

Open Data Publication Plan

The SEPA Approach



1 The Vision

The Scottish Government has a vision of a Scotland which makes its public data open and available for reuse by anyone for any purpose from general interest to commercial exploitation.

All public bodies are required to commit to the development and implementation of their own Open Data publication plans.

“An open data publication plan will set out the organisation’s commitment to making its data open and identify how and when they will achieve this, including the data that will be made open.”¹

SEPA shares this commitment.

2 The Key Characteristics of Open Data

The key characteristics of open data are that it needs to be Discoverable, Viewable and Downloadable.

Discoverable means not only is it easy to find but the potential user is also informed what the data are about. This information is called metadata and its format must meet minimal industry standards. The metadata will typically provide the potential user with a description of the data, where it came from, what its purpose is for the owning organisation, what standard of quality can be reasonably be expected and what type of licence covers its use.

Viewable means that the potential user can look at the data on screen using any internet browser to see what the data or portions thereof look like in order to assess its suitability for his purpose. Data such as geographical data may need to be viewed using some kind of application such as a map viewer. These should be provided by the data owner and should be useable through any internet browser.

Downloadable means that a potential user is able to export the data from the host platform to his own local machine without any manual assistance from the data owner. The data owner needs to provide the necessary mechanisms to allow the potential user to download the datasets he wishes to use. The “level of openness” is an essential aspect of the open data vision. Open data should be readable by any non-proprietary software. This means it must fall into the 3-star or above data type category in the [5-star data scheme](#).

3 The SEPA Approach

The SEPA approach is to fully document what data are currently published, together with its metadata, licensing information, level of openness and where it is published. This information will form the basis of a new “Environmental Data” page on the SEPA public website thus providing a single point of entry to the catalogue of SEPA published data.

From this starting point, SEPA will develop the current published data offerings to comply with the minimum requirements of the open data vision, add new data to the catalogue and move towards 5-star openness in an appropriate way. As the collection and management of new data falls within SEPA’s area of responsibility, open publication of data will become embedded in the agency’s business as usual processes.

SEPA will collaborate with colleagues across the public sector to share experience as the project develops with a particular focus on metadata standards and common publishing platforms.

Selecting the data: SEPA will start by publishing a catalogue of datasets now available on the SEPA public website under the “Environmental Data” main heading; data requests come into SEPA on a regular basis from private and public bodies; these requests are continually reviewed to identify potential future data for publication; candidate data for open publication will be prioritised for action based on its perceived usefulness and the level of demand from external individuals and groups

Licensing reuse: open data publication excludes personal and commercially sensitive data; it is SEPA’s objective to publish all other environmental data under the open government licence (OGL) which permits unlimited use; SEPA’s legal and security function has developed an internal licensing process which will certify candidate data for publication under an OGL

¹ Scottish Government Open Data Strategy <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/02/6614/0>

Level of openness: SEPA's technical team will create processes to make currently published datasets available at the 3-star level and above; usefulness, demand and ease of upgrade will be the factors used to prioritise this activity

Data publication: SEPA data will continue to reside on SEPA's servers; it will be accessible through a new "Environmental Data" page on the SEPA website; much of the data currently published is also accessible through the Scotland's Environment Web via the Data Discovery page which provides data visualisation applications from which data can be exported; SEPA's linked data store is also under development at data.sepa.org.uk which will be increasingly utilised as the open data vision takes shape.

4 Current status and timescale

SEPA currently publishes data on the [SEPA public website](#) under the "Environment" main tab. There are also data visualisation applications available of [Scotland's Environment Web](#) under the Get Interactive/Discover Data link.

A dataset publication schedule (draft example shown below) will be published on a redeveloped "Environmental Data" page on the SEPA public website. This will point to all the currently available published data on both the websites mentioned above. This will be available during **Q2 2016**.

All currently available data on the schedule will be made available as at least 3-star level of openness with an Open Government Licence (OGL) by the end of **Q4 2016**.

By the end of **Q4 2017**, the SEPA linked data store will be fully operational and the open data publications described above will be fully embedded in SEPA business as usual processes.

5 Dataset Publication Schedule

The currently downloadable datasets are listed in this table which will form the basis of the updated “Environmental Data” page on the SEPA public website

Data category	Where published	Application	Licence level	Access level
Water body classification (detail)	SEPA website	Water Classification	SEPA Reuse statement	Excel
Water body classification (summary)	SEWeb	Discover data	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV (& Map view)
Groundwater	SEWeb	Discover data	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV
River basin management planning	SEPA website	Water environment hub	Composite (SEPA, OS, CEH, EA, SNH)	CSV
SEPA River basin Planning	SEWeb	Benefits of the water environment	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV
SEPA River basin Planning	SEWeb	Potential impacts of climate and land use change	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV
SEPA River basin Planning	SEWeb	Characterisation of the water environment, risks and issues	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV
Water Levels	SEPA & NRFA websites	Water Level Data	SEPA, National River Flow Archive, CEH	CSV, Shape
Bathing waters	SEPA website	Locations	SEPA website conditions of use	View only
Bathing waters	SEWeb	Discover data	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV (& Map view)
Flood Hazard and Risk Maps	SEPA website	Flood maps	Restricted to personal use only	View only
Aquaculture	Scotland's aquaculture (SEWeb)	Monthly biomass & treatment reports	See LEGAL (Use of this website)	CSV
Aquaculture Marine Fish Farm	SEWeb	Discover data	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV
Waste data reporting	SEPA website	Waste from all sources	SEPA Reuse statement	Excel + PDF reports
Waste data reporting	SEPA website	Business waste data	SEPA Reuse statement	Excel + PDF reports
Waste site information	SEPA website	Waste sites and capacity	SEPA Reuse statement	Excel
Waste from all sources	SEWeb	Discover data	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV
Household waste	SEWeb	Discover data	Open (SEWeb T&C 10.1)	CSV
Scottish Waste Sites Data Tool	SEPA website	Interactive tool	SEPA Reuse statement	CSV
Scottish pollutant release inventory	SEPA website	Search SPRI data returns	SEPA reuse statement	View only
Scottish pollutant release inventory	SEWeb	Discover data	SEWeb T&C 10.1	CSV (& Map view)