

River Basin Management Plans 2015 - 2021

# POM Partnership Working Summary of all Measures

December 2015

### **Working together to improve the water environment**

Progress has been made in implementing the programme of measures within Northern Ireland and this is the result of the co-ordinated efforts of a range of responsible authorities and stakeholders.

NIEA has developed a number of initiatives to encourage partnership working. In support of this, Catchment Management Officers attend national and local events to raise awareness of the importance of the water environment and water quality issues. NIEA's Water Environment Community Awards funded eighteen projects across Northern Ireland (£18,000) which aims to improve awareness and understanding of the importance of the water environment. The Water Quality Improvement Grant scheme funds the wider community to help improve their local water quality, thereby helping to meet the objectives set out in the 2009 River Basin Management Plan.

NIEA has supported the Rivers Trust in the development of trusts across Northern Ireland and are also involved in supporting the set up of Riverfly Partnerships across Northern Ireland. A Riverfly Partnership is a community-led initiative to monitor river stretches to identify pollution.

Local District Councils have responsibility for implementing the two main pieces of legislation relating to litter (The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and The Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994). Although NIEA has no statutory obligation to address litter in the water environment, it actively encourages the public to take more responsibility through good land management practices. To this end, NIEA has supported the non-government organisation, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, and works in partnership in many areas, for example, Beach NI website, beach cleans, coastal litter surveys. In addition to this, NIEA helps to organise a large number of local river events with local angling clubs and community groups in an effort to encourage the general public to take ownership of their rivers. These events include voluntary litter cleanups, as well as educating attendees about the importance of the river both to themselves and the wider environment. Water Quality Improvement Grants have been used by local communities to assist river clean ups.

Litter in the marine environment is being addressed through the Northern Ireland Marine Litter Strategy (published on 4 July 2013). The Strategy is a coordinated response which aims to reduce the levels of litter entering the sea and removing litter which is already there. It contains measures designed to change attitudes and behaviour towards littering. This will be done through education, adequate provision of bins, fining offenders and collecting data on the extent of the problem. The Strategy will be implemented through partnerships between public, private and voluntary and community organisations. The implementation role for DOE's Marine Division will include on-going communication and sharing of best practice with stakeholders.

A model to more fully explain how pressures are affecting the status of the water environment has been developed for Northern Ireland (SIMulated CATchment). The model is being used to assess the relevant contributions of point sources into water bodies and also to assist in the quantification of the contribution from diffuse sources.

For a full list of measures already in place in the first cycle please see our website.

**What further actions will deliver environmental improvements?**

**RBMP 1 (2009-2015)**

Table 1 summarises the progress we have made against the existing and planned measures.

**RBMP 2 (2015-2021)**

The measures which we will take forward in the second cycle are summarised in Table 2.

These are measures which will improve our understanding of the pressures, enable us to improve the evidence base to target actions, and build on actions already complete.

In the current economic climate there is no certainty at this stage around future funding and budgets that will be available throughout the lifetime of this plan. However DOE will in collaboration with other departments and agencies continue to make a strong case for additional funding through the standard government bidding processes.

**Table 1 Summary of existing and planned measures 2009-2015**

Improvement Required	Actions	Delivery mechanism	Lead Department / Agency	Support Provider	Deadline for delivery of action (year end)
Protection of rivers	Facilitate River Trusts across NI	River Trust Working Groups  River Trust Action Plans  Community Engagement	NIEA	Public Participation	In Place
Protection of freshwater pearl mussel sites in NI	Develop action plans for designated freshwater pearl mussel Special Areas of Conservation	Freshwater pearl mussel action plans	NIEA		In Place

**Table 2 Summary of supplementary measures for 2015 to 2021.**

Improvement Required	Actions	Delivery mechanism	Lead Department / Agency	Support Provider	Deadline for delivery of action (year end)
<b>Protection of rivers</b>	Support established river trusts through specific projects	Established NI Rivers Trusts Rivers Trust Action Plans Community Engagement	NIEA		2021
<b>Reduction impacts from waste disposal</b>	Work with Local Councils and wider stakeholders to increase awareness and support actions to address litter in the water environment	Partnership working	NIEA		2021
<b>Restoration of rivers and lakes</b>	Develop and implement a programme of catchment scale improvement projects to protect and improve water status	INTERREG V and other funding sources	All partners and stakeholders		2021
<b>Protection of lakes and control of diffuse and point sources of pollution</b>	Develop management measures for smaller lakes based on the outcomes from the DOLMANT project and other lakes programmes	Set up an inter-agency Lakes Restoration working group	NIEA / DCAL		2018
<b>Reduction in pollution</b>	Consider options for civil sanctions, such as on the spot fines, as part of the regulatory reform programme for environmental regulation	DOE Regulatory Reform programme	DOE RNRPD		2017

