

Flooding in Ireland

Floods are a natural and inevitable part of life in Ireland. Major flood events in recent years include widespread flooding in the southeast in the summer of 2008, throughout much of the country in November 2009, in eastern areas in October 2011 and in the southwest in June 2012.

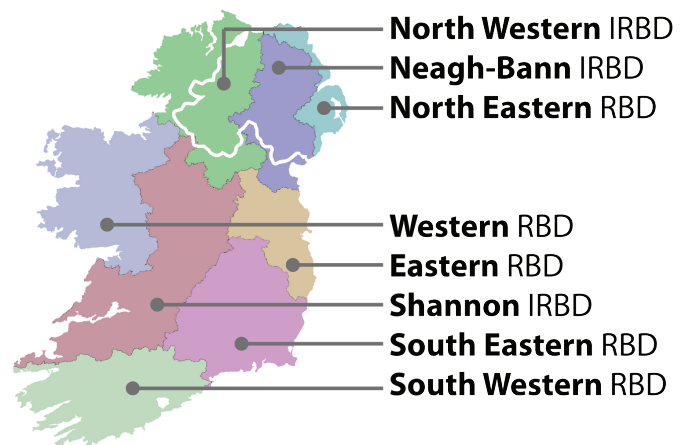
Floods pose a risk to human life and wellbeing, may lead to extensive damage to property and can have severe environmental consequences. It is likely that the effects of climate change will make flooding more frequent and severe in the future.

Historically, flood risk in Ireland has been addressed through the use of structural or engineered flood protection measures in response to flood events. However, the EU Floods Directive is now the driving force behind flood management and prescribes a more proactive, sustainable flood risk management approach with increased use of non-structural and flood impact mitigation measures.



What is the Floods Directive about?

The Floods Directive entered into force on 26th November 2007 and is concerned with the assessment and management of flood risks. It aims to reduce and manage the risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. It takes a sustainable, catchment-based approach to assessing and managing flood risks rather than relying on reactive, structural or engineered flood protection measures. It applies to inland waters as well as coastal waters at the level of the River Basin Districts and is closely aligned with the activities of the Water Framework Directive.



Ireland's River Basin Districts

How is the Floods Directive being applied in Ireland?

The National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme was developed to meet the requirements of the Floods Directive, as well as to deliver on core components of the 2004 National Flood Policy. Pilot CFRAM studies have been undertaken since 2006 in the Dodder and Tolka catchments, the Lee Catchment, the Suir Catchment and in the Fingal/East Meath area.

CFRAM studies were commissioned at the scale of the River Basin Districts during 2011/12. Cross-border cooperation and coordination within districts that are shared between Ireland and Northern Ireland must be achieved.

For each River Basin District, a flood risk review must be completed to identify areas that require further assessment to determine their risk of flooding. For these Areas for Further Assessment (AFAs), flood risk maps and flood hazard maps must be drawn up by 2013 and Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) developed by 2015.

FRMPs will include measures in relation to flood prevention, protection and preparedness. Emergency response to flooding, recovery from flooding and incorporating lessons learned will be important elements of the FRMPs. Issues such as climate change, land use practices and future development will also be addressed in the FRMPs. The public will have a right to access the CFRAM programme information and to have their say in the development of FRMPs.

Who will be involved in implementing the Floods Directive?

The Office of Public Works (OPW) is the lead agency for flood risk management in Ireland and has been appointed as the competent authority with overall responsibility for the implementation of the Floods Directive.

The OPW appointed RPS Consulting Engineers as consultant in relation to the North Western - Neagh Bann CFRAM Study. The OPW, RPS and the Local Authorities in the North Western and Neagh Bann districts will work in close partnership to deliver the objectives of the CFRAM Programme.

It is the duty of all public authorities, public bodies and organisations to exercise their functions in a manner which is consistent with the provisions of the directive and which achieves or promotes compliance with the requirements of the directive. Full and thorough public and stakeholder consultation and engagement is critical to the successful implementation of the directive.



How and when will public consultation take place?

There will be a number of formal and informal opportunities for stakeholders and the public to engage in the process as well as to meet with the study team. Public information days will be held at key stages and in key locations during the implementation process and will be announced in the media and via national and project websites. So come along and have your say!

Queries or submissions can be made at any time by phone, email or in writing.

You can also send your views via the national and project websites.

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Where can I find further information?

The outputs from the CFRAM studies will be available to view at Local Authority offices in 2013 and 2015.

They can also be downloaded from the national CFRAM website and the individual study websites.

www.cfram.ie
www.northwestcframstudy.ie
www.neaghbanncframstudy.ie
www.southeastcframstudy.ie
www.eastcframstudy.ie
www.shannoncframstudy.ie
www.westcframstudy.ie
www.southwestcframstudy.ie

Information dealing with current OPW flood-related activities and operations are available at the following websites.

www.opw.ie
www.floodmaps.ie
www.flooding.ie
www.leecframs.ie
www.fingaleastmeathframs.ie

