

# MACRO MONITORING RESULTS

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## STRATEGY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEYING AND MONITORING

FOR THE

## WILD ATLANTIC WAY OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

**for:**

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## Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
Methodology .....	4
1.1.1 Methodology for Macro Monitoring.....	4
2. Presentation of Results and Analysis.....	10
2.2 Macro Indicator 1- Water Quality.....	10
2.3 Macro-Indicator 2- National Roads Authority Traffic Counter .....	19
2.4 Macro-Indicator 3- Blue Flag Beaches .....	24
2.5 Macro Indicator 4- Green Coast Award .....	25
1.5.1 Green Coasts at Monitoring Points .....	25
1.5.2 Green Coasts at Control Points .....	25
2.6 Monitoring Indicator 5- State of Knowledge of Irelands Biodiversity.....	26
2.7 Monitoring Indicator 6- EPA Ireland's Environment - An Assessment (2012).....	28
Monitoring Indicator 7- The status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland .....	29
2.8 Monitoring Indicator 8- Visitor Numbers.....	35
1.8.1 Visitor Numbers at Monitoring Points .....	35
2.9 Monitoring Indicator 9- Tourism Related Planning Refusals .....	38
3. Conclusions and Recommendations .....	40

# 1. Introduction

This document details the results of the Macro Monitoring Study carried out as part of the *Environmental Surveying and Monitoring for the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme*. It has been undertaken by CAAS Ltd. on behalf of Fáilte Ireland.

The Strategy for Environmental Surveying and Monitoring was carried out as part of Fáilte Ireland's commitments in the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme 2015-2019. A copy of the Operational Programme and associated documents are available on the Fáilte Ireland website.

Other Monitoring includes

- Monitoring and surveying of the activities of visitors at points along the Wild Atlantic Way
- Monitoring and surveying of the ecological effects of visitor activities at points along the Wild Atlantic

The purpose of the monitoring strategy is to ensure that the effects of the implementation of the Operational Programme are understood and acted upon. This will contribute to avoiding delays in identifying existing or emerging activities that could threaten the environment.

The Strategy for Environmental Surveying and Monitoring for the Wild Atlantic Way is intended to describe the existing conditions of sites with a view to:

- contributing to Visitor Management Strategies;
- contributing to future editions of Fáilte Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way Guidelines;
- identifying remedial action/works required;
- assessing the capacity for future loadings;
- integrating site management with future European Site Management Plans.

The monitoring includes the compilation of relevant regional data that is collected by other agencies as well as site specific data collected on behalf of Fáilte Ireland. Part of this work involves the development of generic monitoring methodologies and templates that may be used across a range of sites and conditions. The monitoring examines individual sites as well as larger-scale and regional indicators.

The macro monitoring element of the surveying as discussed in this document concentrates on long-established, high quality, official baselines that. These *inter alia* measure the seasonal variances in environmental loading caused by visitors at, and around the candidate Discovery Points. These official baselines will describe a number of key performance indicators. These will be combined to identify any emerging trends changes in the state of the environment along the Wild Atlantic Way.

These key performance indicators, which are described in detailed in Table 1.1 over, will be applied to six sites along the Wild Atlantic Way and a further four control sites inland from the route.

The results of these macro monitoring activities will be collated and presented to a Monitoring Group twice each year- along with results of all other Wild Atlantic Way monitoring activities. This information can be used by relevant members of the Monitoring Group to identify protective, remedial or improvement actions within their own areas of responsibility during the following year. An annual summary of the results of monitoring will be published on the Fáilte Ireland website.

## Methodology

Strand One of the monitoring strategy concentrates on long-established, high quality, official baselines. These measures *inter alia* the seasonal variances in environmental loading caused by visitors - such as water quality, road traffic, Blue Flag Beach conditions and Green Coast Awards.

The use of existing, robust datasets will be combined to identify any emerging trends and changes in a small number of key diagnostic environmental performance indicators. These macro-indicators provide a very high level of coordination for the cumulative impact assessment of other activities. Strategic Environmental Assessment of these plans and policies – at county, regional and sectoral levels utilise the same indicators. This also facilitates the isolation of the contribution of tourism though in-combination effects.

The monitoring focuses on intra-urban settlements between gateway towns along the Wild Atlantic Way. Gateways such as Cork and Galway that capture the infiltration of visitors. These also supply the high-level 'input' data for the monitoring before they become dissipated among many smaller destinations and intra-urban settlements (See Figure 1.1). The purpose of macro monitoring is to identify the state of the environment between the gateway settlements because these intra-urban settlements, such as Bundoran in Co. Donegal, often accommodate and entertain the bulk of overnight visitors.

This strategy facilitates the direct identification and assessment, at a high level, of the effects that visitor numbers have on key environmental indicators. These use long-established baselines (from agencies such as the National Roads Authority, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, etc.). It should be noted from the summarised historical overview of tourism and promotion in Section 2.8, that there are no survey areas associated with the Wild Atlantic Way where a meaningful 'baseline' condition exists that has not already been subject to over a century of the effects of tourism and promotion.

### 1.1.1 Methodology for Macro Monitoring

1. Seven sites have been selected along the route - one for each county or at the closest available point where regional monitoring is carried out (See Table 1.2). The initial macro monitoring focuses on these seven sites. Future monitoring can be expanded to prioritise other areas in order of sensitivity and significance as directed by a Monitoring Group. The sites will be updated and informed by emerging results.
2. A further four control sites inland from the route in Donegal, Clare, Galway and Kerry have also been selected (See Table 1.3). These are also subject to expansion to prioritise other areas in order of sensitivity and significance as directed by a Monitoring Group.
3. The sites were selected on the basis that they are primary settlements along the Wild Atlantic Way route which are representative of a range of typical tourism based settlements and where data is readily accessible.

The monitoring points in Table 1.2 and the control points in Table 1.3 were chosen to measure the Monitoring and Technical Indicators shown on Table 1.1. This was based on the settlement meeting a specific criteria whereby datasets presently exist for infrastructure i.e. the settlement has a wastewater treatment plant, a National Roads Authority traffic counter,

## Macro-Monitoring Results

an Environmental Protection Agency Bathing Water monitoring location at or adjacent to the location. Other settlements were considered but did not meet these criteria.

4. The information collected from the existing datasets outlined in Table 1.1 will be combined annually to identify trends and changes in the technical indicators identified for each of the ten monitoring points.
5. The results will be presented to identify which trends and changes to technical indicators are directly attributable to tourism. Other intervening factors for example a technical failures at a wastewater treatment plant which are not attributable to tourism will also be highlighted. This will result in the ongoing review of indicators and targets, collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action.
6. If the results that show that visitor activity and/or visitor intensification is predicted or identified to result in a negative impact on the environment in particular locations, then recommendations will be made depending on the outcome and as directed by a Monitoring Group..

# Macro-Monitoring Results



Figure 1.1 Macro Monitoring Locations

## Macro-Monitoring Results

Factor	Technical Indicator	Monitoring	Authority/Source	Frequency
<b>Water Quality</b>	Non-conformities with relevant legislative requirements in Waste Water Treatment data available from licensed facilities (Waste Water Treatment Plants and Agglomerations)	<p>Non-conformances relating to minimum water quality standards and the licenced Population Equivalent (P.E) loading for the WWTP will be examined.</p> <p>Where a non-conformance is identified, the EPA collects and details information on the reason for failure. Persistent effects that is attributable to tourism i.e. overloading of treatment capacity resulting in failure to meet minimum requirements in summer months as a result of high visitor numbers.</p> <p>Non-conformances related to a relevant intervening factor, such as mechanical/technical issues, will be noted.</p>	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Annual
	Conformance with legislative requirements at the closest bathing water monitoring site	Non-conformances relating to minimum bathing water quality standards and legislative Coastal Water Quality status will be assessed		
<b>Traffic Volume</b>	Upward/downward trend in traffic volumes during tourist season and shoulder seasons	Assessment of National Roads Authority traffic counters adjacent to chosen sites and along the Wild Atlantic Way route where year round statistics are collected.	National Roads Authority (NRA)	Annual
		Assessment of Local Authority data from intermittent monitoring of regional and local road traffic (where available). Regional and local roads comprise of 75% of the Wild Atlantic Way Route.	Local Authorities	
<b>Blue Flag Beaches and Marinas</b>	Upward/downward trend in award/status	Assessment of the number of annual Blue Flag Beach status being retracted/awarded at the closest bathing water.	An Taisce	Annual
<b>National Green Coast Award</b>		Assessment of the number of National Green Coast Awards being retracted/awarded at the closest bathing water.		
<b>State of Knowledge Ireland's Biodiversity Report (2010)</b>	Changes in the status of biodiversity	The status of this indicator be informed and updated by emerging findings and information sources from Biodiversity Reports.	National Biodiversity Centre	Occasional
<b>EPA Ireland's Environment - An</b>	Changes in environmental status along the Wild Atlantic Way	The status of this indicator be informed and updated by emerging findings and information sources from this report.	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Every 4 Years

## Macro-Monitoring Results

Factor	Technical Indicator	Monitoring	Authority/Source	Frequency
<b>Assessment (2012)</b>				
<b>The status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland</b>	Changes in the status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland	The status of this indicator be informed and updated by emerging findings and information sources from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other stakeholders on the status of EU Protected Habitats and Species.	National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) Department of Agriculture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG)	Occasional
<b>Visitor Numbers</b>	Changes in Fáilte Ireland data on visitor numbers	Upward/downward trends in visitor numbers during the tourist season and shoulder season.	Fáilte Ireland	Annual
<b>Tourism related planning refusals</b>	Refusals of unsuitable tourism related projects by County	Applications to An Bord Pleanála will provide an official high level indicator as to where pressure points are occurring in Counties along the Wild Atlantic Way without the need to capture all planning applications to Local Authorities and or Foreshore Lease/Licence applications to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. A high level of tourism related refusals is a potential indicator pressure on the environmental status of said County. Record trends in tourism related applications.	An Bord Pleanála	Annual

