



**Proposal for a Research Programme on  
Experimental Governance with regard to Ireland's Water  
Governance Structures and Processes**

**Submitted by**

**The Institute of Public Administration to the Environmental Protection  
Agency**

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## 1. Introduction

This paper outlines a proposed research programme on experimental governance with regard to Ireland's water governance structures and processes (termed Experimental Governance for short). The proposal has emerged following initial discussions between the EPA and IPA. The Experimental Governance research programme would be located at the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) and funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), with the possibility of staff from both organisations being involved in the research.

The next section of this proposal discusses the general structure of existing research activity at the IPA, and the advantages that a research collaboration with the EPA could bring. In Section 3 we set out the background to the proposed programme. Section 4 outlines the proposed oversight and design of the programme. Section 5 sets out the main themes to be addressed in the research programme, and the research outputs. Section 6 outlines the methodological approach proposed. Section 7 provides some information on the research team and a summary budget.

## 2. Research at the IPA

The IPA's mission is to advance the understanding, standard and practice of public administration and public policy. Established in 1957, the business of the IPA is overseen by a Board composed of senior managers from across the public service, including representatives from government departments, local government, and state agencies.

Research is one of the central pillars of the work of the Institute. The research team focuses on applied, commissioned research. The research agenda closely aligns with the public service reform and modernisation agenda, to increase awareness and stimulate informed debate and further thinking on significant management issues of the day. As the only dedicated full time resource devoted to the scientific study of public management in Ireland, the research team at the IPA has played and continues to play a vital role in the development of the public services in Ireland.

The research team works closely with government departments, local authorities and state agencies in developing an applied research agenda and research programmes to support reform initiatives. At central government level, there are strong ties with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to support the public sector reform programmes driven by the Department. For example, the Institute's *State of the Public Service Research Series* (<https://www.ipa.ie/research-papers/state-of-the-public-service-series.683.html>) provides up to date research on national and international developments in various aspects of public management. The head of research is a member of the Public Service Management Group overseeing the implementation of *Our Public Service 2020* (Government of Ireland, 2017), a framework reform initiative that supports continuous development and innovation across the public service.

At local government level, *Local Government Research Strategy 2019-2021*, agreed with the County and City Management Association (CCMA), provides the framework for research activity. The strategy identifies a number of research themes and topics to be addressed in research papers produced as part of the IPA *Local Government Research Series* (<https://www.ipa.ie/research-papers/local-government-research.684.html>). These research outputs share national and international good practice, and inform discussion of important issues in a manner that is accessible to busy public service managers.

The research team has strong international connections, having carried out research with and for a range of bodies including the European Commission, World Bank and the OECD. Staff of the research team are members of a number of international research organisations, including the European Group of Public Administration (EGPA) and the International Evaluation Working Group (Inteval).

From the perspective of the IPA, a major advantage of these national and international collaborations and multi-year programmes is that the researchers involved can deepen their expertise in an area thereby improving the quality of the research. Funders can benefit from flexibility in setting the research agenda and from reduced procurement-related costs. In addition, they benefit from the creation of a pool of researchers with skills and expertise relevant to their area of responsibility. Following discussions with the Office of Government Procurement, the IPA has established that public service clients are not obliged to go to tender for services which they require from the IPA, they may simply contract with the IPA directly, once they satisfy their own governance arrangements and financial responsibilities (see Annex 1).

### 3. Background to the Research Programme

There are two main elements to the proposed Experimental Governance research programme:

1. Learning lessons from current experience with regard to the operation of water governance structures and processes to inform the development of the Third-Cycle River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027. This will enhance the evidence base, which in turn will support the evolving governance arrangements.
2. Drawing out wider learning from the study of water governance of relevance to the development of policy and practice in other areas of public reform, for example, climate action and public service reform.

These two strands are described briefly below in sections 3.2 and 3.3, following a short description of experimental governance in section 3.1.

