

# Bathing Water Profile for Gairloch Beach

Gairloch, Scotland

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Current water classification <https://www2.sepa.org.uk/BathingWaters/Classifications.aspx>

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## Description

Gairloch Beach is an area of sandy beach with large dunes. It is situated south of Gairloch village in the North-West Highlands.

Gairloch is popular for a number of recreational uses including swimming, rowing, kayaking and snorkelling. The An Dun headland is a North West Highland Snorkel Trail site.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0 to 170m. For local tide information see:

<http://www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide/EasyTide/index.aspx>



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## Site details

Local authority	Highland Council
Year of designation	2017
Water sampling location	NG 80405 75701
EC bathing water ID	UKS7616092

## Catchment description

A catchment area of 0.7 km<sup>2</sup> drains into Gairloch Beach bathing water. Meall Achadh Deisteil hill rises in the area to the east of the catchment. The small burn Allt a' Ghamhna flows from the hilly area into the bathing water.

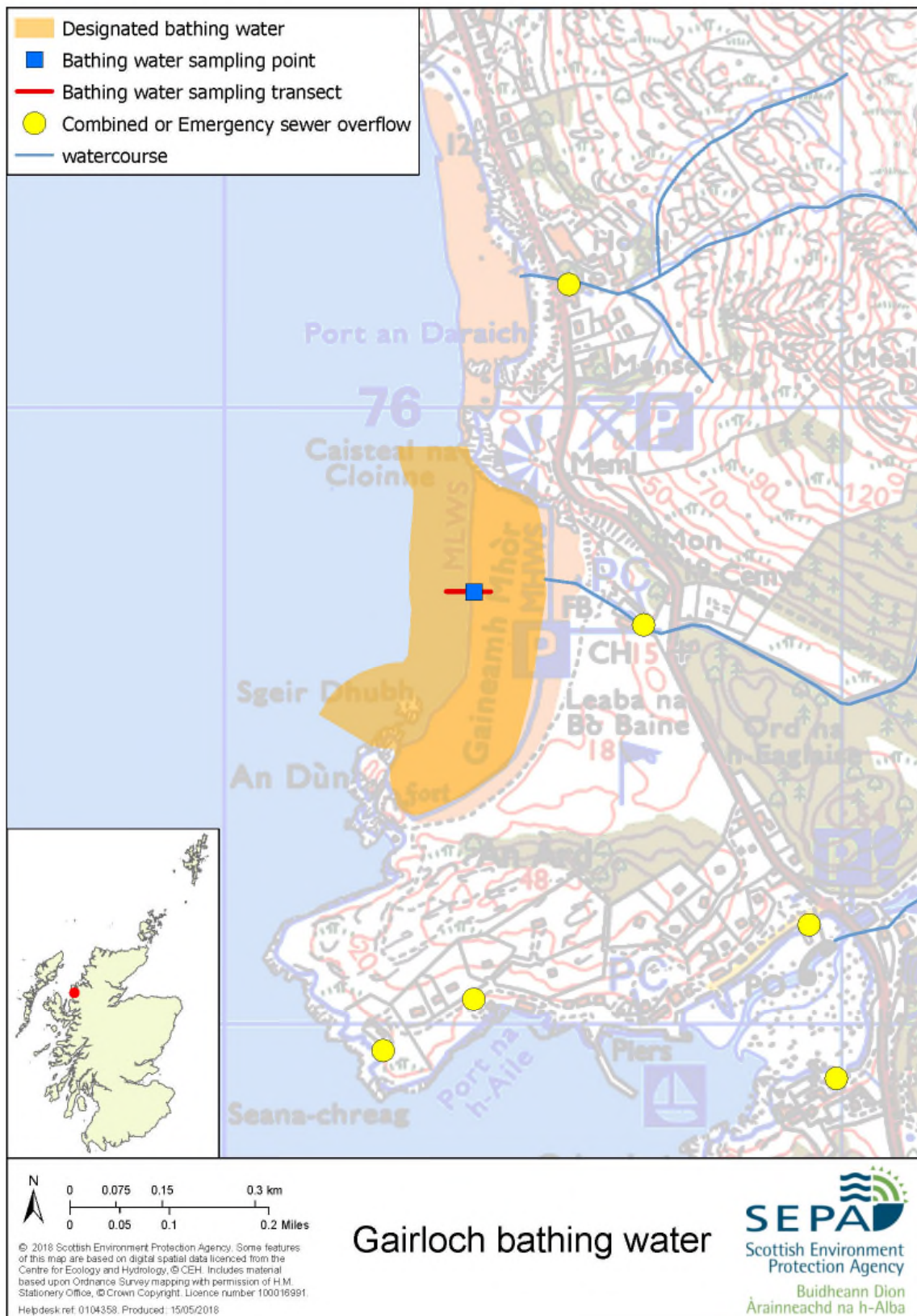
Land use in the catchment includes improved grassland and heather grassland as well as broadleaved woodland and coniferous woodland. The main village of Gairloch is situated north of the catchment area.

