

Fish in Rivers Factsheet

ERBD

River Liffey Catchment

Factsheet: 2025/04

The River Liffey Catchment is located within the Eastern River Basin District and covers an area of approximately 1,250 km². The river rises in the Liffey Head Bog, near Kippure in the Wicklow Mountains and flows through the Sally Gap and into Poulaphouca Reservoir in County Wicklow. It continues from there through counties Kildare and Dublin, before entering the sea in Dublin Bay after flowing for over 120 km. The major tributaries of the River Liffey include the Rivers Brittas, Camac, Dodder, King's, Morrell, Poddle, and Rye Water.

The catchment geology is mostly granite in its upper reaches, sandstone and shale in the middle reaches, and limestone in its lower reaches. The main land uses are peat bog and forestry in the upper catchment, agriculture in its middle reaches and urban as it flows through Dublin City.

Three hydroelectric power stations, together with associated dams and reservoirs, were built on the River Liffey in the 1930s and 1940s at Poulaphouca and Golden Falls, County Wicklow, and Leixlip, County Kildare. The stations at Poulaphouca and Golden Falls

were built on natural, impassable waterfalls. As a result, salmon are limited to the main channel and tributaries below Golden Falls. The River Liffey also supplies much of Dublin City's drinking water.

Inland Fisheries Ireland conducts annual nation-wide fish sampling surveys to assess and report the status of stocks in Ireland's rivers, lakes and transitional waters. This report presents the results of a catchment-wide electro-fishing (CEN 2003) survey, carried out in the Liffey Catchment over 2025 survey season. Fifty-four sites were surveyed between the 5th to 13th of August 2025.

The survey methods included 10-minute timed Electro-Fishing (TEF₁₀) and Area Delineated Electro-Fishing (ADEF handset and ADEF Boat sites). The TEF₁₀ and ADEF handset methods are primarily used in tributaries and shallow, narrow sections of the main channel, while the ADEF boat method is predominantly used in wider, deeper sections of the main channel. All TEF₁₀ fish count results were converted to minimum population estimates according to Matson *et al.* (2018).



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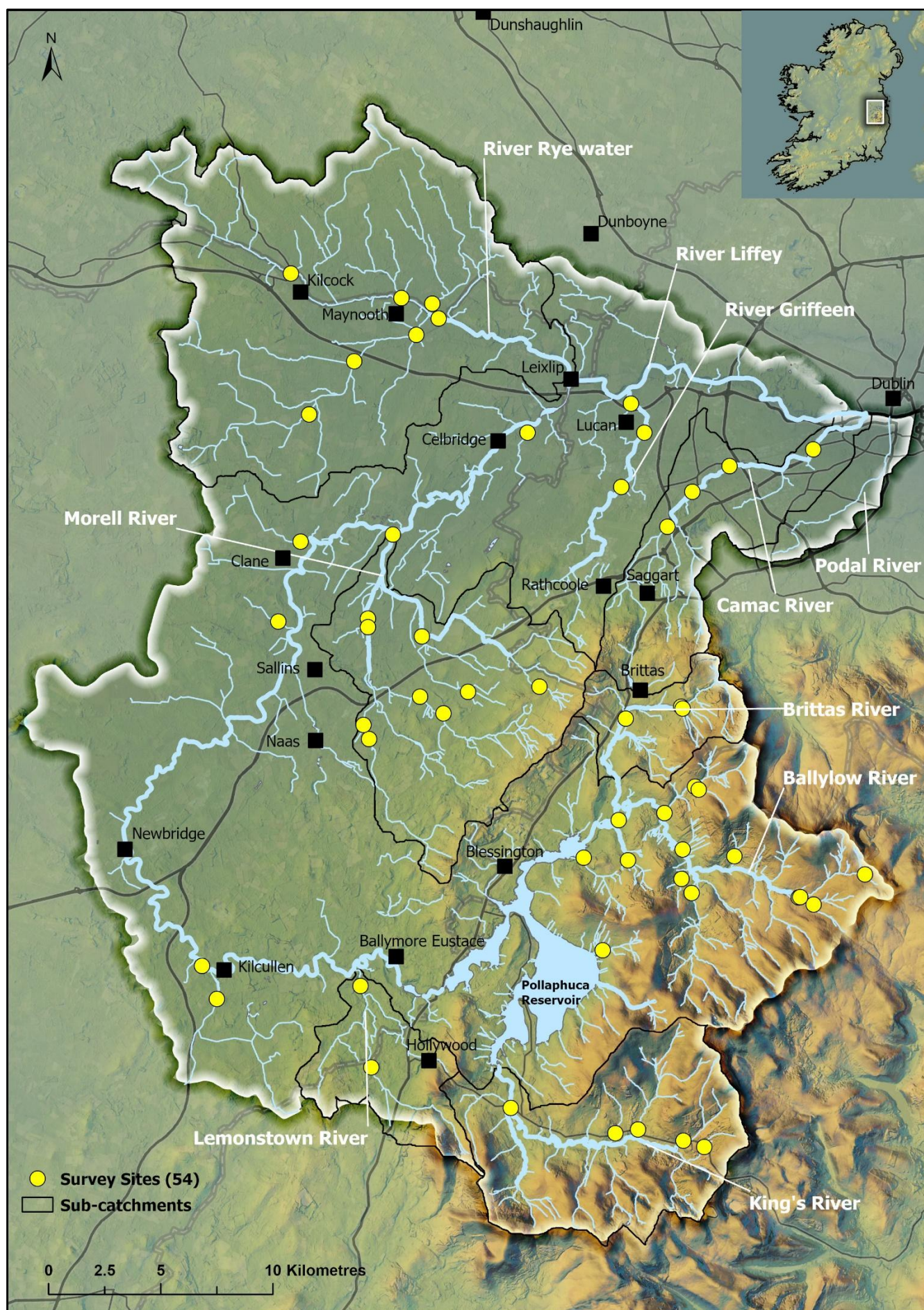


Figure 1. Location of electrofishing survey sites on the River Liffey Catchment, 2025. Sub-catchments are also highlighted.