#### 3.1 Experimental governance defined

Countries and governments at all stages of development are facing a common set of problems, the familiar name for which are wicked problems (Head and Alford, 2015). Very often, no one has a precise answer at the beginning about how to address these issues. These problems are ones where the different units and levels of government have to coordinate with each other and with non-government actors in civil society and the private sector. They have to do this to figure out responses to problems that none of them can address alone. Indeed, they have to collaborate to do something that they cannot precisely define in advance.

In response to uncertainty, governments and public bodies are increasingly inclined to set up collaborative exploration of possibilities. In setting up such a collaborative process, the government is stating its commitment to tackling the problem and its willingness to commit resources, but admitting that it does not know what precisely to do. It sets out to learn what to do in collaboration with the people who can develop the best provisional idea of what to do. The centre and those working on the problem commits to learn from the work as it progresses and to correcting and improving the first idea about what to do.

Sabel and Zeitlin (2012) coined the term experimentalist governance to describe the way in which regulation and public governance have evolved in the face of such wicked problems, fragmentation of political authority, and the complexity and uncertainty of technological, market and social conditions. Experimental governance<sup>1</sup>, drawing from this original work, can be described as having five elements:

- First, framework goals are established (such as full employment, 'good water status' or social inclusion) and initial measures for gauging their achievement are agreed.
- Second, entities closer to the problem (such as executive or regulatory agencies or, in the case of EU directives, member states) are given the freedom to pursue these goals as they see fit.
- Third, in return for this autonomy, they must regularly report on their performance, as measured by agreed indicators, and participate in a peer review in which their results are compared with those pursuing the same general ends.
- Fourth, learning from this, the framework goals, metrics and procedures are themselves periodically revised by the actors who initially established them, often augmented by new participants whose knowledge and cooperation are seen as indispensable (NESC, 2010: 36-8; Sabel and Zeitlin, 2008: 273-4).
- Fifth, to ensure engagement and genuine effort to achieve the agreed goal, such approaches require an element of sanction; this can take a number of forms, including legal norms, withdrawal of funding, market pressure and conditional access to large markets.

Experimental governance reflects some of the best and most up to date international thinking on public governance, public institutions and relations between the state and civil society. Among these are:

- The continued focus on 'delivery' and 'implementation', combined with recognition of the limits of ex ante policy blueprints.
- The increased interest in the problem solving capacity of the modern state (Lodge and Wegrich, 2017).
- The enduring interest in the role of networks and 'new governance', qualified by recognition that the state and public agencies have distinctive roles within policy networks.
- The enhanced interest in the way in which policy-relevant knowledge is generated and used in complex and 'wicked' problem areas (Collins and Evans, 2007; Bijker et al 2009).

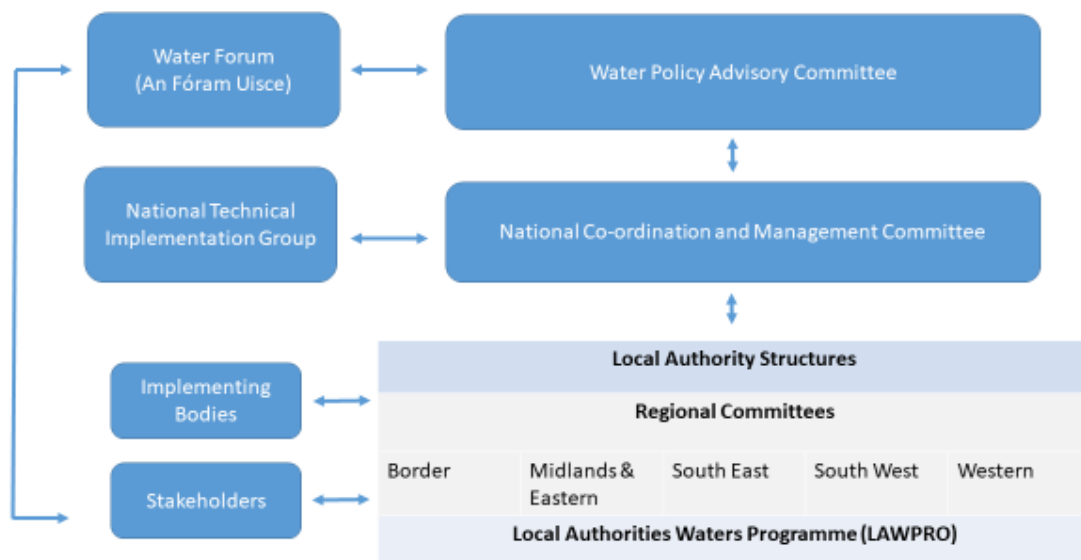
### 3.2 Ireland's reformed water governance system

