Water Policy Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Overall Purpose
The Water Policy Advisory Committee¹ is convened to provide policy advice and assistance to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and on broader water resource issues. The Committee is also responsible for providing advice on and support for the making of river basin management plans including the programme of measures as part of those plans.

Specific Objectives

1. Plan-making
   (a) To provide oversight in the preparation of river basin management plans (whether nationally or at cross-border level) and programmes of measures including advice and recommendations, having regard to other relevant national plans, programmes and policies, especially in relation to Biodiversity, Climate Change and the wider Environmental agenda.
   (b) To provide oversight in the determination of the methodologies to be applied to carry out the necessary economic analysis that is required under the Water Framework Directive to complete the river basin management plans and set out the programme of measures.
   (c) To resolve conflicts arising between local/national and inter-Governmental / sectoral priorities and to make recommendations to the Minister, where necessary, for resolution of such policy conflicts.
   (d) To recommend river basin management plans and programmes of measures to the Minister for adoption and approval.

2. Funding and Resources
   (a) To advise the Minister on the funding and resources necessary to support implementation of the river basin management plans and of programmes of measures.
   (b) To identify and recommend priorities for relevant national water-environment research, with the subject discussed at a minimum of one committee meeting per year.

3. Implementation
(a) To monitor and, where necessary, advise and make recommendations to the Minister on the coordinated implementation of the adopted and approved programmes of measures.
(b) To resolve conflicts arising between local/national and inter-Governmental / sectoral priorities arising from the implementation of plans and to make recommendations to the Minister, where necessary, for resolution of such policy conflicts
(c) To provide advice and guidance to Departments, local authorities and state agencies on implementation of the regulatory framework for the Water Framework Directive.

Membership
Membership of the Committee consists of nominees of:
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Geological Survey Ireland
- Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- Department of Health
- Health Services Executive
- County and City Managers’ Association (from both Water and Environment Committees)
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Office of Public Works
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- Irish Water
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Local Authority Waters Programme

The Committee may, from time to time, invite representatives of other organisations to attend meetings for specific agenda items.

Procedure
The Committee will normally meet four times a year and will be chaired by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (A/Sec., Water Division). The secretariat will be provided by DHLGH.

From time to time, sub-groups may be established to facilitate the development of particular areas of work.