

Argyll and Lochaber area management plan catchment summaries

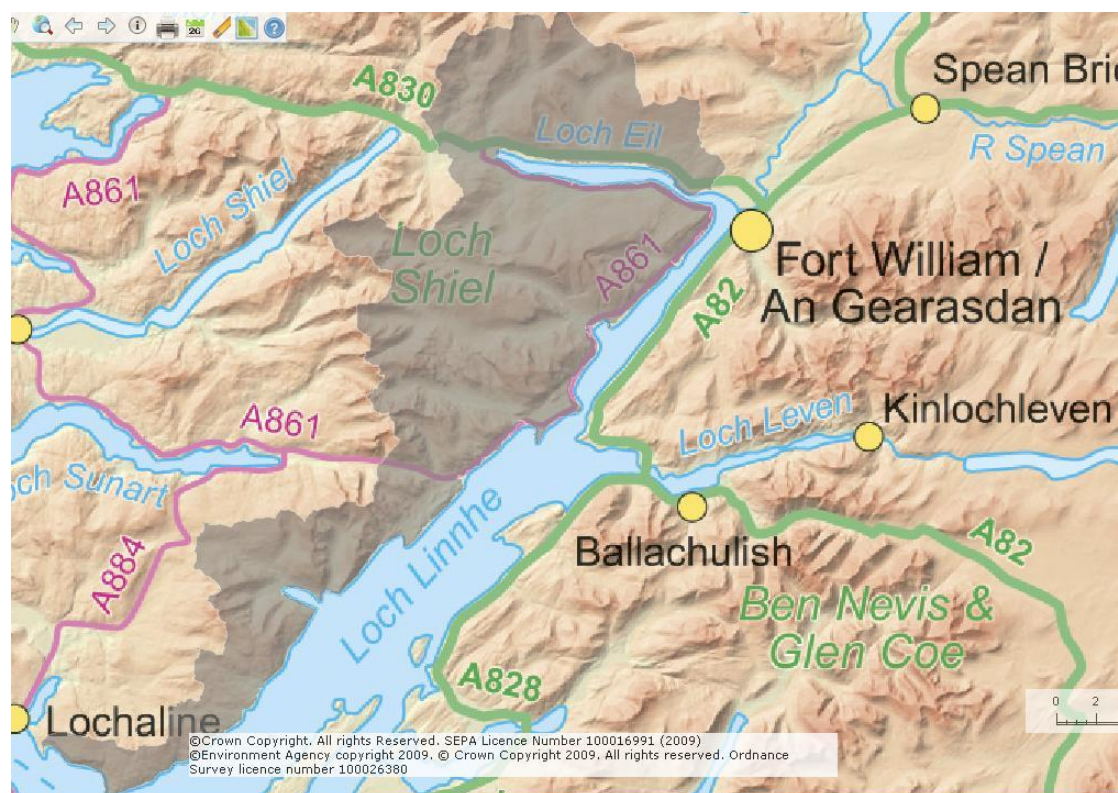
Ardgour coastal catchment

Introduction

Ardgour coastal catchment covers 483 km² and borders the west coast of Loch Linnhe from north of Loch Eil to Loch Aline in the south as shown by the grey shading in Map 1.

The catchment:

- contains 14 water bodies, one of which, Abhainn na Coinnich, is a heavily modified water body (HMWB);
- is adjacent to four coastal water bodies and two transitional water bodies;
- contains/is adjacent to nine protected areas.



Map 1: Area covered by Ardgour coastal catchment shown in grey

Further information on Ardgour coastal catchment can be found on the river basin planning interactive map – www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning.aspx