**Table 1.1 Macro Monitoring Indicators**

## Macro-Monitoring Results

County	Monitoring Point	National Roads Authority Traffic Counter	WWTP Licence No.	WWTP/Agglomeration	Bathing Water Monitoring Site
Donegal	Dungloe	N56 Between Dungloe and R252 Jn, Co. Donegal (20562)	D0208-01	Dungloe	Naran Beach/Carrickfinn
Donegal (Sligo Border)	Bundoran	N15 Between Bundoran and Sligo, Tullaghan, Co. Leitrim (20153)	D0130-01	Bundoran/Mullaghmore /Cliffony	Bundoran/Mullaghmore
Mayo	Newport	N59 Between Mullranny and Newport, Newfield, Co. Mayo (20591)	D0224-01	Mallaranny	Mulranny/Clare Island/Bertra
Galway	Galway Bay	N18 Between Kilcolgan and Clarinbridge, Co. Galway (1182)	D0050-01	Galway Mutton Island	Silverstrand/Salthill/Grattan Road/Ballyloughane
Clare	Kilrush	N67 Between Kilrush Ferry and Kilrush, Moyne Court, Co. Clare (1671)	D0075-01	Kilrush Agglomeration	Cappagh Pier
Kerry	Cahersiveen	N70 Between Caherciveen and Glenbeigh, Gortaforia, Co. Kerry (20701)	D0181-01	Cahersiveen/Knightstown	Whitestrans
Cork	Bantry	N72 Between Bantry and Glengarriff, North of Bantry, Co. Cork (1715)	D0168-01	Bantry	Barley Cove

**Table 1.2 Macro Monitoring Points**

County	Control	National Roads Authority Traffic Counter	WWTP Licence No.	WWTP/Agglomeration	Bathing Water Monitoring Site
Donegal	Ballybofey	N13 Between Stranorlar and Letterkenny, Treantaboy, Co. Donegal (1133)	D0120-01	Ballybofer/Stranlorlar	N/A
Galway	Gort	N18 Between Kilcolgan and Clarinbridge, Co. Galway (1182)	D0195-01	Gort	N/A
Kerry	Castleisland	N21 Between Tralee and Castleisland, Co. Kerry (1211)	D0180-01	Castleisland	N/A
Clare	Lahinch	N67 Between Ennistimon and Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare(20671)	D0080-01	Lahinch	Lahinch

**Table 1.3 Macro Monitoring Control Sites**

## 2. Presentation of Results and Analysis

### 2.2 Macro Indicator 1- Water Quality

'Water Quality' was the first macro-indicator of environmental status to be examined at each of the monitoring points outlined in Table 1.2, and control sites outlined in Table 1.3. The 'Water Quality' indicator is broken into two sub-indicators: Wastewater treatment plant/Agglomeration operational status, and Bathing Water Status.

#### **Wastewater treatment plant/ agglomeration operational status**

This macro-indicator can be used to identify persistent effects on Water Quality that is attributable to tourism i.e. overloading of treatment capacity resulting in failure to meet minimum requirements in summer months as a result of high visitor numbers.

In order to determine the operational status of each of the wastewater treatment plants/agglomerations associated with each of the established monitoring and control points, the Annual Report of each of the EPA licenced facilities below was reviewed. A number of parameters related to the operational status of each facility were assessed under the headings outlined in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 below. Non-conformances relating to minimum water quality standards and the licenced Population Equivalent (P.E) loading for the WWTP were examined. Where a non-conformance was identified, the reason for failure was detailed.

The numbers of complaints made to each facility during the year 2014, as well as the number of reported incidents were noted. Any improvements or upgrades made to any of the facilities during the year ending 2014 were summarised.

This data should be reviewed and compared annually in order to identify any upwards or downwards trends in the operational status of the wastewater treatment plants/agglomerations at the monitoring and control points which might be attributable to tourism. For example, continuous exceedances in ELV's over consecutive years might indicate that a wastewater treatment plant/agglomeration is serving more than the population equivalent which it was intended. This might suggest high visitor numbers at the monitoring and control point locations.

## Macro-Monitoring Results

Monitoring Point	WWTP Licence No.	WWTP/ Agglomeration	Status of conformity	Reasons for non-conformity	Complaints and Reported Incidents	Population Equivalent	Improvements
<b>Dungloe</b>	D0208-01	Dungloe	The final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values in 2014.	The following parameters exceeded the emission limit values in 2014: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cBOD</li> <li>• Suspended solids</li> </ul>	2 complaints, 6 Reported Incidents	1,310	The Dungloe Sewerage Scheme has been included in the Irish Water Capital Investment Programme for 2014-2016. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and construction of a new wastewater treatment plant and outfall pipes to receiving waters.</li> <li>• New pumping stations and detention tanks.</li> <li>• New rising mains from pumping stations and gravity outfall pipe.</li> <li>• Design and construction of rehabilitation works for existing gravity pipelines</li> </ul>
<b>Bundoran</b>	D0130-01	Bundoran/ Mullaghmore/ Cliffony	The final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values in 2014.	The following parameters exceeded the emission limit values in 2014:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cBOD</li> <li>• COD</li> <li>• Suspended solids</li> <li>• Ammonia</li> </ul>	No complaints	2,000	There were no major capital or operational changes undertaken in 2014
<b>Newport</b>	D0224-01	Mallaranny	N/A (applied)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Galway Bay</b>	D0050-01	Galway Mutton Island	The final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was compliant with the Emission Limit Values in 2014.		14 complaints, 4 reported incidents	91,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant upgrade works which will increase the plant capacity from 91,600 PE to 170,000 PE commenced in September 2014</li> </ul> Improvement works were carried out on the Michael Collins Road surface water overflow
<b>Kilrush</b>	D0075-01	Kilrush Agglomeration.	Monitoring data relating to influent flow, or	N/A	2 complaints, 0 reported incidents	4626	There was no major capital or operational changes undertaken in

## Macro-Monitoring Results

			discharges to the receiving waters are not available.  It is not possible to state whether the final effluent is compliant with the Emission Limit Values in 2014.				2014.
<b>Cahersiveen</b>	D0181-01	Cahersiveen/ Knightstown	N/A (final decision issue date: 22/01/2015)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Bantry</b>	D0168-01	Bantry	N/A (final decision issue date: 5/02/2015)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Table 2.1 WWTP/Agglomeration Status at Monitoring Points**

<b>Control</b>	<b>WWTP Licence No.</b>	<b>WWTP/Agglomeration</b>	<b>Status of conformity</b>	<b>Reasons for non-conformity</b>	<b>Complaints and Reported Incidents</b>	<b>Population Equivalent</b>	<b>Improvements</b>
<b>Ballybofey</b>	D0120-01	Ballybofer/ Stranlolar	The final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values in 2014.	The following parameters exceeded the emission limit values in 2014:-  • Ammonia 1 No	1 complaint, 1 reported incident	4000	There was no major capital or operational changes undertaken in 2014.
<b>Gort</b>	D0195-01	Gort	The final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was non-compliant with one of the Emission Limit Values in 2014.	The following parameter exceeded the emission limit values in 2014:-  • Ammonia	0 complaints, 1 reported incident	4310	There was no major capital or operational changes undertaken in 2014.
<b>Castleisland</b>	D0180-01	Castleisland	The final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was compliant with the Emission Limit Values in 2014.	N/A	1 complaints, 0 reported incidents	6,000	There was no major capital or operational changes undertaken in 2014.

## Macro-Monitoring Results

<b>Lahinch</b>	D0080-01	Lahinch	The final effluent from the Primary Discharge Point was non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values for Ammonia and Total phosphorus in 2014.	The following parameter exceeded the emission limit values in 2014:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phosphorous</li> <li>• Ammonia</li> </ul>	0 complaints, 2 reported incidents	8400	There were no major capital or operational changes undertaken in 2014
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**Table 2.2 WWTP/Agglomeration Status at Control Sites**

## Macro-Monitoring Results

The results show that of the 7 monitoring points and 4 control points examined for this study, only 2 (Castleisland and Galway Mutton) wastewater treatment plants/ agglomerations were compliant with Emission Limit Values in 2014. Reasons for non-compliance were regularly attributable to exceedances in permitted ELV's of ammonia and other substances. Non-compliance with ELV's at wastewater treatment plants could suggest that the facilities are serving over-populated catchment areas. Increased visitor numbers to the monitoring points and control sites along the Wild Atlantic Way during the summer months could be putting pressure on these wastewater treatment facilities, resulting in breaches in annual ELV's. Future monitoring is required.

5 of the named facilities received complaints during the year 2014, and 5 of the sites reported incidents to the EPA.

2 of the 11 wastewater treatment plants/agglomerations examined for this study had improvements or upgrades made to the facilities during the year 2014.