Southern River Liffey Catchment.

Twenty-seven sites were surveyed in Southern section of the River Liffey in 2025. This included eighteen sites on main channel & tributaries, three sites on the Brittas, five sites on the King’s, and one site on the Lemonstown, sub-catchments. One long-term Water Framework Directive (WFD) surveillance monitoring (SM) site was surveyed on the Liffey River at Killcullen Bridge (Site 25) (Figure 2 and Table 1).



Figure 2. Location of electrofishing survey sites and sub-basin waterbodies: Brittas (sites 1-3), King’s (sites 4-8), Liffey main channel & tributaries (sites 9-26) and Lemonstown (Site 27), sub-catchments, 2025.

Table 1. Site survey details, Southern River Liffey, August 2025.

No.	WFD Sub-basin	River	Site	Method	WFD	Date
Brittas sub-catchment						
1	BRITTAS_010	Brittas River	Lower Aghfarrell	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
2	BRITTAS_010	Brittas River	Bridge just off R114	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
3	BRITTAS_010	Brittas River	Moanaspick Golf Course	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
King's sub-catchment						
4	KING'S (LIFFEY)_010	King's Wicklow (Glashaboy) River	Glashaboy Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
5	KING'S (LIFFEY)_010	King's Wicklow (Annalecka) River	Annalecka Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
6	BALLINAGEE_010	King's Wicklow (Ballinagee) River	Ballinagee Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
7	KING'S (LIFFEY)_020	King's Wicklow (Garryknock) River	Garryknock_Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
8	KING'S (LIFFEY)_020	King's Wicklow (Douglas) River	Lockstown Confluence	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
Liffey main channel & tributaries						
9	LIFFEY_010	Liffey River	Liffey Head Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	12/08/2025
10	LIFFEY_020	Liffey River	Kippure South	TEF (Handset)	NO	12/08/2025
11	LIFFEY_020	Liffey (Sally Gap) River	Plantation East	TEF (Handset)	NO	12/08/2025
12	LIFFEY_020	Liffey (Sally Gap) River	Sally Gap NW	TEF (Handset)	NO	12/08/2025
13	LIFFEY_030	Liffey River	Ballysmuttan Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	13/08/2025
14	LIFFEY_030	Liffey River	500 m d/s Ballyward Bridge	ADEF (Boat)	YES	05/08/2025
15	LIFFEY_020	Liffey (Athdown) River	u/s Kippure Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	12/08/2025
16	BALLYDONNELL BROOK_010	Liffey (Ballyconnell) River	Ballylow Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	13/08/2025
17	LIFFEY_020	Liffey (Ballynatona) River	Ballynatona	TEF (Handset)	NO	13/08/2025
18	LIFFEY_030	Liffey (Shankill) River	d/s Kilbride Rifle Range	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
19	LIFFEY_030	Liffey (Shankill) River	Shankill	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
20	LIFFEY_030	Liffey (Shankill) River	Cloghleagh Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
21	LIFFEY_030	Liffey (Ballyward) River	Stoneyford Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	05/08/2025
22	LIFFEY_040	Liffey (Woodend) River	Woodend Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	05/08/2025
23	LIFFEY_040	Liffey (Sorrel) River	u/s Templeboodin Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	13/08/2025
24	LIFFEY_060	Liffey (Kilcullen) River	Milemill	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025
25	LIFFEY_060	Liffey River	Kilcullen Bridge	ADEF (Boat)	YES	06/08/2025
26	LIFFEY_050	Liffey (Hollywood) River	Ardinode East	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025
Lemonstown sub-catchment						
27	LEMONSTOWN STREAM_020	Liffey (Lemonstown) River	Lemonstown Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025



Ballyconnell River at Ballylow Bridge (Site 16), Co. Wicklow.

Table 2. Minimum density estimates of fish (no. fish/m²), for the Brittas, King’s and Lemonstown sub-catchments and the Liffey main channel & tributaries, August 2025 (previous results are shown where applicable).