In recent years, Ireland has created new structures and processes for water governance (Figure 1). These include a new three-tier structure: a Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) supported by a Water Forum; a layer of technical support provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO). The new governance arrangements build on the enhanced capacity and capability for water quality and catchment monitoring and assessment, created in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from 2013, and now embedded in the shared services provided by LAWPRO. As well as enhanced central steering, the new arrangements involve new levels of engagement with local communities and enhanced collaboration with a range of public bodies.

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<sup>1</sup> The elements described can be equally applied at the multi-state or state level, for example, how Ireland is implementing the Water Framework Directive.

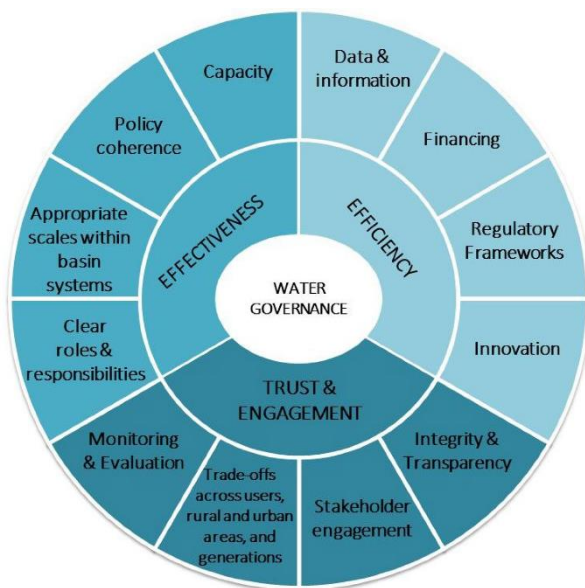
**Figure 1 Water governance arrangements**



These Irish innovations have occurred in the context of the ongoing efforts across the EU to achieve the goals of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and international engagement with the OECD’s ‘principles of water governance’ (Hering et al. 2010; Voulvoulis et al. 2016; Giakoumis and Voulvoulis, 2018; OECD, 2015). Figure 2 gives an overview of the twelve OECD principles. The principles are based on three mutually reinforcing and complementary dimensions of water governance (OECD, 2015: 3):

- Effectiveness relates to the contribution of governance to define clear sustainable water policy goals and targets at all levels of government, to implement those policy goals, and to meet expected targets.
- Efficiency relates to the contribution of governance to maximise the benefits of sustainable water management and welfare at the least cost to society.
- Trust and Engagement relate to the contribution of governance to building public confidence and ensuring inclusiveness of stakeholders through democratic legitimacy and fairness for society at large.

**Figure 2 Overview of OECD Principles on Water Governance**



Source: OECD, 2015

The new water governance system can be seen as a ‘living lab’, demonstrating features of experimental governance, and addressing the OECD water governance principles (Sabel, O’Donnell and O’Connell, 2019). Research is required to provide information on how and where the new structures and processes are working and any problems or issues emerging. This requires field research to trace out the way in which the three-tier governance system is working to achieve the objectives of the WFD and the national River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) (Government of Ireland, 2015).

The research programme aims to provide a real time external assessment of the process and, in dialogue with actors, identify possible adjustments to governance structures and processes for consideration in the context of the development of the Third-Cycle River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027. It should also assist Ireland’s contribution to the EU policy processes on the WFD and move towards deeper links between environmental and agricultural policy, building on the innovative work to date including the establishment of the National Dairy Sustainability Forum and the Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme. The research will also relate the Irish experience to the OECD Water Governance Indicator Framework. In this way, it will feed in to national and international developments with regard to evolving practice in water governance.