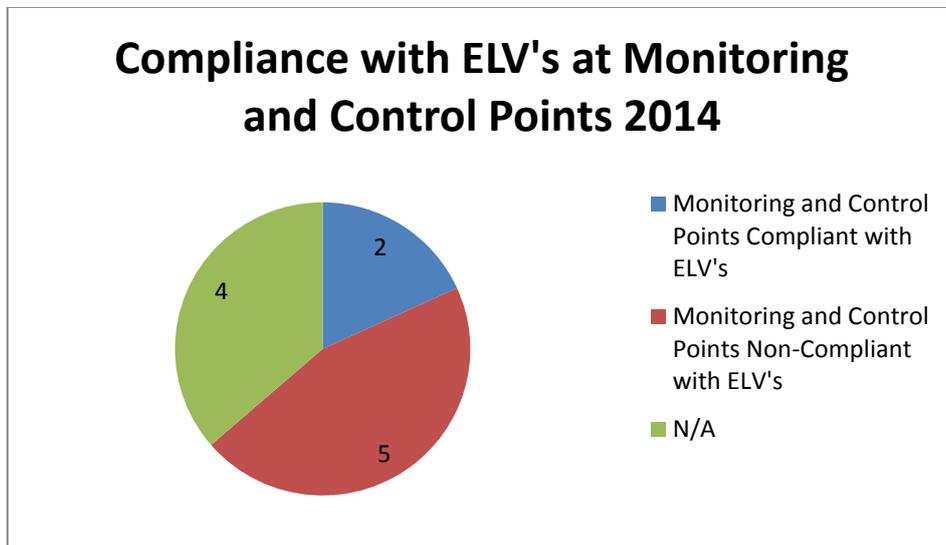


Figure 2.1 Compliance with ELV's at Monitoring and Control Points 2014

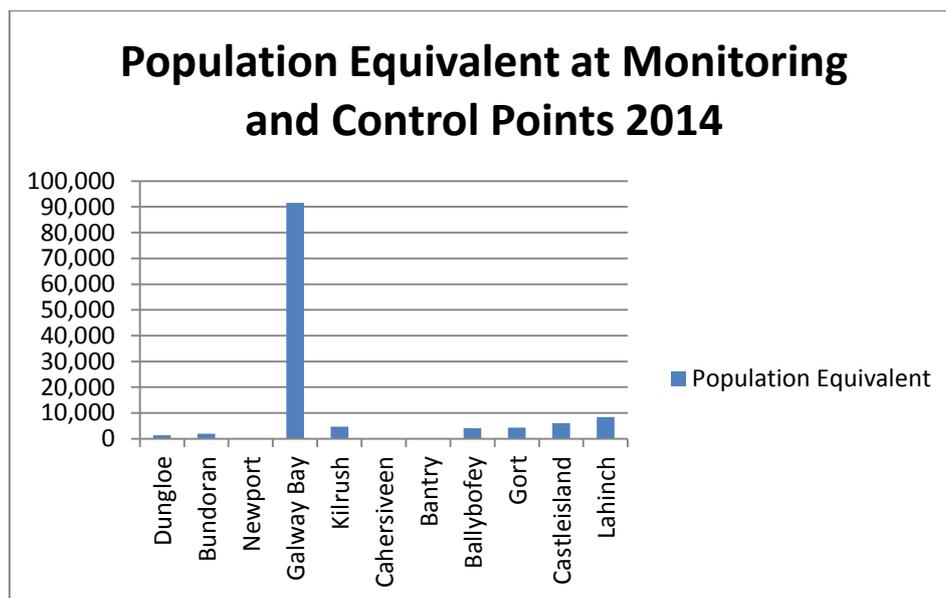


Figure 2.2 Population Equivalent at Monitoring and Control Points 2014

## Macro-Monitoring Results

It should be noted that 4 of the abovementioned facilities had not published an Annual Review for the year ending 2014 at the time of this study. As such, it was not possible to determine the operational status of these four wastewater treatment plants/agglomerations.

## Macro-Monitoring Results

### Bathing water status

The second aspect of the technical indicator 'Water Quality' involved the inspection of the bathing water status of each of the chosen settlements. This was done by comparing each of the monitoring points and control sites against its associated Bathing Water Profile, as documented on the website '*Splash!*' -the EPA run national bathing water information website. The 2014 Bathing Water status of each monitoring point and control site was noted, as well as any reason for non-conformity with legislative coastal water quality status, and days restricted by any short-term pollution. The bathing water status of a site is noted as being 'excellent,' 'good' 'sufficient' 'poor', or having 'no data.'

The results of this monitoring indicator should be reviewed and compared annually in order to determine upwards or downwards trends in bathing water quality. Continuous recordings of 'poor' or 'sufficient' water quality might indicate tourism related pollution of bathing waters.

County	Monitoring Point	Bathing Water Monitoring Site	Bathing Water Status 2014	Reason for non-conformity	Days restricted by Short term pollution
<b>Donegal</b>	Dungloe	Naran Beach/Carrickfinn	Excellent/ Excellent		0
<b>Donegal (Sligo Border)</b>	Bundoran	Bundoran/Mullaghmore	Excellent/ Excellent		0
<b>Mayo</b>	Newport	Mulranny/Clare Island/Bertra	Excellent/Excellent/Excellent		0
<b>Galway</b>	Galway Bay	Silverstrand/Salthill/Grattan Road/Ballyloughane	Excellent/ Excellent/ Sufficient/ Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grattan Road Beach, 'Sufficient' status- based on the assessment of bacteriological results for the period 2011 to 2014</li> <li>• Ballyloughane Beach, 'Poor' status based on the assessment of bacteriological results for the period 2011 to 2014</li> </ul>	0
<b>Clare</b>	Kilrush	Cappagh Pier	Excellent		0
<b>Kerry</b>	Cahersiveen	Whitestrans	Excellent		0
<b>Cork</b>	Bantry	Barley Cove	Excellent		0

**Table 2.3 Bathing Water Status at Monitoring Points**

Macro-Monitoring Results

<b>County</b>	<b>Control</b>	<b>Bathing Water Monitoring Site</b>	<b>Bathing Water Status 2014</b>	<b>Reason for non-conformity</b>	<b>Days restricted by Short term pollution</b>
<b>Donegal</b>	Ballybofey	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Galway</b>	Gort	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Kerry</b>	Castleisland	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Clare</b>	Lahinch	Lahinch	Excellent	N/A	0

**Table 2.4 Bathing Water Status at Control Points**

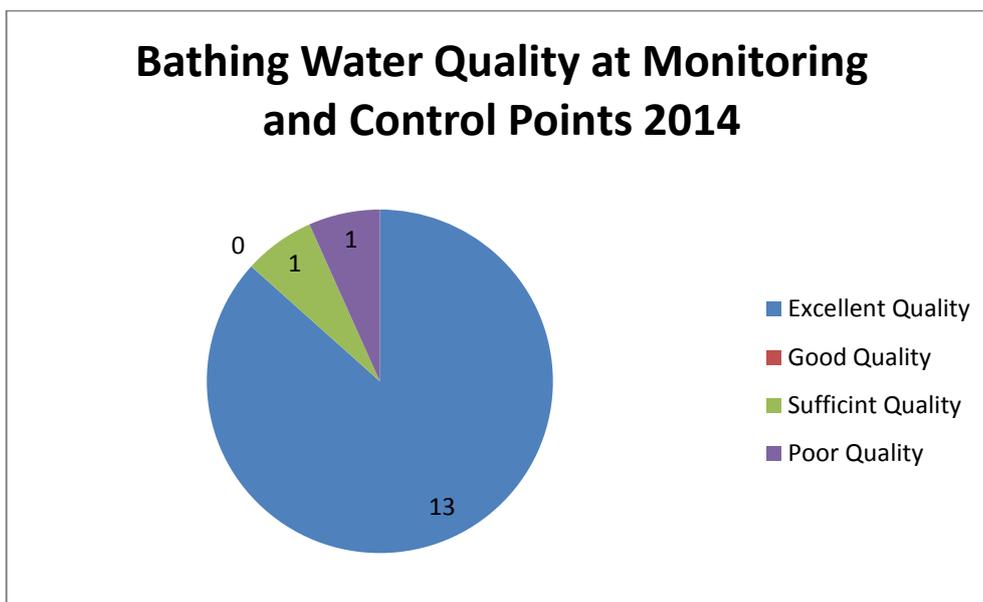
## Macro-Monitoring Results

15 'Bathing Water Monitoring Sites' at 7 of the established monitoring points and control sites along the Wild Atlantic Way were examined. Please note that some of these sites are associated with more than one EPA 'bathing water monitoring site' and thus have more than one definitive 'bathing water status.' Some of the monitoring points and control sites along the Wild Atlantic Way are not associated with any EPA 'bathing water monitoring sites', and thus the 'bathing water status' of these sites cannot be determined. .

Of the 15 bathing water monitoring sites examined, 13 were found to have 'Excellent' bathing water status. According to the Bathing Water Regulations, 2008, and as referenced by '*Splash!*';

"Bathing waters are to be classified as "excellent":

1. if, in the set of bathing water quality data for the last assessment period, the percentile values for microbiological enumerations are equal to or better than the "excellent quality" values set out in Schedule 4, column B; and
2. if the bathing water is subject to short-term pollution, on condition that:
  - (i) Adequate management measures are being taken, including surveillance, early warning systems monitoring, with a view to preventing bathers' exposure, by means of warning or, where necessary, a bathing prohibition;
  - (ii) Adequate management measures are being taken to prevent, reduce or eliminate the causes of pollution; and
  - (iii) the number of samples disregarded in accordance with Regulation 7(4) because of short-term pollution during the last assessment period represented no more than 15% of the total number of samples provided for in the monitoring calendars established for that period, or no more than one sample per bathing season, whichever is the greater.



**Figure 2.3 Bathing Water Quality at Monitoring and Control Points 2014**

## 2.3 Macro-Indicator 2- National Roads Authority Traffic Counter

The monitoring and technical Indicator 'NRA Traffic Counter' was applied to each of the monitoring points outlined in Table 1.2, and control points outlined in Table 1.3. This involved the assessment of traffic counts on roads adjacent to chosen sites and along the Wild Atlantic Way for the year ending 2014.

The Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) 'Traffic Data' website presents data collected from the TII traffic counters located on the National Road Network. The Website uses a dynamic mapping interface to allow the User to access data in a variety of report formats. The Monthly summary data available on the 'Traffic Data' website was examined and both the workday and weekday average interval traffic volumes for 24hr periods were noted for each month in 2014. This data can be reviewed and compared each year to identify upward or downwards trends in traffic volumes during tourist season and shoulder seasons.

County	Monitoring Point	National Roads Authority Traffic Counter	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donegal	Dungloe	N56 Between Dungloe and R252 Jn, Co. Donegal (20562)	2450	2535	2632	2905	2920	2967	3373	3391	2920	2720	2635	2457
			2256	2341	2496	2754	2776	2851	3300	3237	2748	2572	2496	2300
Donegal (Sligo Border)	Bundoran	N15 Between Bundoran and Sligo, Tullaghan, Co. Leitrim (20153)	5899	6349	6656	7202	7261	7580	8592	9099	7464	6988	6667	5999
			5603	6099	6466	7058	7118	7545	8540	8985	7352	6780	6387	5778
Mayo	Newport	N59 Between Mullranny and Newport, Newfield, Co. Mayo (20591)	2278	2386	2576	3020	2972	3299	3945	4304	3218	2727	2448	2370
			2181	2287	2537	3005	3276	3339	3959	4231	3248	2701	2433	2313
Galway	Galway Bay	N18 Between Kilcolgan and Clarinbridge, Co. Galway (1182)	16375	17556	18028	19000	19581	19819	20499	20984	19178	18045	18067	16488
			15542	16644	17300	18316	18878	19096	19754	20363	18682	17558	17403	16096
Clare	Kilrush	N67 Between Kilrush Ferry and Kilrush, Moyne Court, Co. Clare (1671)	1159	1212	1259	1348	1637	2144	2159	1973	1580	1258	1250	1095
			1049	1086	1158	1254	1522	1997	2043	1850	1511	1173	1140	1009
Kerry	Cahersiveen	N70 Between Cahersiveen and	1792	1815	2064	2454	2682	2998	3530	3960	2847	2286	2043	1877

Macro-Monitoring Results

		Glenbeigh, Gortaforia, Co. Kerry (20701)	1703	1716	2010	2413	2650	2999	3561	3907	2809	2214	1928	1815
<b>Cork</b>	Bantry	N72 Between Bantry and Glengarriff, North of Bantry, Co. Cork (1715)	4935	5131	5409	5694	6062	6297	6694	7051	6135	5461	5363	4961
			4624	4742	5139	5561	5844	6037	6458	6802	5912	5273	5014	4734

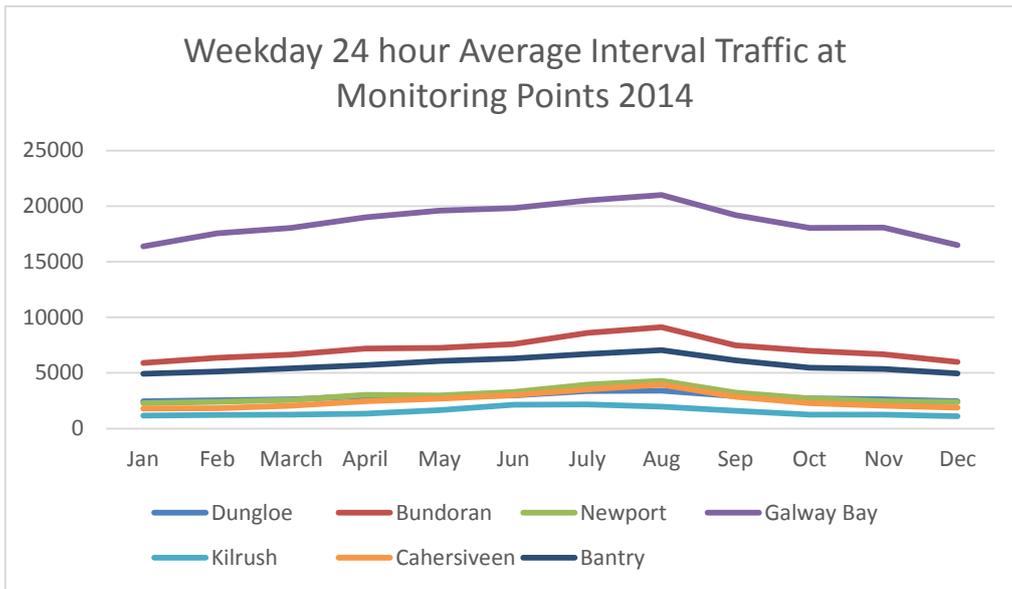
**Table 2.5 NRA Traffic Count at Monitoring Points**

## Macro-Monitoring Results

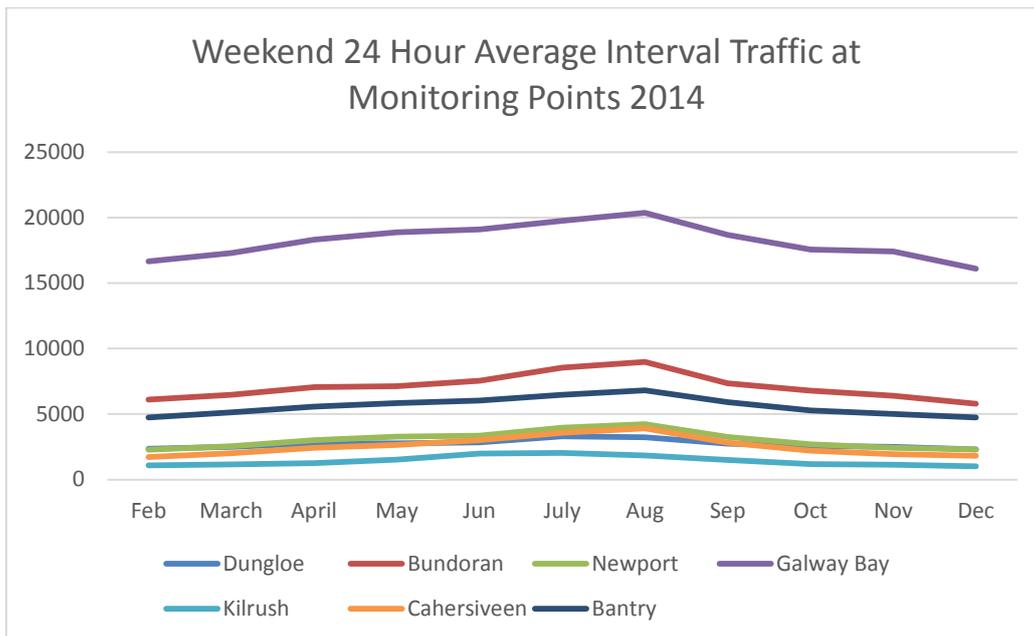
County	Control	National Authority Counter	Roads Traffic	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donegal	Ballybofey	N13 Between Stranorlar and Letterkenny, Treantaboy, Co. Donegal (1133)		8782	9298	9434	9675	9772	9945	10198	10275	9947	9748	9739	9116
				8192	8666	9000	9151	9300	9506	9708	9711	9426	9292	9229	8716
Galway	Gort	N18 Between Kilcolgan and Clarinbridge, Co. Galway (1182)		16375	17556	18028	19000	19581	19819	20499	20984	19178	18045	18067	16488
				15542	16644	17360	18316	18878	19096	19754	20363	18682	17558	17403	16096
Kerry	Castleisland	N21 Between Tralee and Castleisland, Co. Kerry (1211)		5077	8483	8833	9144	9208	9315	9802	10195	9334	9255	9150	8775
				7663	7984	8509	8923	8954	9102	9517	9885	9044	8933	8779	8502
Clare	Lahinch	N67 Between Ennistimon and Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare(20671)		1789	1849	2053	2231	2415	2579	2831	2970	2826	2107	1927	1813
				1683	1773	1997	2123	2393	2573	2783	2924	2948	2051	1823	1744

