Published September 2010

Argyll and Lochaber area management plan catchment summaries

Islay coastal catchment summary

Introduction

Islay coastal catchment, covering 618 km^2, includes all of the freshwater on Islay as shown by the grey shading in Map 1.

The main land-uses and water uses associated with the catchment are agriculture, mainly extensive sheep and cattle farming and some crofting, whisky production and Machrie Golf Course.

The catchment:

- contains 17 water bodies;
- is adjacent to 10 coastal water bodies;
- contains/is adjacent to 12 protected areas.

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

Further information on Islay catchment is below and can be found on the river basin planning interactive map – www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning.aspx

Classification summary

Ecological status (ES) and Ecological potential (EP)	No. WBs	WB ID	Name	WB category
High ES	2	100286	Loch Finlaggan	Loch
		10359	Claggain River	River
Good ES	21	10350	Gortantaoid River	River
		10351	Uisg an t-Suidhe/Abhainn Ghlas	River
		10352	Abhainn Araig/Allt a Chromain	River
		10355	Eallabus burn	River
		10356	River Laggan	River
		10358	Kilennan River	River
		10360	Kintour River/Abhainn Staoin	River
		10361	Machrie River/Allt nan Alrighean	River
		10362	Kintra River	River
		10923	Saligo River	River
		200029	Sound of Jura	Coastal
		200297	North Channel - Off Islay	Coastal
		200298	Sound of Islay	Coastal
		200299	Loch Gruinart	Coastal
		200300	West Islay	Coastal
		200301	Loch Indaal	Coastal
		200302	Laggan Bay	Coastal
		200303	South East Jura	Coastal
		200304	South East Islay	Coastal
		200505	Atlantic Ocean -SW Mull	Coastal
		150094	Islay	Groundwater
Moderate ES	4	100288	Loch Gorm	Loch
		10349	River Leoig	River
		10353	River Sorn/Ballygrant Burn	River
		10357	Duich River/Torra River/Uisge Gleann a Chromain	River

Protected areas

Protected area (PA) designation	Condition	No. WBs	PA ID	Name
Shellfish growing water	Failing guideline standards	1	UKS7992374	Loch Gruinart
Drinking water protected areas	Meeting current standards	4	100520	Loch Gearach
			100564	Loch Lossit
			10357	Duich River/Torra River/Uisge Gleann a Chromain
			150094	Islay
SPA for Greenland barnacle goose and Greenland white-fronted goose (non-breeding)	Favourable[1]	7	UK9003051	Gruinart Flats
			UK9003053	Laggan Peninsula
SPA for Greenland barnacle goose (non-breeding)			UK9003052	Bridgend Flats, Islay
SPA for Greenland white-fronted goose			UK9003054	Eilean na Muice Duibhe
SPA for breeding chough, common scoter, corncrake, hen harrier. Non-breeding chough, Greenland white-fronted			UK9003057	Rhinns of Islay

[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.

goose, whooper swan				
Blanket bog, dry heath, marsh fritillary butterfly, vegetated sea cliffs			UK0019775	Glac na Criche
Common seal			UK0030067	South East Islay Skerries

Pressures, measures and objectives summary

No pressures – no deterioration objectives

No pressures exist on the 23 water bodies which are at high or good ecological status. The objective for these is no deterioration in status by 2015.

Diffuse pollution

Loch Gorm (100288) is at moderate ecological status due to diffuse pollution from livestock. Measures are due to be carried out in partnership with local farmers by 2011 under the Lochs Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The loch should therefore achieve good ecological status for nutrients by 2015.

Morphology

The River Sorn/Ballygrant Burn (10353) is at moderate ecological status due to morphology pressures from channel realignments and a series of impoundments. Discussions are required with the landowners to explore options to improve the water body. Due to the time required to fix these pressures without incurring disproportionate cost a longer term objective has been set for it to reach good ecological status by 2027.

Channel straightening on mixed farmland is the reason the River Leoig (10349) is at moderate ecological status. A longer term objective of good ecological status by 2027 has been set as implementation of remediation measures earlier would impose disproportionate burdens on the landowner. SEPA will work with landowners to identify potential remediation measures, timescales and sources of funding.

Water resources

The Duich River/Torra River/Uisge Gleann a Chromain (10357) water body is at moderate ecological status due to the abstraction and flow regulation pressures from Torra WTW. Scottish Water is scheduled to mitigate these pressures by 2024 following studies under Quality and Standards 3. A longer timescale until 2027 is therefore set to achieve good ecological status, as implementing the measures sooner would impose disproportionate burdens on Scottish Water.

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, priority catchments and measures for shellfish waters including the use of Food Standards Agency Sanitary Survey Reports.

Loch Gruinart (UKS7992374) is not predicted to meet the guideline value for faecal coliforms until 2027 under the priority catchment programme, and bacterial source tracking studies will be required at the earliest opportunity to identify the main sources of diffuse pollution at this site.