

Management Plan for the Great Western Lakes – Stakeholder Views



**A PLAN TO ADDRESS
THE KEY ISSUES
CURRENTLY IMPACTING
ON THE FISH, THEIR
HABITATS AND
ECOSYSTEMS**



Designated Lakes



- Corrib, Conn, Cullin
- Mask, Carra
- Arrow
- Sheelin



Wild Brown Trout / Salmonid – Other Annex 2 Spp.



Western Lakes Management Plan - Summary

HLOs

Lakes

Corrib, Mask, Carra, Conn, Cullin, Arrow, Sheelin

- Summary of Key Features
- Fish Stocks Past & Present
- Ecological Status

Fish

- Brown Trout - Atlantic Salmon - Arctic Char - European Eel - Lampreys
- Three Spined Stickleback
- Nine Spined Stickleback
- Roach – Perch – Pike – Bream – Pink Salmon - Chub
- Tench – Rudd - Hybrids

- Native spp. Of High Conservation Value
- Native Spp. Of Less Conservation Concern
- Non-Native Species Requiring Management
- Non-Native Spp. Not Requiring Management

Stake-Holders

Catchment Associations & Community Groups - Rivers Trusts - Statutory Bodies. Angling Clubs - Landowner Groupings - Forestry - Agriculture

- Encourage Communities to form Groups
- Identify & Action Issues
- Formal & Informal Contact

Climate

- Climate Research
- Susceptible Species & Habitat Management
- Flood Mitigation – Riparian Management

- Protecting Vulnerable Spp.
- Aquatic Buffer Zones
- Building Climate Resilience

Water Quality

Enhancing Cooperation -Sources & Areas Known - Boots on the Ground

- Enhanced Enforcement powers
- Increased Staff Numbers
- Inter Agency Synergies

Invasive Species

- Strategic Management Programmes
- Legislation & Enforcement
- Public Awareness - Biosecurity

- Weed & Fish Stock Management.
- Enforcement powers
- Effective Use of Media & Signage

Stock Management

Stock Management Plans - Citizen Science – Risk Analysis

- Adaptive Stock Management.
- Provide Data Streams for Research
- Develop Salmonid Risk Matrix

Habitat

- Catchment-wide Surveys
- Prioritised Lists of Candidate sites
- Streamline Authorisation Processes

- RHAT Survey Scoring.
- Protect Biodiversity
- Increase Throughput of Projects

Research

Fish Stock Monitoring – Expand Data Collection – Population Modelling
Integrate Fish Data with Climate research

- Provide Data Streams
- Continue to Develop Pop. Models.
- Integrate Research Programmes

