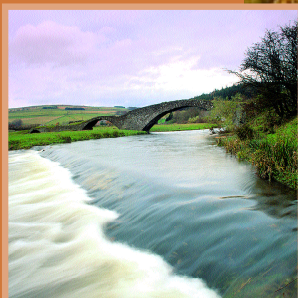
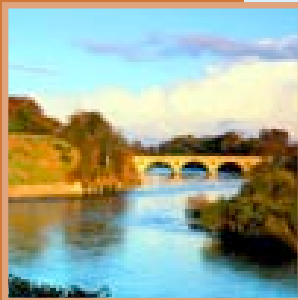




River Basin Planning Framework for the Solway Tweed River Basin District



Contents

Foreword	3
1. Introduction	4
1.1 Why do river basin planning?	4
1.2 A Solway Tweed Framework	6
2. River basin planning: guiding principles for the Solway Tweed	8
3. The river basin planning process	10
3.1 Cycles of river basin planning	10
3.2 River Basin District characterisation	11
3.3 Preparation of first RBMP	13
3.3.1 Inception (July–December 2006)	13
3.3.2 Significant Water Management Issues (October 2006–July 2007)	14
3.3.3 Draft River Basin Management Plan (August 2007–December 2008)	14
3.3.4 River Basin Management Plan (January–December 2009)	15
3.4 Implementation and review (January 2010–December 2015)	15
3.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment	15
4. Working in partnership – the Agencies	16
4.1 Regulatory functions	17
4.2 Environmental quality standards	17
4.3 Environmental monitoring	17
4.4 Data management systems and reporting	18
5. Delivering participation and consultation	19
5.1 Background	19
5.2 Guiding principles of stakeholder engagement	20
5.3 Achieving participation in Solway Tweed	21
5.4 Working with existing groups and partners	22
6. Working in partnership	23
6.1 Area Advisory Groups	23
6.1.1 Role	24
6.1.2 Membership	25
6.1.3 Chairmanship	25
6.1.4 Relationship with existing organisations	26
6.1.5 Support from the Agencies	27
6.2 Wider stakeholder engagement	27
6.3 Working at national scale	28
6.4 Mechanisms to resolve conflict	28

7. Coordination and co-operation between river basin planning and other planning processes	30
7.1 The importance of coordination and co-operation	30
7.2 Spatial/land use planning	31
7.2.1 National Parks Authorities	32
7.3 Community planning	32
7.4 Agriculture planning	32
7.5 Forestry	33
7.6 Water and sewerage services planning	33
7.7 Marine, transitional waters and coastal planning	34
7.8 Natura 2000 sites	35
7.9 Biodiversity Action Plans	36
7.10 Freshwater fishery management plans	37
7.11 Catchment Management Plans	38
7.12 Flood risk management planning	38
7.13 Water resource plans	39
8. Summary of Framework recommendations and monitoring progress	40
List of Acronyms	43
Map 1: Solway Tweed River Basin District	7
Map 2: Area Advisory Groups boundaries Solway Tweed River Basin District	23
Table 1: Summary of actions	40
Table 2: Indicators to be monitored	42
Figure 1: River basin planning process	11
Figure 2: Main stages of the first river basin planning cycle	12
Figure 3: Components of good public participation	20
Figure 4: Summary of the relationship between different bodies in the river basin planning process for the Solway Tweed RBD	29

Foreword

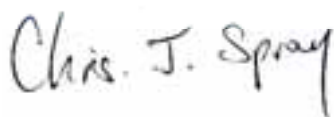


The Water Framework Directive came into force in December 2000. Across Europe it established new, better ways of protecting and improving rivers, lakes/lochs, groundwater, transitional and coastal waters. These include managing water based on river basins and groups of river basins as river basin districts. In the future we will work more closely with others to better integrate the management of land and water through the production of river basin management plans for river basin districts.

We strongly support this European Union Directive. It means we can take a further major step forward in protecting and improving the quality of our environment for the benefit of everyone. The Directive also means that SEPA, the Environment Agency and others will need to work closely together to achieve the best possible results for the wider environment.

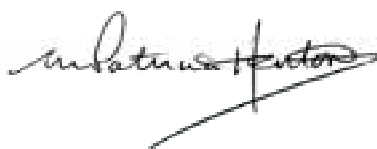
SEPA and the Environment Agency have a leading role in Water Framework Directive implementation in the Solway Tweed River Basin District. However, the Directive's objectives can only be fully achieved through ongoing co-operation between a wide range of government departments, local planning authorities, industry and many other organisations and individuals.

This document sets out our approach in developing the new river basin planning process in the Solway Tweed River Basin District. We recognise that we will have to adapt and change as we learn from our experience and develop more detailed guidance. We look forward to working with you in delivering the first River Basin Management Plan for the Solway Tweed.



Dr Chris Spray
Director of Environmental Science
Scottish Environment Protection Agency

August 2006



M Patricia Henton
Director of Environmental Protection
Environment Agency

August 2006

I. Introduction

I.1 Why do river basin planning?

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is a wide-ranging and ambitious piece of European environmental legislation, which came into force in December 2000. Its overall purpose is to achieve coordinated and integrated water management across Europe in order to:

- Prevent deterioration and improve the condition (status) of aquatic ecosystems, including wetlands and groundwater;
- Promote sustainable water use;
- Reduce pollution; and
- Help reduce the effects of floods and droughts.

The WFD applies to inland surface waters (rivers, streams, lakes/lochs), groundwater, estuaries/firths and coastal waters. Importantly, the WFD recognises that actions in one part of a river basin may have impacts in another and that the activities of one set of water users may affect the interests of others.



The WFD sets up a six-year cycle of planning and action with the production of the first River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) required by the end of 2009. The key objective for the WFD is to 'aim to achieve' good status for surface waters and groundwaters (or good ecological potential for artificial or heavily modified water bodies) by 2015. However, it is recognised that there will be conditions under which it will not be possible to achieve good status by 2015. Where the achievement of environmental targets would be disproportionately expensive or technically infeasible, the WFD includes the flexibility to extend deadlines or to set alternative, less stringent objectives. These decisions will need to be justified in each case.

The environmental objectives of the WFD place a stronger emphasis on the total health of the water environment than existing legislation and require us to assess and protect waters in a more holistic and sustainable manner than before. To do this we need to take account of water quality, water quantity, ecology and physical habitats to understand and manage pressures from human activities.

To deliver this wider view we need to provide opportunities for people to become involved in the river basin planning process (one of the main themes of the WFD). Ensuring and enabling the participation and influence of stakeholders must be an integral part of the river basin planning process. This Framework is part of our commitment to deliver this active engagement process.



1.2 A Solway Tweed Framework

When the WFD was transposed into UK legislation, separate provision was made for the Solway Tweed River Basin District (RBD) because it straddles the English–Scottish border (see Map 1). Under the Solway Tweed Regulations¹, the Environment Agency and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (the Agencies) were given a number of new duties and responsibilities.

In the Solway Tweed RBD, the Agencies must work jointly to deliver a coordinated approach to river basin planning in the District. In particular, we must act together to produce the following:

- River basin characterisation;
- Monitoring programme;
- Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures;
- Significant Water Management Issues;
- Environmental objectives for each water body and a summary Programme of Measures (PoMs) to be applied to achieve those objectives;
- A draft River Basin Management Plan; and
- A River Basin Management Plan.

We have produced this stand-alone document to help us and our partners manage water effectively across the borders of the River Basin District. It demonstrates our commitment to joint working and will provide confidence that the RBMP produced for approval by Scottish Ministers and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will meet the obligations of the WFD and the Regulations applying to the Solway Tweed RBD.