### 3.3 Ireland’s Public Reform Trajectory and Challenges

The joint EPA-IPA research programme on experimental governance in the area of water governance structures and processes will also contribute to the wider understanding of Ireland’s public system and public sector reform challenges. Since its 2002 Strategy report, NESC has argued that many of the profound organisational challenges in the Irish public system--as well a major substantive challenges such as the Developmental Welfare State and the climate change challenge--, require elements of experimental governance (NESC, 2002; 2005a; 2005b; 2009; 2012; 2013 and 2019).

Public service reform in Ireland is at a critical juncture. The fiscal crisis prompted not only fiscal retrenchment, but also increased centralisation, organisational rationalisation and a complex pattern of reform (Boyle, 2014). After the period of strong fiscal adjustment and centralisation, the public system is now moving to a new phase, in the light of the complexity of some key economic, social and environmental challenges. In a review of public service reform in Ireland, the OECD notes that Ireland's public reform process is in a critical phase. In its assessment of Ireland's second public service reform plan it argues that the next programme should be significantly different, taking a more outcomes-oriented approach, including 'mechanisms for feedback, dialogue and alignment of expectations to build trust and responsiveness between citizens and government' (OECD, 2018: 10). *Our Public Service 2020* (Government of Ireland, 2017), the current public service reform plan, responds to these issues.

The OECD also placed emphasis on establishing a 'performance dialogue with sectors'. Indeed, it argues that 'the co-production of reform means giving citizens a role in prioritising outcomes and in making decisions about how to achieve them' (OECD, 2018: 16). This has significant implications for how data is generated and used: 'Developing a performance focus will mean building capacity, consulting broadly and aligning expectations, getting creative in terms of using administrative data, and a steady commitment to building data over time to contribute to tracking and measuring reform priorities' (OECD, 2018: 17).

The OECD also points to the importance of innovation, for example through supporting innovation networks, and reforming structures processes and practices. The OECD assessment finishes by asking a series of probing questions, among which is: 'is Ireland ready to move beyond a series of public service reforms to a state of continuous change and transformation to meet the challenges of a globalised and interdependent world?' (18).

The research on experimental governance to be undertaken in the research programme can play an important role in helping answer this question. In particular the research can:

- Contribute to the wider discussion of approaches to environmental policy and governance, including climate change, waste management, the circular economy, air quality and their interdependencies.
- Provide a rich account of experimental governance in one important sphere - encompassing overall steering, intra-institutional and administrative reform and engagement with stakeholders - in ways that can inform the emerging understanding of Ireland's approaches to dealing with the grand environmental challenges as set out in the EPA's State of the Environment reports together with wider public sector reform trajectories and challenges (Boyle, 2017).
- Contribute to international understanding of regulatory and public sector reform.

#### 4. Proposed Oversight and Design of Research Programme

For the specific design of the research programme, we would propose that the following elements be included:

- A Steering Committee comprising two senior staff members from the IPA and the EPA, a senior representative from the Water Division of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG), a senior official from LAWPRO also representing the County and City Managers Association (CCMA), an official from the National Economic and Social Council



(NESC), and a representative from the OECD water governance team, with the EPA providing the chair. The Steering Committee would provide overall high-level guidance. It would meet at least twice annually and would agree the work-plan for the programme, in terms of topics and deliverables. The Steering Committee could agree periodically to invite other interested parties to attend meetings where papers are being presented and to comment on drafts of papers.

- The IPA would appoint a Programme Coordinator who, as well as being a researcher on the programme, would have responsibility for managing the various projects that form the programme. (S)he would be responsible for ensuring that the team of researchers undertook the work to a high standard and delivered outputs on time and in accordance with the schedule set out by the Steering Committee. This person would be a member of the Steering Committee.
- Publication of outputs from the programme in the form of policy papers, journal articles and/or books/book chapters, including open access pdfs. Where relevant, joint IPA/EPA conferences could be organised so that work under the programme could be presented directly to interested parties.