## Risks to water quality

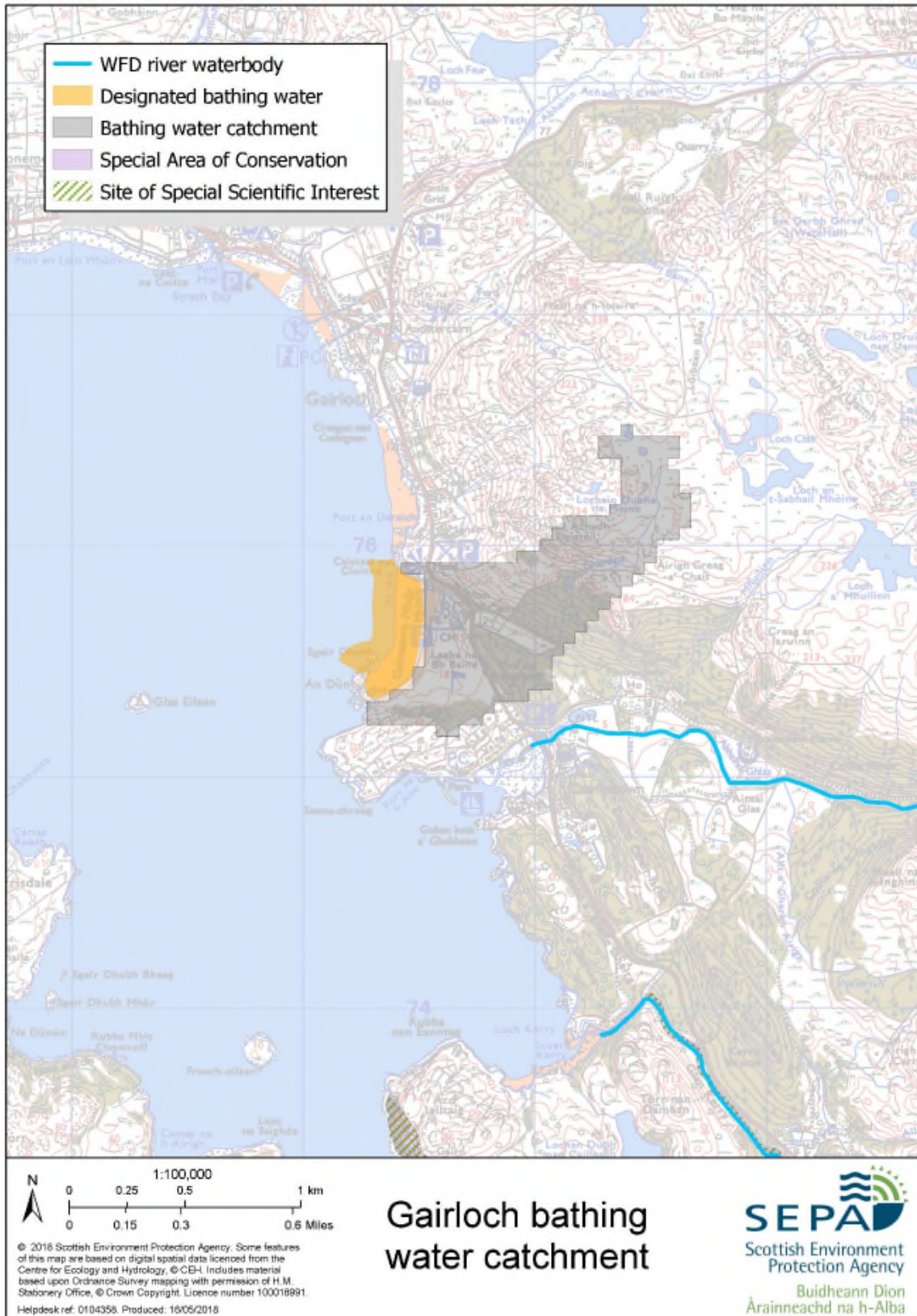
Our regulatory and scientific assessment indicates that there are no significant pollution inputs to this bathing water under normal weather situations.