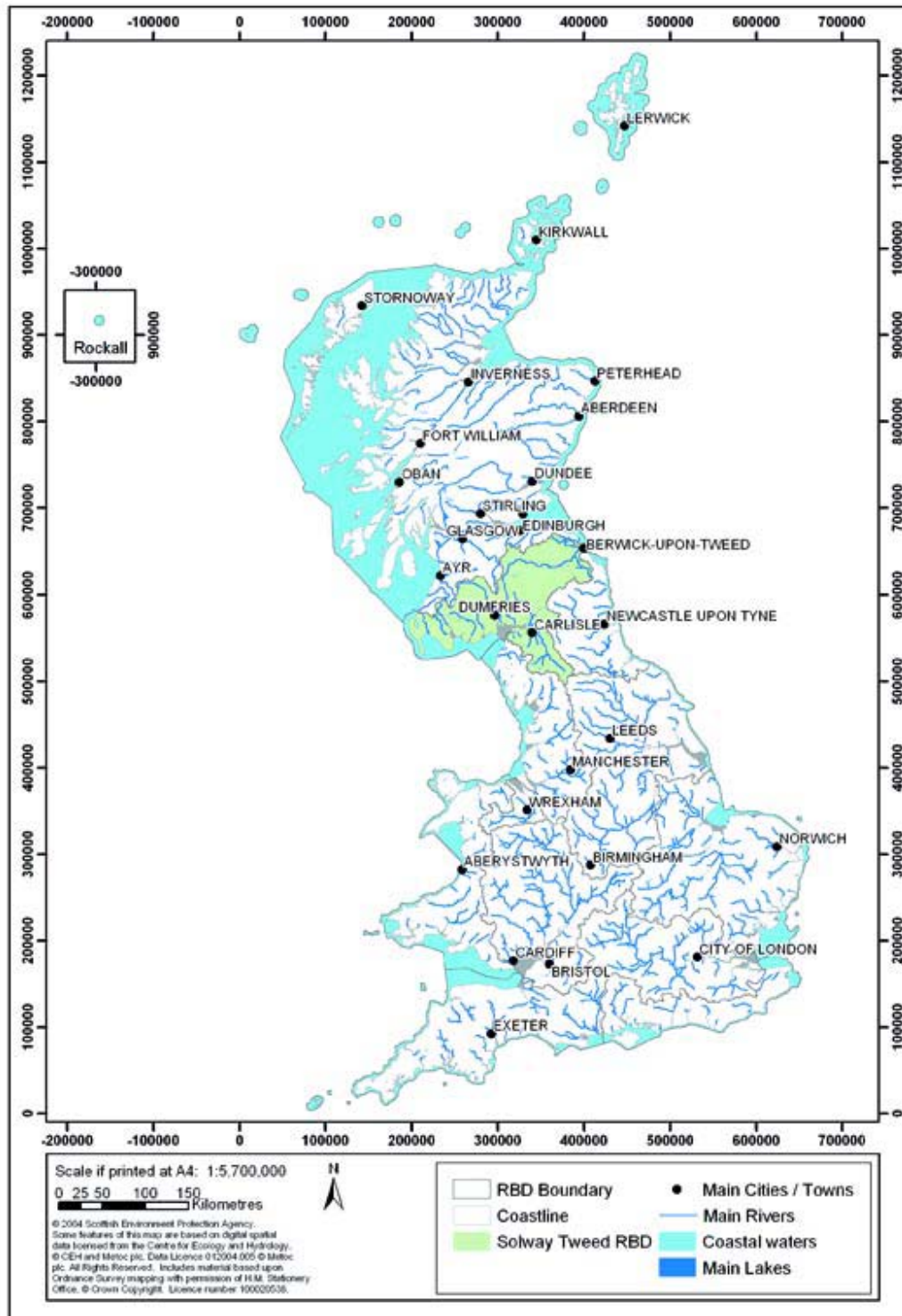
We have jointly produced this Framework by actively involving and listening to the views of others. It reflects responses to related public consultations produced by the Agencies and the contributions made at two seminars held in Carlisle and Kelso during 2004. Your views have focused the Framework on four main areas:

- Guiding principles to deliver river basin planning;
- A clear and transparent process to river basin planning through the development of appropriate administrative arrangements;
- A partnership approach throughout implementation; and
- Effectively coordinating and integrating the RBMP with other plans and planning systems.

This Framework outlines the river basin planning process and the mechanisms we will use to involve and work with others to achieve joint ownership of the Solway Tweed RBMP and the commitment of those responsible for undertaking its actions. We hope that this document will assist in your preparations to be part of the new river basin planning system.

¹The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (Solway Tweed River Basin District) Regulations 2004. These can be viewed on the SEPA website at www.sepa.org.uk/wfd/rbmp/index.htm

Map 1: Solway Tweed River Basin District



2. River basin planning: guiding principles for the Solway Tweed

We expect river basin planning in the Solway Tweed RBD to be an important mechanism to protect, improve and manage the water environment in partnership with others.

To help us to achieve appropriate levels of environmental protection while supporting sustainable development, we have adopted a series of six principles that will guide our approach to river basin planning.

1. River basin planning will be an ongoing process that promotes sustainable water management while protecting and improving the Solway Tweed's water environment.

River basin planning is more than just producing a RBMP. The WFD sets out an integrated process that adopts a participative approach to delivering sustainable water management. River basin planning will have an ongoing role in contributing to the development and delivery of the key WFD outputs:

- Assessment of the pressures and impacts upon the water environment;
- Analysis of the economic importance of water use;
- Design of monitoring programmes to assess impacts and monitor changes;
- Setting of environmental objectives; and
- Identification and delivery of measures to improve the environment.

2. River basin planning will provide the basis upon which a range of organisations can work together to deliver agreed environmental objectives.

A wide range of organisations already work to improve and protect the water environment. River basin planning is an ongoing process which we can all use to protect the water environment more efficiently. It provides us with an opportunity to better target and coordinate our actions with others and to set shared objectives against which we can assess the results of our actions. Taking this risk-based and collaborative approach to water management is aligned with the principles of both Governments 'Better Regulation' agenda.

3. River basin planning will adopt an approach based on participation and the engagement of local stakeholders and communities.

Involving stakeholders in water management is one of the main themes of the WFD. We believe the River Basin Management Plan provides an important mechanism with which to protect, improve and manage the water environment in partnership with others and for everyone. To do this, the river basin planning process must:

- Acknowledge, support and accommodate the contributions of others;
- Coordinate management of water and land effectively and efficiently; and
- Undertake work at scales that allow consideration and action by those with a direct interest in the environment.

4. River basin planning will deliver Water Framework Directive obligations over a series of six-year planning cycles.

We are starting a programme of prioritised action in the Solway Tweed RBD in order to achieve the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and we will meet these requirements in a clear and transparent manner. However, we believe that, in the longer term, river basin planning can also contribute to the achievement of wider benefits for the environment such as improved biodiversity and soil management.

Each River Basin Management Plan can incorporate objectives to be achieved over one, two and three six-year planning cycles. But to set objectives extending beyond the first cycle, the WFD requires us to take account of ecological, economic and social priorities so that sustainable water management and water uses are supported by the provision of achievable objectives.

5. River basin planning will work towards the integration of water and land management to support sustainable development in the Solway Tweed River Basin District.

The Agencies cannot protect the water environment in isolation. River basin planning must work with other planning processes in order to provide effective environmental protection. The effects of land management are often directly related to water management and vice versa. We need to:

- Recognise the valuable economic, social and environmental aspects of land and water management; and
- Ensure clear linkages are developed between the various planning systems.

We recognise the need to be open and transparent and fair in how we develop and manage river basin planning. To help us achieve this we will provide opportunities for our partners and the public to become involved in the process. In addition the Agencies will adapt the decision-making process as our own knowledge and experience of this new planning system develops.

To further support coordination and integration, we will direct resources to where they can make the most difference and achieve sustainable environmental, social and economic benefits.

6. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (Solway Tweed River Basin District) Regulations require the Agencies to work together to produce the River Basin Management Plan for the Solway Tweed River Basin District.

The River Basin District scale is the main geographical reporting unit of the WFD. The river basin planning process must therefore be prioritised at this scale. In the Solway Tweed RBD, SEPA and the Environment Agency will work together with the support of our partners to produce a single coordinated River Basin Management Plan.

This Framework sets out our intentions and priorities for working together and with our partners. It will be supported by other statements as our respective and joint national guidance develops.

3. The river basin planning process

Delivering the principles of river basin planning set out in Chapter 2 is an ambitious challenge. It implies changes to current practices as well as the introduction of new approaches. It requires strategic thinking, particularly at the RBD and local scales, with better coordination, integration and planning of activities between these scales. We also need to take a more participative approach in river basin planning.

This chapter sets out the process of river basin planning.

3.1 Cycles of river basin planning

The WFD introduces a six-year cycle of river basin planning. A River Basin Management Plan for the Solway Tweed RBD must be produced in 2009, 2015, 2021, etc. Among other things, the plans must:

- List the environmental objectives for the RBD;
- Justify how and where alternative objectives have been used; and
- Summarise the Programme of Measures for the RBD required to meet all objectives.

The WFD requires:

- Setting of objectives for all water bodies;
- Compliance with standards and objectives set for protected areas; and
- Implementation of Programmes of Measures to meet those objectives.

Decisions about the use of the alternative objectives must be based on the factors set out in Article 4 of the WFD including considerations of the technical feasibility and the costs and benefits of implementing the measures that would be necessary to achieve WFD objectives.