Exploring Synergies

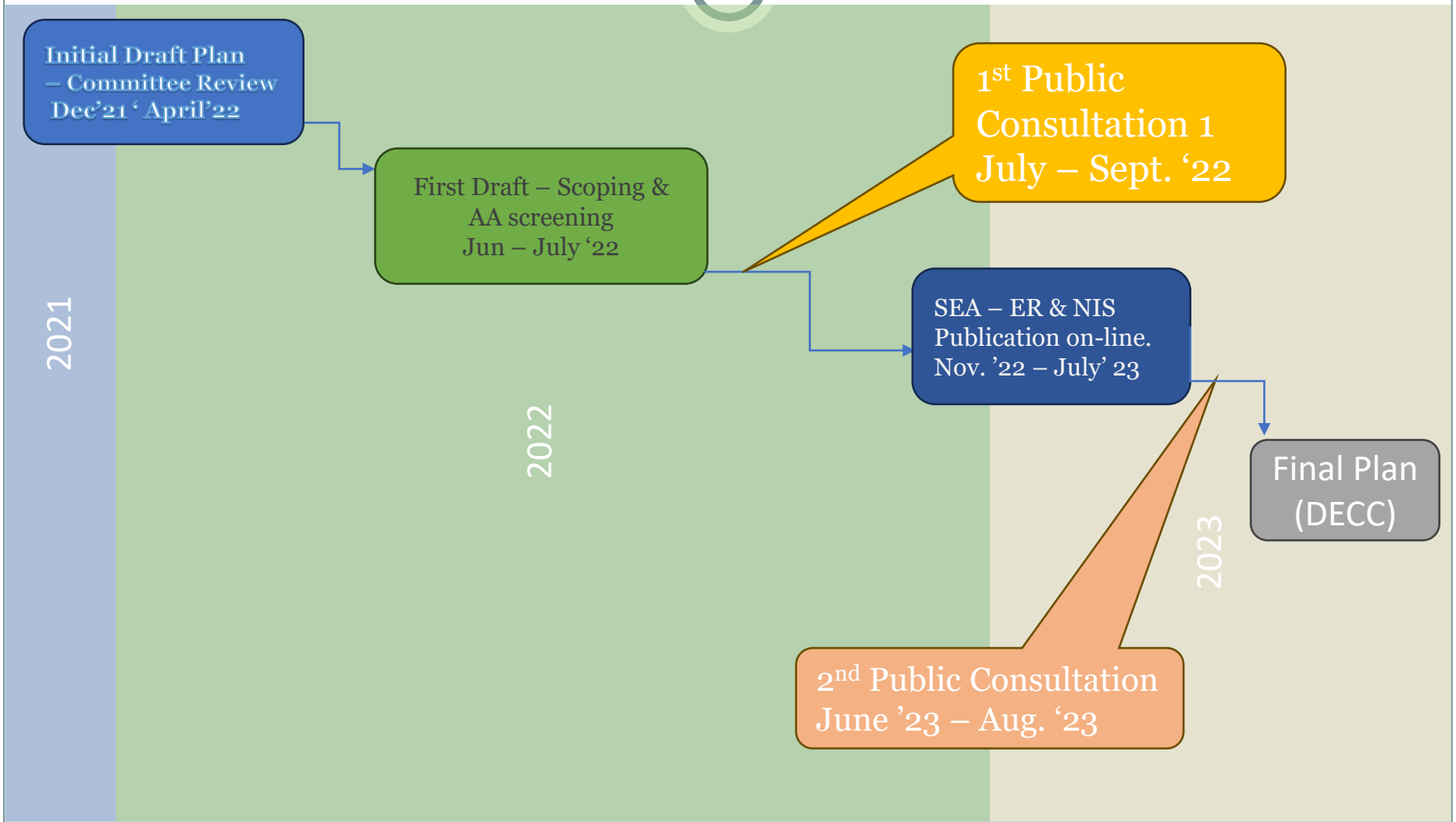
Agreeing Timelines

Engaging Communities

Developing Models

Adaptive Management Framework

Timelines



2021

2022

2023

Initial Draft Plan
– Committee Review
Dec'21 - April'22

First Draft – Scoping &
AA screening
Jun – July '22

1st Public
Consultation 1
July – Sept. '22

SEA – ER & NIS
Publication on-line.
Nov. '22 – July' 23

2nd Public Consultation
June '23 – Aug. '23

Final Plan
(DECC)

SEA Process



Public Consultation



- Plan Entered into SEA Process June 2022
- Copy Uploaded to IFI Website
- Public Consultation Events:
Aug/Sept 2022

Castlebaldwin
Ballina
Partry
Kilnaleck
Headford
Oughterard



- 2nd Public Consultation - Online June/July '23

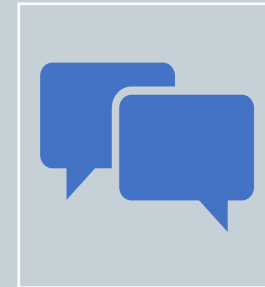
Common Across All Themes – PC 1



Water Quality -
Increased resources -
enforcement
(environmental and
regulations, monitoring)



