



Bank erosion and poaching caused by livestock access can increase diffuse pollution risks.

## How will this work affect you as a land manager?

Work to address the environmental problems identified will be undertaken by SEPA together with National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS), Scottish Rural Property and Business Association (SRPBA), Scottish Tennant Farmers Association (STFA), Confederation of Forest Industries (ConFor), Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services (SEARS) partners, and land managers in each diffuse pollution catchment. We will discuss possible options to address diffuse pollution problems and help to develop practical steps to improve the condition of the water environment in the catchment. This will involve workshops, evening meetings and site visits to look at all land use in a catchment in greater detail and offer advice on regulations and best management practices that may also benefit business.

It's likely that the majority of diffuse pollution problems could be reduced by better compliance with the Diffuse Pollution General Binding Rules (GBRs).

## Further information

More information on priority catchments can be found at: [www.sepa.org.uk/dpprioritycatchments](http://www.sepa.org.uk/dpprioritycatchments)

Specific guidance on the Diffuse Pollution GBRs is contained in *Controlled Activities Regulations: A practical guide*:

[www.sepa.org.uk/water/water\\_publications.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_publications.aspx)

For DP GBR information leaflets visit:

[www.sears.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.sears.scotland.gov.uk)

[www.sepa.org.uk/water/water\\_publications.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_publications.aspx)

More information on the river basin management planning process is available at:

[www.sepa.org.uk/water/river\\_basin\\_planning.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning.aspx)

For any other queries about diffuse pollution, you can get in touch with your local SEPA office or email a question to: [diffuse.pollution@sepa.org.uk](mailto:diffuse.pollution@sepa.org.uk)

Alternatively you can contact SEARS:

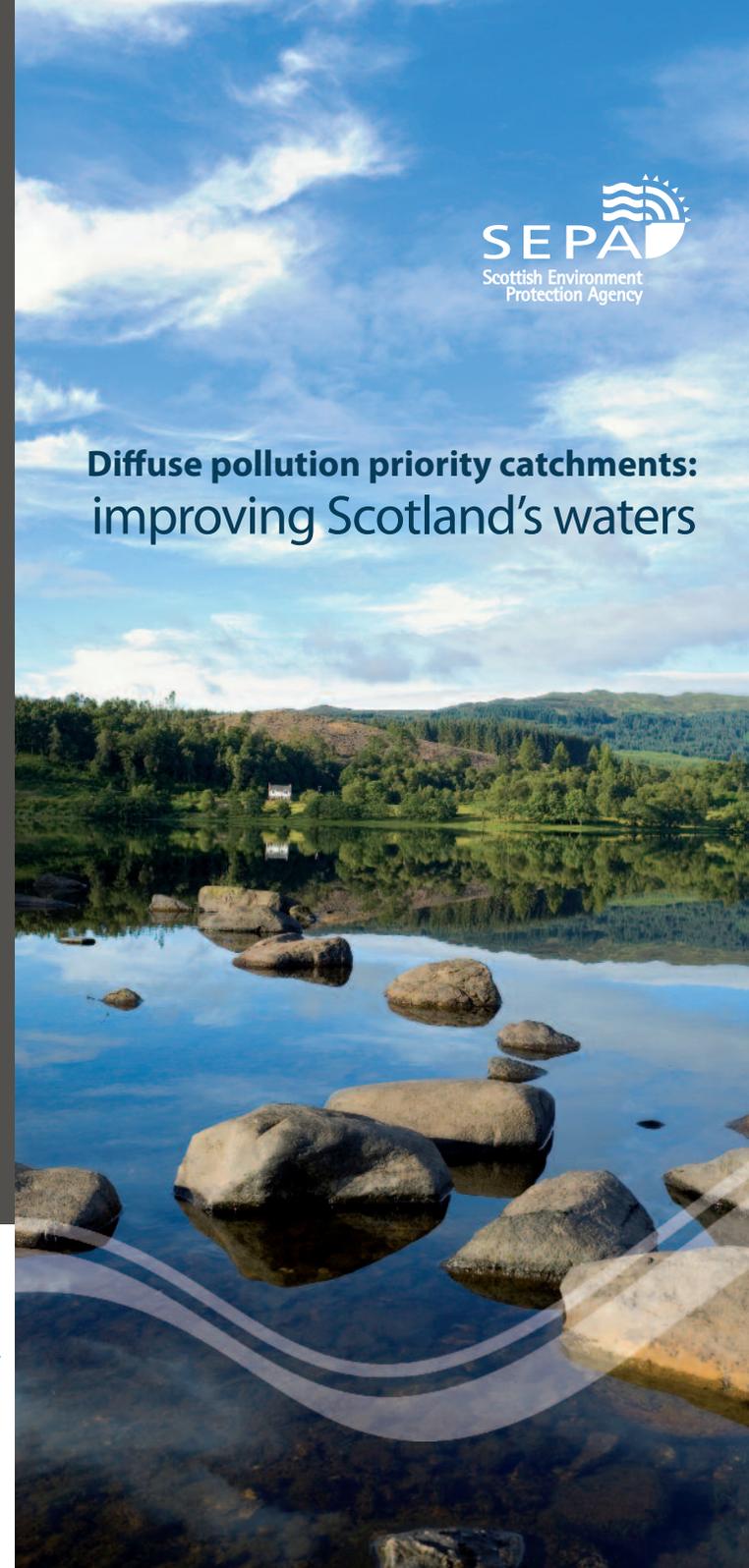
Tel: 08452 30 20 50

Email: [info@sears.scotland.gov.uk](mailto:info@sears.scotland.gov.uk)

[www.sears.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.sears.scotland.gov.uk)



## Diffuse pollution priority catchments: improving Scotland's waters



This leaflet aims to raise awareness about rural diffuse pollution issues in Scotland and to highlight future work that will be carried out by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and partner organisations to reduce adverse impacts on the water environment.



The DP GBRs require feeding rings to be sited at least 10m from a watercourse, protecting water quality from bacteria, dung and eroded soils.



Forestry felling operations can affect water quality.

## Why do we need to improve water quality?

Scotland has a good reputation in terms of water quality. Considerable resources have been devoted to reducing pollution from sewage and industrial discharges, but work is needed to deal with the remaining environmental problems. At present, diffuse pollution is the biggest threat to achieving good water quality; we estimate that there are more than 4,600km of rivers, 300km<sup>2</sup> of lochs, and 80km<sup>2</sup> of coastal waters adversely affected by rural land use. Groundwater, which feeds rivers and can be a source of drinking water, is often also affected. Scotland must aim to meet improvement targets by 2015, and we are taking action through the river basin management planning process.

To help improve the protection of Scotland's waters, the Diffuse Pollution General Binding Rules (DP GBRs) were introduced under the Water Environment (Diffuse Pollution) (Scotland) Regulations in April 2008. They are based on already accepted good management practices.

## What is a diffuse pollution priority catchment?

Diffuse pollution priority catchments have been identified as those water bodies that don't meet environmental quality standards and require a catchment-wide approach to reduce diffuse pollution risks; over 100 catchments across Scotland need this level of action. The first 14 water body catchments have been selected.

## What will happen?

Work to improve the condition of rivers, lochs and coastal waters will see SEPA assessing rivers and burns in these catchments to identify actions which may be impacting on water quality. These can include land cultivated too near to watercourses, poaching and bank erosion caused by livestock, slurry and manure spreading, and other land management or water issues.

This work will allow SEPA to collect more detailed information on the environmental impacts in diffuse pollution priority catchments. SEPA already carries out

this kind of work in several catchments in Scotland, but more concerted efforts will be focused in the diffuse pollution priority catchment to understand the interaction between land-use activities and the water body concerned.

How we manage land can influence water quality.