Iteration is therefore built into the river basin planning process. It will be necessary to:

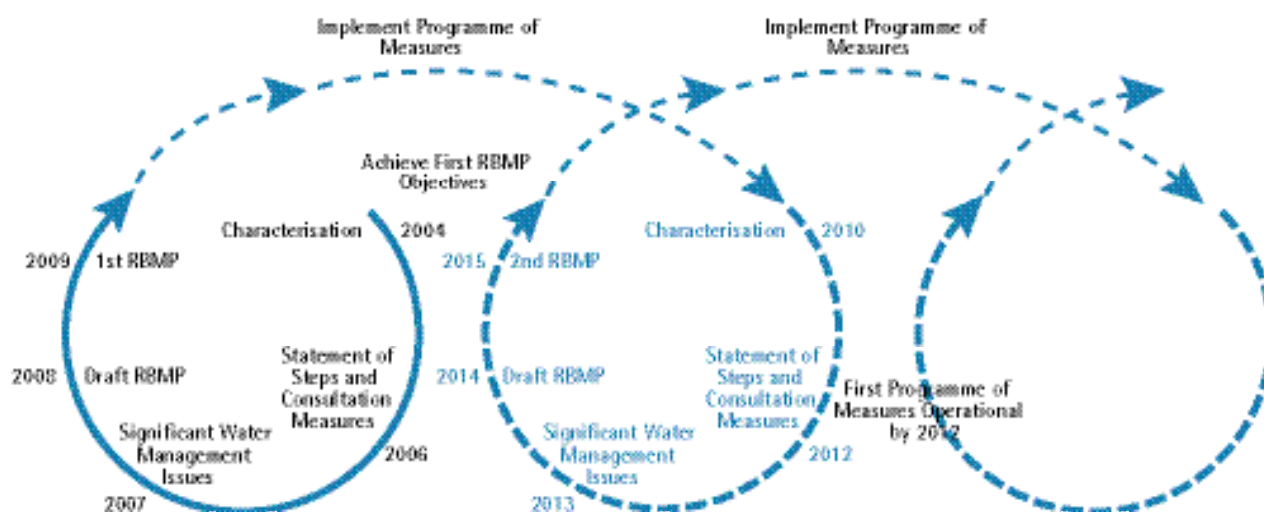
- Identify objectives;
- Consider possible measures to meet these objectives;
- Consider the technical feasibility, costs and benefits of implementing these measures, etc.; and
- Re-assess the objectives and consider the use of alternative objectives.

The next sections cover the key steps in the river basin planning process. Given the scope and the timetable for WFD implementation, there is a gradual development of the policy for delivery.

It is currently too early to give detailed advice on every aspect of the planning process. Work is underway on a number of different themes in partnership with stakeholders and technical experts to develop the tools needed to implement the WFD and the river basin planning process that underpins it. Further information and guidance on a variety of key issues will be issued during the course of the river basin planning process.

Figure 1 illustrates this cyclic approach to river basin management. An important element within each cycle is the development of the RBMP, which sets out a strategic and policy framework for water management within each RBD.

Figure 1: River basin planning process



3.2 River Basin District characterisation

We have already begun the process of working together to deliver WFD requirements in the production of a single environmental and economic characterisation for the Solway Tweed RBD. Article 5 of the WFD required that these documents were produced by December 2004. The final documents were published by SEPA and can be found on its website at www.sepa.org.uk/publications/wfd/index.htm.

The environmental characterisation has allowed us to identify water bodies considered to be most at risk of failing to meet the default environmental objectives of the WFD by 2015.

The characterisations will be subject to refinement. They will be used by the Agencies and others to:

- Begin to prioritise actions; and
- Identify and carry out a Programme of Measures to achieve WFD environmental objectives.

There will be opportunities for wider participation in identifying the Programme of Measures and associated objectives through the arrangements discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 2: Main stages of the first river basin planning cycle

Stage			Analysis and planning activities	Indicative timescale
1.	Inception	River basin planning work programme Consult	(a) Establish Area Advisory Groups (b) Initial understanding of river basin issues (c) Produce Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures (by end of December 2006) (d) Prepare for Forum event Consultation: December 2006 to June 2007	July–December 2006
2.	Significant Water Management Issues	SWMI Consult	With Area Advisory Groups: (a) Update main pressures risks and impacts (b) Produce Summary of Significant Water Management Issues (c) Hold Forum event Consultation report (by late summer 2007) Consultation: six months from publication	October 2006 to July 2007
3.	Draft RBMP	Draft RBMP Consult	With Area Advisory Groups: (a) Provide summary of the Programme of Measures and draft environmental objectives (b) Carry out analysis of cost-effectiveness and disproportionate costs to support decision-making (c) Highlight areas of uncertainty (d) Produce draft report by December 2008	August 2007 to December 2008
4.	Final RBMP	Publish RBMP Report Submit to EC	(a) Final appraisal (b) Submit RBMP to Ministers for approval (c) Submit RBMP to EC by March 2010	January–December 2009
 Implementation of measures phase				

3.3 Preparation of first RBMP

Figure 2 summarises the main stages of the first river basin planning cycle for the Solway Tweed RBD culminating in the submission of the approved RBMP to the European Commission (EC) by March 2010. These steps are explained below.

3.3.1 Inception (July–December 2006)

During the inception phase we will:

- Publish the Solway Tweed RBD Framework (this document);
- Establish the Area Advisory Groups and Forums – see Chapter 6;
- Establish an initial understanding of river basin planning issues and priorities;
- Produce the Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures (by the end of December 2006).

One of the first milestones set out by the WFD is the completion of a Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures (SoSCM) to be published for consultation by December 2006. This document will include:

- The timetable and key milestones for the preparation of the Solway Tweed RBMP;
- How we will ensure that stakeholders are involved in the process of preparing the Solway Tweed RBMP and the general public are given the opportunity to comment via consultations; and
- Information about the main public and private sector organisations whose activities and interests are likely to be affected by the RBMP.

We expect the SoSCM to provide more detail on our intentions and timetable for river basin planning in the Solway Tweed RBD than this document. The SoSCM will also include any revisions made to this Framework as our joint and national guidance develops.

A document summarising the comments received and how they have influenced the further development of the river basin planning process will be published after the six-month consultation has closed.

Action 1

The Agencies will prepare a Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures for public consultation by 22 December 2006.

3.3.2 Significant Water Management Issues (October 2006–July 2007)

The WFD requires an interim review of the Significant Water Management Issues (SWMI) identified in the RBD. For the first river basin planning cycle, the WFD requires a consultation on the SWMI to be undertaken by December 2007 at the latest.

The main activities within this stage are to:

- Update Article 5 information on the main pressures, risks and impacts on the water environment;
- Produce a Summary of Significant Water Management Issues and consult on these; and
- Understand the wide range of options available to address the issues.

We plan to produce the SWMI document before the December 2007 deadline, with the start of consultation set for late summer 2007. There will then be a period of six months for consultation and feedback. The comments collected will help to shape the draft RBMP.

Action 2

The Agencies will prepare a SWMI summary in advance of the December 2007 deadline to allow for better consultation and appropriate integration into the draft RBMP.

3.3.3 Draft River Basin Management Plan (August 2007–December 2008)

The main activities within this stage are to:

- Analyse for cost-effectiveness and disproportionate costs of potential measures;
- Develop a summary of the Programme of Measures;
- Set out proposed objectives, including the use of alternative objectives;
- Highlight areas of remaining uncertainty; and
- Produce the draft Solway Tweed RBMP for consultation.

The draft RBMP will be informed by the advice and guidance from the previous stages, but also the input from the Forums, Area Advisory Groups (see Chapter 6) and national groups and Governments.

A six-month consultation on the draft RBMP must start by 22 December 2008.

Action 3

The Agencies will publish a draft RBMP by 22 December 2008 for consultation.

3.3.4 River Basin Management Plan (January–December 2009)

The main activities within this stage are to:

- Revise the draft RBMP in light of consultation responses;
- Produce the Solway Tweed RBMP and submit it to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Scottish Ministers for review and approval; and
- Publish the first RBMP by 22 December 2009.

The RBMP will be submitted to the European Commission in March 2010.

Action 4

The Agencies will prepare the RBMP and submit to Ministers by 22 December 2009.

3.4 Implementation and review (January 2010–December 2015)

Once the RBMP is approved, the implementation phase of the river basin planning process will begin.

The Programme of Measures must be made operational by 22 December 2012 (at the latest) with the aim of achieving the WFD objectives by 22 December 2015. In cases where extended deadlines are set, they will need to be reached by 2021 or 2027.

A number of the measures will be underway before the 2012 deadline.

During this time, the second cycle of river basin planning will be progressing for production of a second RBMP by 2015.

3.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Plans and programmes produced as part of the WFD implementation will also need to meet the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. This applies to certain plans and programmes whose formal preparation began after 21 July 2004 and which are considered likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The SEA process requires an 'environmental assessment' such that any significant environmental effects arising from the proposed plans and programmes are identified, assessed and taken into account. This process is not dissimilar to that being undertaken to meet the requirements of the WFD.

River Basin Management Plans and Programmes of Measures prepared under the WFD will require an environmental assessment under the SEA Directive. We are aware of the overlap and, where possible, will complete activities in parallel to reduce duplication of effort and resources. Appropriate 'signposting' within RBMPs will indicate how the requirements have been satisfied.

Action 5

The Agencies will undertake a SEA for the Solway Tweed RBD in accordance with the SEA Directive.

