

# **Analysing benefits accruing from the EU Water Framework Directive using a Spatial Microsimulation Approach**

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## **Abstract**

An important element of the EU Water Framework Directive is that it calls for a consideration of the economic costs and benefits of improvements to ecological status in catchment management plans, along with the introduction of full social cost pricing for water use. Hence, benefits play an important role in the assessment of the proportionality of costs in the implementation of the WFD. This paper presents the results of a contingent valuation exercise where the value to the Irish general public of achieving good ecological status, as specified in the WFD, is estimated. The results from the contingent valuation analysis are then used in combination with a spatial microsimulated model of the Irish population to estimate the value of achieving GES within individual water management units across Ireland. The estimated values from this function based transfer approach are compared against the results from a previous primary valuation study that was carried out in one Irish river catchment.