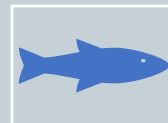
Broad welcome for the
plan



Fish Stock Management
– Opposing Views



Education & Awareness
of Fish & their Habitats

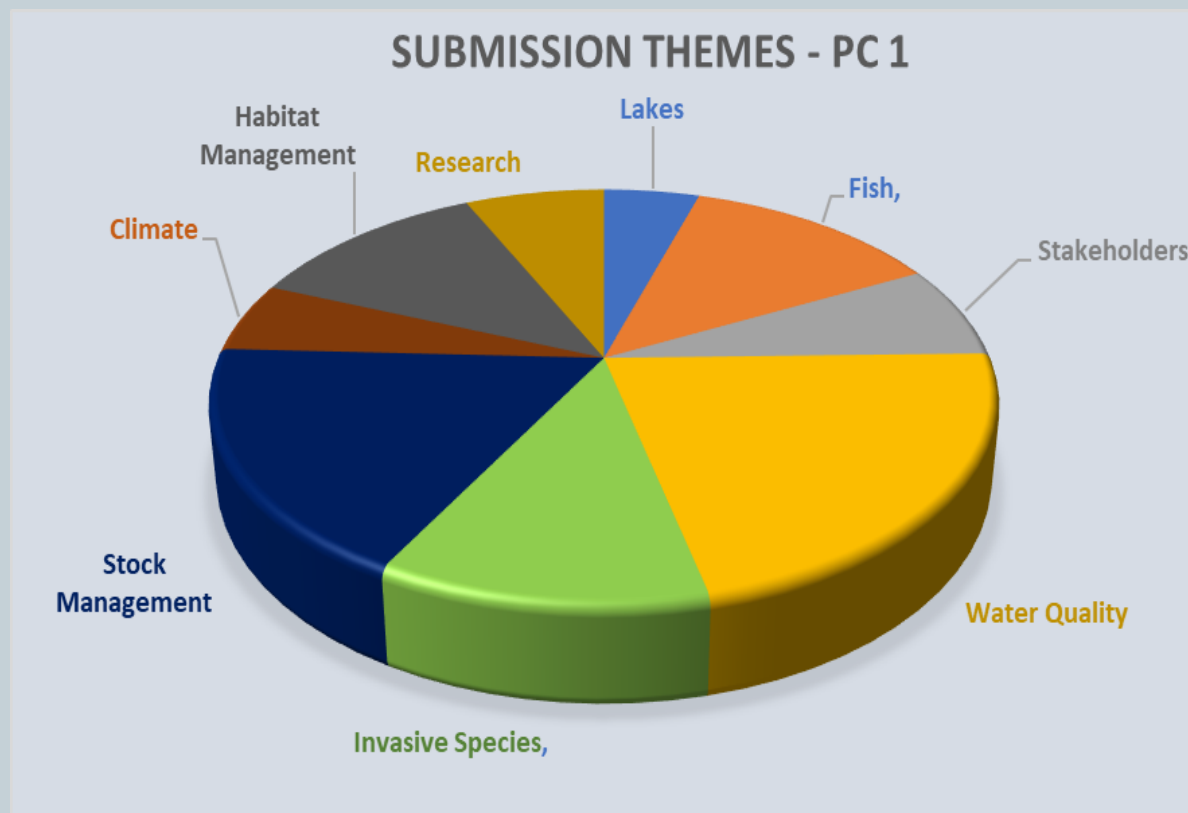


Increased penalties for
legislative breaches -
Particularly fish
movement

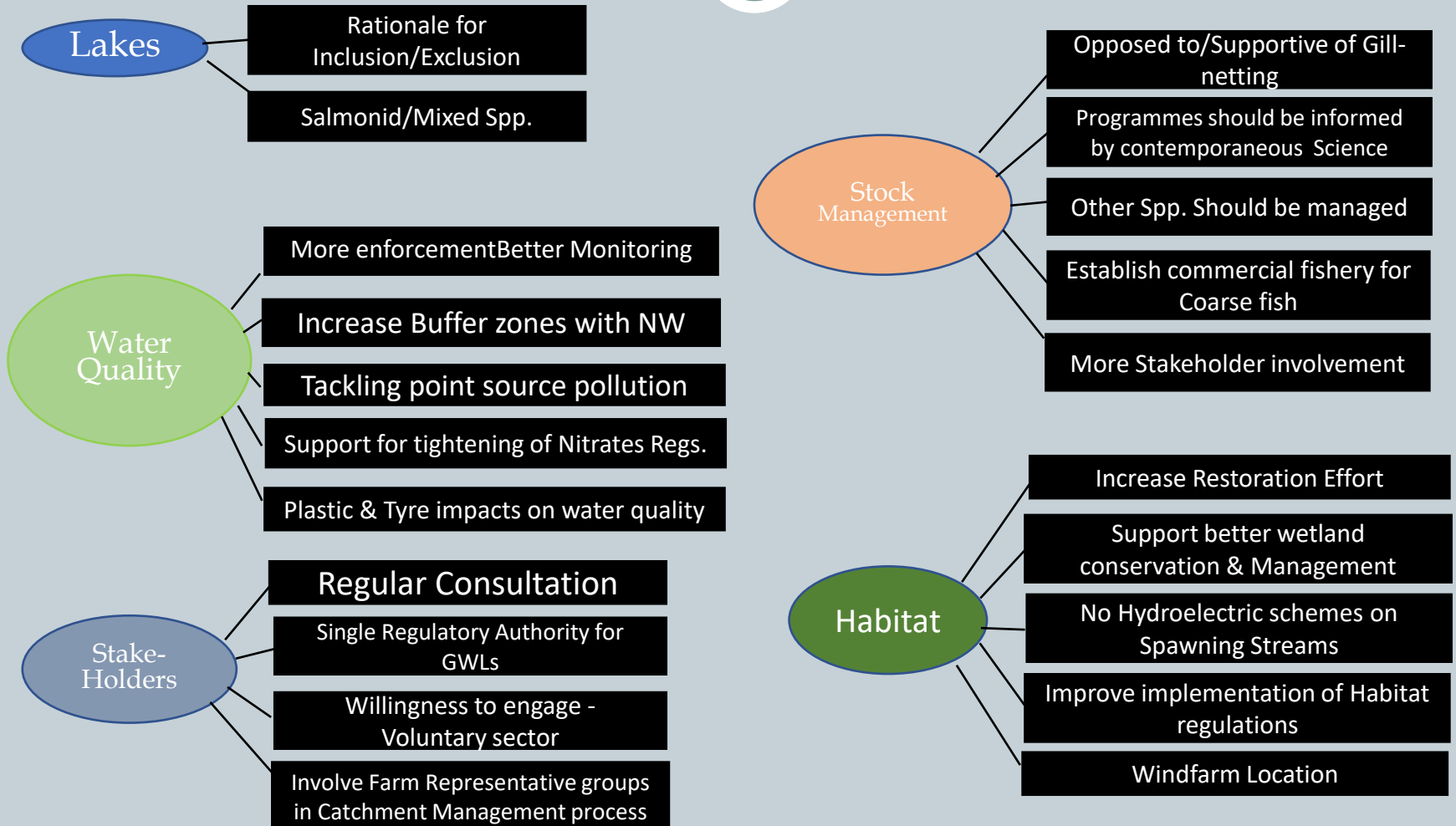