4. Working in partnership – the Agencies

The Agencies will work jointly to deliver the WFD outputs and river basin planning process outlined in Chapter 3. To do this SEPA and the Environment Agency will operate within their existing legislative framework to achieve common outcomes for the following:

- Regulatory functions;
- Environment standards;
- Environmental monitoring networks;
- Data management systems and reporting; and
- Stakeholder engagement and consultation.

We cover the first four points below and stakeholder engagement in the next two chapters.

In working together to protect and improve the water environment in the Solway Tweed RBD, we will promote the principles of Better Regulation, i.e. being transparent, consistent, proportionate and targeted in all that we do.



4.1 Regulatory functions

The different regulatory systems operated by the two Agencies (and other public bodies) in the Scottish and English parts of the Solway Tweed River Basin District will continue. The compilation and implementation of the Programme of Measures within the RBD will need to take account of these different systems.

In Scotland, SEPA is identified as the competent authority responsible for carrying out the regulatory functions introduced by the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (WEWS Act) and the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005². These Regulations introduce new regulatory powers to enable SEPA to control activities that have an impact on the water environment (e.g. water abstraction and impoundments, and engineering activities) as well as replacing the existing controls over point source pollution.

In England and Wales, the Environment Agency and others are already the regulators of these activities with long and well-established systems of control in place. However, certain parts of the Till, Tweed, Esk and Sark catchments have historically been exempt from abstraction controls as they have been considered cross-border rivers. The Water Act 2003 removes this exemption and regulation by the Environment Agency will commence at a date to be agreed.

4.2 Environmental quality standards

Environmental quality standards are the means by which we assess the potential impact of substances on the environment. In the Solway Tweed RBD, we will work towards the use of common environmental standards. This will be achieved by adopting a set of consistent assessment methods and environmental standards. These are currently being developed through the UK Technical Advisory Group (UKTAG), a group which coordinates technical WFD matters across the UK³. These environmental standards will inform the objectives that we (and others) will set and need to meet using their own separate regulatory regimes.

Action 6

The Agencies will adopt consistent standards of environmental protection (when developed by UKTAG).

4.3 Environmental monitoring

The WFD requires that monitoring networks for each RBD are established and operational by December 2006. The principles of monitoring strategies and classification schemes are being agreed at a UK level and will be the basis used by both SEPA and the Environment Agency in establishing monitoring networks.

We will be responsible for assessing the results from the monitoring sites in our respective parts of the River Basin District using agreed protocols.

Action 7

The Agencies will work together to develop compatible monitoring systems and assessment protocols for the Solway Tweed RBD.

²More information on the WEWS Act and Controlled Activities Regulations can be found on the SEPA website at www.sepa.org.uk/wfd/regimes/index.htm

³www.wfduk.org

4.4 Data management systems and reporting

The availability and accessibility of information is important in helping us to be clear and transparent about our decisions, particularly where uncertainties exist.

To deliver an effective and transparent river basin planning process and RBMP for the whole of the Solway Tweed RBD, we will need data management and reporting systems that provide information on:

- Characterisation and risk;
- Environmental monitoring;
- Significant water management issues;
- Environmental objectives and classification; and
- Programme of Measures.

This information must be widely available to enable stakeholders to make an informed contribution to the process. We also wish to make this information available at the RBD, AAG and water body levels.

Good sharing and management of information will also enable an adaptive approach to the river basin planning process to evolve. We will include further details on how we intend to make information on the river basin planning process available to our partners in the Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures (see Chapter 3).

Action 8

The Agencies will develop joint data management and reporting for the Solway Tweed RBD.



5. Delivering participation and consultation

5.1 Background

The WFD requires the adoption of an inclusive and participative approach during the production and implementation of RBMPs. Such an approach will:

- Make the best possible use of available knowledge and expertise;
- Give a more accurate reflection of priorities; and
- Promote the ownership of environmental objectives and the contributions required to achieve them.

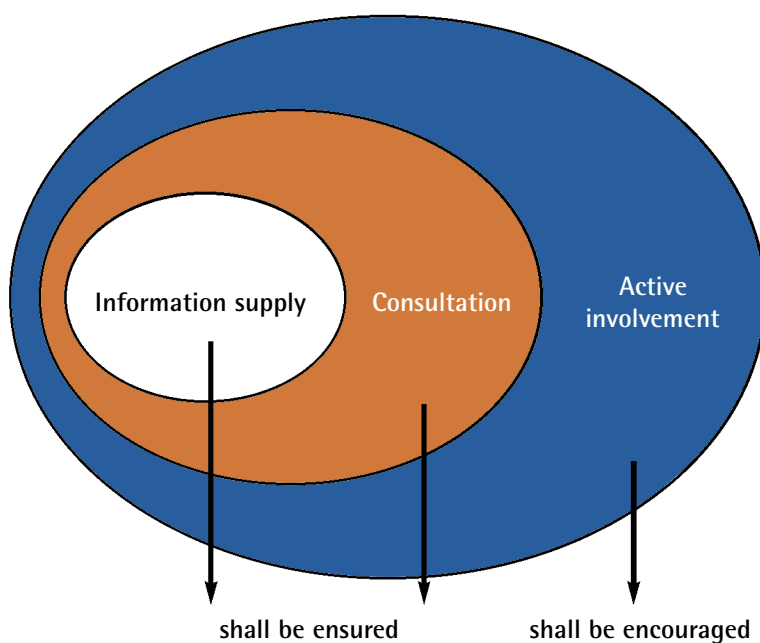
This approach will mean a better RBMP is prepared and more effective partnerships developed to support its implementation. These benefits are summarised in Box 1.

Box 1: Benefits of participative plan development and decision-making

- Establishment of sustainable and long-term decision-making processes
- Development of a shared understanding of the contribution made by different sectors to the achievement of environmental objectives
- Improved ownership of environmental objectives, actions and plans
- Improved compliance with regulatory and other policy decisions and drivers
- Greater likelihood of successful plan implementation
- Strengthening of partnership working and concerted action to produce better environmental outcomes

We will work to ensure that the river basin planning process achieves the fundamental components of good public participation, i.e. to supply information and consultation opportunities while encouraging the long-term active involvement of interested parties and building capacity and opportunities to participate (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Components of good public participation



5.2 Guiding principles of stakeholders engagement

We are committed to working effectively with a wide range of stakeholders to deliver a participative river basin planning process. This will require arrangements that are:

- **Efficient** – in the use of time and resources;
- **Open and transparent** – to make the river basin planning process clear and inclusive, and to allow stakeholders to plan their involvement;
- **Consistent** – in application across sectors and groups;
- **Targeted** – communication that connects with the right audience at the right time in the right way;
- **Time bound** – to deliver the RBMP outputs within the WFD or required timeframes; and
- **Outcome based** – contribute to the protection and improvement of the Solway Tweed's water environment.

We will apply these principles to the administrative arrangements and levels of involvement outlined in Chapter 6 and in the Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures (see section 3.3.1).

5.3 Achieving participation in Solway Tweed

Although the focus of the WFD is on the RBD scale, the effectiveness of the river basin planning process depends on being able to integrate plans, issues and stakeholder views across a number of scales:

- National (England and Scotland);
- River Basin District;
- Sub District; and
- Local.

This is reflected in the arrangements and structures we will put in place to encourage and support:

- Effective stakeholder engagement and participation;
- Consultation; and
- Information provision.

Our Statement of the Steps and Consultation Measures will detail the actions we must undertake to achieve effective participation and consultation. It will also list the dates by which those steps and measures will be complete. This document will be published by December 2006 and we will gather views and comments on it during a six-month consultation period.



5.4 Working with existing groups and partners

Much of our current work is collaborative and we have already reaped many benefits from working with a range of partners. Through this approach:

- We draw on the wealth of knowledge coming from different sources;
- We can coordinate our plans and actions with those of others;
- We are more likely to recognise potential conflicts early on when there is still time to find solutions; and
- We ensure effective and efficient use of limited resources and avoid duplication of effort.

We currently work with others in a variety of ways:

- We bring stakeholders together to help us to develop certain plans and strategies, e.g. the Environment Agency's Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS).
- We contribute to the plans and strategies of other authorities, e.g. through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in England.
- We support and contribute to other environment-focused networks and forums, e.g. through our membership of coastal partnerships in Scotland and England.

Stakeholder involvement in river basin planning will build on and enhance these positive experiences. How we go about river basin planning and management has an important influence on the outcomes. It is essential for us to review how we work with existing water management groups to ensure an efficient and effective river basin planning process.

Some existing partnerships or networks already carry out public participation, consultation and engagement exercises, although the scope and range of these activities can vary from specific or sectoral water issues (e.g. fisheries management) to broader topics extending beyond the water environment (e.g. community planning).

Two existing non-statutory groups have already been suggested as bodies that might assist river basin planning in the Solway Tweed RBD:

- Tweed Forum (in the Tweed catchment); and
- Solway Firth Partnership (covering the coastal and transitional waters of the Solway).

