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About Tellus

Tellus is a ground and airborne geoscience mapping programme, collecting geochemical and geophysical data that will inform the management of Ireland's environment and natural resources. Tellus is undertaken by the Geological Survey of Ireland and is funded by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

Tellus surveying has been completed in Northern Ireland and the northern region of Ireland. The Geological Survey of Ireland endeavours to complete surveying in 50% of Ireland by end 2017.

Data and maps are freely accessible at www.tellus.ie



Geochemical surveying in Ireland

The Tellus geochemical survey routinely collects samples of stream sediment, stream water and topsoil from across Ireland. The average sampling density is one sample per four km^2 .

Stream water and sediment samples are typically collected from small first-, second- and third-order streams. Stream sediment is wet-sieved to less than 150 microns size fraction and is analysed to measure concentrations of a range of major, minor and trace element concentrations by X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and of precious metals by lead-collection fire assay followed by ICP-MS analyses.

Archive stream sediment samples have been re-analysed by multi-element and precious metal analytical techniques, and data have been quality controlled. Reports and publications are available at www.tellus.ie/about/publications

Platinum in stream sediment

Stream sediment samples collected between 1986 and 1990 by the Geological Survey of Ireland were reanalysed in 2015 as part of the Tellus programme. Data have been quality controlled with respect to a range of certified and secondary reference materials.

An extensive zone of high platinum concentrations occurs northwest of Croghan Kinshelagh between Aughrim and Tinahely. The bedrock comprises a mixed volcanic-sedimentary rock succession intruded by mafic igneous rocks, including serpentinite, and granite. Platinum was previously recorded here during mineral exploration. High Pt also occurs close to the nearby Cummer serpentinite, where chromium mineralization has been reported.