Dept./Agency	Feedback
IFI	re: IFI and Barriers sharing of information. Please find attached a selection of links to the information on Barriers available to the public on the IFI site. This includes a webpage, story board, APP and full Open Data various reports on assessments and the 2023 annual report. National Barriers Programme | Inland Fisheries Ireland The National Barriers Programme | IFI Open Data Portal (arcgis.com) Microsoft Word - River Boyne WFD III Barrier Assessment Obstacles to Fish Passage and Mitigation Options (fisheriesireland.ie) national-barriers-programme-annual-report-2023.pdf (fisheriesireland.ie)
NPWS	Pg 151 of report: Regulation 3 (a) (iii) of the European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, amended the term "environmental impact assessment report" to "environmental impact statement" If I understand the sentence above correctly, it should be amended the term "environmental impact statement" to "environmental impact assessment report" (EIS is now termed EIAR).
Water Policy	In relation to pg 172 part C, there are a number of claims within that have no basis and have clearly not been rigorously checked by the authors. **1.** Section 87 does not preclude the EPA from considering the environmental pressures when determining an ESB abstraction licence application - S. 87 (5) gives the EPA the powers to attach conditions to a licence to mitigate the adverse impacts on the water body from the hydro-electric scheme. The only perceived limitation on the EPA undertaking its functions is that in doing so, it must not compromise the safe operation of the hydro scheme, and that it has regard to the overall functions of the ESB. **2.** There is clear misrepresentation (or misunderstanding) of what a water abstraction agreement is in S.20(8). Under S. 83, a water abstraction agreement is a standalone legal agreement between the ESB and UE. It is necessary for the granting of a licence for UE to abstract from an ESB reservoir, but it is not the subject of the licence assessment process. Any application by UE for a licence under the Act is subject to the full assessment process, including EIA where necessary. S.20(8) is making it clear that the water abstraction agreement does not require EIA screening or full EIA, on the basis I have outlined above. In relation to Appropriate Assessment, the report calls out the absence of reference to the protection of Natura 2000 sites. Amendments to the habitats regulations are currently being drafted to bring the abstractions act in under the requirements of the regulations, which will ensure the full application of AA processes will be required for abstraction licensing.
Uisce Éireann	Section 2.2.1 should acknowledge the fact that UÉ currently abstract c. 30% of the public drinking water supply from behind impoundments and that removal of these impoundments would potentially have a significant impact on our ability to continue to supply water.

ESB

Section / Page No.	Text	ESB Observations
XXii	In 2020, the Irish Supreme Court held ESB responsible for negligence in dam management.	This comment does not reflect the complexity of the Judgement. The Supreme Court held that ESB ought to have had a Flood Risk Assessment in place to inform the management of the dams. ESB did not have a Flood Risk Assessment in place.
37	"The persistence of Ardnacrusha, while used locally for some energy security during periods of high electricity demand, is now possibly more a matter of national and engineering history, and cultural heritage, than power generation. The impact of the operation of the hydropower station is explored further in Section 5.1.1."	Ardnacrusha is not used locally for some energy security during periods of high electricity demand. Ardnacrusha generates predictable zero carbon energy for approximately 50% of the year and contributes to the decarbonisation of the Irish Electricity System. The report's representation of the station's energy value is presented as fact but is factually incorrect.
190	Figure 45. River Shannon. This figure is based on work by ESB cited at: https://irishriverproject.com/category/hydro-power/	This figure is not an ESB figure and the comment should remove the reference to ESB. The representation of the Ardnacrusha head race canal is entirely incorrect. A correct figure is available at https://cdn.esb.ie/media/docs/default-source/generation/rivershannonmap.pdf
192	The dam regulates water retention upstream in Lough Derg, where the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) maintains water fluctuations to a narrow operating band of 460 mm, except in flood periods (Irish Water, 2016).	The normal operating band for Lough Derg is 36 cm. An additional 10 cm is retained for emergency black start services to the Transmission System Operator in the event of a national electricity system blackout. An error such as this could have been avoided by the authors making contact with ESB rather than quoting 3rd party sources for information on ESB operations.
192	The ESB classifies Ardnacrusha as a Category A dam, with the view that a breach could endanger lives downstream.	It is important to note in this sentence that it is not just Ardnacrusha Dam that is a Category A structure, but that the headrace canal is formed by Embankment Dams which are also Category A dams and in addition upstream of Parteen Weir, the Fort Henry and Ardclooney Embankment Dams are also Category A dams.
193	The ESB has a statutory obligation to manage and preserve the Shannon (along with the Rivers Erne, Lee and Liffey), with their role in fisheries part of a "commitment to Ireland's environment and natural landscape" (https://esb.ie/acting-responsibly/fisheries-2/fisheries).	The ESB has a statutory obligation to manage and preserve the Shannon fisheries. The word fisheries is omitted from the sentence in error.
191	Ardnacrusha Dam was constructed upstream of the town of Killaloe in the 1930s to provide national electricity supply (Figure 46).	Ardnacrusha dam is constructed approx 19km downstream of the town of Killaloe. Parteen Weir is approx 6 km downstream of Killaloe where this regulating weir diverts the water into the headrace canal.
191	Figure 46. Parteen Basin (Irish Water, 2016).	It would be more appropriate to have this image with an ESB reference as this infrastructure is not related to Irish Water. The Western Embankment is called "Ardclooney Emabnkment"
192	After "During high flows, water can be discharged down the old river channel through spill gates at the Parteen Regulating Weir."	It should also be pointed out here that in high flow situations Ardnacrusha Station provides a flood eleviation effect by diverting 350-400m3/s of water away from flood prone areas of the lower shannon.Therefore throughout the document it should be clear that Ardnacrusha is providing a flood alleviation effect for communities in high flow conditions.
194	It is not known to what extent the report submitted by CDC Smith reviewed the latest technologies to support fish passage through hydroelectric schemes.	Proposals were presented by CDM Smith at the EPA Water Conference in 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtGqXaw4MVY
195	"The operating procedures at the Ardnacrusha power station seem quite fixed and, given the conservation concerns, outdated."	The author has not referenced any Ardnacrusha operating procedures and is not accurately representing the protocols in place at the station. This sentence should state that the authors have not reviewed actual operating procedures. ESB is willing to meet the authors and explain our operations.
200	A serious event occurred in October 2020 following a release of water from the Inniscarra Dam, a reservoir on the River Lee (Figure 50), and coinciding with high tides and heavy on-shore winds.	Flooding in Cork city during October 2020 was solely as a result of high tides and was not caused in any way by a release of water from Inniscarra reservoir. This allegation should be removed. If you would like to discuss this for better understanding, we are happy to meet to clarify further.
200	In 2020, the Supreme Court held ESB responsible for the negligence in dam management that led to extensive flooding in UCC.	This comment does not reflect the complexity of the Judgement. The Supreme Court held that ESB ought to have had a Flood Risk Assessment in place to inform the management of the dams. ESB did not have a Flood Risk Assessment in place.
205	The water flow is then released into the River Liffey, from Golden Falls Reservoir at the ESB's discretion, at a rate of 1.5 m3/s when the ESB are not generating electricity at Golden Falls Power Station and up to 30 m3/s when the ESB are generating electricity, with a capacity of 4 MW.	ESB maintains a statutory compensation flow of 1.5m3/s from Golden Falls at all times, please update the sentence to reflect this. this is not discretionary.