Written Submissions - PC 1



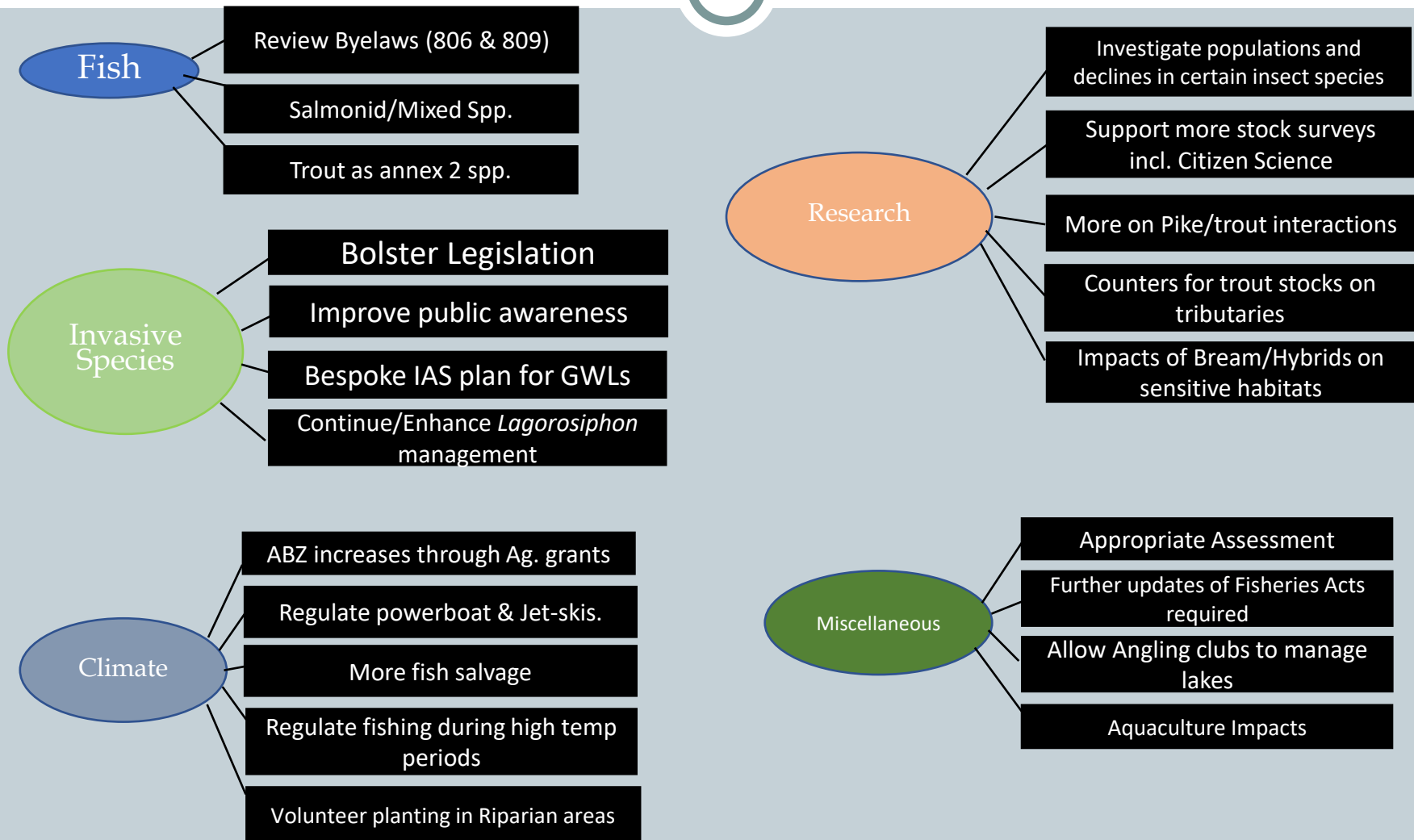
- Received July – September 2022
- Specific pathways – Web portal & Public events
- 227 Written Submissions received
- Some Covered numerous themes
- Not all comments could be directly linked to TORs for plan