Brittas sub-catchment								King's sub-catchment	
Site no.	1		2			3		4	
Species	2019	2025	2011	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025
Brown trout	0.426	0.405	0.196	0.274	0.864	0.290	0.313	0.059	0.017
0+ brown trout	0.426	0.375	0.026	0.214	0.210	0.148	0.076	-	-
1+ & older brown trout	-	0.030	0.170	0.059	0.654	0.142	0.237	0.059	0.017
Three-spined stickleback	-	-	-	-	0.037	0.068	-	-	-
All fish	0.426	0.405	0.196	0.274	0.901	0.358	0.313	0.059	0.017
King's sub-catchment							Liffey main channel & tributaries		
Site no.	5		6		7		8		9
Species	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019
Brown trout	-	0.031	0.008	0.082	0.168	0.228	0.207	0.201	-
0+ brown trout	-	-	0.008	0.011	0.032	-	0.071	0.017	-
1+ & older brown trout	-	0.031	-	0.071	0.136	0.228	0.136	0.183	-
All fish	no fish	0.031	0.008	0.082	0.168	0.228	0.207	0.201	no fish
Liffey main channel & tributaries									
Site no.	10		11		12		13		14
Species	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2013
Brown trout	0.094	0.060	0.011	0.113	0.259	0.270	0.034	0.292	0.018
0+ brown trout	0.023	0.038	-	0.021	0.043	0.103	0.019	0.061	0.005
1+ & older brown trout	0.070	0.022	0.011	0.092	0.216	0.167	0.015	0.231	0.013
Minnow	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.009	0.022	0.047
Perch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.002
Pike	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0003
Stone loach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0003
Three-spined stickleback	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0003
All fish	0.094	0.060	0.011	0.113	0.259	0.270	0.043	0.314	0.068
Liffey main channel & tributaries									
Site no.	14		15		16		17		18
Species	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019
Brown trout	0.001	-	0.053	0.135	0.016	0.093	0.160	0.300	0.212
0+ brown trout	-	-	0.006	-	0.008	0.010	0.114	0.248	0.147
1+ & older brown trout	0.001	-	0.047	0.135	0.008	0.083	0.046	0.052	0.065
Minnow	0.003	0.007	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Perch	0.001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pike	-	0.001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Roach	-	0.001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All fish	0.004	0.008	0.053	0.135	0.016	0.093	0.160	0.300	0.212
Liffey main channel & tributaries									
Site no.	19		20		21		22		23
Species	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019
Brown trout	0.177	0.427	0.266	0.301	0.350	0.226	-	0.164	0.199
0+ brown trout	0.139	0.068	0.055	0.057	0.350	0.136	-	0.127	0.064
1+ & older brown trout	0.038	0.359	0.211	0.244	-	0.090	-	0.036	0.135
Minnow	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.040	-	-
Pike	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.054	-	-
Stone loach	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.128	0.024	0.016
All fish	0.177	0.427	0.266	0.301	0.350	0.226	0.223	0.188	0.215
Liffey main channel & tributaries								Lemonstown sub-catchment	
Site no.	24		25			26		27	
Species	2019	2025	2013	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025
Brown trout	0.129	0.269	0.024	0.005	0.007	0.233	0.182	0.149	0.134
0+ brown trout	0.078	0.199	0.013	0.0002	0.001	0.217	0.120	0.022	0.096
1+ & older brown trout	0.052	0.070	0.011	0.005	0.006	0.016	0.062	0.127	0.038
Salmon	-	-	0.021	0.0005	-	-	-	-	-
0+ salmon	-	-	0.006	0.0002	-	-	-	-	-
1+ & older salmon	-	-	0.015	0.0003	-	-	-	-	-
European eel	-	-	0.0001	0.0002	0.007	-	0.012	-	-
Gudgeon	-	-	-	0.001	0.0003	-	-	-	-
Minnow	-	-	0.004	0.005	0.008	-	-	-	-
Perch	-	-	0.0002	0.0002	0.0003	-	-	-	-
Pike	-	-	-	0.0002	-	-	-	-	-
Roach	-	-	-	-	0.001	-	-	-	-
Stone loach	-	-	0.001	-	-	-	0.008	-	-
Three-spined stickleback	-	-	-	-	0.0003	-	-	0.017	-
All fish	0.129	0.269	0.050	0.012	0.024	0.233	0.202	0.166	0.134

Table 3. Brown trout % age class (where recorded), Southern River Liffey.

Site No.	% of catch				
	0+	1+	2+	3+	4+
Brittas sub-catchment					
1	94	6	-	-	-
2	29	57	14	-	-
3	25	39	36	-	-
King's sub-catchment					
4	-	100	-	-	-
5	-	-	50	50	-
6	14	57	29	-	-
7	-	80	20	-	-
8	9	36	55	-	-
Liffey main channel & tributaries					
9	-	-	-	100	-
10	67	17	16	-	-
11	25	50	25	-	-
12	46	36	18	-	-
13	22	41	34	3	-
15	-	70	30	-	-
16	11	33	56	-	-
17	85	15	-	-	-
18	33	67	-	-	-
19	19	65	16	-	-
20	22	61	17	-	-
21	64	36	-	-	-
22	79	14	7	-	-
23	10	40	50	-	-
24	75	-	25	-	-
25	15	4	26	37	18
26	68	23	9	-	-
Lemonstown sub-catchment					
27	75	25	-	-	-

Table 4. Fish ecological status for the Southern River Liffey, August 2025.

Site No.	2013	2019	2025
Brittas sub-catchment			
1	-	M	M
2	-	G	G
3	-	G	G
King's sub-catchment			
4	-	P	P
5	-	B	P
6	-	P	M
7	-	M	M
8	-	G	G
Liffey main & tributaries			
9	-	N/A	M
10	-	G	M
11	-	P	M
12	-	G	G
13	-	M	G
14	G	G	P
15	-	P	P
16	-	M	M
17	-	M	G
18	-	M	M
19	-	G	G
20	-	G	G
21	-	M	G
22	-	P	M
23	-	M	M
24	-	M	M
25	H	G	M
26	-	M	M
Lemonstown sub-catchment			
27	-	M	M

