



Iascach Iníre Éireann  
Inland Fisheries Ireland

*It's about the Fish*

# Corporate Plan 2021-2025





# Stream

*Salmon in shoals, heading up the river,  
Trout dart past the heron, to avoid being dinner.  
Reeds by the side, whistle in the breeze,  
Eels by the score, slink, and slither with ease  
Above are the swallows, dragon flies and the kingfisher,  
Moles and the mink, the otter, and the dipper.*

5th Class Category Winner: Orlaith Timmons, Fifth Class at Moycarkey National School in Thurles, Co. Tipperary

An award-winning poem from the 2021 'Something Fishy' Poetry Competition, organised for Primary Schools by Inland Fisheries Ireland and the Blackrock Education Centre.

For more information about the Something Fishy educational programme for Primary Schools in Ireland, please visit [www.somethingfishy.ie](http://www.somethingfishy.ie)



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## Chairperson's Foreword

**On behalf of the Board of Inland Fisheries Ireland, I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce the 2021 – 2025 Corporate Plan and as it says on the front cover – it's all about the Fish.**

This plan is the culmination of extensive consultation, consideration and experience and reflects the Board's determination that it will be meaningful, understandable and clearly focused on the core functions and objectives of Inland Fisheries Ireland as outlined in Section 7 of the 2010 Inland Fisheries Act.

It is also the firm wish of the Board that this plan will be meaningful, useful and helpful to staff, stakeholders and the general public.

In its preparation for the delivery of this plan the Board and Executive invested a lot of time and effort in redefining Inland Fisheries Ireland's values and mission statement. The values and mission statement are the guiding principle and foundation for this document. The Board is confident that this plan is faithful to and aligned with the clearly redefined values. It takes due cognisance of Inland Fisheries Ireland's legislative framework but the real challenge and opportunity for all will be in living the values in the implementation of the plan.

It is envisaged that the core functions of protection, management and conservation of the inland fisheries resource will be delivered, measured and reviewed under the headings of Habitat, Fish, Stakeholders, Sustainability, Our People, Corporate Management and Innovation.

Although this outline is not significantly changed from the last plan, the context and challenges for the resource have changed considerably and the current plan and allocation of resources must reflect the ever changing circumstances.

Wildlife and freshwater species are vanishing at an alarming rate worldwide and Ireland is not unaffected.

**Wildlife and freshwater species are vanishing at an alarming rate worldwide and Ireland is not unaffected.** ”

Environmental factors, water quality, urbanisation and global warming are all impacting negatively on the resource. In order to assist the survival and sustainability of fish, Inland Fisheries Ireland will redirect staff and resources to conservation and habitat works. Inland Fisheries Ireland will, of necessity, increase its focus on conservation activities while continuing to deliver targeted and effective protection, development and promotion functions. Circumstances have changed and continue to evolve, consequently Inland Fisheries Ireland's planning and delivery must be proactive.

The concentration on conservation of the resource will resonate with stakeholders and an increasingly environmentally aware populace. It presents an opportunity to renew and positively build our relationship with stakeholders in our joint effort to sustain our shared resource. Inland Fisheries Ireland staff will be our ambassadors in this vital task.

The good performance of the organisation must always be a consideration for the Board. The resilient, resourceful and adaptable staff are key to the success of this plan and the Board and I appreciate the continued commitment and dedication of staff at all levels and are confident that they will rise to the challenges currently prevailing.

Governance comprises the systems and procedures under which organisations are directed and controlled. A robust system of governance enables the organisation to operate effectively and to discharge its responsibilities as regards transparency and accountability to those we serve. Inland Fisheries Ireland is a public sector body and as such we willingly comply with the governance and financial requirements of our parent department, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC).

An organisation can have the best plans in the world but it's the way they are implemented that really counts. The Board is confident that this is the best possible plan given the staffing and financial resources available. We are also confident and assured that the Chief Executive Officer and leadership team will deliver the strategy and structures to put this plan into action and achieve the desired results.