**Table 2.6 NRA Traffic Count at Control Points**

## Macro-Monitoring Results

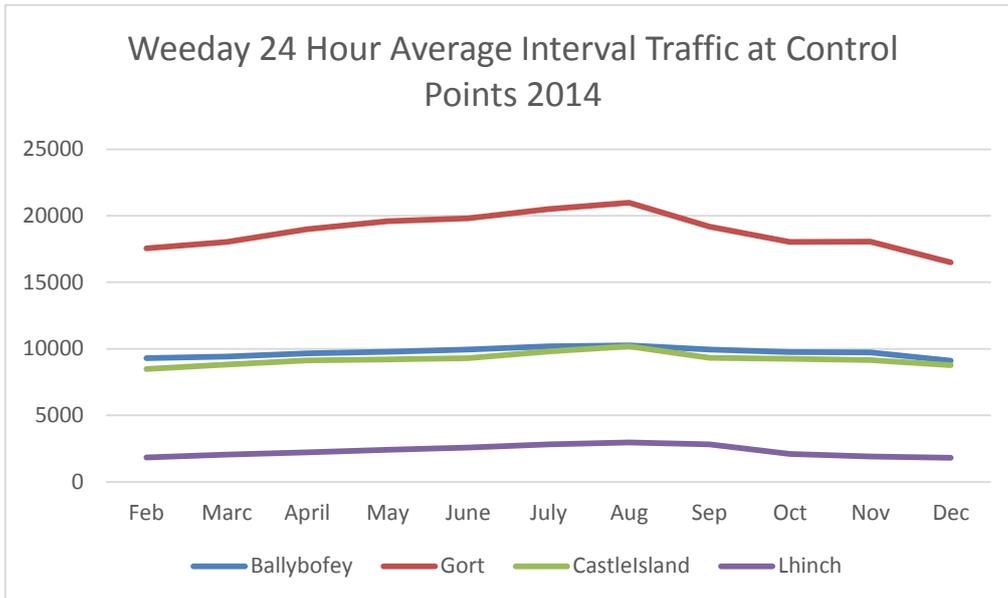


**Figure 2.4 Weekday 24 hour average interval traffic at monitoring points 2014**

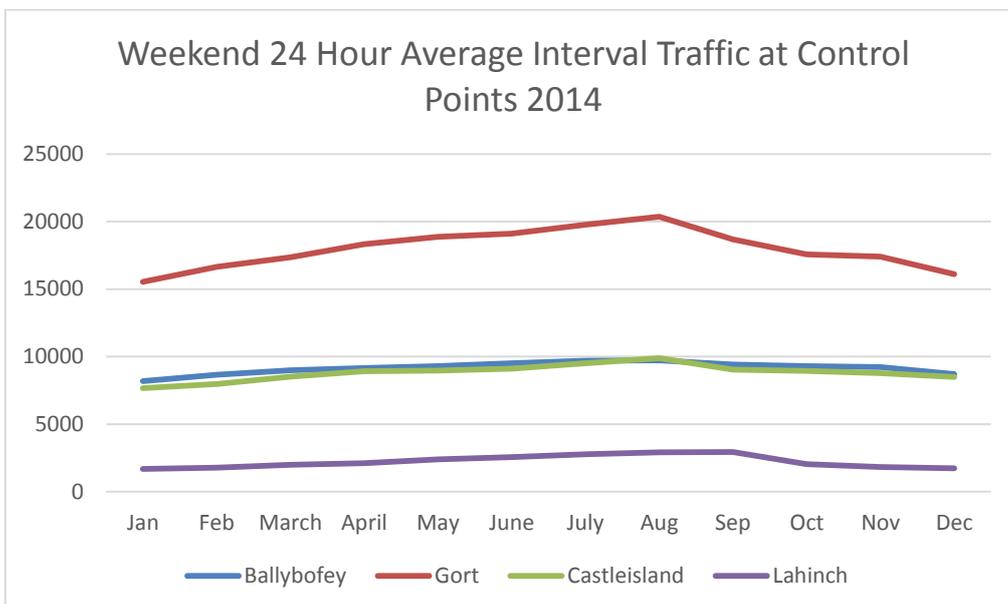


**Figure 2.5 Weekday 24 hour average interval traffic at monitoring points 2014**

## Macro-Monitoring Results



**Figure 2.6 Weekday 24 hour average interval traffic at monitoring points 2014**



**Figure 2.7 Weekend 24 hour average interval traffic at control points 2014**

The results of this macro indicator show that in 2014 there was an increase in 24 hour average interval traffic volumes during both weekends and weekdays, at all monitoring and control points during the summer months. This increase in average interval traffic at the monitoring points and control sites examined is likely attributable to an influx of tourists (domestic and foreign) travelling to and from the Wild Atlantic Way sites during the summer months.

## 2.4 Macro-Indicator 3- Blue Flag Beaches

The monitoring and technical Indicator 'Blue Flag Beaches' was applied to each of the monitoring points outlined in Table 1.2, and control points outlined in Table 1.3. The Blue Flag is operated in Ireland by An Taisce on behalf of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). Beaches and marinas that achieve this accolade must comply with a specific set of criteria relating to water quality, information provision, environmental education, safety and beach management. At beaches the bathing water must comply with the excellent standard in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Directive. The 'Blue Flag Beaches' locations map, as available on An Taisce's 'Blue Flag Beaches' website was examined against the list of the established monitoring and control points. All those monitoring and control points that have been awarded 'Blue Flag' status in the year 2014 were noted, as indicated in Tables 2.7 and 2.8 below.

County	Monitoring Point	Blue Flag
Donegal	Dungloe	N
Donegal (Sligo Border)	Bundoran	Y
Mayo	Newport	N
Galway	Galway Bay	N
Clare	Kilrush	N
Kerry	Cahersiveen	N
Cork	Bantry	N

County	Control Site	Blue Flag
Donegal	Ballybofey	N
Galway	Gort	N
Kerry	Castleisland	N
Clare	Lahinch	Y

**Table 2.7 Blue Flag Beaches at Control Sites**

**Table 2.8 Blue Flag Beaches at Monitoring Points**

Of the 11 beaches examined at the established monitoring and control points, 2 of the beaches had been awarded 'Blue Flag' status in 2014. These were Bundoran beach and Lahinch beach.

## 2.5 Macro Indicator 4- Green Coast Award

The monitoring and technical Indicator 'Green Coast Award' was applied to each of the monitoring points outlined in Table 1.2, and control points outlined in Table 1.3. The Green Coast Awards is an An Taisce award for beaches that meet the excellent standard for water quality as set out in the Bathing Water Directive but may not have the necessary built infrastructure to achieve Blue Flag status. An important element of this award is that these beaches have a beach management plan in place and that the local community are engaged in this process. The 'Green Coast' locations map as accessed via An Taisce's 'Clean Coasts' website was examined against the list of the above mentioned monitoring and control points. All those monitoring and control points that had 'Green Coast' status in the year 2014 were noted, as indicated in Tables 2.9 and 2.10 below.

### 1.5.1 Green Coasts at Monitoring Points

County	Monitoring Point	Green Coast
Donegal	Dungloe	N
Donegal (Sligo Border)	Bundoran	N
Mayo	Newport	N
Galway	Galway Bay	N
Clare	Kilrush	N
Kerry	Cahersiveen	N
Cork	Bantry	N

### 1.5.2 Green Coasts at Control Points

County	Control Site	Green Coast
Donegal	Ballybofey	N
Galway	Gort	N
Kerry	Castleisland	N
Clare	Lahinch	N

Table 2.9 Green coasts at control sites

### Table 2.10 Green Coasts and Monitoring Points

Of the 11 monitoring and control points examined, none held an An Taisce 'Green Coast Award' in 2014.

## 2.6 Monitoring Indicator 5- State of Knowledge of Irelands Biodiversity

This general monitoring indicator is common to all of the above mentioned monitoring and control points. In 2010 the National Biodiversity Data Centre produced a document entitled 'State of Knowledge- Irelands Biodiversity 2012.' It is the first inventory of the principal sources of biodiversity data in the Republic of Ireland. The document is laid out in sections following taxonomic grouping. Each section follows the same format and provides information on; Irish species, number of species, primary sources of distribution data, National conservation assessment, and monitoring or repeat surveys in place. The status of this indicator can be informed and updated by emerging findings and information sources from Biodiversity Reports.

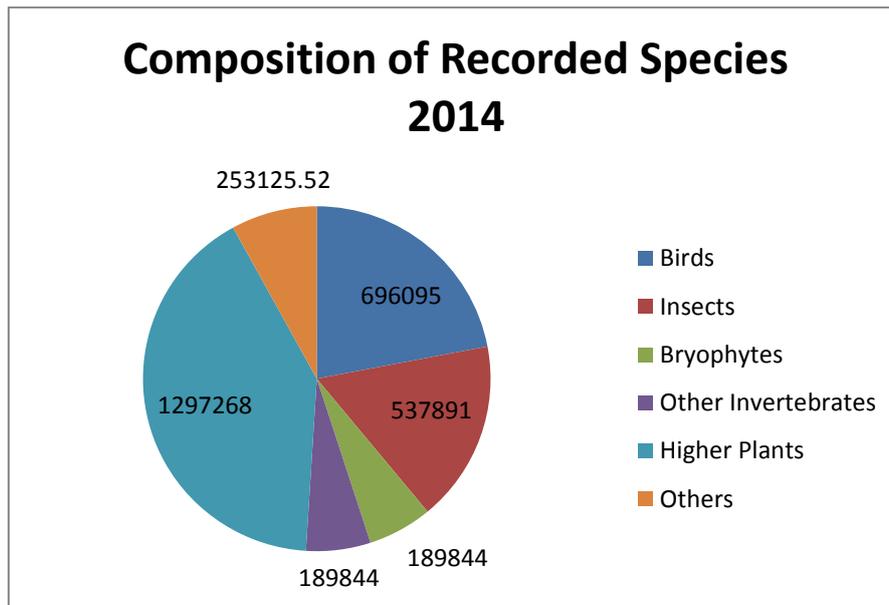
For monitoring purposes, the National Biodiversity Centre Annual Review was examined in order to inform on the State of Knowledge of Irelands Biodiversity for the year ending 2014. The following 2014 parameters were noted: Species Numbers, Datasets, Habitats and Recorded Users of Biodiversity Maps- the online data portal, as indicated in Table 2.11 below. Annual Review publications can be examined hereafter in order to assess any upward or downward trends in the state of knowledge of Irelands Biodiversity.