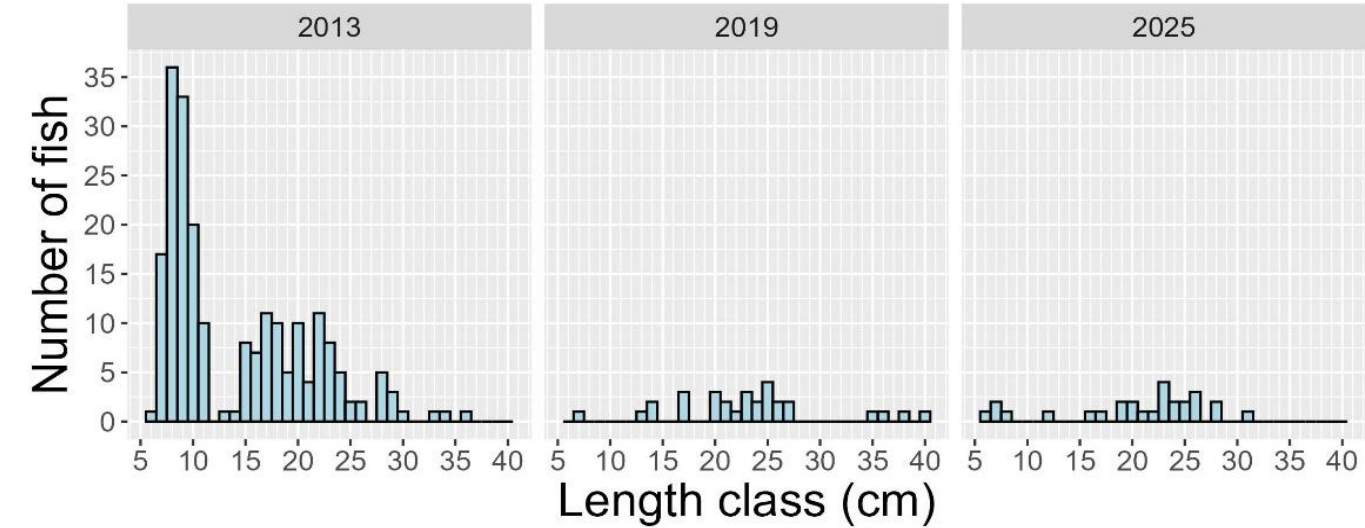


Figure 3. Length frequency distribution of brown trout (2013 n=214, 2019 n=30, 2025 n=27) from the WFD surveillance monitoring site at Kilcullen Bridge (Site 25) in the River Liffey Catchment.

Northern River Liffey Catchment.

Twenty-seven sites were surveyed in the Northern section of the River Liffey in 2025. This included six sites on the main channel and tributaries, ten sites on the Morell, seven sites on the Rye Water and four sites on the Camac sub-catchments (Figure 3 and Table 6).

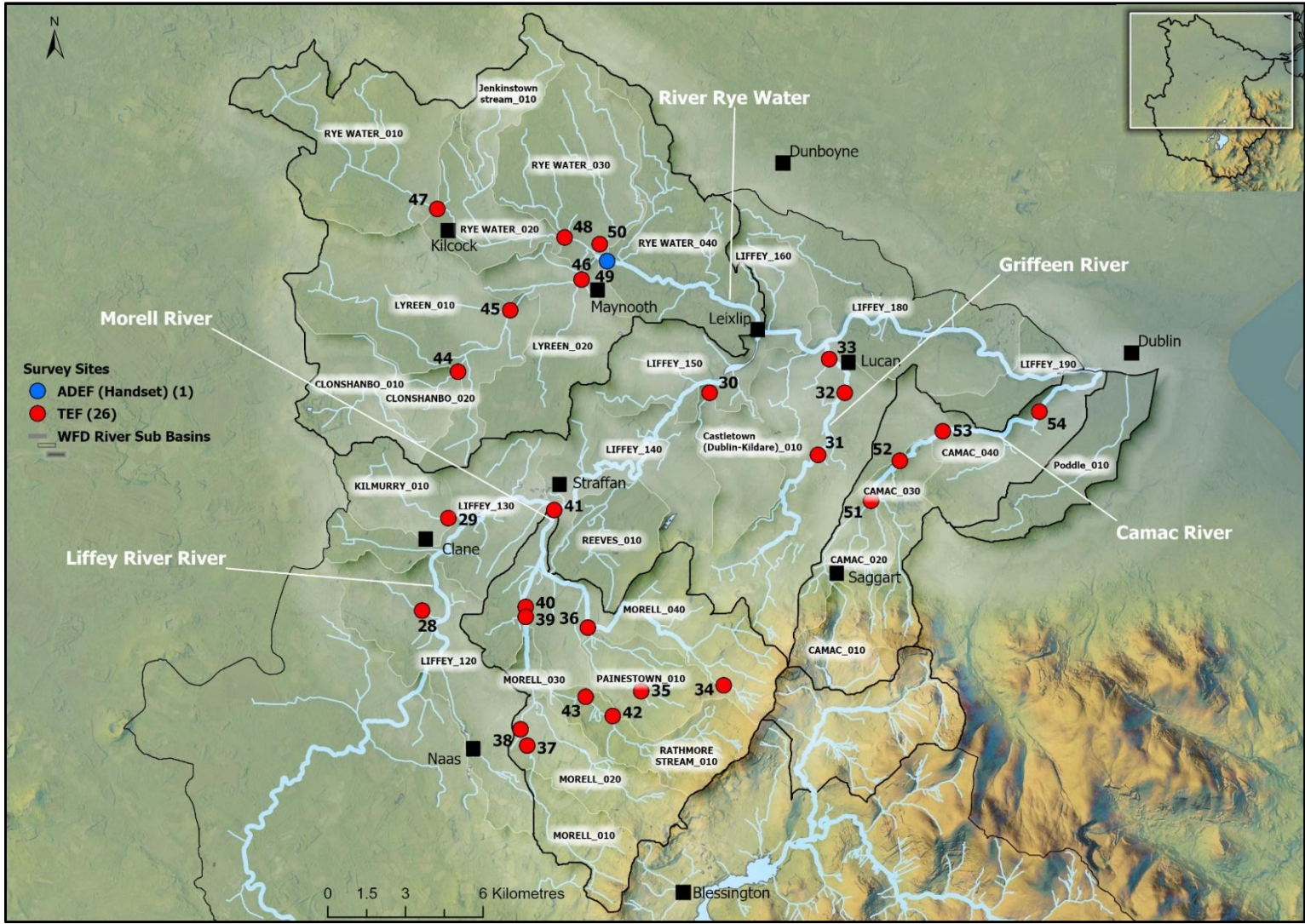


Figure 4. Location of electrofishing survey sites and sub-basin waterbodies: Liffey (sites 28-33), Morell (sites 34-43), Rye Water (sites 44-50), Camac (site 51-54), sub-catchments, 2025.