As Chairman, I am enthused by this plan and look forward to working with all concerned to place the inland fisheries resource in the best sustainable position possible for the benefit of future generations.



Fintan Gorman  
Chairman

**I am enthused by this  
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all concerned** ”

## Chief Executive Officer's Introduction

**I am delighted to present Inland Fisheries Ireland's new five-year Corporate Plan 2021-2025. This plan will help Inland Fisheries Ireland to ground our priorities for the next five years with a strong focus on delivering on our statutory remit.**

This plan clearly sets out our vision, mission and values as an organisation. Knowing who we are and what we stand for will form the foundation as to how we will deliver on our high-level objectives and outcomes set out in this plan. Moreover, this will allow us to refocus on the resource we protect, the stakeholders we engage with, and the wider public in general.

Ireland, like the rest of the world, is experiencing the detrimental effects of climate change, the destruction of natural habitats, and the continuing decline of vulnerable species. This is particularly true of the freshwater species that we protect. Many of our larger lake systems that remained unchanged for the last millennia are now in a transition state. Species such as the wonderful Atlantic salmon have now declined across their home range at an alarming rate. Many thought that this could never happen.

We know that many freshwater species have limited toleration to water chemistry changes. This is already evident to Inland Fisheries Ireland and is borne out in our own research and that of others. Invasive species, both flora and fauna are posing immense ecological challenges for freshwater systems and native species across Ireland. We need a collective response to this problem by engaging other agencies and the public in general. Inland Fisheries Ireland will not be found wanting in terms of working with others to find solutions to these issues.

Over 320,000 Irish people love to go fishing and Ireland's inland fisheries attracts 150,000 visiting anglers annually.

Working together with anglers and our tourism partners, Inland Fisheries Ireland will continue to manage and promote sustainable angling to ensure that our precious resource is accessible and sustainable thereby supporting biodiversity, well-being and the economy.

The illegal taking of freshwater fish by unscrupulous individuals remains a high priority for Inland Fisheries Ireland as a conservation agency. I would ask the public to play its part and report where possible such activity. After all, this is your resource and that of your children. No one has the right to exploit this resource illegally for profit or gain. This is a natural asset that belongs to us all and one that is critically important for socioeconomic development in rural areas.

This Corporate Plan will be supported by robust corporate governance practices in line with existing requirements for the public service. Resources will be directed to key areas aligned with our statutory remit to protect fish, to protect water quality and to develop and improve fish habitats. The latter will be underpinned by evidenced based scientific research in line with good practice in an era of climate change.

**Our people believe in maintaining freshwater ecosystem integrity for future generations.**



Our people believe in maintaining freshwater ecosystem integrity for future generations. I am confident that our values and internal culture will drive behaviours and performance to meet our responsibilities on behalf of the public and the valuable resource that we are charged with protecting for existing and future generations.

Francis O' Donnell  
Chief Executive Officer

## Public Sector Context

Inland Fisheries Ireland is a State Agency operating under the Aegis of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC). The Inland Fisheries Ireland Corporate Plan 2021–2025 has been prepared in such a way that it is congruent with the overall strategic goals of our Parent Department.

In addition to adhering to our Parent Department's Statement of Strategy, Inland Fisheries Ireland's Corporate Plan also recognises a suite of other Government policies, frameworks initiatives including inter alia;

-  Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016
-  The Public Spending Code
-  Our Public Service 2020
-  Open Data Strategy 2017-2022
-  National Development Plan 2018 – 2027
-  Project Ireland 2040
-  Public Service ICT Strategy
-  Our Rural Future
-  Climate Action Plan 2021

Inland Fisheries Ireland's role in relation to the inland fisheries resource is primarily concerned with the protection, management conservation, development and promotion of freshwater fisheries in Ireland including the fish species listed in the Habitats Directive. In addition, Inland Fisheries Ireland's remit also covers certain activities at sea, including commercial fishing for salmon and sea trout, and recreational sea angling. While the Minister through the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) has overall policy responsibility for the protection, management and conservation, of the inland fisheries sector, Inland Fisheries Ireland has primary responsibility for the implementation of fisheries policy. Other public bodies such as the Loughs Agency, the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Marine Institute (MI) and the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) also play important roles in the sector.