## 5. The Research Programme: Themes and Outputs

Within the overarching framework of the research programme, four themes have been identified to provide a specific focus for the research:

- *The implementation of structures and strategy.* Concentrating on ways in which the new governance structures and processes function to build capabilities within partner organisations and generate a resilient approach to water governance.
- *Knowledge generation, management and transfer.* Providing a more precise account and analysis of the ways in which knowledge is generated, shared and used in the key institutions in the new water governance arrangements.
- *Communication and stakeholder engagement.* Analysis and understanding of the approaches to engagement of stakeholders and identification of its distinctive characteristics in the context of the wider turn to engagement in public policy.
- *Monitoring and evaluation.* Assessing the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation arrangements put in place to support reflection, learning, accountability, and the achievement of the ultimate outcome of good water status with regard to the implementation of the RBMP.

These four themes were chosen as they address important aspects of water governance as set out in the RBMP, and also as they resonate with a number of the OECD principles on water governance. *Implementation structures and strategy* is of central concern to the principles associated with the effectiveness dimension of the OECD principles, especially the ‘policy coherence’ and ‘clear roles and responsibilities’ principles. *Knowledge generation, management and transfer* is central to the efficiency dimension of the OECD principles, especially the principles concerning ‘data and information’ and ‘innovative governance’. *Communication and stakeholder engagement* links with the trust and engagement dimension of the OECD principles, and especially the principle on ‘stakeholder engagement’. Finally, *monitoring and evaluation* is itself one of the principles coming under the trust and engagement dimension of the OECD principles.

Through a detailed look at early progress in relation to each of these themes within and across each of the three tiers of water governance, the research would throw light on a number of dimensions relevant to the understanding of the new governance structures and processes, their effectiveness in driving improvements in water quality and their resilience as a form of regulation and public governance. The proposed research themes are of mutual interest to the EPA and IPA but also have a distinct public good aspect with likely interest from a wide range of stakeholders (e.g. DPER, local authorities, state agencies). Each of the themes is outlined in more detail below.

### 5.1 Implementation structures and strategy

As noted in Section 3.2, a three-tier governance structure is in place to support the implementation of the RBMP 2018-2021:

- A Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) supported by a Water Forum and a National Co-ordination and Management Committee (NCCM). WPAC provides high-level policy direction and oversight of implementation
- A layer of technical support provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). A National Technical Implementation Group (NTIG) co-ordinates detailed tracking of implementation and provides a forum for knowledge sharing.
- The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO). LAWPRO, along with 5 regional committees, drives delivery of supporting measures at local level.

These implementation structures ‘build on the successful elements of the first cycle, while also addressing shortcomings with regard to local and regional implementation, national oversight, public engagement and communication’ (Government of Ireland, 2018, 121).

The proposed research will examine the operation of the three-tier structure, with a particular emphasis on the interaction between the new water-governance structures. The research will examine successes and limitations in the ways in which the new governance structures and processes function to build capabilities within partner organisations and generate a resilient approach to water governance.

### 5.2 Knowledge generation, management and transfer

The EPA have a key role with regard to networking and knowledge sharing. The WFD app and the catchments.ie website both act as information and data repositories and as knowledge-sharing tools to allow better targeting of measures and co-ordination of implementation. An additional knowledge-sharing portal is LAWPRO’s watersandcommunities.ie website, which sets out information on areas for action, and publicises the Office’s work, including public engagement and events. It also provides another medium through which the public can engage with local authorities on water quality at catchment level.

A number of initiatives referenced in the RBMP 2018-2021 also aim to promote wider adoption of best environmental practice through the use of knowledge transfer:

- *The Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP)*. The objective of the new approach is to encourage and support behavioural change, facilitate knowledge transfer and achieve better on-farm environmental outcomes.

- *National Dairy Sustainability Forum*. The Initiative drives the development and rollout of a targeted knowledge-transfer programme to act on the key lessons emerging to bring about soil-fertility improvements on dairy farms.
- *Smart Farming Collaborative Initiative*. The programme collates existing resource-efficiency knowledge and expertise from Ireland's leading academic and advisory bodies, state agencies and technical institutions. This initiative aims to improve farm returns and enhance the rural environment.
- *Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014– 2020*. The RDP 2014–2020 consists of a suite of measures designed to enhance the competitiveness of the agri-food sector, achieve more sustainable management of natural resources and ensure more balanced development of rural areas. There is a strategic focus on water-quality objectives, and two targeted agri-environment schemes under the RDP - Green Low-carbon Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS) and the Targeted Agriculture Modernisation Scheme (TAMS) - have important roles as supporting measures to improve water quality.

