

River Basin Management Plan Engagement Strategy 2019 – 2021

Outlined below is SEPA's engagement strategy for river basin management planning, RBMP, from 2019 – 2021. This covers the development of RBMP3 and supporting documents while we continue to support delivery of Scotland's RBMP objectives.

In 2018, SEPA published the [Statement of Steps Consultations](#) for Scotland and the Solway Tweed districts that outlined the steps to engage stakeholders for the third plan. Respondents were supportive of the proposed approach but some stakeholders asked for clarification about the structure this engagement will take. This document addresses the queries and sets out how we would like to work with you.

What is RBMP and why do we need your involvement?

[RBMP](#) provides Scotland with a set of objectives to protect, manage and improve the water environment. SEPA are the lead authority in the development and coordination of the plans and their objectives. Delivery of these objectives is implemented by SEPA, [responsible authorities](#) and partner organisations. The objectives cover a wide range of activities all across Scotland. To ensure the objectives are correct and achievable we are dependent on successful engagement with everyone involved in the process.

SEPA is also changing. We published a new regulatory strategy, [One Planet Prosperity](#), 1PP. 1PP aims to ensure Scotland can thrive and succeed within the resources on one planet, at present we use the resources of three. We will do this by ensuring compliance in regulation, and where possible, look for opportunities to work with businesses and others to go beyond compliance looking for innovative ways to use less resources, energy, water and produce less waste.

This approach is intrinsically linked to the principles of RBMP. [Sector Plans](#) provide additional delivery mechanisms to meet the objectives and build resilience into our water environment for the future. They provide access to influence business and industry stakeholders to support wider environmental improvements. We intend to use sector groups to help develop the third cycle objectives for relevant industries.

We aim to create social and economic success from Scotland's water environment by:

- developing and publishing ambitious RBMPs; and
- expanding the delivery of the objectives through 1PP.

Our engagement will:

1. Raise awareness of RBMP.
2. Ensure stakeholders are involved in development of objectives and documents.
3. Develop and strengthen partnerships for the delivery of improvements.

How will we do this?

Throughout the second cycle we collated feedback from advisory group members and stakeholders. The message was clear: efforts must now shift towards delivery if we are to achieve our ambitions. Members find the meetings useful for information dissemination but given the pressure on time and resources for all parties, face to face meetings are not always an efficient way to do this.

To address these concerns we propose the [Area Advisory Groups](#) will:

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

- Integrate, where appropriate, with Flood Risk Management Local Advisory Group, LAG, meetings and meet as required.
- Set up focused delivery groups targeted at an appropriate scale, from single water body to multiple catchments.
- Use the extended stakeholder communication network to inform all interested stakeholders (via emails and through our internet pages) about development of RBMP3, consultations, progress on delivery, workshops etc.

The [Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group](#) (DPMAG) helps create a robust governance, decision-making and coordination framework for the effective delivery of rural diffuse pollution actions with input from a cross section of rural, environmental and biodiversity interests. During the second cycle DPMAG membership was reduced to members that actively contribute to delivery. The remit for the group can be found [here](#). DPMAG meets and corresponds with members as and when required.

The [Fish and Fisheries Advisory Group](#) (FFAG) role has particular relevance when it comes to; understanding the status of fish stocks, reviewing and improving our classification, identifying areas where further research and development is required, representing a wide range of relevant interest groups and providing feedback from the work of the group within its sector. FFAG meets and corresponds with its members as and when required.

The role of the [National Advisory Group](#) (NAG) has changed as we have progressed through the cycles. In the initial stages it provided views from a wide range of sectors and interests to help shape the plans. As the process developed they provided a strategic steer for delivery in the areas of greatest challenge. The group itself was not a delivery group and so, as we are now focused on delivery, the role of NAG must evolve as follows:

- Interactions are predominantly via email correspondence that NAG members should disseminate where they deem appropriate.
- Responsible authorities involved in delivery of objectives will be directly engaged in the process of setting objectives.

Information will be provided for everyone on the [RBMP web pages](#) about the objective setting and development of the third RBMPs. Emails will be sent to our extended stakeholder network updating on forthcoming consultations, progress on delivery, news and events. Formal consultations will be published on line using the consultation tool.

When do we do this?

SEPA are responsible for coordinating the development of the third plans. We will strive to ensure all interested stakeholders are kept up to date with the development of documents and opportunities to attend meetings or respond to consultations. SEPA will ensure information is disseminated at appropriate stages so stakeholder have adequate notice to consider and provide comment. For convenience we have provided a timescale of the RBMP process up to the publication of the third plans below.