## How the plan was developed

Inland Fisheries Ireland has engaged in an inclusive consultation process which began in 2019. This process involved consulting stakeholders within the public sector, sectoral interest groups, members of the general public and staff, on aspects of our previous Corporate Plan (2016-2020) and their aspirations for Ireland's inland fisheries into the future.

Also, during 2019, four core values were devised through workshops with the Board, Senior leadership and Management teams. These core values underpin the fundamental beliefs of the Board Management and Staff of Inland Fisheries Ireland and reflect how we, as a conservation organisation will undertake our daily work and interact with all of Inland Fisheries Ireland's stakeholders.

The Board of Inland Fisheries Ireland approved the newly developed vision, mission and values and set a series of High Level Objectives for its next five year strategy in October of 2019. Following this, a working group made up of a cross section of staff from within Inland Fisheries Ireland created descriptors for each of the four values – a “roadmap” of what these values mean to us in our roles and how they can be lived each day.

In November 2019, Inland Fisheries Ireland staff came together to provide feedback on the previous Corporate Plan and provide their input into the new plan.

During 2020, a national and international sectoral scan was conducted. Incorporating inputs from this scan and consultations, an analysis document was developed, and staff were invited to provide their feedback on this. With this feedback, Inland Fisheries Ireland's Senior Leadership Team developed actions and outcomes which were workshopped with the Board arriving at Inland Fisheries Ireland's strategy for the next five years.

## Corporate Plan 2021-2025

Our Corporate Plan details the Inland Fisheries Ireland's, Vision, Mission and Values and our seven strategic objectives for the period 2021 to 2025. Under each of the seven objectives a series of actions required to achieve the objectives are described, with the intended outcomes outlined. The strategic objectives outline where Inland Fisheries Ireland will focus our efforts over the next five years.

Inland Fisheries Ireland will secure stakeholder feedback on the implementation of the Strategy mid-2023.





## Vision

TO PLACE THE INLAND FISHERIES RESOURCE IN THE **BEST SUSTAINABLE POSITION POSSIBLE** FOR THE BENEFIT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS.



## Mission

TO **PROTECT, MANAGE AND CONSERVE** IRELAND'S INLAND FISHERIES AND SEA ANGLING RESOURCES AND TO MAXIMISE THEIR **SUSTAINABILITY** AND **NATURAL BIODIVERSITY**



## Values

WE WORK **COLLABORATIVELY** WITH **PROFESSIONALISM**

WE ARE **OPEN, TRANSPARENT** AND **ACCOUNTABLE**

WE ACT WITH **RESPECT** AND **INTEGRITY**

WE ARE COMMITTED TO **STEWARDSHIP** AND **SUSTAINABILITY**

# High Level Objectives



## HABITATS

To sustainably develop and improve fish habitats



## FISH

To protect, maintain and enhance Ireland's wild fish populations



## STAKEHOLDERS

To actively engage with stakeholders in the continued stewardship of our shared resource



## SUSTAINABILITY

To play a leadership role in achieving our climate action and biodiversity goals



## OUR PEOPLE

To value our people and support their development and performance



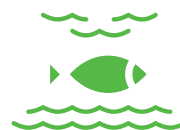
## CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

To foster a culture of value for money and evaluation of performance in a measurable, transparent and accountable manner



## INNOVATION

Harness the power of innovation to continue to deliver a modern fisheries service



## 01 HABITATS

TO SUSTAINABLY DEVELOP  
AND IMPROVE FISH HABITATS

### Action

### Outcome

**1.1** Focus on maintaining and restoring fish habitats (through creating appropriate organisational structures and resourcing) and will use and comply with all relevant legislative power to facilitate this