We are currently discussing with these two groups how they might best contribute to and support river basin planning in the Solway Tweed RBD.

There are other groups and initiatives in the Solway Tweed RBD with specific expertise and experience to contribute to the process. Where these share aims with the WFD, we will work together to achieve common goals.

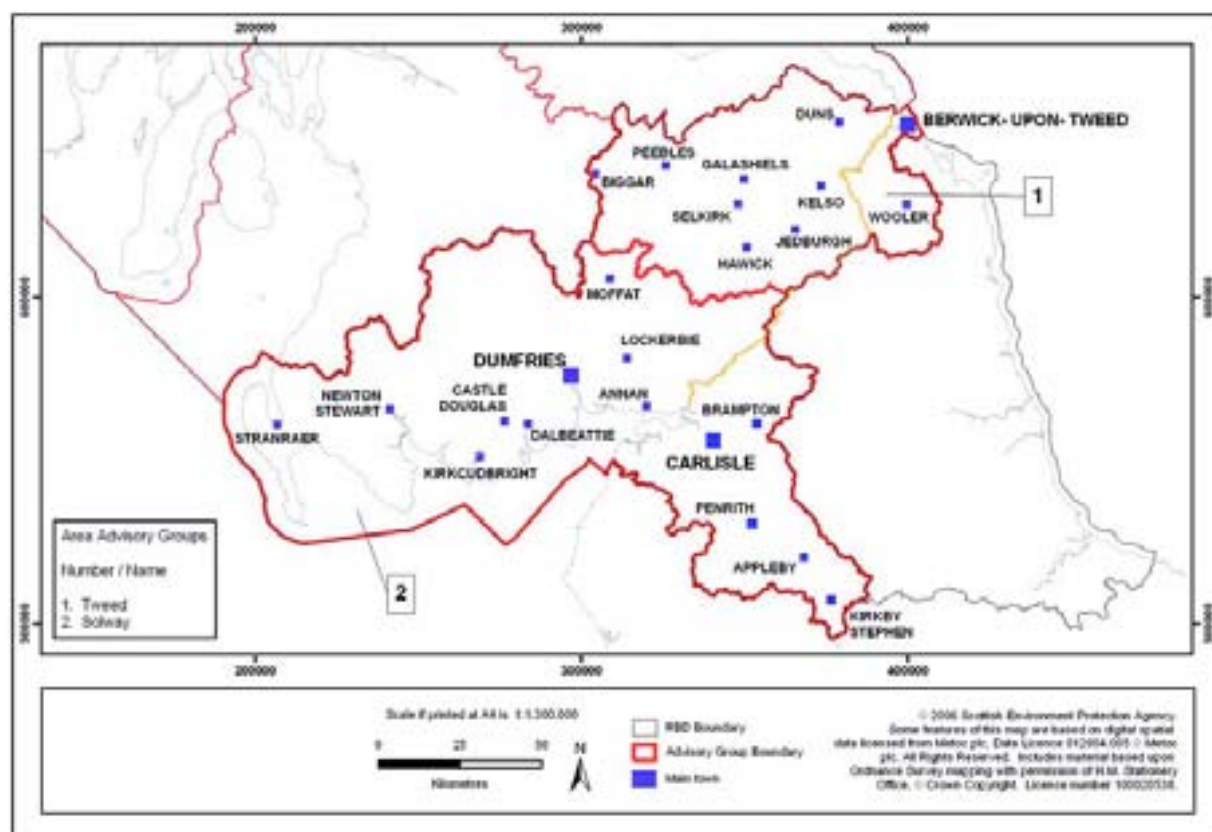
6. Working in partnership

We will make the river basin planning process inclusive by encouraging the involvement of others in the planning process. We recognise that people will wish to become involved in different ways and we will provide a range of opportunities to allow this (see Figure 4).

6.1 Area Advisory Groups

In the Solway Tweed RBD we propose to form two Area Advisory Groups (AAGs) – one for the Solway area and one for the Tweed basin – to provide a more effective link to local stakeholders and expertise. The boundaries of the areas covered by the AAGs are shown in Map 2.

Map 2: Area Advisory Groups boundaries Solway Tweed River Basin District



6.1.1 Role

The Area Advisory Groups will:

- Be the primary source of help, support and advice to the Agencies in delivering the river basin planning process and WFD outputs for the entire RBD;
- Bring their knowledge and understanding of their part of the Solway Tweed RBD and their sector to the process;
- Help the Agencies identify and gather the data needed for effective river basin planning, pooling data where appropriate;
- Provide advice on objectives, including the use of alternative objectives;
- Ensure significant issues and priorities are identified and that an agreed Programme of Measures is devised to address them and achieve the aims of the Directive;
- Feedback to their sector the decisions and work of the group;
- Identify improvements in the coordination and integration of different plans and policies that will help to better protect the water environment and promote its sustainable use;
- Consider the need for, and use of, further detailed plans and programmes; and
- Assist the resolution of any conflict generated in the river basin planning process.



6.1.2 Membership

It is essential that the membership of the AAGs reflects the character and pressures in the area. We expect membership will be driven largely by the nature and distribution of:

- Pressures on the environment (as identified during characterisation);
- Extent and abundance of different types of water body;
- Protected areas under the WFD; and
- Public bodies designated as Responsible Authorities⁴ (in Scotland).

These criteria suggest that the membership will be drawn from:

- Responsible Authorities, as designated in Scotland, e.g. local authority and Scottish Natural Heritage;
- Public bodies (including local authorities in England);
- Land-use sectors (e.g. forestry, farming);
- Public utilities;
- Environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- Business and industry;
- Key water users; and
- Others as identified by the AAG.

The final membership will reflect the cross-border nature of the District and the requirement to have Scottish and English representatives from key sectors. The final membership of the AAGs will be discussed and agreed at their first meetings.

The timetable for the WFD and river basin planning process means that the AAGs must be set up during 2006.

Action 9

The Agencies will set up Area Advisory Groups during summer 2006. This will enhance river basin planning across the Solway Tweed and allow time to produce the documents required between 2006 and 2009.

6.1.3 Chairmanship

Although there are benefits in sharing lead roles in the river basin planning process, particularly in developing a genuine position of shared ownership of, and commitment to, the RBMP and its implementation we will chair the AAGs in recognition of our legislative responsibilities under the WFD.

⁴Responsible Authorities are listed in The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (Designation of Responsible Authorities and Functions) Order 2006

6.1.4 Relationship with existing organisations

As part of our commitment to make best use of existing organisations and their experience, we are discussing with the Tweed Forum its role in the river basin planning process. The membership of the Tweed AAG will differ from that of the Tweed Forum. It is likely that we will coordinate Tweed AAG meetings with those of the Tweed Forum in order to:

- Make best use of existing links and representatives; and
- Minimise the need for additional meetings.

However, the Agencies are ultimately responsible for the timely delivery of required WFD outputs and cannot delegate these responsibilities.

We also hope to liaise with other organisations such as the Solway Firth Partnership that have experience in the process of working with a wide group of stakeholders.

Action 10

The Agencies will seek to work effectively and efficiently with existing groups in the Solway Tweed RBD.



6.1.5 Support from the Agencies

We will do all we can to help AAG members make the best use of their time and expertise. We will provide officer support to the AAGs to ensure:

- Awareness of national policy and guidance;
- Consistency of approach across the entire River Basin District; and
- Timely production of the RBMP.

We recognise the importance of coordinating work at the RBD scale to facilitate the production of the River Basin Management Plan, which must be a single document for the Solway Tweed River Basin District.

Action 11

Officers from SEPA and the Environment Agency will support the Area Advisory Groups in developing their contributions to the Solway Tweed RBMP.

6.2 Wider stakeholder engagement

We want river basin planning to reach beyond the Area Advisory Groups and their members. We propose that each Area Advisory Group should form an Area Advisory Forum with provision for a wide and open membership. This will extend the range and number of people able to provide input to, and be regularly informed of, progress in river basin planning without them having to be involved in the detail of the plan production process.

We expect to organise Forum events at the main stages and major milestones within the river basin planning process, e.g. during the public consultation on the Significant Water Management Issues and the draft RBMP.

In addition, we will make information available in a range of different forms and formats (e.g. websites, newsletters and reports) to allow public access to information on an ongoing basis.

Action 12

Forum events will be held to provide an opportunity to exchange information and ideas with interested parties not directly involved in the Area Advisory Groups.

6.3 Working at national scale

In Scotland, SEPA will develop a National Advisory Group to coordinate and advise on RBMP production. We expect this National Advisory Group to include representation from the Solway Tweed Area Advisory Groups.

The group of key stakeholders in England set up by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to discuss issues relating to the WFD and water policy in general has provided an important focus for stakeholder input. Its membership covers a wide range of interests including the environment, water companies, agriculture, the countryside and industry.

We will ensure that the national groups are aware of guidance and policy considerations appropriate to the Solway Tweed river basin planning process.