Table 5. Site survey details, Northern River Liffey, August 2025.

No	WFD Sub-basin	River	Site	Method	WFD	Date
Liffey main channel & tributaries						
28	LIFFEY_120	Liffey (Longtown) River	Blundells Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
29	KILMURRY_010	Liffey (Gollymochy) River	Loughbollard Commons	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
30	Castletown (Dublin-Kildare)_010	Liffey (Shinkeen) River	Shinkeen Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
31	LIFFEY_170	Griffeen River	Grange Castle Industrial Estate	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025
32	LIFFEY_170	Griffeen River	Griffeen Avenue Br. Esker S	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
33	LIFFEY_170	Griffeen River	Vesey Park	TEF (Handset)	NO	11/08/2025
Morell sub-catchment						
34	MORELL_040	Liffey (Slane), River	Kilteel	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
35	PAINESTOWN_010	Liffey (Kill) River	Thornberry	TEF (Handset)	NO	08/08/2025
36	MORELL_040	Liffey (Painestown) River	Painestown Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
37	MORELL_020	Liffey (Morell) River	Morell Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	08/08/2025
38	MORELL_020	Liffey (Morell) River	Kingsfurze	TEF (Handset)	NO	08/08/2025
39	MORELL_030	Liffey (Morell) River	Sherlockstown Common	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
40	MORELL_040	Liffey (Morell) River	Killeenmore SW	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
41	LIFFEY_140	Liffey (Morell) River	Ballyhays	TEF (Handset)	NO	07/08/2025
42	RATHMORE STREAM_010	Liffey (Hartwell) River	Burntfurze	TEF (Handset)	NO	08/08/2025
43	RATHMORE STREAM_010	Liffey (Hartwell) River	Morristown	TEF (Handset)	NO	08/08/2025
Rye Water sub-catchment						
44	CLONSHANBO_020	Baltracey/Clonshambo River	Fraynes Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	05/08/2025
45	LYREEN_010	Rye Water (Lyreen)	Crinstown	TEF (Handset)	NO	05/08/2025
46	LYREEN_020	Rye Water (Lyreen)	St Mary's Church	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025
47	RYE WATER_020	Rye Water	Balfeaghan Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	05/08/2025
48	RYE WATER_020	Rye Water	Anne's Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	05/08/2025
49	RYE WATER_030	Rye Water	Kildare Bridge	ADEF (Handset)	YES	05/08/2025
50	RYE WATER_030	Rye Water (Moygaddy)	Moygaddy Castle	TEF (Handset)	NO	05/08/2025
Camac sub-catchment						
51	CAMAC_020	Camac River	Moneenalion Commons Bridge	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025
52	CAMAC_030	Camac River	Corcaigh Park	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025
53	CAMAC_040	Camac River	Yellow Meadows	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025
54	CAMAC_040	Camac River	Landsdowne Valley	TEF (Handset)	NO	06/08/2025



Morell River at Kingfurze (Site 38), Co. Kildare.

Table 6. Minimum density estimates of fish (no. fish/m²), for the Liffey main channel & tributaries and Morell sub-catchment, August 2025 (previous results are shown where applicable).

Liffey main channel & tributaries									
Site no.	28		29		30		31		32
Species	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2011	2025	2025
Brown trout	0.028	-	0.076	-	0.070	0.364	-	-	0.205
0+ brown trout	0.028	-	0.057	-	0.017	0.019	-	-	-
1+ & older brown trout	-	-	0.019	-	0.052	0.345	-	-	0.205
European eel	-	-	-	-	-	0.029	-	-	0.054
Lamprey sp.	-	-	0.066	-	-	-	-	-	-
Minnow	-	-	0.665	0.440	-	-	-	-	-
Perch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.009
Pike	-	-	0.009	0.027	-	-	-	-	-
Roach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.134
Stone loach	-	0.141	0.085	-	-	-	-	-	-
Three-spined stickleback	1.446	-	0.180	-	-	-	1.128	-	0.027
All fish	1.474	0.141	1.082	0.467	0.070	0.393	1.128	no fish	0.429
Liffey main channel & tributaries					Morell sub-catchment				
Site no.	33		34		35		36		
Species	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	
Brown trout	0.158	0.269	0.259	0.177	-	-	0.296	0.323	
0+ brown trout	0.060	-	0.259	0.177	-	-	0.296	0.323	
1+ & older brown trout	0.098	0.269	-	-	-	-	-	-	
European eel	0.023	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lamprey sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.025	-	
Minnow	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.037	0.096	
Roach	-	0.007	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Stone loach	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.210	0.108	
Three-spined stickleback	0.023	-	0.328	0.200	0.725	0.962	0.037	-	
All fish	0.203	0.275	0.587	0.377	0.725	0.962	0.604	0.527	
Morell sub-catchment									
Site no.	37		38		39		40		
Species	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	
Brown trout	0.721	0.853	0.609	0.589	0.378	0.210	0.850	0.383	
0+ brown trout	0.562	0.462	0.290	0.116	0.223	0.059	0.302	0.103	
1+ & older brown trout	0.159	0.390	0.319	0.473	0.155	0.151	0.548	0.280	
Lamprey sp.	-	-	-	-	0.012	-	-	-	
Minnow	-	-	-	-	0.037	0.020	0.537	-	
Three-spined stickleback	-	-	-	-	0.019	-	-	-	
All fish	0.721	0.853	0.609	0.589	0.447	0.230	1.387	0.383	
Morell sub-catchment									
Site no.	41		42		43				
Species	2025		2019	2025	2019	2025			
Brown trout	0.063		0.345	0.161	0.346		0.369		
0+ brown trout	0.040		0.328	0.031	0.248		0.318		
1+ & older brown trout	0.023		0.017	0.130	0.098		0.050		
Salmon	0.023		-	-	-		-		
0+ salmon	0.011		-	-	-		-		
1+ & older salmon	0.011		-	-	-		-		
Lamprey sp.	-		-	-	-		-		
Minnow	0.132		-	-	-		-		
Stone loach	0.023		-	-	-		-		
Three-spined stickleback	-		-	-	-		0.025		
All fish	0.241		0.345	0.161	0.346		0.394		

Table 7. Minimum density estimates of fish (no. fish/m²), for the Ryewater and Camac River sub-catchments, August 2025 (previous results are shown where applicable).