An increase in the amount of optimal fish habitat conserved and maintained over the lifetime of this Corporate Plan

**1.2** Further develop an evidence base to support this work taking account of environmental factors such as water quality, urbanisation, intensive farming, afforestation and the possible long-term impact of climate change

An increase in the amount of optimal fish habitat conserved and maintained over the lifetime of this Corporate Plan

**1.3** Connect and collaborate with other relevant agencies to capture and share insights, knowledge and lessons learned in order to support the protection and improvement of fish habitats and access through the removal of barriers where possible, in conjunction with other stakeholders

An increase in the amount of optimal fish habitat conserved, accessed and maintained over the lifetime of this Corporate Plan



## 02 FISH

TO PROTECT, MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE  
IRELAND'S WILD FISH POPULATIONS



## 03 STAKEHOLDERS

TO ACTIVELY ENGAGE WITH STAKEHOLDERS  
IN THE CONTINUED STEWARDSHIP OF OUR  
SHARED RESOURCE

Action	Outcome	Action	Outcome
2.1 Develop resourced 5 year plans and annual risk based fisheries protection programme including protection and conservation for protected, vulnerable and endangered species	Resources are targeted based on risk assessment leading to increased fish stocks in improved fresh water and marine environments	3.1 Create a stakeholder engagement strategy that promotes and delivers meaningful engagement, communication and collaboration with all our stakeholders. This will include engagement with the National Inland Fisheries Forum	Enhanced communication and collaboration with stakeholders in the delivery of our habitat and species protection objectives
2.2 Implement evidence based species protection policies & programmes with a focus on mitigation and adaptation in an era of climate change	Maintained and where possible improved current populations of native, threatened or vulnerable species (in both freshwater & marine environments)	3.2 Manage Inland Fisheries Ireland owned fisheries sustainably for the benefit of all stakeholders	Efficiently and sustainably managed state fisheries
2.3 Develop fishery management plans in light of best evidence based research and modelling available. In the first instance to assist in the management of wild brown trout fisheries	Science based policy supporting the rationale for managing 'managed wild brown trout fisheries' in a sustainable manner	3.3 Upgrade and modernise Inland Fisheries Ireland's angling infrastructure and collateral in line with angling demand	Ensure angling access infrastructure is safe and fit for purpose and information is up to date
2.4 Improve existing, and investigate the feasibility of, new aquaculture facilities	To supply (non-wild) fish for stakeholders in addition to having facilities to respond to ecological disasters or to intervene where fish are in danger of localised extinction	3.4 Support management, development and restoration of other (non-Inland Fisheries Ireland owned) private/public fisheries	Efficiently and sustainably managed private/public/ other fisheries



# High Level Objectives



## 04 SUSTAINABILITY

TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN ACHIEVING  
OUR CLIMATE ACTION AND BIODIVERSITY GOALS



## 05 OUR PEOPLE

TO VALUE OUR PEOPLE AND SUPPORT THEIR  
DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Action	Outcome	Action	Outcome
4.1 Achieve our current CO2 reduction and energy efficiency targets in line with legislation: 7 % year on year (50% by 2030), maximise energy efficiency and minimise the ecological footprint of Inland Fisheries Ireland activity	At least a 7% overall reduction in energy consumption and emissions (CO2) year on year associated with Inland Fisheries Ireland activities and maximum contribution to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 onwards	5.1 Develop and implement a HR strategy to support Inland Fisheries Ireland 's Corporate plan 2021 to 2025	A fit for purpose organisational structure and a motivated, skilled, adaptable and productive workforce capable of successfully delivering the Corporate Plan in line with our Mission, Vision and Values whilst utilising efficient and innovative internal communications and being cognisant of staff wellbeing
4.2 Ensure the sustainability of native fish and maintaining biodiversity through the introduction of a climate change adaptation and mitigation programme	Evidence based strategies will have been developed and implemented to mitigate the impact of climate change on fish habitat and populations		
4.3 Promote sustainable stewardship of fisheries in line with legislation	Sustainable management of fisheries in line with current legislation		



