

River Sediment Pollution Project: SILTFLUX

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Damian Lawler together with colleagues at University College Dublin and the Irish Central Fisheries Board have been awarded a research grant of ½ million Euros by the Environmental Protection Agency in Ireland to carry out the first comprehensive assessment of the magnitude and dynamics of fine sediment transport and resultant sediment pollution problems in key Irish rivers. Silt in the water column is now seen as a major aquatic pollutant. The work will include intensive, automated field instrumentation of key determinands. Part 2 of this major project will test for competing and switching dominance of in-channel, catchment and land use controls on sediment fluxes, both between rivers and over time, at seasonal, subseasonal and storm-event timescales.



The project will help to set standards for suspended solids flux and concentrations for the protection of sensitive catchments in Ireland and, eventually, elsewhere. The team will also advise EPA Ireland on management solutions and options. The project started on 1 May 2011, and will run till May 2015. The first meeting took place on Tuesday 10 May in Dublin, at which EPA and Steering Group members (including Professors Des Walling and Steve Ormerod) were present.