Rye Water sub-catchment										
Site no.	44			45		46		47		
Species	2011	2019	2025	2019	2025	2019	2025	2011		
Brown trout	0.167	0.018	0.078	0.048	0.102	0.119	0.124	0.079		
0+ brown trout	0.160	0.018	0.078	0.012	0.065	0.075	0.040	0.066		
1+ & older brown trout	0.007	-	-	0.036	0.037	0.044	0.084	0.013		
Lamprey sp.	0.160	0.018	0.020	-	0.019	-	-	0.033		
Minnow	0.152	0.755	0.059	-	-	0.298	0.156	2.281		
Stone loach	-	-	-	-	-	0.008	-	0.066		
Three-spined stickleback	6.085	2.230	0.490	-	0.177	0.048	-	0.789		
All fish	6.564	3.021	0.647	0.048	0.297	0.472	0.279	3.248		
Rye Water sub-catchment										
Site no.	47		48			49			50	
Species	2018	2025	2018	2020	2025	2018	2022	2025	2020	2025
Brown trout	0.179	0.382	0.274	0.120	0.066	0.125	0.099	0.025	0.018	-
0+ brown trout	0.024	0.050	0.089	0.092	0.038	0.022	0.004	0.010	0.018	-
1+ & older brown trout	0.155	0.332	0.185	0.028	0.028	0.103	0.095	0.015	-	-
European eel	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.016	0.010	-	-
Lamprey sp.	-	-	-	-	-	0.011	0.004	0.010	-	-
Minnow	0.250	0.257	0.383	0.176	0.052	0.648	0.052	0.369	-	-
Perch	-	0.017	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pike	-	-	-	-	-	0.011	0.016	-	-	-
Stone loach	-	-	-	-	0.028	-	0.008	0.020	-	0.023
Three-spined stickleback	0.440	0.025	0.041	-	-	0.016	0.008	0.029	0.026	-
All fish	0.869	0.681	0.698	0.296	0.147	0.811	0.202	0.462	0.044	0.023
Camac sub-catchment										
Site no.	51			52		53		54		
Species	2011	2017	2025	2017	2025	2017	2025	2017	2025	
Brown trout	0.110	0.441	0.546	0.467	0.512	0.512	0.494	0.094	0.234	
0+ brown trout	0.103	0.383	0.333	0.253	0.323	0.173	0.148	-	0.037	
1+ & older brown trout	0.006	0.058	0.212	0.215	0.189	0.339	0.346	0.094	0.196	
European eel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.075	
Lamprey sp.	-	-	-	0.013	-	-	-	-	-	
Minnow	-	0.014	-	0.196	0.061	0.038	0.081	-	-	
Three-spined stickleback	0.194	0.137	-	-	-	0.019	0.046	-	-	
All fish	0.303	0.593	0.546	0.676	0.574	0.570	0.621	0.094	0.309	

Table 8. Brown trout % age class (where recorded), Northern River Liffey.

Site No.	% of catch					
	0+	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+
Liffey main channel & tributaries						
30	6	17	72	-	5	-
32	-	37	18	9	18	18
33	-	-	53	-	42	5
Morell sub-catchment						
34	100	-	-	-	-	-
36	100	-	-	-	-	-
37	59	32	9	-	-	-
38	24	40	36	-	-	-
39	31	19	38	12	-	-
40	26	16	47	11	-	-
41	67	17	-	16	-	-
42	20	10	60	10	-	-
43	87	9	4	-	-	-
Rye Water sub-catchment						
44	100	-	-	-	-	-
45	67	17	-	-	16	-
46	33	7	40	13	-	7
47	14	-	64	13	9	-
48	57	-	29	14	-	-
49	57	-	14	29	-	-
Camac sub-catchment						
51	62	23	11	4	-	-
52	65	7	24	2	2	-
53	30	11	46	4	9	-
54	17	67	-	12	4	-

Table 9. Fish ecological status for the Northern River Liffey, August 2025.

Site No.	2011	2017	2018	2019	2020	2022	2025
Liffey main channel & tributaries							
28	-	-	-	P	-	-	P
29	-	-	-	M	-	-	P
30	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
31	M	-	-	-	-	-	B
32	M	-	-	M	-	-	M
33	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
Morell sub-catchment							
34	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
35	-	-	-	P	-	-	P
36	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
37	-	-	-	M	-	-	G
38	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
39	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
40	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
41	-	-	-	G	-	-	M
42	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
43	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
Rye Water sub-catchment							
44	M	-	-	P	-	-	M
45	-	-	-	M	-	-	M
46	-	-	-	P	-	-	M
47	G	-	M	-	-	-	M
48	-	-	M	-	M	-	M
49	G	-	M	-	-	M	M
50	-	-	-	-	P	-	P
Camac sub-catchment							
51	M	M	-	-	-	-	M
52	-	M	-	-	-	-	M
53	-	M	-	-	-	-	M
54	-	P	-	-	-	-	M