Theme - Details



Theme – Details (Contd..)



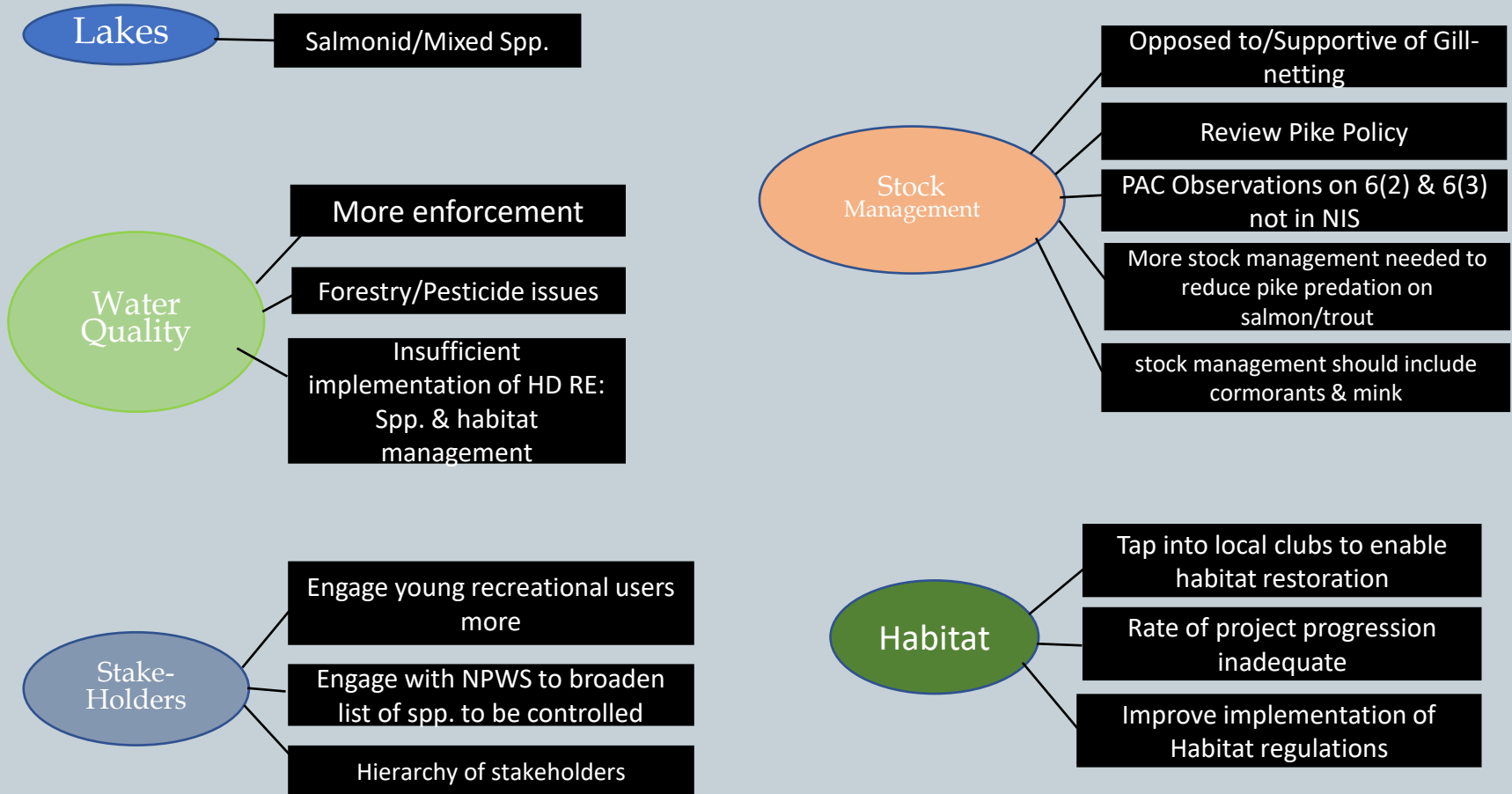
Submissions - PC 2



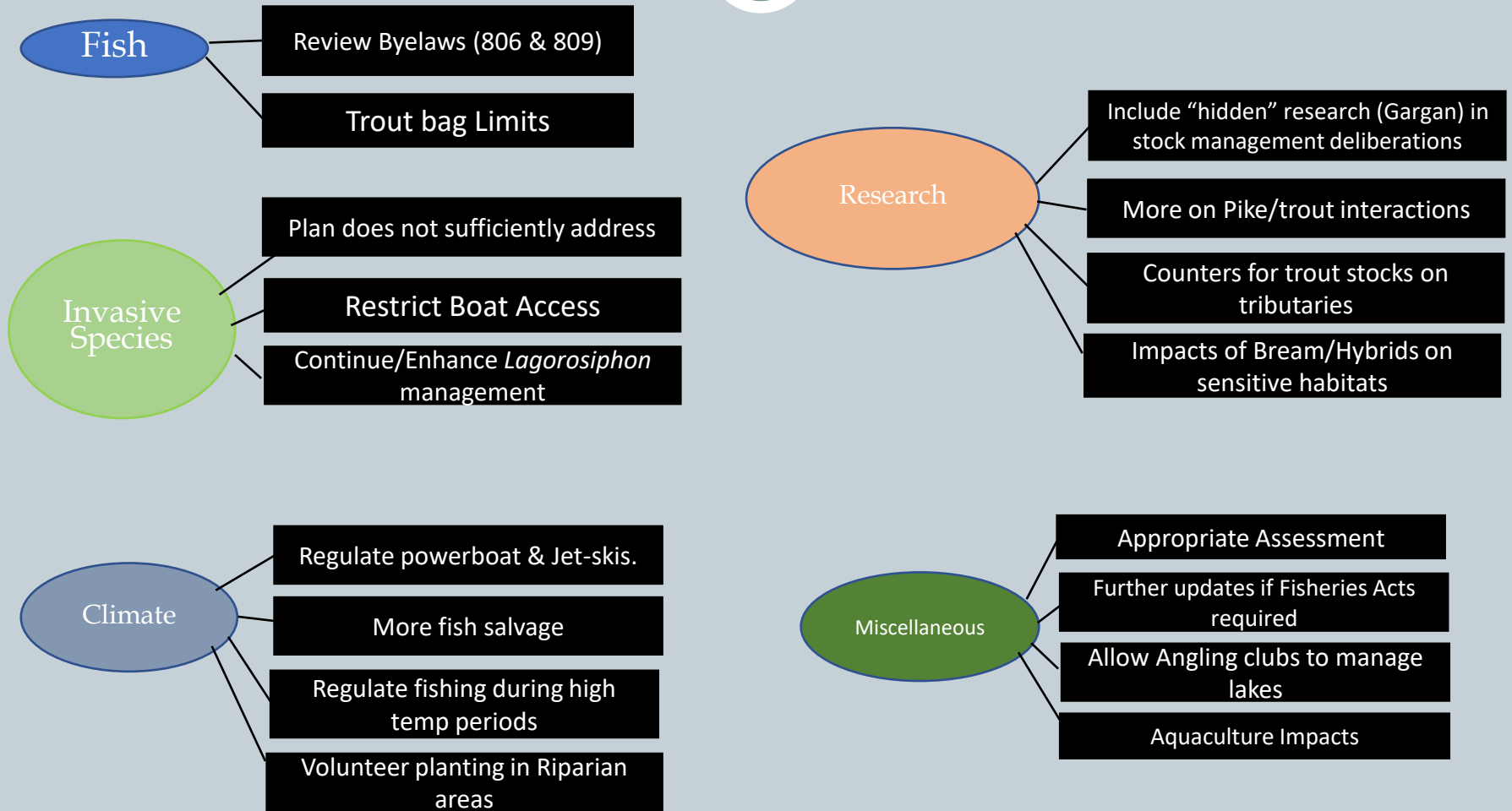
- Received June-July 2023
- Specific pathways – Web portal – email submissions
- 159 Written Submissions received
- Some Covered numerous themes
- Not all comments could be directly linked to TORs for plan
- Less on HM – More on Stakeholders



