

Paper 5: Objective setting principles for fish barriers

1. Purpose

This paper summarises the principles for setting objectives for fish barriers pressures. The Consultation Document (2nd RBMP draft plans) are due for publication on 22 December 2014 and the objectives which were set in the first RBMP are required to be reviewed and updated.

This paper highlights the background, key principles, key issues, recommendations and timelines (see annex 1) for this work stream.

2. Background

The SEPA systems currently have recorded 552 impassable weirs, dams or other man made structures and ~ 14% of water bodies in Scotland are at less than good status due to barriers to fish.

To enable objective setting for the seconds and third cycles of the RBMP, we are required to set out key principles to provide a prioritised list of fish barriers to tackle.

RAFTS were commissioned to carry out a piece of work to prioritise fish barriers to enable the WEF to focus on which barriers to tackle. As a result of this work, SEPA have been provided with a set of data from RAFTS which included barriers which we did not have on our system and also amendments to our passability for certain barriers. RAFTS and SEPA (Dominic Habron and Kjesti Birkeland) have discussed this data and have now come up with a list of barriers and passability that both SEPA and RAFTS agree upon. RAFTS will also be providing a prioritised list of these barriers which will be used to inform the objective setting process and will be useful for the WEF when prioritising barriers within cycles.

There are 3 main types of barriers that SEPA need to look at:

- 1/ Historical/abandoned barriers without an economic use
- 2/ Licence Barriers (CAR Licence)
- 3/ Asset barrier (owned by local authorities or land owners).

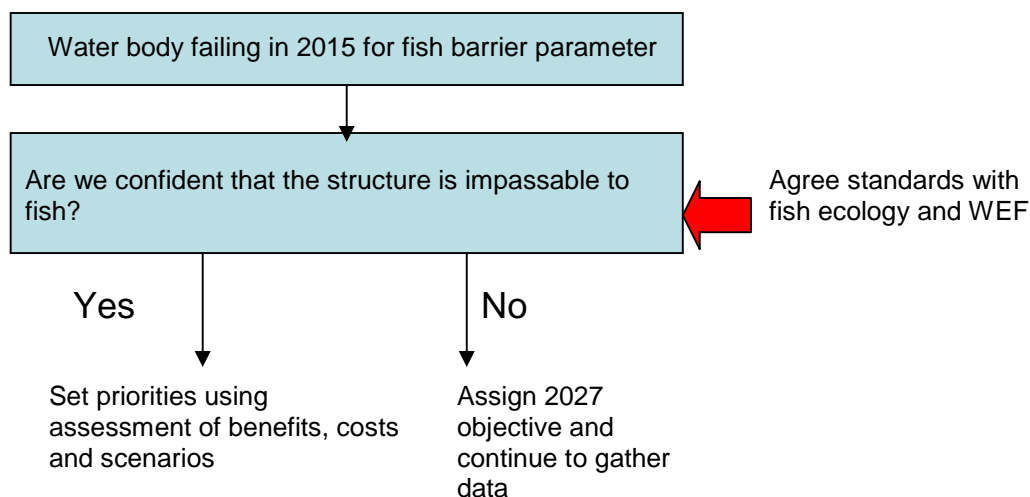
The licensed barriers can be tackled through the CAR licensing process, however, the historical and asset based barriers will need either a voluntary or regulatory approach for removal/fish passage.

Barriers which have a CAR licence will have objectives set via the sector plans (i.e. hydrology, whiskey, Q&S etc), however, it will be important that these tie in with the objective setting processes for historical and asset barriers.

3. Principles

Objectives will be set for those water bodies which are failing classification for fish barriers. Any barriers which are at good or above status will not have objectives set upon them, except for no deterioration. The second principle is that we are confident that the structure is impassable to fish.

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There still needs to be discussions with fish ecology (Kjersti Birkland) to discuss what standards we can use to state whether we are confident that the structure is impassable.

3.1 Setting priorities

Following the filtering of the barriers using the principles above, it is then required to set priorities and objectives. The following principles have been identified as the key drivers:

Principle	Where data is coming from
Length of improvement (how much upstream habitat will be opened up)	Dominic Habron has calculate this
Impacts upon water dependant Natura sites	Currently added all WBs which are located within an SAC for salmon, FWPM and lamprey. DISCUSSIONS WITH SNH
Classification – Poor fish barrier WBs are more important than moderate	Classification
RAFTS prioritisation	We are currently using a yes or no system for this as we do not yet have RAFTS data in a national list. The data is in AAG areas and cannot be compared between the two.
Habitat	Hydro work stream has used this and it is wise that this work stream does the same. Awaiting further discussion with AD & KB. THIS IS ON HOLD UNTIL FINAL PLAN
WEF Scoping	Francis Hayes is providing a list of all barriers where a scoping study has been carried out. Need to finalise how this will be incorporated into the tool. WON'T BE USED FOR PRIORITISATION BUT FOR ADDITIONAL INFO

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It is also important to have links with other sector plans, confidence in delivery dependant upon delivery partners and prioritising single 'big hits' or by a catchment approach or both.

Although we are only looking to set objectives for historical and asset barriers, it is recommended that all barriers are put through the prioritisation process on a national basis and then cross checked with the sector plans for the CAR licences. This will ensure that all barriers are being captured and also that a catchment approach will be taken into account.

3.2 Developing Scenarios

The Spotfire tool will be used to display the results of the prioritisation. It will incorporate 'sliders' to allow each principle to be given a weighting. This will then be able to summarise benefits and costs at a catchment level and will also generate scenarios based on numbers of catchments, benefits delivered and costs.

4. Engagement

Who	When
Internal meeting to discuss the spotfire tool and key principles. AA, KH, KB/AD,RHH, PP	24 February via intercall
Discussion with DH and JC to discuss the spotfire tool and principles AA, KH, DH, JC	27 Feb via tel
Discussion to finalise presentation for FFAG KH, RF, AA, DH	6 March via tel
FFAG where the spotfire tool will be presented and the principles discussed.	14 March
Workshops with fisheries trusts to discuss new fish ecology tool and standards. Could be used to show the objective setting	April 2014
Local authority engagement to discuss asset barriers	March – June 2014

5. Recommendations

It is recommended that

1. The key principles are approved
2. all barriers will be put through the prioritisation process to allow a cross check with the sector plans

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Annex 1: Fish Barrier Objective Setting Timeline

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