

Discover how working with nature can help conserve water, improve local rivers, wetlands and lakes and bringing benefits to your community.

Take part in our free 14-week 'ECO (Educational Community Outreach) Programme' as part of the Protecting Shared Waters project, funded by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), and turn real ideas into real projects.

Learn about your important local drinking water sources, rivers, lakes and wetlands. Build new skills in water quality and conservation, deliver change in your community.

Join the free 14-week ECO Programme running from September to December 2026. Learn, plan and take action to protect and improve the health of our rivers and lakes.

The Protecting Shared Waters project aims to develop jointly transferable catchment management solutions that will contribute to water quality/quantity improvements and benefit cross-border communities, landowners and stakeholders. The Protecting Shared Waters project is supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

How to apply for the ECO Programme

To express your interest in the ECO Programme, please send us an email to find out more or request a callback from us before 10th August to talk about the programme:

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Catherine Kelly

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Or express your interest online here:

We look forward to speaking with you.



Sign up to the ECO Programme and help protect our precious rivers and lakes

Get involved in the ECO Programme and learn simple solutions to help water quality and quantity locally whilst protecting your drinking water sources.

Our rivers, wetlands and lakes are important for our economy, drinking water, biodiversity, angling, recreation and local communities. The ECO Programme will support you in understanding how to protect water with nature-friendly measures.

As Patrick Kavanagh quotes in Tarry Flynn:

"It is not to be wondered at that the minds of the natives were shaped by and like the environment".

Our local waters shape our communities. The ECO Programme supports local people to build on existing efforts and take practical action to keep these waters healthy for future generations.

Contact us today.

PARTNERS



ASSOCIATE PARTNERS



The Protecting Shared Waters Project is supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

* Funding support for programme activities will be subject to eligibility criteria and delivered in line with applicable state aid requirements, with details communicated clearly to participants.*



PROTECTING
SHARED
WATERS



PEACEPLUS
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the
European Union | UK Government
Belfast to Belfast
Government of Ireland | Northern Ireland
Executive

Ready to make a difference for the River Fane and our shared waters? Join the free ECO programme



What Is The ECO Programme?

The ECO Programme is a free course empowering communities to protect local drinking water, rivers, wetlands and lakes through learning, collaboration, and action through:

- > Practical learning workshops and site visits.
- > Expert support for creating local environmental projects.
- > Working with local experts, community groups and landowners to create lasting environmental improvements in your area.
- > The opportunity for selected projects to be developed through the programme and will be implemented by the Protecting Shared Waters project for nature-based solutions and water conservation measures.

Funding

Funding is not provided directly to participants; instead, the programme will manage and deliver the selected projects on the ground. All participants will receive guidance on other funding opportunities to support future community-led projects.

What are Nature-based Solutions?

Nature-based solutions are actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously benefitting people and nature.” Source: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

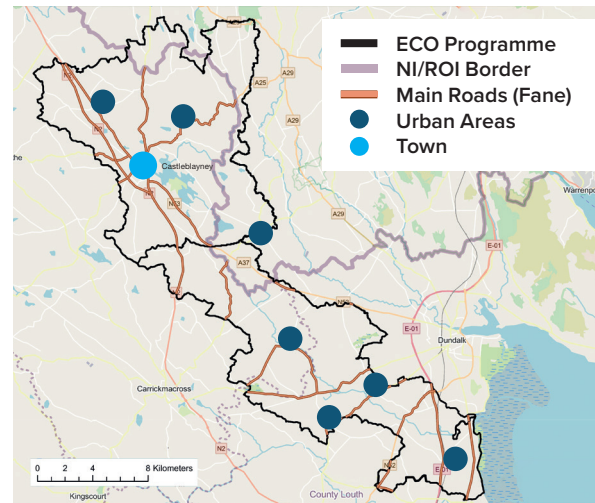
This can be native tree planting along rivers, creating wetlands, swales and other natural features. These measures benefit water, improving water quality, protecting drinking water sources, supporting wildlife, and creating healthier environments for communities to enjoy.



Who is the ECO Programme for?

The ECO Programme is for anyone aged over 18 with an interest in protecting and improving our water environment, including community groups, anglers, recreational users, farmers, and landowners. The River Fane is a cross-border catchment and the ECO Programme is open to participants from Northern Ireland and Ireland.

Join a network of people who share your passion, and help protect, preserve, and enhance our rivers and lakes through real, on-the-ground action.



Why take part?

- > Learn practical skills to protect your local rivers, wetlands and lakes.
- > Visit local and cross-border sites to see nature-based solutions in action.
- > Develop and pitch your own project ideas for your community.
- > Receive expert guidance and mentoring.
- > Plan your own community-led water improvement project.
- > Showcase your project to key stakeholders and an expert panel.
- > Help create lasting improvements in your local area.



YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH THE ECO PROGRAMME

Workshops:

Learn about rivers, lakes and drinking water in your area.

Take part in six instructor-led workshops and events (held on Saturdays, September to December 2026). Explore the pressures facing the Fane's rivers and lakes and discover practical, nature-based solutions. Connect with others in your community and contribute your local knowledge to help shape the work.

Field visits:

Learning in action

Visit local sites across the Fane catchment to explore your water environment firsthand and get involved in citizen science activities.

Action planning: Develop your project

Work with peers from your community to jointly develop and design a real water improvement project for the Fane. Receive expert support throughout and take part in a cross-border visit to the Strule catchment (Co. Tyrone) to share learning and see nature-based solutions in action.

Expert panel: Pitch your ideas

Develop and present your projects to a panel of local experts and stakeholders. Receive valuable feedback to help refine your plans. A number of projects will be selected to be taken forward for delivery and will be implemented by the Protecting Shared Waters project team.