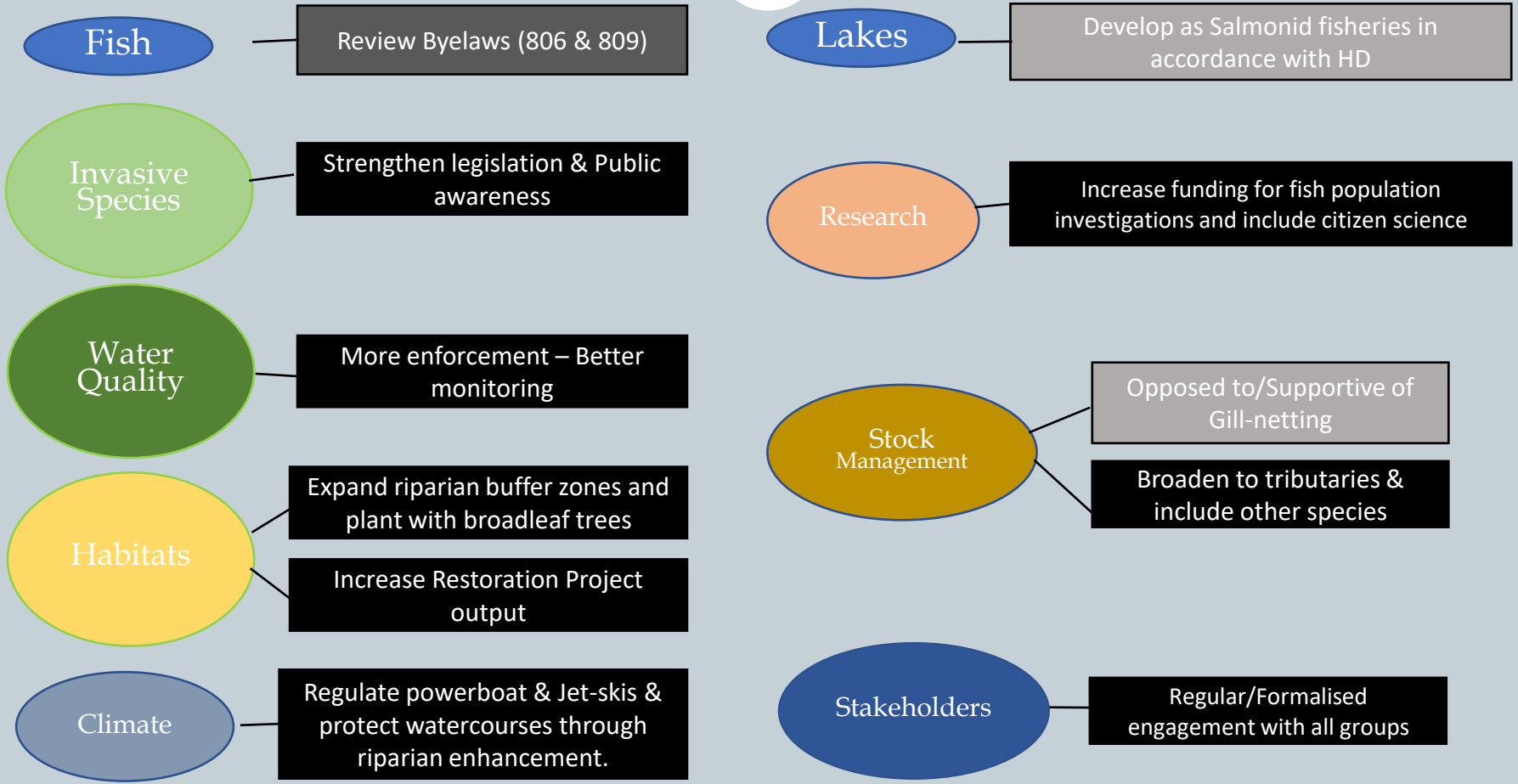
Theme – Details – PC 2



Theme – Details (Contd..)



Emerging Consensus??