State of Knowledge Ireland's Biodiversity Report (2010) -National biodiversity Centre Annual Review	Species Numbers 2014	Records of Species 2014		Datasets of Species 2014	National surveys of EU protected Habitats 2014	Recorded users of Biodiversity Maps
	14,352	Total	3,164,069	105	8	120,711
		Birds	22%			
		Insects	17%			
		Bryophytes	6%			
		Other Invertebrates	6%			
		Higher Plants	41%			
		Others	8%			

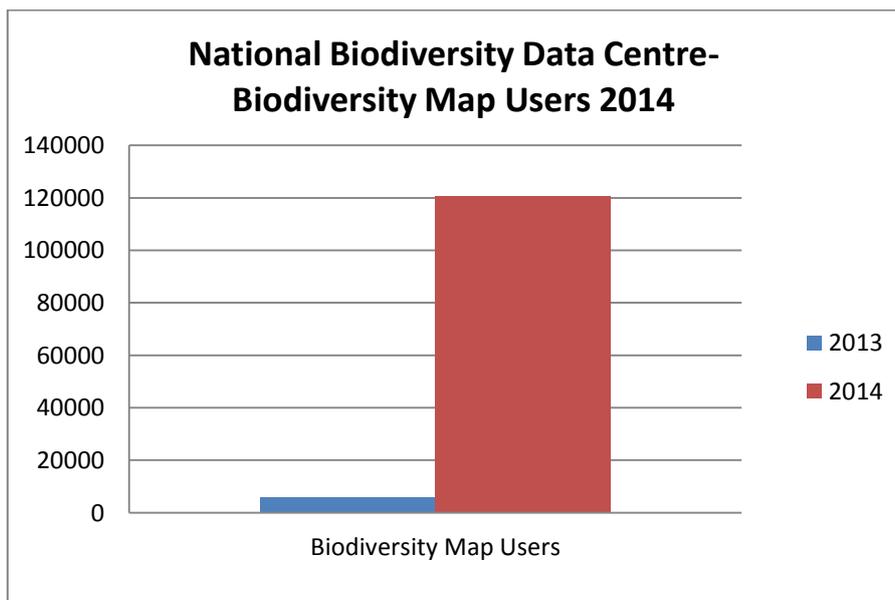
**Table 2.11 National Biodiversity Centre Annual Review 12014 data**

## Macro-Monitoring Results

The National Biodiversity Center Annual Review shows a notable rise in both numbers of species, and records and datasets of species in 2014. The National Biodiversity Data Centre has continued its work of collating empirical data and growing the national biodiversity database. This database now contains 3,164,069 records from 105 datasets. Data on 14,352 species, which is almost half of all known Irish species, is available to map through the on-line data portal Biodiversity Maps. This is a growth of over 11% in the number of records added to the system during 2014. During 2014, Biodiversity Maps saw a growth of users from 5,967 in 2013 to 120,711.



**Figure 2.8 Composition of recorded species 2014**



**Figure 2.9 Biodiversity Map Users 2014**

## **2.7 Monitoring Indicator 6- EPA Ireland's Environment - An Assessment (2012)**

This general monitoring indicator is common to all of the above mentioned monitoring and control points. Ireland's Environment 2012 – An Assessment, is the Environmental Protection Agency's four-yearly state of the environment report. It provides an evidence-based assessment of the current state of the environment in Ireland and the pressures being placed on it. It outlines the trends and changes in environmental quality as well as the socio-economic activities that are linked with these changes. The status of this monitoring indicator can be informed and updated by emerging findings and information sources from this report. It should be reviewed on release- every four years, and any changes in the environmental status along the Wild Atlantic Way should be noted.

The overall finding of the 2012 report is that Ireland's environment is in a generally good condition overall. However, there is no room for complacency and the country faces tough challenges in the coming years to meet EU commitments and targets across a range of areas including water, waste, air quality and greenhouse gases to name but a few. The current recession has meant that levels of emissions and waste generation rates have paused and in some cases reduced. However, it must not be assumed that recession-induced reductions mean that environmental pressures are being managed in a sustainable way. Ireland needs to ensure that its economic renewal and recovery is based strongly on the principles of sustainable development, and that we decouple future economic growth from environmental pressures. In this context, the report has identified four key environmental challenges for Ireland: Valuing and protecting our natural environment; Building a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy; Implementing environmental legislation; and Putting the environment at the centre of our decision-making.

## **Monitoring Indicator 7- The status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland**

This general monitoring indicator is common to all monitoring and control points. It provides for an assessment of the status of the habitats and species that Ireland is required to protect under the EU Habitats Directive. The status of this indicator can be informed and updated by emerging findings and information sources from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and other stakeholders on the status of EU Protected Habitats and Species.

The 2008 report 'The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland' as published by NPWS was reviewed in order to inform this monitoring indicator. The overall status of each of Irelands known habitats and species was noted as 'Good' 'Poor' or 'Bad,' for the period 2008-2014, as indicated in Table 2.12 below. This report should be review on release- every six years, and any changes in the status of Irish habitats or species along the Wild Atlantic Way should be noted.

Macro-Monitoring Results

Habitat	Overall Status
SANDBANKS slightly covered by seawater at all times (1110)	Poor
ESTUARIES (1130)	Poor
MUDFLATS & SANDFLATS not covered by seawater at low tide (1140)	Poor
COASTAL LAGOONS (1150)	Bad
LARGE SHALLOW INLETS AND BAYS (1160)	Poor
REEFS (1170)	Poor
ANNUAL VEGETATION OF DRIFT LINES (1210)	Poor
PERENNIAL VEGETATION OF STONY BANKS (1220)	Poor
VEGETATED SEA CLIFFS of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts (1230)	Poor
SALICORNIA and other annuals colonising mud and sand (1310)	Poor
SPARTINA SWARDS (1320)	Poor
ATLANTIC SALT MEADOWS (1330)	Poor
MEDITERRANEAN SALT MEADOWS (1410)	Poor
HALOPHILOUS SCRUB (1420)	Bad
EMBRYONIC SHIFTING DUNES (2110)	Poor
SHIFTING DUNES along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) (2120)	Bad
FIXED COASTAL DUNES with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) (2130)	Bad
DECALCIFIED FIXED DUNES with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> (2140)	Bad
ATLANTIC DECALCIFIED FIXED DUNES ( <i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i> ) (2150)	Bad
DUNES with <i>Salix repens</i> spp. <i>Argentea</i> ( <i>Salicion arenariae</i> ) (2170)	Bad
HUMID DUNE SLACKS (2190)	Bad
MACHAIR (21A0)	Bad
OLIGOTROPHIC WATERS containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> ) (3110)	Bad
OLIGOTROPHIC to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and or <i>Isoeto - Nanojuncetae</i> (3130)	Bad
HARD OLIGO-MESOTROPHIC WATERS with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. (3140)	Bad
NATURAL EUTROPHIC LAKES with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> – type vegetation (3150)	Bad
NATURAL DYSTROPHIC LAKES and ponds (3160)	Bad
TURLOUGHES (3180)	Poor
WATER COURSES of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation (3260)	Bad
RIVERS WITH MUDDY BANKS with <i>Chenopodion rubri</i> p.p. and <i>Bidention</i> p.p. vegetation (3270)	Good
NORTH ATLANTIC WET HEATHS with <i>Erica tetralix</i> (4010)	Bad

Macro-Monitoring Results

<b>EUROPEAN DRY HEATH (4030)</b>	Poor
<b>ALPINE AND SUB-ALPINE HEATH (4060)</b>	Poor
<b>JUNIPERUS COMMUNIS formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands (5130)</b>	Poor
<b>CALAMINARIAN GRASSLANDS of the Violetalia calaminariae (6130)</b>	Poor
<b>SEMI-NATURAL DRY GRASSLANDS and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (6210)</b>	Bad
<b>SPECIES-RICH NARDUS GRASSLANDS on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (6230)</b>	Bad
<b>MOLINIA MEADOWS on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) (6410)</b>	Bad
<b>HYDROPHILOUS TALL HERB fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels (6430)</b>	Poor
<b>LOWLAND HAY MEADOWS (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) (6510)</b>	Bad
<b>ACTIVE RAISED BOG (7110)</b>	Bad
<b>DEGRADED RAISED BOG still capable of regeneration (7120)</b>	Poor
<b>BLANKET BOG (and Active Blanket Bog) (7130)</b>	Bad
<b>TRANSITION MIRE and quaking bogs (7140)</b>	Bad
<b>DEPRESSIONS on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion (7150)</b>	Good
<b>CALCAREOUS FENS with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae (7210)</b>	Bad
<b>PETRIFYING SPRINGS with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) (7220)</b>	Bad
<b>ALKALINE FEN (7230)</b>	Bad
<b>SILICEOUS SCREE of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsetalia ladani) (8110)</b>	Poor
<b>CALCAREOUS AND CALCHIST SCREEs of the montane to alpine levels in Ireland (Thlaspietea rotundifolii) (8120)</b>	Poor
<b>CALCAREOUS ROCKY SLOPES with chasmophytic vegetation (8210)</b>	Poor
<b>SILICEOUS ROCKY SLOPES with chasmophytic vegetation (8220)</b>	Poor
<b>LIMESTONE PAVEMENTS (8240)</b>	Poor
<b>CAVES not open to the public (8310)</b>	Good
<b>Submerged or partially submerged SEA CAVES (8330)</b>	Good
<b>OLD SESSILE OAK WOODS with Ilex and Blechnum (91A0)</b>	Bad
<b>BOG WOODLAND (91D0)</b>	Poor
<b>ALLUVIAL FORESTS with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (91E0)</b>	Bad
<b>Taxus baccata WOODS (91J0)</b>	Bad
<b>Species</b>	
<b>KILLARNEY FERN Trichomanes speciosum (1421)</b>	Good
<b>MARSH SAXIFRAGE Saxifraga hirculus (1528)</b>	Good