## 06 CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

TO FOSTER A CULTURE OF VALUE FOR MONEY AND  
EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE IN A MEASURABLE,  
TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE MANNER

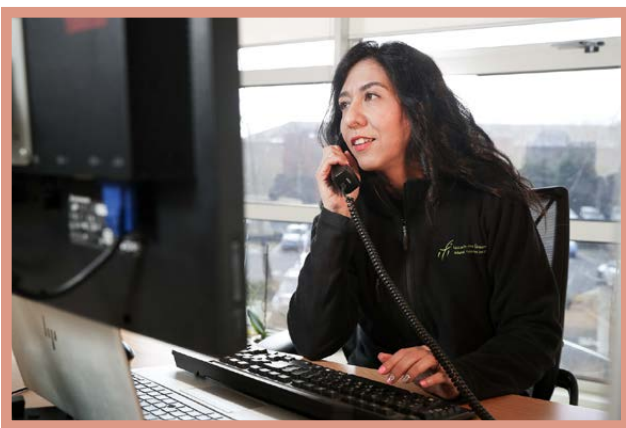
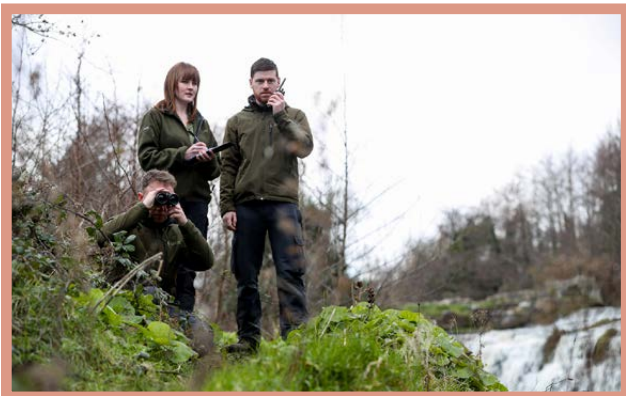


## 07 INNOVATION

HARNESS THE POWER OF INNOVATION TO CONTINUE TO  
DELIVER A MODERN FISHERIES SERVICE

Action	Outcome	Action	Outcome
6.1 Ensure business process excellence through the development of appropriate strategies and processes incorporating value for money and sustainability	Improved business processes to deliver consistency and efficiency and improved quality of service delivery	7.1 Develop an innovation strategy to increase organisational agility, improve efficiency, communication and public service delivery to sustainably develop improve and protect fish habitats	Implementation of the innovation strategy
6.2 Seek to ensure best practice Corporate and Environmental Governance is adopted across the organisation	All governance guidelines and circulars are implemented in a timely manner and monitored on an ongoing basis, to ensure high levels of Corporate and Environmental Governance	7.2 Develop and implement an ICT strategy to support the implementation of the Corporate Plan	Implementation of the ICT strategy

## Our People





# Stream

*Sitting by the river or sometimes by the sea, I often think that I can see the fish stare back at me.*

*Trout, Salmon, Rudd and Perch are the fish that come to mind. They might come close for us to see if we could just be quiet and kind.*

*Ripples in the water is a sign that they are near, when the sun shimmers off their scales we can see them nice and clear.*

*Every now and then they will leap into the air and when they disappear from sight I often stand and stare.*

*My days by the river are special to me as I watch all this wildlife...wild and free.*

6th Class Category: Aoibhé Kieran, Sixth-Class at Ballon National School in Carlow

An award-winning poem from the 2021 'Something Fishy' Poetry Competition, organised for Primary Schools by Inland Fisheries Ireland and the Blackrock Education Centre.

For more information about the Something Fishy educational programme for Primary Schools in Ireland, please visit [www.somethingfishy.ie](http://www.somethingfishy.ie)





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