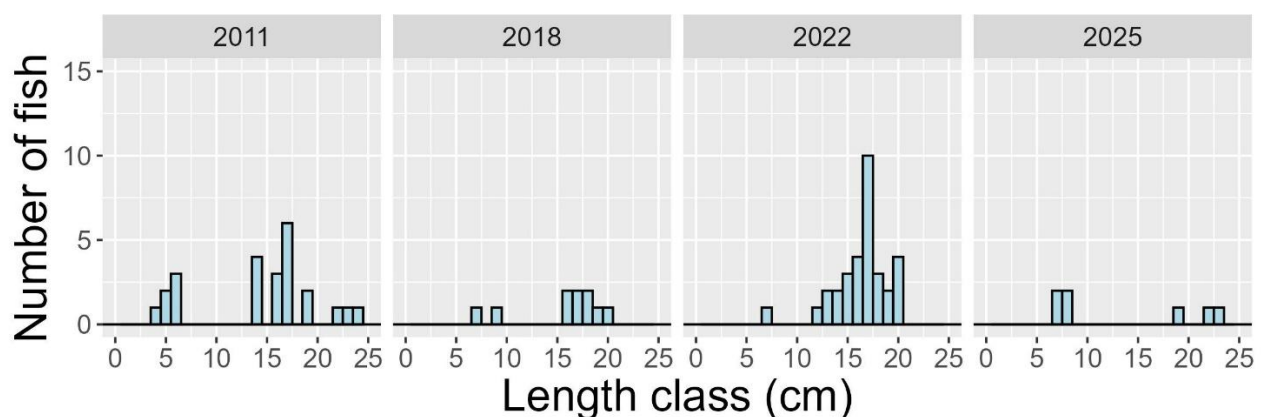


Figure 5. Length frequency distribution of brown trout (2011 n=24, 2018 n=11, 2022 n=36, 2025 n=7) at Site 49 (Kildare Bridge), a WFD surveillance monitoring site in the Rye Water River sub-catchment.

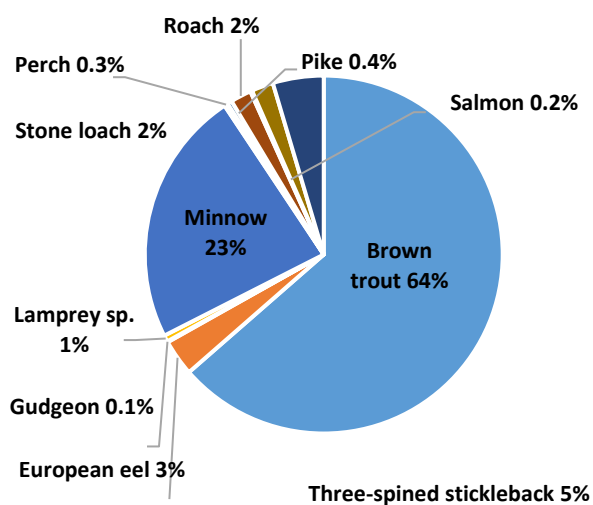


Figure 6. Fish species composition (%), River Liffey Catchment, 2025.

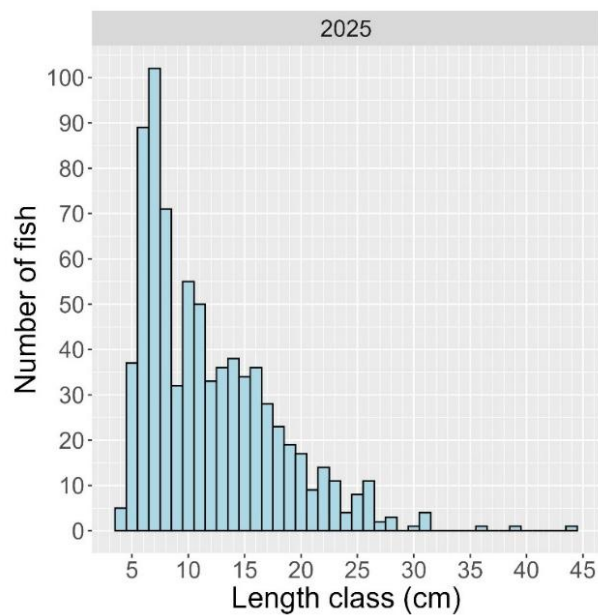


Figure 7. Length frequency distribution for brown trout (n = 775), River Liffey Catchment, 2025 (No. sites=48).



Lyreen River at St Mary's Church (Site 46), Co. Kildare.