Macro-Monitoring Results

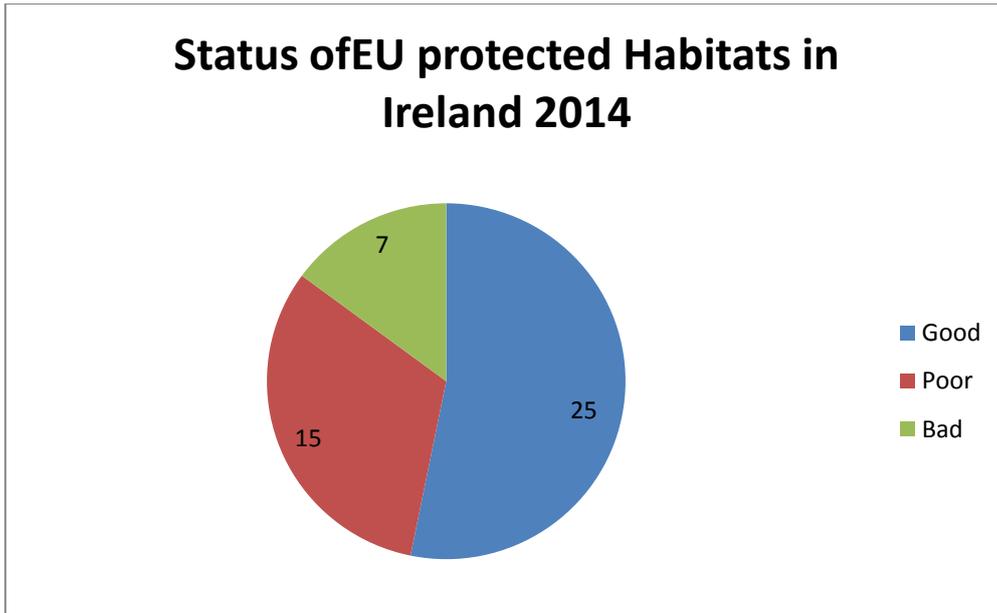
<b>SLENDER NAIAD</b> <i>Najas flexilis</i> (1833)	Poor
<b>SLENDER GREEN FEATHER-MOSS</b> <i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i> (1393)	Good
<b>PETALWORT</b> <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (1395)	Good
<b>MAERL</b> <i>Lithothamnion coralloides</i> <i>Phymatolithon calcareum</i> (1376, 1377)	Poor
<b>WHITE CUSHION MOSS</b> <i>Leucobryum glaucum</i> (1400)	Poor
<b>SPHAGNUM GENUS</b> <i>Sphagnum</i> spp. (1409)	Poor
<b>LYCOPODIUM GROUP</b> <i>Lycopodium</i> (and related genera) (1413)	Poor
<b>CLADONIA SPP.</b> <i>Cladonia</i> subgenus <i>Cladina</i> (5113)	Poor
<b>GEYER'S WHORL SNAIL</b> <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (1013)	Poor
<b>NARROW-MOUTHED WHORL SNAIL</b> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (1014)	Poor
<b>DEMOULIN'S WHORL SNAIL</b> <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (1016)	Bad
<b>KERRY SLUG</b> <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> (1024)	Good
<b>FRESHWATER PEARL MUSSEL</b> <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (1029)	Bad
<b>NORE FRESHWATER PEARL MUSSEL</b> <i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i> (1990)	Bad
<b>WHITE-CLAWED CRAYFISH</b> <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (1092)	Poor
<b>MARSH FRITILLARY</b> <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> (1065)	Poor
<b>SEA LAMPREY</b> <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (1095)	Poor
<b>RIVER LAMPREY</b> <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> <b>BROOK LAMPREY</b> <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (1099,1096)	Good
<b>ALLIS SHAD</b> <i>Alosa alosa</i> (1102)	Unkown
<b>KILLARNEY SHAD</b> <i>Alosa fallax killarnensis</i> (5046)	Good
<b>TWAITE SHAD</b> <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (1103)	Bad
<b>POLLAN</b> <i>Coregonus autumnalis</i> (5076)	Bad
<b>ATLANTIC SALMON</b> <i>Salmo salar</i> (1106)	Bad
<b>NATTERJACK TOAD</b> <i>Bufo calamita</i> (1202)	Bad
<b>COMMON FROG</b> <i>Rana temporaria</i> (1213)	Poor
<b>LEATHERBACK TURTLE</b> <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i> (1223)	Poor
<b>HORSESHOE BAT</b> <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> (1303)	Good
<b>COMMON PIPISTRELLE</b> <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> (1309)	Good
<b>SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE</b> <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> (5009)	Good
<b>NATHUSIUS' PIPISTRELLE</b> <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i> (1317)	Good
<b>NATTERER'S BAT</b> <i>Myotis nattereri</i> (1322)	Good
<b>DAUBENTON'S BAT</b> <i>Myotis daubentoni</i> (1314)	Good
<b>WHISKERED BAT</b> <i>Myotis mystacinus</i> <b>BRANDT'S BAT</b> <i>Myotis brandtii</i> (1330, 1320)	Good

Macro-Monitoring Results

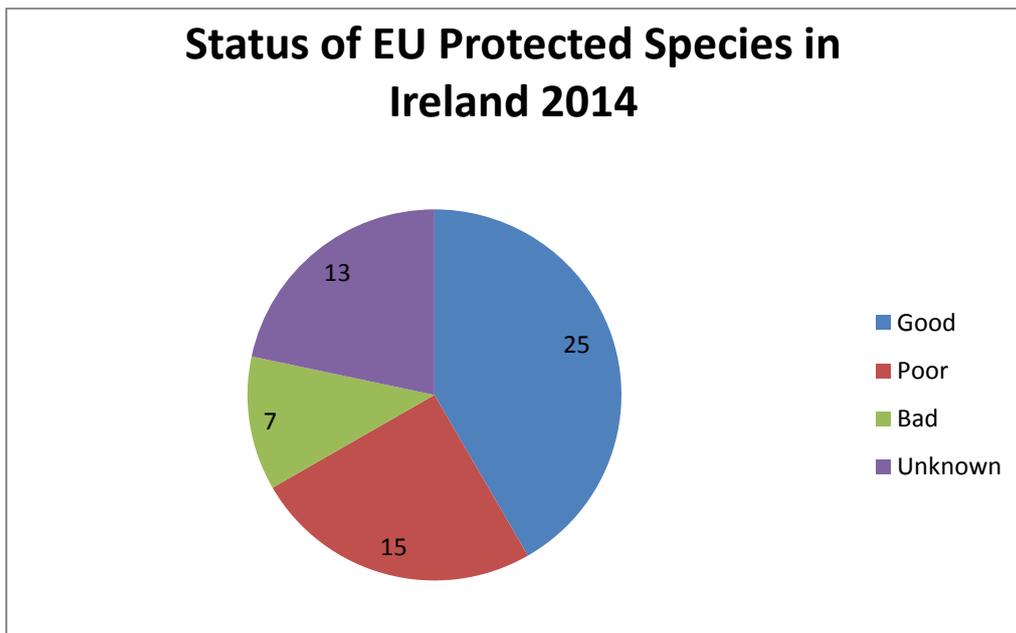
<b>BROWN LONG-EARED BAT</b> <i>Plecotus auritus</i> (1326)	Good
<b>LEISLER'S BAT</b> <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i> (1331)	Good
<b>IRISH HARE</b> <i>Lepus timidus</i> (1334)	Poor
<b>OTTER</b> <i>Lutra lutra</i> (1355)	Poor
<b>PINE MARTEN</b> <i>Martes martes</i> (1357)	Good
<b>GREY SEAL</b> <i>Halichoerus gryphus</i> (1364)	Good
<b>COMMON (HARBOUR) SEAL</b> <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (1365)	Good
<b>HUMPBACK WHALE</b> <i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i> (1345)	Unknown
<b>BOTTLE-NOSED DOLPHIN</b> <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (1349)	Good
<b>COMMON DOLPHIN</b> <i>Delphinus delphis</i> (1350)	Good
<b>HARBOUR PORPOISE</b> <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (1351)	Good
<b>KILLER WHALE</b> <i>Orcinus orca</i> (2027)	Unknown
<b>LONG-FINNED PILOT WHALE</b> <i>Globicephala melas</i> (2029)	Unknown
<b>RISSO'S DOLPHIN</b> <i>Grampus griseus</i> (2030)	Unknown
<b>WHITE-SIDED DOLPHIN</b> <i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i> (2031)	Good
<b>WHITE-BEAKED DOLPHIN</b> <i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i> (2032)	Unknown
<b>STRIPED DOLPHIN</b> <i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i> (2034)	Unknown
<b>CUVIER'S BEAKED WHALE</b> <i>Ziphius cavirostris</i> (2035)	Unknown
<b>SOWERBY'S BEAKED WHALE</b> <i>Mesoplodon bidens</i> (2038)	Unknown
<b>MINKE WHALE</b> <i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i> (2618)	Good
<b>FIN WHALE</b> <i>Balaenoptera physalus</i> (2621)	Good
<b>BLUE WHALE</b> <i>Balaenoptera musculus</i> (5020)	Unknown
<b>SPERM WHALE</b> <i>Physeter macrocephalus</i> (5031)	Unknown
<b>NORTHERN BOTTLENOSE WHALE</b> <i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i> (5033)	Unknown
<b>SEI WHALE</b> <i>Balaenoptera borealis</i> (2619)	Unknown

**Table 2.12 Status of EU protected habitats and species 2014**

The data shows that in the year 2014, of the 59 EU protected habitats in Ireland- 4 were of 'Good' status, 26 were of 'Poor' status and 29 were of 'Bad' status. Of the 60 EU protected species in Ireland- 25 were of 'Good' status, 15 were of 'Poor' status, 7 were of 'bad' status. The status of some 13 EU protected species in Ireland were 'Unknown' in 2014.