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Improvement Required	Actions	Delivery mechanism	Lead Department / Agency	Support Provider	Deadline for delivery of action (year end)
	Develop and agree five prosperity agreements with local industry/ business	Partnership working with businesses and interest groups	NIEA		In place/ Ongoing
<b>Reduction in pollution</b>	Develop modelling tools to help understand the natural dynamics and science of the catchments. This may include further development of the SCIMAP tool which examines diffuse pressures, determines flow pathways and flood risk areas within catchments so that measures can be targeted to manage problem areas	Identification of agricultural and general diffuse critical risk areas using GIS and linking with hydrological significant pathways using SciMAP.	NIEA	DARD RA	2021
	Details of pollution incidents to be made available on the NIEA website	NIEA Website	NIEA		2015
<b>Reduction in pollution and flood risk</b>	Consider increased utilisation of flood plain storage as part of Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs)	Partnership working on local projects and schemes	DARD RA	NIEA	2021

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Improvement Required	Actions	Delivery mechanism	Lead Department / Agency	Support Provider	Deadline for delivery of action (year end)
<b>Education and Awareness</b>	Continue to work together to improve understanding of the wider public of the value, wider benefits and protection of the water environment	Partnership working, Education and Awareness campaigns and River Basin Stakeholder Groups	NIEA	NIW	2017
	Increase awareness of the role of groundwater in the management of the aquatic environment as part of catchment wide projects	Working with others such as GSNI, Universities, Councils, NIW and local stakeholder groups	NIEA		2021
<b>Reduction in discharges/ impacts from waste disposal</b>	Review success of pilots with local councils to address fly tipping, including hazardous and fuel laundering waste	Partnerships between NIEA and Local Councils	NIEA		2015
<b>Restoration of rivers and lakes</b>	Development of an inter-departmental group to look at synergy between Directives, so that measures proposed have a synergistic effect and at least do not disbenefit any	The interagency catchment Oversight Group meets regularly. There are representatives from NIEA, WMU, Rivers Agency, Natural Environment Division, DCAL, AFBI and DARD. Between them these Agencies cover WFD, Nitrates, UWWTD, Floods and Habitats Directive.	NIEA/ DARD RA/ DCAL/AFBI/ DARD		In Place
<b>Restoration of all waters</b>	Consider alternative funding opportunities, for example, the INTERREG V programme, to deliver sustainable solutions that take account of economic and social needs as well as environmental objectives for various European Directives	NIEA external funding group	SEUPB	DARD RA/ DCAL/ LA/ DARD/ NIEA	Ongoing

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Improvement Required	Actions	Delivery mechanism	Lead Department / Agency	Support Provider	Deadline for delivery of action (year end)
<b>Protection of rivers and lakes</b>	Align, as far as possible, the objectives and standards for the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000 Protected Areas	Joint WMU and NED working group in place to take forward working approach to be trialled during finalisation of second cycle plans	NIEA	UKTAG	2016
<b>Protection of freshwater pearl mussel sites in NI</b>	Consider the findings of Interreg IVA Freshwater Pearl Mussel project and implement appropriate measures in designated FWPM sites	Partnership working between Government and NGOs	NIEA	DARD	2021
<b>Protect drinking water sources</b>	Complete Catchment Management Plans for 24 Drinking Water Catchments	Catchment Plan studies undertaken by external contractor under NIW framework with support from NIW internal staff - Catchment Manager, Catchment Officers, Water Quality Scientists and Water Supply staff	NIW	NIEA	2021
	Submit a proposal through Interreg V ScaMP to improve raw water quality in 3 cross border drinking water catchments	Partnership working through INTERREG	NIW/ IW	NIEA/ DWI	2016
<b>Protection of rivers and lakes</b>	NIEA will expand the use of new technologies to extend its investigative monitoring capabilities. This includes the use of in-river instrumentation and lake monitoring buoys as part of multi-agency catchment studies	Development of in house skills and equipment deployment.	NIEA	DCAL/ LA/ DARD RA	2018
	Establish a Freshwater Award scheme to highlight areas of good ecological condition	Water Community Award scheme/ Stakeholder engagement	NIEA		2018
	Ensure WFD Objectives are integrated within the new development plans being developed by the 11 councils.	Utilisation of role as a consultee to the development plan consultation process at appropriate stages.	NIEA	DCAL/ LA / DARD/ DRD	2018

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Improvement Required	Actions	Delivery mechanism	Lead Department / Agency	Support Provider	Deadline for delivery of action (year end)
<b>Protection of bathing waters</b>	Continue to work together to increase awareness of bathing water protection through the implementation of biannual Good Beach Summits.	Good Beach Summit Action Plan, stakeholder engagement	DOE Marine Division		In place / ongoing
	Management of fisheries through establishment of DARD Inshore Fisheries Group	DARD Inshore Fisheries Group	DARD		Ongoing
	Strategic development of a concerted Citizen Science programme for Northern Ireland – a one-stop-shop for standardised sampling and recording methodologies/ training and the collation of data collected by the wider community.	DOE Digital Strategy	DOE		2021
	Management of fisheries through DARD Inshore Fisheries Partnership	Improved partnership working	DARD		Ongoing