Action 13

The Agencies will be responsible for the coordination and transfer of information between national bodies and the Solway Tweed Area Advisory Groups.

6.4 Mechanisms to resolve conflict

As the Competent Authorities under the WFD, the Agencies are responsible for the production and submission of the draft and final RBMP to ministers for approval. At key points in the decision-making and plan preparation process, we may need to be the arbiters of what is in the draft and the first RBMP submitted to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Scottish Ministers for approval.

To optimise planning and delivery, we will seek to gain agreement from stakeholders and to foster joint ownership of the RBMP for the Solway Tweed RBD throughout the planning process and within the structures described above. However, we are responsible for the timely submission of RBMPs and we will need to ensure that the process delivers these on time. We must also be able to advise Scottish Ministers and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the level of agreement achieved in presenting the RBMP for their approval and submission to the European Commission.

We will propose a mechanism for reviewing significant or unresolved differences over the RBMP and consult on this as part of the Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures during winter 2006.

Figure 4: Summary of the relationship between different bodies in the river basin planning process for the Solway Tweed RBD

WHAT	BODY	WHO
• Approve RBMP • Submit RBMP to Europe • Resolve conflict and arbitrate	Scottish Ministers and Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	
↕		
• Provide link between Ministers and Area Advisory Groups • Produce and issue national guidance and instruction • Negotiate and resolve conflict	National Advisory Groups	• Scottish Executive/Defra • The Agencies • Responsible authorities • National stakeholders • Representatives from key water use sectors • Representatives from environmental NGOs • Representatives from AAGs
↕		
• Assist with the production of a single RBMP for the River Basin District • Identify priorities for environmental improvement and protection • Identify actions and measures to deliver environmental improvement and protection • Provide advice on objective setting • Coordinate public participation and consultation • Coordinate with other statutory and non-statutory plans • Consider the need for more detailed plans and programmes • Act as a link to national policy and guidance	River Basin District Area Advisory Groups	• The Agencies • Responsible authorities and other regulators • Local representatives of key water use sectors • Representatives of other key partnerships and initiatives
↕		
• To provide an indication of wider view of interests, priorities and attitudes relating to river basin planning • To consider and be consulted on the key documents and steps in the river basin planning process, such as the Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures, Significant Water Management Issues report etc.	Advisory Forums	• Wide and open membership • Members of responsible authorities, interested organisations, stakeholders and the public

7. Coordination and co-operation between river basin planning and other planning processes

7.1 The importance of coordination and co-operation

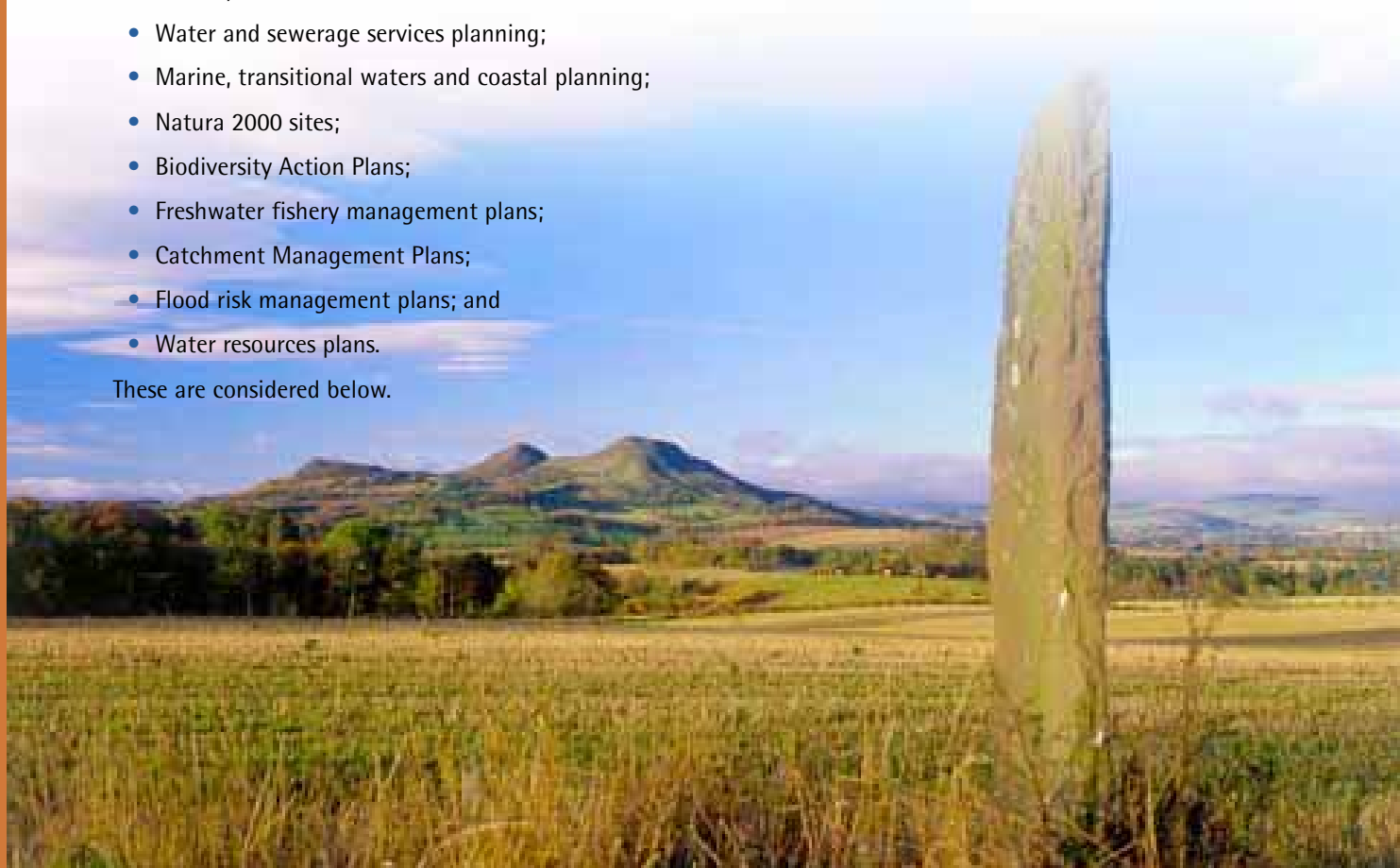
RBMPs are not the only plans with an important role in protecting, enhancing and managing the water environment. A range of planning processes can impact on the water environment. Integration between river basin planning and other planning mechanisms is essential to ensure that their preparation and content contribute to common goals while respecting different requirements and objectives.

We need representatives of the other major planning processes to be fully engaged with river basin planning through the Area Advisory Groups and the Area Advisory Forums. A co-operative approach will help deliver those RBMP objectives and the measures that rely on other plans for implementation and support. Equally we need to provide input into other major planning processes to help ensure an integrated and sustainable approach to water management.

The following activities are particularly important for river basin planning:

- Spatial/land use planning;
- Community planning;
- Agriculture planning;
- Forestry;
- Water and sewerage services planning;
- Marine, transitional waters and coastal planning;
- Natura 2000 sites;
- Biodiversity Action Plans;
- Freshwater fishery management plans;
- Catchment Management Plans;
- Flood risk management plans; and
- Water resources plans.

These are considered below.



7.2 Spatial/land use planning

Land use planners are increasingly aware of the fundamental need to manage development pressures against a background of challenging water-related issues and constraints. Development proposals and land use allocations in development plans will have a significant impact on whether WFD objectives are met.

We already work closely with spatial planners and developers by providing:

- Environmental advice to planning authorities on development plans and certain types of planning applications; and
- Pre-application advice to developers and land owners.

Land use planning and river basin planning are both statutory processes. Links between river basin planning and the land use planning system need to be strengthened to:

- Prevent impacts on the water environment becoming unnecessary blocks to development; and
- Promote an approach to development that is consistent with delivery of WFD environmental objectives.

Close linkages can also help achieve a plan-led system that facilitates strategic decisions about land use planning and sustainable development.

We consider it important that the planning authorities form an effective part of the process of preparing the RBMP. Our proposal that local authorities are represented on the Solway and Tweed Area Advisory Groups will allow this to take place and help to coordinate the input from a range of local authority functions including planning.

The separate mechanisms that currently exist to deliver strategic spatial planning in England and Scotland will remain; the challenge facing river basin planning is to effectively engage with them.

We recognise that:

- The timescales for river basin planning and development planning are not synchronised; and
- Links between river basin planning and spatial planning need to be strengthened to promote a positive approach to development that is consistent with delivery of WFD objectives.