The research will provide an account and analysis of the ways in which knowledge is generated, shared and used within and between the various stakeholders and institutions in the new water governance arrangements. The research will assess the organisational and cultural factors that can both support and inhibit the development of knowledge transfer. It will provide guidance in respect of developing a robust approach to knowledge generation, management and transfer.

### 5.3 Communication and public and stakeholder engagement

The public consultation processes carried out as a precursor to the development of the second RBMP highlighted the need to improve communication and public and stakeholder engagement with regard to the implementation of the RBMP. The concerns centred around facilitating (1) public and stakeholder engagement with national water policy and (2) public and stakeholder engagement at the regional and local level to contribute to delivery of the plan itself.

To address the former, the Water Forum (An Fóram Uisce) was set up to facilitate stakeholder engagement on all water issues, including issues of water quality and implementation of the WFD. Its views feed into the implementation structures at all levels.

At the local level, LAWPRO drives public engagement, participation, and consultation with communities and stakeholders, and co-ordinates these activities across all 31 local authorities.

The engagement between these actors and various sectors of the community seeks to improve the public perception of Ireland's water bodies.

The research will examine the operation and effectiveness of these arrangements to improve public and stakeholder engagement with the RBMP. It will deepen understanding of the approaches to the engagement of stakeholders and the ways in which increased engagement in the process modifies perceptions of interest and/or understanding of the options and issues being progressed. Examples of good practice will be identified and highlighted.

### 5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring the implementation of planned-measures, and the evaluation of the success of measures, is seen as central to ensuring effective delivery of the RBMP objectives. Although the NCMC will

ultimately oversee the implementation of national measures, it is the role of the NTIG, with the support of the regional structures, to monitor the impacts of measures at a regional and national level.

Each regional committee must produce an annual report that will provide an update on implementation progress and an evaluation of the measures implemented. This reporting is to be integrated with the WFD web-based application. These reports are a critical input to both the NCMC and the WPAC. These annual reports follow the structure of the regional work programmes and outline progress with respect to the plans set out in those programmes.

The research will examine the operation of these new forms of monitoring and evaluation for the collection, analysis and use of data, highlighting lessons learned from practice. Particular emphasis will be placed on the issues of how and why evidence is or is not being used to shape policy and practice developments and how it is supporting the achievement of the ultimate outcome of good water status as required by the Water Framework Directive.

## 5.5 Research outputs

Synthesis reports produced at the end of year one and year two will form the main research output. The report at the end of year one will pull together and highlight the main findings from the examination of the four research themes at that stage, with an emphasis on lessons learned to guide thinking with regard to the development of governance arrangements for the Third-Cycle River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027, within the context of the OECD Principles on Water Governance. The synthesis report at the end of year two will continue to draw lessons from emerging governance practice, with a particular emphasis placed on identifying and outlining the lessons learned for public governance of wicked problems in a globalised and inter-dependent world, for example, the challenges identified by the EPA in its State of the Environment Reports.

As well as these synthesis reports, it is envisaged that a number of shorter papers and journal articles will be produced focusing on more detailed issues and lessons emerging from particular strands of the research.

To ensure that research outputs reach as wide and relevant an audience as possible, and in addition to the EPA research communication channels, the Institute offers a number of dissemination options. The *State of the Public Service Series* (<https://www.ipa.ie/research-papers/state-of-the-public-service-series.683.html>) and *Local Government Research Series* (<https://www.ipa.ie/research-papers/local-government-research.684.html>) offer outlets for substantive papers. These papers are published on the IPA's website and are open-access. Social media, blogs etc. can be used to provide brief summaries and links to more substantial research outputs.