In general, all natural waters are affected by rainfall. Faecal pollutants can be washed from agricultural or urban land into the sea. At some locations, waste water discharges from public sewerage infrastructure can affect water quality. These events are expected to last one or two days, depending on the duration of the rainfall, and may result in elevated faecal pollutant levels compared to dry conditions.

**Map 1: Gairloch Beach bathing water**



**Map 2: Catchment draining into Gairloch Beach bathing water**



Managing bathing water quality

### **Pollution from agricultural sources**

Agriculture does not have a significant impact on this bathing water.

### **Pollution from public and private sewerage**

Scottish Water provides public waste water collection and treatment services in Gairloch.

In response to increasing operational challenges, Scottish Water is proposing to replace the existing Sewage Treatment Works at Fhasaich. An independently chaired Stakeholder Liaison Group is being set up in order to identify the best replacement options. Both Scottish Water and SEPA will participate fully in the workings of this group.

### **Pollution from urban sources**

Diffuse pollution from urban areas does not have a significant impact on this bathing water.

### **Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae)**

Marine waters are not at risk of cyanobacteria overproduction.

### **Algae**

Current information suggests that this bathing water is not at risk of excessive growth of macroalgae (seaweed) or phytoplankton.

### **Jellyfish**

Jellyfish are common around Gairloch beach. There is a possibility of increased numbers of jellyfish in the water during summer months. Most species common to the UK are harmless. The Marine Conservation Society advises to 'look but don't touch'.

### **Responding to pollution incidents**

Please call SEPA's 24 hour hotline (0800 80 70 60) to report pollution.

The local authority will erect signs to advise beach users of a pollution incident. Information will also be displayed on SEPA's website.

Beach cleaning and litter clean-up is maintained for this bathing water by The Highland Council. Beach users are encouraged to use the bins provided or to take litter home.

### **Contact details and information sources**



<p><b>SEPA Dingwall office</b></p> <p>Graesser House Fodderty Way Dingwall Business Park Dingwall IV15 9XB 01349 862021 <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk">www.sepa.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>The Highland Council</b></p> <p>Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX 01349 886606 <a href="mailto:service.point@highland.gov.uk">service.point@highland.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.highland.gov.uk">www.highland.gov.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Keep Scotland Beautiful</b></p> <p>01786 471333 <a href="mailto:beach@ksbscotland.org.uk">beach@ksbscotland.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org">www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org</a></p>
<p><b>Scottish Government</b></p> <p>Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ 0131 244 0396 <a href="mailto:eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters</a></p>		

Version number:	Date:	Next review due:
1.0	May 2018	
1.1	April 2020	