We will seek to use and develop existing mechanisms to assist with the integration of river basin planning and spatial planning:

1. **Partnership working.** This will be promoted through existing arrangements for development planning and the proposal for planning authorities to be involved in the preparation of the RBMP.
2. **Co-ordination of planning processes.** Planning authorities, the Environment Agency and SEPA will consider the WFD during the preparation of Development Plans (including Local Development Frameworks and Regional Spatial Strategies) and will seek coordination between the two processes.
3. **RBMPs as material considerations.** The RBMP itself may be a material consideration in planning decisions.
4. **The Environment Agency and SEPA as consultees.** The Environment Agency and SEPA are already consultees for land use planning and can formally object if they consider a policy or proposal could prejudice RBMP implementation.

Action 14

The Agencies will work towards integrating the River Basin Management Plan and Development Plans using the following mechanisms:

1. Partnership working
2. Co-ordination of planning processes
3. RBMPs as material considerations
4. Working as a consultee

7.2.1 National Parks Authorities

It is important that the priorities and requirements of the Lake District National Park Authority and the Northumberland National Park Authority and their plans are considered within the Solway Tweed RBMP.

Each National Park Authority (NPA) has established its own consultative mechanisms when producing Park Plans. We will discuss with the NPAs how and when such mechanisms might be used to support consultative and participative activities during preparation of the RBMP. This will help to make best use of existing consultative mechanisms.

7.3 Community planning

We believe that the partnerships in community planning may help secure participation and consultation within the river basin planning process. The intended membership of Area Advisory Groups includes organisations already involved in community planning and this will create a link between the two processes.

7.4 Agriculture planning

Agriculture is an important sector in the Solway Tweed RBD. Its influence on the water environment means that farmers are expected to make an increasingly significant and positive contribution towards the achievement of the WFD's environmental objectives. Particular emphasis is likely on how to address diffuse pollution while sustaining economic agricultural activity. We also need to recognise the role of farmland in flood risk management.

Our approach to the agriculture sector is based upon a partnership between farmers and regulators using a range of advice, incentives and risk-based proportionate regulation. A partnership approach and full engagement with farmers within the river basin planning process will be essential if we are to identify how best to collaborate, make the most of current resources and seize opportunities in the future.

Action 15

The Agencies will work with the agriculture sector within the river basin planning process to assist in the identification and delivery of WFD environmental objectives and required actions and measures.

7.5 Forestry

Forestry and woodlands are a significant and important land use in the Solway Tweed RBD. Forestry and its associated activities (e.g. road construction and tree planting and felling) have the potential to influence and affect the water environment. The Forestry Commission has published guidelines (e.g. *Forests and Water Guidelines*) to ensure that forestry activities are carried out in an appropriate manner that complies with existing regulations.

There are clear links between delivering WFD environmental objectives and the activities of the forestry sector in the Solway Tweed RBD. We will continue to work closely with the Forestry Commission and the wider forestry sector during the river basin planning process to ensure forestry activities take account of the WFD in strategic planning and operational delivery.

Action 16

The Agencies will work with Forestry Commission to ensure coordination and integration between forestry plans and the RBMP.

7.6 Water and sewerage services planning

The provision of drinking water and the treatment of sewage are essential to our daily lives. However, water company activities to supply these services can have an impact on the water environment. In contrast, the activities of other sectors may impact the water industry, e.g. pollution of drinking water supplies by pesticides can require expensive water treatment.

We work with the water companies at many levels on a regulatory and partnership basis and, water company improvement programmes have contributed to the creation of a better water environment. The WFD and river basin planning process offers the opportunity to strengthen these relationships and to promote more sustainable water management.

In England, Ofwat (the Water Services Regulation Authority) sets limits on the prices that water companies are allowed to charge their customers. This process takes account of water company business plans. In its business plan, each water company sets out the services and improvements it intends to provide. These include improvements to sewage treatment needed to meet obligations which, in future, will need to incorporate the contribution of the water companies to WFD Programmes of Measures. The business plans also list the works required to maintain and secure the reliability of water supplies to consumers and industry.

A similar process operates in Scotland, where the Water Industry Commission sets the limits on the prices that Scottish Water is allowed to charge its customers. In its development plan, Scottish Water sets out the services and investment that it intends to undertake in order to meet its environmental obligations.

Action 17

The Agencies will work with the water companies within the river basin planning process to assist in the identification and delivery of WFD environmental objectives and required actions and measures. These will need to be taken into account in the water industry business planning process.

7.7 Marine, transitional waters and coastal planning

We have a large range of statutory responsibilities for protecting and enhancing transitional and coastal waters. These include:

- Regulating pollution to maintain good water quality;
- Monitoring the state of coastal waters; and
- Protecting species and habitats.

Effective management links between land and sea are vital but, because there is currently no formal 'planning system' at sea, different activities can clash with one another and have adverse impacts on the marine environment.

A network of voluntary partnerships has developed which act as a forum to encourage sustainable management and development of our coasts. Consideration of specific coastal and estuarine issues will be required during development of the Solway Tweed RBMP and these coastal partnerships may provide an effective means of engaging interested parties in doing this.

The Solway Firth Partnership is one such partnership that occurs in the RBD. This aims to bring together those involved in the development, management and use of the Solway to devise strategies for integrated management and sustainable use of its resources on both sides of the national border. These strategies are then delivered through the action of individual partners or projects set up and run by the Partnership.

Such coastal partnerships can also be effective in building consensus on issues requiring joint action and in raising awareness of the value of coastal resources. They have developed considerable experience in engaging and working effectively with coastal stakeholders.

We therefore consider that the Solway Firth Partnership can advise on coastal issues and should be part of the Solway Area Advisory Group.



7.8 Natura 2000 sites

A number of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) have been, or are being, designated across the UK under the Birds Directive, the Habitats Directive and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994. Such sites are referred to collectively as Natura 2000 sites.

Statutory Schemes of Management may be produced for Marine SAC and SPA sites. These set out the conservation objectives and the actions required of competent authorities to deliver them. In freshwaters, such schemes are not required though the concept of non-statutory River Conservation Strategies is developing. Elsewhere, catchment-wide initiatives have considered or delivered the requirements of freshwater Candidate SACs. Such an approach may be considered by Scottish Natural Heritage, English Nature (Natural England) and other partners in other designated sites.

The RBMP must aim to achieve the objectives of Natura 2000 sites that depend on the condition of the water environment. Where more stringent objectives exist than the WFD objectives, the more stringent objectives will apply. If already developed, Schemes of Management for Marine SAC and SPA sites and River Conservation Strategies will be taken into account in developing the RBMP.

All protected areas designated under European legislation within the RBD must be listed in the Register of Protected Areas included within the RBMP.

We will work with Scottish Natural Heritage, English Nature (Natural England) and other partners to ensure that the objectives of SPAs and SACs are brought into the river basin planning process.

Action 18

The Agencies will integrate appropriate measures in statutory Schemes of Management, River Conservation Strategies and catchment-wide initiatives into the Solway Tweed RBMP. This will help ensure that river basin planning contributes to the achievement of the objectives for Natura 2000 sites within the River Basin District.

7.9 Biodiversity Action Plans

Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) have been developed in both England and Scotland to help achieve the local targets and national targets published in the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan. These voluntary partnerships are made up of a wide range of interested organisations working together to produce their local BAP (LBAP) and implement the actions. These plans focus mainly on local authority areas or clusters of them.

The strong geographic and environmental focus of local BAP groups means they may be able to fulfil a number of roles within the river basin planning process including:

- Assistance in delivering public consultation and participation;
- Awareness raising activities; and
- Contributing to the development and implementation of the Programme of Measures.

We will work with individual LBAP initiatives to agree how they can best participate in river basin planning in the Solway Tweed RBD.

Action 19

The Agencies will work with LBAP initiatives across the River Basin District to agree how they can support RBMP production and implementation in the Solway Tweed RBD and vice versa.



7.10 Freshwater fishery management plans

The role of the Environment Agency in fisheries management is to:

- Ensure the conservation and maintain the diversity of freshwater fish, salmon, sea trout and eels and to conserve the aquatic environment;
- Enhance the contribution salmon, trout and freshwater fisheries make to the economy; and
- Enhance the social value of fishing as a widely available and healthy form of recreation.

A number of national, regional and local plans and strategies (e.g. The River Eden Salmon Action Plan and Freshwater Fish Directive Action Plans) have been drawn up and, where appropriate, Fisheries Action Plans are being piloted in important catchments. Increasingly, Rivers Trusts are being formed to assist in the local management of rivers and fisheries. It is important that all these bodies and activities are linked into river basin planning (and vice versa) to ensure that the WFD's environmental objectives are met.

In Scotland, the situation is more complex and responsibility for freshwater fisheries does not lie with a single organisation. The management of migratory salmonid species (salmon and sea trout) falls to the District Salmon Fishery Boards (DSFB), which have an umbrella organisation – the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB). These bodies are often supported by Fishery Trusts and their association, Rivers and Fisheries Trusts Scotland (RAFTS). Increasingly, these bodies consider non-salmonid species when formulating management strategies although there is no legal requirement for them to do so. There is no comprehensive structure to manage non-salmonid fish in Scotland.