Summary of Submissions

Theme	Submission Comment - Summary	Current Position in Plan
Lakes	Rationale for Inclusion/Exclusion – Why were some lakes included and others not?	Seven lakes issued in TORs – Due to historical amenity use and management practices. No change to list is appropriate
	Conflicting views on designation of lakes – Should they be managed for all species or just salmonids & other conservation spp.	Designation as salmonid (& annex 2) issued in TORs – No change to designation is appropriate

Theme	Submission Comment - Summary	Current Position in Plan
Fish	<u>Bye-laws</u> protecting Coarse fish and Pike in GWLs are not compatible with conservation objectives for salmonids	Report currently recommends review of these <u>bye-laws</u> in GWLs
	Other species should be considered in the management and promotion of the GWLs	See comment 2 (above)
	Brown trout in GWLs should be included in annex 2 of HD and afforded conservation status	Must be internationally agreed <u>in light of</u> IUCN recommendations – Would also need to be included in Annex 5.
	Review trout bag limits No need for trout bag limits Need evidence to prove efficacy.	Plan recommends review and alignment subject to stakeholder consultation and agreement. 1 st PC agreed with review. 2 nd PC objections to review. Scientific advice received

Summary of Submissions

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Research	Investigate populations and declines in certain insect species	To be recommended in final draft
	Support more fish stock surveys and consider use of citizen science	Currently mentioned in Plan
	More research focus on pike/trout interactions	Will form a significant part of fish population modelling
	Fish counters on trout spawning streams	Logistically difficult – High level of resources required
	Impact on Bream/Hybrids on sensitive lake habitats	Recommend research in current draft.

Theme	Submission Comment - Summary	Current Position in Plan
Invasive Species	Strengthen Legislation and public awareness	Legislation to be applied is decided at dept. level. Plan calls for more public awareness and increased biosecurity
	Each GWL should have a bespoke IAS plan	Principles and process can be set out for all lakes in single plan.
	More resources for lagarosiphon management	Process under review and development
	Restrict Access for boats, jet-skis etc.	

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Stakeholder Engagement	There should be a single regulatory authority managing the GWLS and liaising with public and stakeholders	Currently numerous public authorities and other ancillary groups (e.g. Teagasc, FS, UE) are referred to in <u>plan</u> . All are represented in WFD groups & committees towards management & public liaison. Changing this to one public authority is outside scope of the plan
	Huge will in voluntary sector to participate in management & conservation work in GWLS	Plan recommends enhancing communications with public and approves LAWPRO model.
	Major farm representative orgs. (IFA etc.) should be included in catchment management groups	<u>Plan</u> could be altered to issue <u>invitation?</u>
	IFI PR should focus more on public awareness of fish and habitats, threats & opportunities – less on angling promotion	E & Or already engaging through "something Fishy" & other programmes.
	Regular, more formalized engagement	Already recommended in plan

Summary of Submissions

Theme	Submission Comment - Summary	Current Position in Plan
Stock Management	Opposed to/Supportive of....	Report advocates - more resources for lake specific fish population modelling and adaptive management on GWLs.
	Stock management should cease due to findings of be recent IFI science.	Report maintains that recent research is first step in producing lake specific models – too early to apply research to all GWLs
	Other species (Bream, mink, cormorants) should be managed on basis of threat to salmonids	IFI management remit confined to fish. Plan explores options to manage bream on L. Mask
	Establish commercial fishery on GWLs for coarse fish & pike	Departmental issue – outside remit of this plan

Summary of Submissions

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Climate	Regulate Powerboats, engine size and jet-skis	Not possible under fisheries acts but may be under 477.
	More fish salvage	Will require additional resources to RBD teams
	Regulate angling during high temperature periods	Likely to require byelaw but is being done as advisory measure
	Volunteers to plant trees in riparian areas	Already part of restoration plans in some projects
Habitats	Increase ABZ through farm grants	Agri environmental schemes progressing in right direction but buffer zones only changeable with landowner agreement
	Increase restoration effort	Habitat <u>specialisation</u> unit now established and will be referred to in final draft
	Support better wetland conservation & Management	Referred to in plan but IFI powers not sufficient to further this issue.
	No Hydroelectric schemes on spawning streams	Referred to in 2 nd draft
	Improve implementation of Hab Regs	Plan calls for powers under SI.477

Summary of Submissions

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Water Quality	More enforcement of Water Quality legislation is required to address pollution pressures on GWLs	Report recommends greater resourcing, increased <u>personnel</u> and enhancement of powers
	Results from monitoring by agencies doesn't reflect deteriorating status	Data on water quality is collected using best practice methods and presented to public via web portals.
	Protect inflowing watercourses by establishing bigger buffer zones in riparian areas. Plant with broadleaf trees and manage accordingly	Fencing & <u>planting</u> is part of IFI's habitat restoration process and is covered in section 9.4. Size of riparian buffer (>1.5m) is at discretion of landowner
	Impacts of point source pollution underestimated in plan	Section revised to reflect evidence base for point source pollution
	Support from stakeholders for implementation of Nitrates Regs. and reduction of derogation limits	Dealt with at National and EU level – outside scope of this plan