funded programme of farm subvention in Ireland is critical.

Given the continued decline in the quality of Ireland's waters, The Water Forum is concerned to extract optimal environmental returns from CAP payments in the context of such supports continuing into the future. With regard, therefore, to the review of the CAP currently under way in

Europe, The Water Forum proposes to commission a body of work to undertake a study of the ways in which a revised programme of CAP supports could underpin improvements in Ireland's water quality and reduce the deleterious impact of agriculture on Ireland's water bodies.

The study will:

- Develop a picture of the composition of agriculture's impact on water quality in Ireland - i.e., with regard to nutrients, pesticide and herbicide residues and physical modification of water courses, drawing on data already in the public domain.
- Assess the role of different farm enterprise types in the continued deterioration of water quality, with particular focus on grassland, tillage and intensive poultry and pig production.
- Show how current farm payment regimes interact with these enterprise types.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of Pillar Two CAP payments in improving the environmental sustainability of farming in Ireland.
- Identify any elements in the current CAP supports which are at odds with Ireland's ambitions regarding improvements in water quality.
- Identify any barriers which prohibit or restrict farmer involvement in agri-environmental schemes.
- Propose changes in a revised CAP which are most likely to lead to the discontinuation of practices which damage water quality.
- Propose changes in a revised CAP that would incentivise farmers to adopt practices and enterprise types which would lead to improvements in water quality.
- Consider CAP in the context of the social and economic wellbeing of rural areas
- Consider the adequacy of the CAP budget in the context of achieving food production from Irish farms in a manner that is genuinely environmentally sustainable and resilient.

In undertaking this study, consideration should also be given to related regulations, such as the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations (2017) and the DAFM 'Ag-Climatise' A Draft National Climate & Air Roadmap for the Agriculture Sector to 2030 and Beyond (2019). In addition, consideration should also be given to Ireland's relevant policy, such as the National Biodiversity Action Plan (2017-2021) and Food Wise 2025.

3. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are required for **all** awarded tenders:

- Final report, encompassing all requirements listed under Section 2.
- A Policy Brief document identifying the key policy recommendations for improving water quality in Ireland under the current CAP review process.

4. BUDGET

The currency and invoices in which all prices and rates shall be quoted, and which payments under the contract will be paid, shall be Euros (€).

The **maximum budget is €24,950**, inclusive of VAT and overheads where applicable.

4.1 Payment Schedules

An upfront payment of 50% of the total agreed budget will be made upon receipt of invoice from the contracted service provider or institution following the initiation of the project.

A final payment of the remaining 50% of the total agreed budget will be made on project completion within the timeframes stated within Section 5, and following receipt of the final report.

5. TIMELINES

It is a mandatory requirement that this a draft report is **completed on or before 17 July 2020** as per the timeframe outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Timeframe for project delivery

Publication of tender	22 January 2020
Deadline for tender submissions	21 February 2020
Award of tender and start of project	4 March 2020
Project initiation meeting	On or before 18 March 2020
Draft report submitted	On or before 17 July 2020

Following review of the draft report, a completed final report is to be submitted which takes into account proposed amendments to the draft report.

6. MARKING SCHEME

All submissions will be assessed by a panel of suitably qualified persons.

Marks will be awarded (maximum 100 marks) based solely on the information provided in the submission, as follows:

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the subject matter of the brief and the requirements of the project (40 marks).
- Project management arrangements (10 marks).
- Details of budget and timeline, including compliance within the stated budget and specified timelines (20 marks). A GANTT chart outlining the timeline for project actions and deliverables is mandatory.
- Demonstrated relevant research track record of team appropriate to the subject matter, including previous/ongoing projects delivered and scientific publications (30 marks).

7. SUBMISSION OF TENDERS

Applications must be submitted no later than **5pm 21 February 2020** via email to Dr Alec Rolston, Research Lead, An Fóram Uisce: alec@nationalwaterforum.ie.

Submissions must include:

- A completed application form.
- A CV (max 4 pages) of the lead person to whom the tender will be awarded.

An acknowledgement of receipt of applications will be issued within 48 hours of the submission deadline.

8. AWARD OF TENDERS

Applicants will be notified of the success of their submissions no later than **4 March 2020**.

Bodies of work may be initiated immediately from the date of award, with an initial project meeting to take place on or before 18 March 2020.

9. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- All applications must be made using the official application form.
- Applications may be received from consortiums of individuals from different institutions. Such applications must identify the **lead person** to whom the tender may be awarded. All other members of the consortium will be sub-contracted by the lead person. The maximum total budget of €24,950 (inclusive of VAT and overheads) is applicable to single service provider applications and consortium applications respectively.
- The Water Forum will disqualify incomplete applications, applications not using the application form provided and any application received after closing time/date. Compliance with the word limitation contained on the Application Form is a requirement of the application process.
- It is a necessary requirement of the application process that the successful applicant must provide a copy of their Organisation/University/Institution's current Tax Clearance Certificate.
- Failure to address within the final report each of the items included under Section 3 and the relevant thematic area will result in the withholding of final payment until all requirements are met.
- The Water Forum will have copyright ownership of any material developed for use by The Water Forum under the terms of this tender. The service provider may have a non-exclusive licence to use such material but only for its own purposes (to be agreed with the successful service provider).
- The principles of Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019 will be applied where there is any potential for commercial exploitation of project outputs resulting from this tender.
- The Water Forum encourages an open access publication policy. Publications arising from tender awards funded by The Water Forum should, as a minimum, ensure open access via Green methods (depositing the peer-reviewed manuscript in an online repository before, at the same time, or after publication). All reports will be uploaded to, and publicly accessible via, The Water Forum's website: www.nationalwaterforum.ie.
- Any publications arising from tender awards funded by The Water Forum must acknowledge An Fóram Uisce|The Water Forum as the source of funding.
- Projects funded by The Water Forum must uphold the highest standards of research integrity and The Water Forum expects all tender awardees to abide by the guidelines outlined in the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland; and the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information – When an application is received by The Water Forum, a record is created in the name of the applicant. This information will be

stored by the office of The Water Forum, where relevant, in paper/electronic form. Information that is collected by the Office, including information that you give us, is added to the record. You have the right, given by the Data Protection Act of 1988 and 2003, to a copy of your information at any time. The Office is also subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2014.

The information we record is used for the following purposes:

- Processing and assessing of applications;
- Payment arrangements;
- Auditing requirements;
- Informing and advising The Water Forum in relation to the Project and using same as a basis for further consideration by The Water Forum including research projects and policy analysis and recommendations;
- Publication of the Project Outcomes.

End/