**Figure 2.10 Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland 2014**



**Figure 2.11 Status of EU Protected Species in Ireland 2014**

## 2.8 Monitoring Indicator 8- Visitor Numbers

The monitoring and technical Indicator 'Visitor Numbers' was applied to each of the relevant counties outlined in Table 1.2 and Table 1.3, for the year ending 2014. It should be noted that data on visitor numbers at the specific monitoring and control sites along the Wild Atlantic Way is not available at present time. Thus, in order to inform this monitoring indicator of environmental status, Fáilte Ireland visitor numbers at county level were reviewed instead.

This data should be reviewed and compared annually in order to identify any upwards or downwards trends in county tourism which might be attributable to awareness and promotion of the Wild Atlantic Way.

### 1.8.1 Visitor Numbers at Monitoring Points

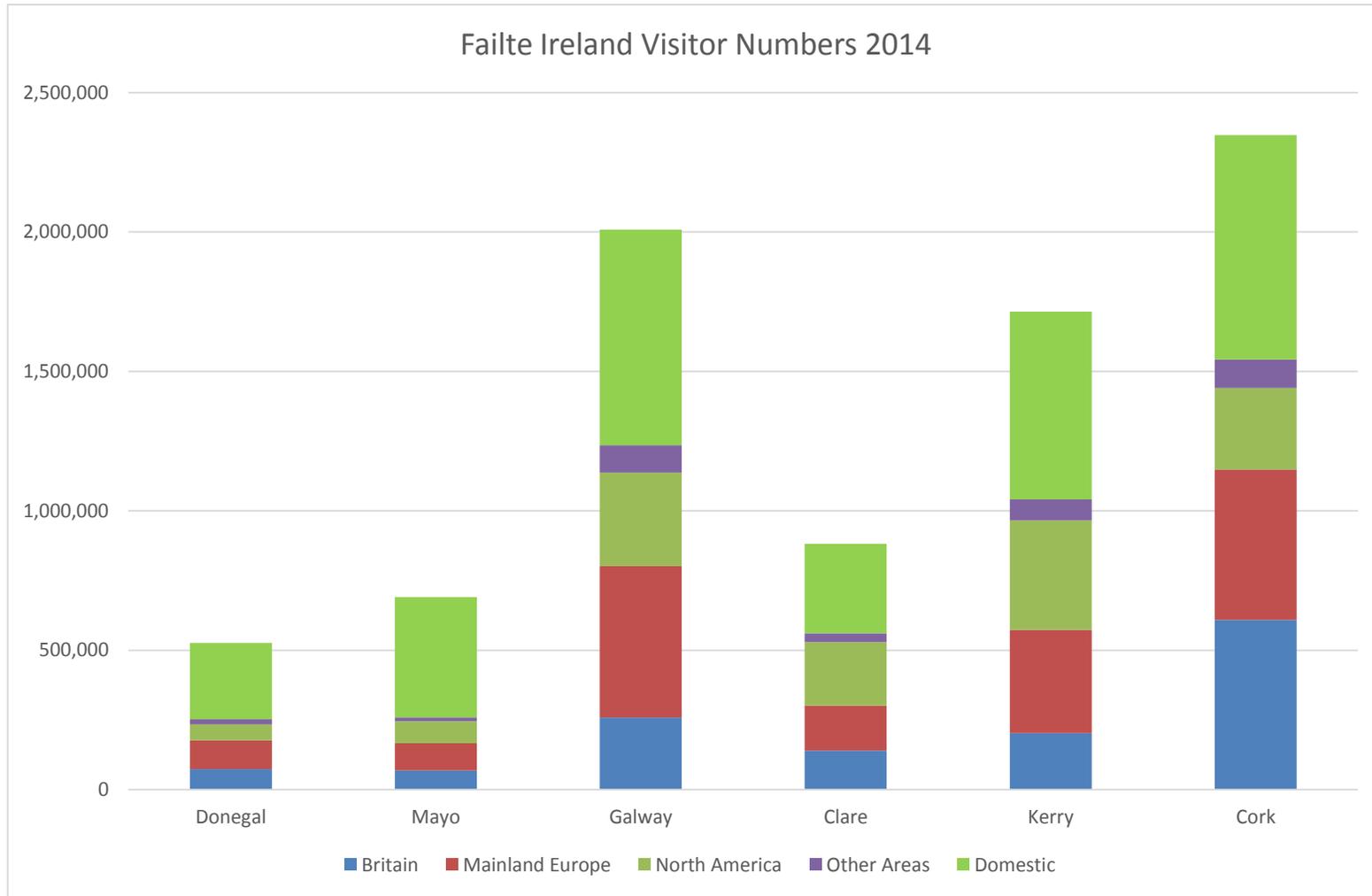
County	Monitoring Point	Britain	Mainland Europe	North America	Other Areas	Domestic	Total Visitors
<b>Donegal</b>	Dungloe	74,000	103,000	57,000	18,000	274,000	526,000
<b>Donegal (Sligo Border)</b>	Bundoran	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above
<b>Mayo</b>	Newport	69,000	98,000	78,000	14,000	432,000	691,000
<b>Galway</b>	Galway Bay	259,000	543,000	335,000	98,000	774,000	2,009,000
<b>Clare</b>	Kilrush	140,000	161,000	228,000	32,000	321,000	882,000
<b>Kerry</b>	Cahersiveen	202,000	371,000	393,000	75,000	673,000	1,713,000
<b>Cork</b>	Bantry	609,000	539,000	293,000	102,000	805,000	2,347,000

**Table 2.13 Visitor Numbers at Monitoring Points**

Macro-Monitoring Results

<b>County</b>	<b>Control</b>	<b>Britain</b>	<b>Mainland Europe</b>	<b>North America</b>	<b>Other Areas</b>	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>Total Visitors</b>
<b>Donegal</b>	Ballybofey	74,000	103,000	57,000	18,000	274,000	526,000
<b>Galway</b>	Gort	259,000	543,000	335,000	98,000	774,000	2,009,000
<b>Kerry</b>	Castleisland	202,000	371,000	393,000	75,000	673,000	1713,000
<b>Clare</b>	Lahinch	140,000	161,000	228,000	32,000	321,000	882,000

**Table 2.14 Visitor Numbers at control sites**



**Figure 2.12 Failte Ireland Visitor Numbers at Counties along the WAW**

## 2.9 Monitoring Indicator 9- Tourism Related Planning Refusals

The final macro-indicator of environmental status examined for this study is 'tourism related planning refusals.' A high level of tourism related refusals is a potential indicator of pressure on the environmental status of a County.

The An Bord Pleanala website was used to gain access to records of all 'decided cases' of planning appeals from the year 2014 at each of the counties along the Wild Atlantic Way. Where a decision was made by An Bord Pleanala to refuse planning for a development in any of these six counties (Galway, Mayo, Donegal, Clare, Cork and Kerry) during 2014, the reason for refusal was examined. All planning refusals during the year 2014 in each county were reviewed and all those with a decision which might be attributable to tourism were noted.

This method provides an official high level indicator as to where pressure points are occurring in Counties along the Wild Atlantic Way without the need to capture all planning applications to Local Authorities and or Foreshore Lease/Licence applications to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

Case Number	Case	Reason for Refusal
<b>Galway</b>		
243438:	Drishaghaun, Co. Galway. (13/1385)	Landscape and Visual Amenity
243245	Ballyconneely, Co. Galway. (14/33)	Landscape and Visual Amenity
242768	Dooros, Co. Galway (13/760)	Area of High Landscape Sensitivity
242436	Keeraun Beg, Co. Galway. (12/1394)	Landscape and Visual Amenity
<b>Donegal</b>		
243281	Kiltooris, Rossbeg, Portnoo, Co. Donegal (14/50028)	Area of Especially High Scenic Amenity
<b>Mayo</b>		
243225	Thornhill, Murrisk, Westport, Co. Mayo. (13/431)	Sensitive Location
<b>Kerry</b>		
242886	Garraneragh, Caherciveen, Co. Kerry. (13/561)	Secondary Special Amenity in the Kerry County Development Plan
<b>Clare</b>		
243085	Murrooghtoohey South, Fanore, Co. Clare. (13/694)	Having regard to the policies of the Clare County Development Plan regarding the appropriate locations for commercial development, rural enterprise, tourism-related developments, and tourist accommodation

**Table 2.15 Tourism Related Planning Refusals**

Results show that every development in the six counties that was refused planning permission in 2014 as a result of tourism related reasons were all located along the Wild Atlantic Way route.



Figure 2.13 Locations of 2014 planning refusals along the WAW attributable to tourism

### **3. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The macro monitoring element of the *Environmental Surveying and Monitoring for the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme*, as discussed in this document concentrates on long-established, high quality, official baselines. These official baselines were adopted for this monitoring survey in order to represent a number of key performance indicators, the intended use of which being to identify trends and changes in the state of the environment along the Wild Atlantic Way.

The key performance indicators, as described in detailed in Table 1.1 of this document, were applied to six monitoring points and a further four control sites inland from the route in order to provide an insight into the state of the environment along the Wild Atlantic Way during the year 2014. The results of these macro monitoring activities will be collated and presented to a Monitoring Group along with results of all other Wild Atlantic Way monitoring activities.

The Strategy for Environmental Surveying and Monitoring is an evolving tool that will be informed and updated by emerging findings. Presentation of all monitoring results should thus be presented to the Monitoring Group twice a year hereafter. This information can be used by relevant members of the Monitoring Group to identify protective, remedial or improvement actions within their own areas of responsibility during the following year. An annual summary of the results of monitoring will be published on the Fáilte Ireland website at the end of each monitoring year.