The Institute also has its own peer-reviewed journal, *Administration* (<https://content.sciendo.com/view/journals/admin/admin-overview.xml>). As the principal journal concerned with Irish public administration and its development, it seeks to combine original scholarship on public administration from a variety of disciplines with the insights and experiences of practitioners. The journal is open access, and part of Elsevier's Scopus database. Further dissemination options include the production of short policy briefs and the inclusion of relevant findings in *Local Authority Times*, a publication produced by the research team for the local government system, which provides an important tool for analysis, discussion, and dissemination on key topics.

## 6 Methodological approach

Given the nature of the proposed research programme, and the fact that the research will commence while the RBMP is underway, a primarily qualitative approach is considered most appropriate for data gathering and analysis. Qualitative data, as Ospina, Esteve and Lee (2017, p. 596) note 'at their best, are words that emerge from observations... interviews... or documents... are collected (or accessed) in a naturalistic way... and are processed through several iterations of systematic analysis'.

While the precise research design will be determined on a topic-by-topic basis, and agreed with the Steering Committee, the approach will draw from the practice of contribution analysis. Contribution analysis is an approach developed by Mayne (2001) whereby based on evidence gathered, a reasonable person can draw conclusions as to the contribution an intervention has made to effectiveness and impact. Patton (2008) has a helpful description:

Where attribution requires making a cause/effect determination, contribution analysis focuses on identifying likely influences. Contribution analysis, like detective work, requires connecting the dots between what was done and what resulted, examining a multitude of interacting variables and factors, and considering alternative explanations and hypotheses, so that in the end, we can reach an independent, reasonable, and evidence-based judgement based on the cumulative evidence.

The research programme will aim to provide rigorous evidence of movement and progress of the contribution made by the water governance structures and processes to the achievement of the desired outcomes set out in the RBMP.

It is envisaged that a number of complementary research methods will shape the gathering of the data required for the research:

- *Key informant interviews.* Interviews with stakeholders will be particularly important in collecting information on the issues addressed in the research.
- *Focus groups.* Interviews with small groups of people to gain insights in a social context, growing out of discussions with other people.
- *Case vignettes.* Using this approach, particular interventions will be examined and highlighted, to illustrate what contributes to their success or failure with regard to their impact.
- *Documentary analysis.* Careful review of relevant documentation (reports, government policy papers, academic literature etc.) to provide supportive evidence
- *Questionnaire analysis.* Short surveys may be useful to provide information on aspects of the programme under scrutiny.

By using this range of methods, triangulation of the data will be possible. Investigator triangulation, through members of the evaluation team sharing their individual understandings and perspectives, will provide a further check on data quality and emerging findings. This approach, allied with oversight by the Steering Committee, will help validate emerging findings, illustrating where consistent or divergent messages are emerging. It will also help illustrate the contribution of the water governance arrangements to change and reform: where the arrangements are a particularly strong influence on achieving desired outcomes, and where they are less strong or effective.

With regard to conducting the research in a professional and ethical manner, the IPA research division is guided by its long-standing tradition with regard to the conduct of applied research for public service

bodies. More specifically, the IPA research division approach is informed by the RESPECT code of practice for socio-economic research (for further details, see [www.respectproject.org](http://www.respectproject.org)).

## 7. Research Team

It is proposed that a research officer will be appointed to be the programme coordinator and principal researcher on the programme. They would work with and alongside four other members of the existing IPA research team, who will provide expertise in particular areas of the research, and contribute to the overall research programme. The team proposed is:

- Programme Coordinator – to be appointed
- Dr. Richard Boyle, Head of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations.
- Joanna O’Riordan, Research Officer
- Laura Shannon, Research Officer
- Fergal O’Leary, Assistant Research Officer

Apart from the programme coordinator, who would be dedicated to the programme, it is proposed that each of the other research team members would provide 40 days per year to the programme. It is also proposed to allocate 20 days per year for potential external expertise which may be brought in, and 40 days per year to the use of summer research interns employed by the IPA.

As part of the programme, it is intended that the learning gained by the research team will help build national research capacity in this vitally important area of policy and practice. The development of junior academics in this emerging field of experimental governance and environmental policy will be given particular attention.

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