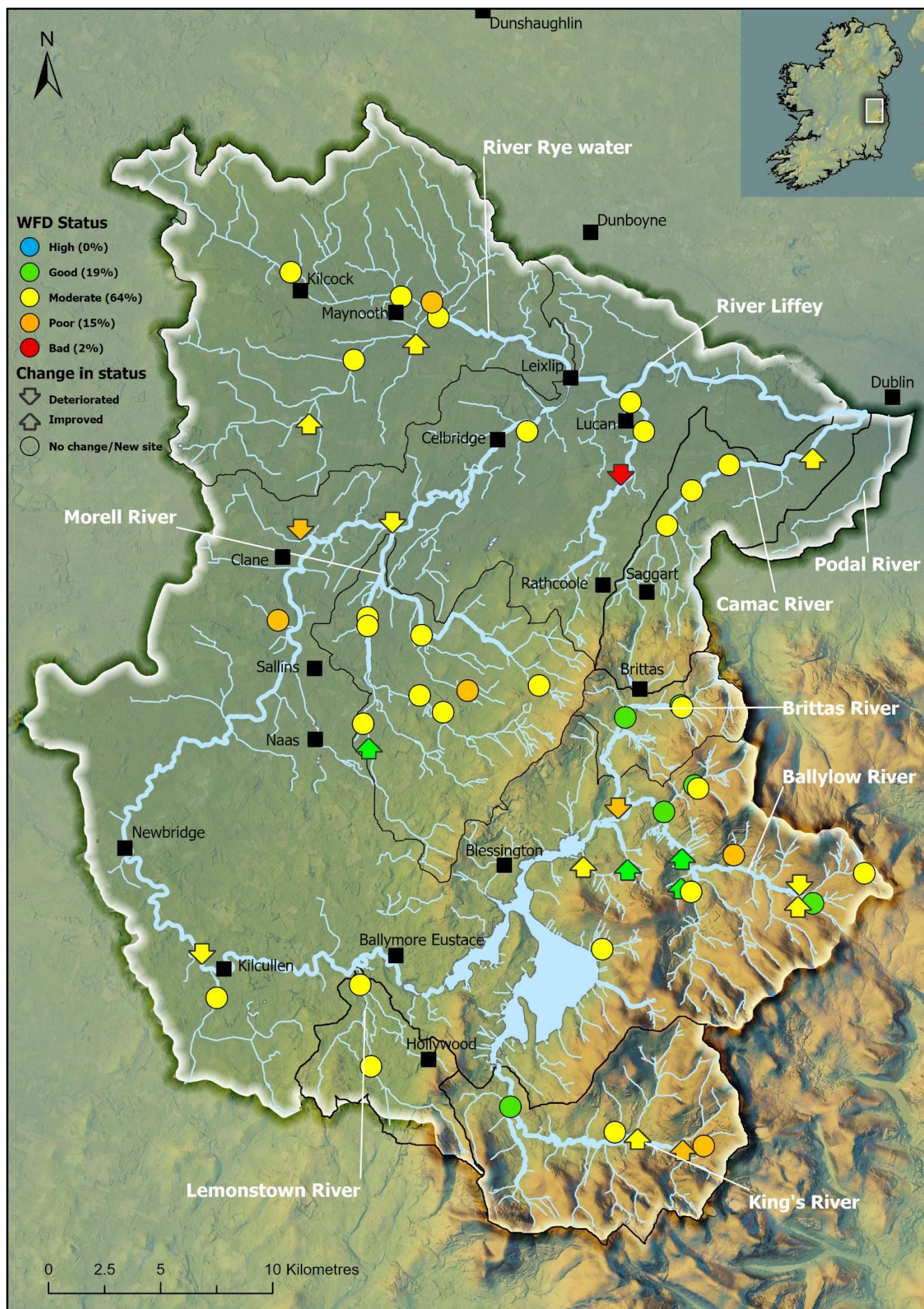


Figure 8. Fish ecological status in the River Liffey Catchment, August 2025. Arrows indicate a change in status since previous surveys (where applicable).

Summary

A total of eleven fish species were recorded across 54 sites surveyed on the Liffey River Catchment in 2025.

Brown trout was the most common species present (48 sites, 89%), followed by minnow (15 sites, 28%), three-spined stickleback (11 sites, 20%), stone loach (8 sites, 15%), European eel (6 sites, 11%), roach (4 sites, 7%), perch (3 sites, 6%), pike and lamprey sp. (2 sites each, 4%) and gudgeon and salmon (1 site each, 2%).

Brown trout was also the most abundant species recorded, followed by minnow, three-spined stickleback, European eel, stone loach, roach, lamprey spp., pike, perch, salmon and gudgeon (Figure 6).

Brown trout ranged in length from 4.5 to 44.2cm (Figure 7). Six age classes were present (0+, 1+, 2+, 3+, 4+ and 5+) with 0+ being the most abundant cohort. The highest density of brown trout (all ages combined) (0.864 fish/m²) was recorded at Site 2 (Bridge just off R114) in the Brittas sub-catchment. The highest density of 0+ brown trout (0.462 fish/m²) was recorded at Site 37 (Morell Bridge) in the Morell sub-catchment. The highest density of 1+ & older brown trout (0.654 fish/m²) was also recorded at Site 2 (Bridge just off R114) in the Brittas sub-catchment.

Salmon were recorded at one site in the River Liffey catchment in 2025. Two salmon measuring 7.1cm (0+) and 15.8cm (2+), were captured at site 41 (Ballyhays) in the Morrell sub-catchment.

A Water Framework Directive fish classification tool (FCS2) was developed for Irish rivers in 2011 (SNIFFER 2011). The tool works by comparing various fish community metric values within a site to those predicted for a site under un-impacted conditions. In general, a site will achieve High status if all indicator species (e.g. both salmonid cohorts 0+ and 1+ and

older) are present and in expected numbers. Status will decline if such cohorts are missing, are in poor abundance, or if more tolerant species proliferate.

Fish ecological status was assigned to fifty-four sites surveyed in the Liffey Catchment in 2025. Ten sites were assigned Good status, with thirty-five sites Moderate, eight sites Poor and one site Bad. Seventeen sites were surveyed previously on this catchment and assigned fish ecological status. When compared with their most recent previous surveys, eleven sites improved (sites 5, 6, 11, 13, 17, 21, 22, 37, 44, 46 and 54), six sites deteriorated (sites 10, 14, 25, 29, 31 and 41), and thirty-seven sites remained unchanged (Tables 4 and 9; Figure 8).

The reasons for the failures (i.e. moderate or lower status) in fish ecological status were due to lower-than-expected abundance of type specific indicator species (e.g. salmon and trout) and absence of certain age cohorts indicating recruitment failures. Failures and deteriorations in fish ecological status can be caused by pressures such as nutrient enrichment, habitat modification and fish passage issues.

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