

River Basin Management Planning Update – February 2013

Advisory group update

The **National Advisory Group (NAG)** met on 24 July 2012. At this meeting NAG received updates on the 'Getting involved' consultation and the 2012 measures reports. The main focus of the meeting discussing and giving feedback on the restoration plan, now titled "Improving the physical condition of Scotland's Water Environment", and a number of local authority representatives attended to the meeting to advise on this item.

The NAG met again on 4 December 2012 with a focus on catchment working for the second cycle. Talks were given by David Harley – SEPA, Katie Harper – SEPA, Alan Hamson – SNH, Mark Williams – Scottish Water and Andrew Bauer – NFUS. Following this we carried out a workshop exercise in which we identified the strengths of catchment working and then the inhibiting factors that need to be addressed as we move into the second cycle. The 3 key inhibiting factors identified were a lack of clarity on the objectives priorities, resources and funding streams and communication. A paper is currently being developed to explore these issues and identify what can be done to address these issues.

The group will meet again on 18th March 2013.

The **Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group** met on 25 June 2012, 4 October 2012 and 28 November 2012.

At the June meeting the group discussed the uncertainty about the amount of funds left in the current SRDP programme. The group also received a presentation on the progress made in priority catchments and compare it with the initial timeline, then advised on possible approaches for the second cycle. It was also agreed that the role of DPMAG will not change. The group will continue to focus on diffuse pollution but will be asked to comment on key points of the restoration strategy.

At the October meeting the group received a presentation on progress in priority catchments showing the funding of the re-visits and the number of measures been put in place. Neil Ritchie from the Scottish Government also attended the meeting to discuss the current and future SRDP programme. Progress on delivering the first cycle diffuse pollution priority catchments was discussed at both the June and October meetings, with the group advising on possible approaches for the second cycle. At the November meeting the group received a presentation on how data is captured during the farm visits. The group also discussed the monitoring of the rural diffuse pollution plan.

The communications sub-group continue to develop the guides for farmers which should be published in January 2013. They are also developing a Farming and Water Scotland diffuse pollution website. An update was delivered at the November meeting.

Papers and presentations from the meetings are available on the [Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group](#) website. The group will meet again on 19 March 2013.

In June 2012 the **Fish and Fisheries Advisory Group** discussed fish passes guidance, run of river hydro schemes, non-native fish species, research into the impact of Archimedes screw hydro generation and RBMP. The FFAG met again on 31 October, where they focused on the Water Environment Fund in relation to fisheries, and considered fish passage in relation to canal locks. They continued to look at run of river hydro schemes, fish passes and screens guidance, and design and regulation of Archimedes screw hydro generation. More information on this group is available [here](#).

RBMP plans

Restoration supplementary plan - 'Improving the physical condition of Scotland's water environment'

The RBMP supplementary plan on restoration, *'Improving the physical condition of Scotland's water environment'*, was further developed through pre-consultation with the National Advisory Group and other stakeholders. A 12 week public consultation on this draft plan launched on 21 November 2012 by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and closes on 27 February 2013. We would welcome your views on the draft plan.

INNS supplementary plan

The WANE Act requirements have been incorporated and the draft plan is nearing completion. Scottish Government is discussing internally and further discussions are likely to take place with SNH about the roles, funding and actions prior to publication.

National measures work

Water Environment Fund

The water environment fund has recently capped the funding available for tackling INNS to £100,000 per year. There will be an interim period up to 2015/16 when existing commitments together with a proposed £100k contribution to a SNH-led LIFE+ Bid will mean that over £100k will be spent. The fund is currently closed to new applications for projects controlling invasive non native species.

Pilot catchments - morphology/flood risk management

To assist with delivering the restoration supplementary plan the Scottish Government has secured funding for three years within the natural assets budget to deliver a pilot catchment project focusing on 4 catchments to demonstrate on the ground measures to combine restoration of physical habitats (addressing morphological pressures) with measures to reduce flood risk. It is likely that this will be managed through the Water Environment Fund. Other benefits (e.g. for reducing diffuse pollution, improving biodiversity, recreation, climate change adaptation and targets to protect and improve protected areas) will also be sought from measures delivered on the ground. Catchments across Scotland have been assessed to determine which would offer the best potential for demonstration sites.

Local advisory group/measures delivery work

In the **River Tay diffuse pollution priority catchment** farm visits due to start in the early part of 2013 and will continue throughout 2013 and 2014. The area being targeted for visits is much the same as that for catchment walking, with the exception of a few waterbodies. Once this area has been finalised, details will be made available. Further events and articles will also coincide with the 1:1 visits next year. Importantly, the Tay PC (and the River Ayr) has been selected as part of a pilot project to look at the provision of training and advice for farmers on nutrient and soil management, to improve water quality.

In the **River South Esk diffuse pollution priority catchment** there are approximately 100 farms to revisit after the initial 170 1:1 farm visits were carried out in 2011/12. To date approximately 20 farms have been revisited, and it is hoped that the remainder will be revisited by the end of April 2013. Overall, the cooperation with the agricultural sector has been very good, and in many cases farmers have carried out the remedial actions requested following the initial farm visit.

Further information on the diffuse pollution priority catchments can be found [here](#).

RBMP first cycle

2012 measures report

Three years after the river basin management plan is in place there is a requirement to submit a report to Europe outlining high level progress on implementation of measures. The purpose of this report is simply to outline if a measure is in place. Consideration of the effectiveness of measures and whether

they have led to an improvement in status will be covered in the following second cycle documents: 2013 - Current condition and challenges for the future (previously the significant water management issues report) and 2014 - Draft river basin management plan.

In addition to this report, we will publish an easy read report for stakeholders. This will contain more detail on where measures are in place, where things are going well in Scotland e.g. diffuse pollution and where more work is needed e.g. restoration.

Drafts of these reports are needed for Ministers in September 2013 to enable submission/publication in December 2013. We are not required to undertake a public consultation on the reports as they are simply factual progress reports. However, we're hopeful that we can circulate a draft to AAGs for their information so they can see how the reports are shaping up.

RBMP second cycle

Getting involved in developing the second river basin management plan

Just a reminder that the 'getting involved' consultation is ongoing to 28 February 2013 and is available online on the [SEPA website](#). The consultation seeks views to help inform the next river basin management plan.

The consultation:

- outlines the timetable and work programme for the development of the second plan in 2015;
- highlights the opportunities and structures/groups in place to enable you to influence the development of the second plan;
- provides you with the opportunity to let us know of any additional ways to get involved in river basin planning; and
- sets out how we propose to develop a second plan that enables more efficient and integrated management.

A summary of the consultation responses will be published by June 2013, explaining how the feedback has been used to influence the river basin planning process.

Current condition and challenges for the future

For the second cycle we will combine the 'characterisation' and 'significant water management issues' reports into a combined report titled '*Current condition and challenges for the future*', which will be published at the end of 2013.

The 'current condition' element will be a risk assessment of whether we will meet the objectives set out in the first river basin management plan, together with providing the evidence base for updating and reviewing the objectives and the programme of measures for the second plans. The report will also contain economic characterisation and an inventory of pollutants.

The 'challenges for the future' element will detail the significant water management issues that Scotland's environment faces. This will be used to focus the second plans.

And finally...

WFD classification

Classification results for 2011 are now available on [SEPA's website](#)

Fish barrier images

We'd like to collect images of fish barriers to allow us to continue to improve our GIS. Please send them in along with the **name of the barrier/barrier ID** (if you know what it is) and **grid reference** to dominic.habron@sepa.org.uk

For more information on the content of this update or for any further questions, please contact:

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