Classification summary

Ecological status (ES) or potential (EP)	No. WBs	WB ID	Name	WB category
High ES	7	20381	An Suileag	River
		20383	Dubh Ligh	River
		20385	An Dubh Uisge	River
		20386	Abhainn Sron a Chreagain	River
		20392	Glensanda River	River
		200090	Loch Eil	Transitional
		200089	Loch Linnhe north	Transitional
Good ES	7	20382	Fionn Lighe	River
		20384	North Garvan River	River
		20388	River Gour	River
		20389	Abhainn Coire an Iubhair	River
		20390	Glengalmadale River	River
		150067	Loch Linnhe	Groundwater
		150065	Loch Sheil and Loch Sunart	Groundwater
Good EP	1	20391	Abhainn na Coinnich	River (HMWB)
Moderate ES	5	20387	River Scaddle/Cona River	River
		200077	Loch a Choire	Coastal
		200066	Firth of Lorn	Coastal
		200081	Loch Linnhe (south)	Coastal
		200464	Sound of Mull	Coastal

Protected areas

Protected area (PA) designation	Condition	No. WBs	PA ID	Name
Shellfish growing water	Failing guideline standards	1	UKS79923117	Loch Eil
Drinking water protected area	Meeting current standards	6	23465	Allt Meadhonach
			23605	Allt Meadhonach
			23466	Allt Bhlathaich Mhoir
			23599	Allt Bhlathaich Mhoir
			23546	Allt a Coire Dhuibh
			23607	Allt a Coire Dhuibh
Special area of conservation (SAC) for	Favourable ¹	2	UK0013091	Ardgour Pinewoods

alder woodland on flood plains				
SAC for, among other non-water dependent features, mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes and otter.	Favourable for water dependent features ¹		UK0030217	Morvern Woods

Pressures, measures and objectives summary

No pressures – no deterioration objectives

No pressures exist on 12 of the 14 water bodies which are at high or good ecological status and the objective for these is no deterioration in status by 2015. Please see water resources pressures below for the remaining two water bodies.

Diffuse pollution

The River Scaddle/Cona (20387) is moderate for fish ecology and this has been tentatively attributed to diffuse pollution. There is only medium confidence in this classification however, and there could be other reasons for the downgrade. Investigations into the causes of the downgrade will take place as soon as possible.

Heavily modified water bodies (HMWBs)

Abhainn na Coinnich (20391) is at good ecological potential with an objective of no deterioration by 2015. This is because all appropriate measures have been put in place by Scottish and Southern Energy to mitigate for the flow regulation, abstraction and morphological pressures caused by the Kingairloch hydropower station.

Water resources pressures - derogations

Although the North Garvan River (20384) and An Dubh Uisge (20385) are currently at good and high ecological status respectively, their objectives have been set to poor and moderate respectively. These deteriorations in status have been permitted because of the importance of the newly commissioned Garvan and Duiskey hydropower schemes which are exerting pressures on the water bodies. As all the appropriate mitigation measures have been put in place and the hydro schemes provide renewable energy, less stringent objectives can be justified.

Coastal water bodies

Loch a Choire (200077), Firth of Lorn (200066), Loch Linnhe (south) (200081) and the Sound of Mull (200464) water bodies are part of a group of 10 coastal water bodies that were all classified as moderate ecological status for benthic invertebrates in 2008. This moderate classification was based on the combined results of monitoring at five sites in Loch Linnhe, five sites in Loch Creran and five sites in Loch

¹ In some cases, other non-water dependent features are in unfavourable condition, but these are not discussed further here. If a water-dependent feature is unfavourable due to a non-water related pressure it is also not discussed further here.

Sunart. Samples obtained from deep water in Loch Linnhe returned the poorest results, but it is thought that this was due to the sea water column being highly stratified, such that levels of dissolved oxygen at the sea bed were very low. The low levels of dissolved oxygen were not considered to be attributable to any human activity, and the results from these sites were not therefore thought to be representative of conditions across a large proportion of the 10 water bodies in question. For this reason a new set of more representative monitoring sites was selected for the purposes of producing future classifications, and results will be reviewed when the 2009 classification is produced.

Protected areas

For the protected areas meeting their required standards the objective is no deterioration by 2015.

Shellfish waters

Please see the Argyll and Lochaber Area Management Plan for further information on planning source tracking and measures for shellfish waters including the use of Food Standards Agency Sanitary Survey Reports.

Loch Eil (UKS79923117) is not predicted to meet the guideline value for faecal coliforms until 2027, and source tracking studies are required at the earliest opportunity in order to identify the main sources of pollution at this site.