Separate arrangements exist in the River Tweed. The River Tweed Commissioners are charged under the Tweed Fisheries Acts of 1857, 1859 and 1969 with the general preservation and increase of salmon, sea trout, trout and other freshwater fish in the River Tweed and its tributaries, and in particular with the regulation of fisheries, the removal of nuisances and obstructions, and the prevention of illegal fishing. The Commissioners are provided with scientific advice to support their management activities by the Tweed Foundation.

Fishery Management Plans are often produced by individual DSFBs or Fishery Trusts for catchments or groups of catchments. It would be helpful to consider these during preparation of the RBMP.

Action 20

The Agencies will seek to have fishery interests represented on the Area Advisory Groups in order to support the integration of activities and to represent fishery management priorities.

- In the Tweed Advisory Group, this is likely to be the River Tweed Commissioners or the Tweed Foundation.
- In the Solway Advisory Group, the situation is more complex as there are a number of DSFBs and Fishery and River Trusts. The Agencies will consider how this sector is best represented through discussions with the fishery organisations.

We will develop methods of communication to ensure effective contribution from those fisheries bodies not represented individually on an Area Advisory Group.

7.11 Catchment Management Plans

Catchment Management Plans (CMPs) can provide effective and often innovative approaches to managing local water issues. Such plans are typically voluntary and issue led, adopt a bottom-up approach and facilitate stakeholder participation in water management. Examples include:

- Large-scale catchment plans such as the Tweed Catchment Management Plan;
- The catchment plan being developed on the River Bladnoch supporting the SAC designation; and
- Those on the Rivers Dee, Annan and Nith following recommendations in the Dumfries and Galloway Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

While CMPs may have different drivers, parts may be relevant and helpful in supporting the river basin planning process or delivering parts of the required Programme of Measures. Thus such initiatives could contribute to the river basin planning process in the Solway Tweed RBD.

Action 21

Area Advisory Groups will:

- Promote the establishment of new CMP initiatives where they consider this necessary to deliver effective management within their area; and
- Ensure significant CMP partnerships are represented on the Area Advisory Group.

7.12 Flood risk management planning

One of the WFD's purposes is to mitigate the effects of floods and droughts. In Scotland, the WEWS Act introduced a new duty on public bodies to promote sustainable flood management in exercising their functions.

A number of existing groups and plans (e.g. Catchment Flood Management Plans, Shoreline Management Plans, Water Level Management Plans) actively consider flooding issues with a number of interested parties.

We need to:

- Recognise the links between flood risk management, development, land use, biodiversity, fisheries, etc.; and
- Ensure that relevant plans, groups and activities are integrated into the river basin planning process.

Action 22

The Agencies will ensure that flood risk management activities are considered in the river basin planning process for the Solway Tweed RBD.

7.13 Water resource plans

In England, the environmental management of water resources is addressed by the Environment Agency at a range of scales through the delivery of Water Resources Strategies, Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies and Drought Management Plans. The Environment Agency also scrutinises and reports on the water resource management and drought plans produced by the water companies.

In Scotland, the protection of water resources is a new duty for SEPA and no such instruments are currently in place. However, Scottish Water is committed to producing a water resource plan with SEPA liaison and guidance. Although there is currently no provision in Scotland for drought plans beyond those developed by Scottish Water, the Scottish Executive proposes to make preparation of droughts plans a statutory requirement. This would bring the situation in Scotland in line with that in England and Wales.

Action 23

The Agencies will ensure that the water resource plans in the English part of the Solway Tweed RBD are considered and included in the river basin planning process and the RBMP.



8. Summary of Framework recommendations and monitoring progress

The recommendations made in this Framework are summarised in Table 2. We will use these to monitor our progress and to identify the work and resource requirements for:

- SEPA;
- Environment Agency;
- Other Responsible Authorities; and
- Stakeholders who we anticipate can contribute to the river basin planning process in the Solway Tweed RBD.

Table 1: Summary of actions

Number	Action
1	The Agencies will prepare a Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures for public consultation by 22 December 2006.
2	The Agencies will prepare a SWMI summary in advance of the December 2007 deadline to allow for better consultation and appropriate integration into the draft RBMP.
3	The Agencies will publish a draft RBMP by 22 December 2008 for consultation.
4	The Agencies will prepare the RBMP and submit to Ministers by 22 December 2009.
5	The Agencies will undertake a SEA for the Solway Tweed RBD in accordance with the SEA Directive.
6	The Agencies will adopt consistent standards of environmental protection (when developed by UKTAG).
7	The Agencies will work together to develop compatible monitoring systems and assessment protocols for the Solway Tweed RBD.
8	The Agencies will develop joint data management and reporting for the Solway Tweed RBD.
9	The Agencies will set up the Area Advisory Groups during summer 2006. This will enhance river basin planning across the Solway Tweed and allow time to produce the documents required between 2006 and 2009.
10	The Agencies will seek to work effectively and efficiently with existing groups in the Solway Tweed RBD.
11	Officers from SEPA and the Environment Agency will support the Area Advisory Groups in developing their contributions to the Solway Tweed RBMP.
12	Forum events will be held to provide an opportunity to exchange information and ideas with interested parties that are not directly involved in the Area Advisory Groups.
13	The Agencies will be responsible for the coordination and transfer of information between national bodies and the Solway Tweed Area Advisory Groups.

14	The Agencies will work towards integrating the River Basin Management Plan and Development Plans using the following mechanisms: 1. Partnership working 2. Co-ordination of planning processes 3. RBMPs as material considerations 4. Working as a consultee.
15	The Agencies will work with the agriculture sector within the river basin planning process to assist in the identification and delivery of WFD environmental objectives and required actions and measures.
16	The Agencies will work with the Forestry Commission to ensure coordination and integration between forestry plans and the RBMP.
17	The Agencies will work with the water companies within the river basin planning process to assist in the identification and delivery of the WFD environmental objectives and required actions and measures. These will need to be taken into account in the water industry business planning process.
18	The Agencies will integrate appropriate measures in statutory Schemes of Management, River Conservation Strategies and catchment-wide initiatives into the Solway Tweed RBMP. This will help ensure that river basin planning contributes to the achievement of the objectives for Natura 2000 sites within the River Basin District.
19	The Agencies will work with BAP initiatives across the River Basin District to agree how they can support RBMP production and implementation in the Solway Tweed RBD and vice versa.
20	The Agencies will seek to have fishery interests represented on the Area Advisory Groups in order to support the integration of activities and to represent fishery management priorities. • In the Tweed Advisory Group, this is likely to be the River Tweed Commissioners or the Tweed Foundation. • In the Solway Advisory Group, the situation is more complex as there are a number of DSFBs and Fishery and River Trusts. The Agencies will consider how this sector is best represented through discussions with the fishery organisations. We will develop methods of communication to ensure effective contribution from fisheries bodies not represented individually on an Area Advisory Group.
21	Area Advisory Groups will: • Promote the establishment of CMP initiatives where they consider this necessary to deliver effective management within their area; and • Ensure significant CMP partnerships are represented on the Area Advisory Group.
22	The Agencies will ensure that flood risk management activities are considered in the river basin planning process for the Solway Tweed RBD.
23	The Agencies will ensure the water resource plans in the English part of the Solway Tweed RBD are considered and included in the river basin planning process and the RBMP.

In addition to these actions, we will need to develop proportionate monitoring systems to assess the effectiveness of the river basin planning process. This will help to ensure that the system is able to develop, improve and learn from both its relative successes and failures.

We therefore intend to develop a suite of indicators for the delivery of the Water Framework Directive to help inform the management of the National Advisory Groups and Area Advisory Groups. Table 3 lists the parameters that could be measured by the monitoring systems.

Table 2: Indicators to be monitored

Topic	Parameter
Environment	• State of the environment reporting • Achievement of WFD environmental objectives
Improvement programmes	• Delivery and effectiveness of RBMP actions (Programme of Measures)
Stakeholder engagement	• Awareness of water issues and potential for involvement • Level of active involvement in river basin planning process • Level of integration and coordination with other plans and planning • Level of consensus achieved by National and Area Advisory Groups
Principles and actions	• Delivery of principles of this Framework • Delivery of the actions in this Framework

List of Acronyms

AAG	Area Advisory Group
CMP	Catchment Management Plan
DSFB	District Salmon Fishery Board
EC	European Commission
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
NAG	National Advisory Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	National Park Authority
PoM	Programme of Measures
RBD	River Basin District
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SoSCM	Statement of Steps and Consultation Measures
SPA	Special Protection Area
SWMI	Significant Water Management Issues
WEWS Act	Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Photography credits

Main cover image istockphoto.com

Top image Tweed Forum **middle image** Environment Agency **bottom image** Tweed Forum

Text pages

Tweed Forum p30; Environment Agency p18, 21, 24, 26, 30; Andy Millar SEPA p36; Barry Robertson SEPA p34; istockphoto.com p4-5, 16