

Second Cycle North Western River Basin Management Plan

Water Dependent Features of Natura 2000 sites (SACs, SCIs and SPAs) in the North Western River Basin District.

December 2015

1 Introduction

Natura 2000 sites are Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive, and also incorporate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designate under the 1979 Birds Directive. SACs contain rare European habitats and SPAs contain rare European bird species and are assessed as being in either favourable or unfavourable condition.

Where Natura 2000 sites are failing their conservation objectives, NIEA has identified the actions that need to be taken to achieve them. Actions necessary to avoid deterioration of the areas supporting designated habitats and species have also been identified.

Very often a Natura 2000 site lies within a water body and where this occurs the WFD status objectives apply in addition to the requirement to maintain the site at favourable conservation status or restore it to that status.

In 2012 the UK government agreed that a set of principles should be designed to provide a combined approach for expressing the conservation objectives for Natura 2000 sites and WFD classification, where water bodies comprise or are part of the area. The potential benefit of the use of same set of standards for WFD status objectives and Natura 2000 objectives is the better alignment of standards and objectives in terms of simplifying management, assisting communication and a reduction in regulatory complexity.

In May 2013, each Devolved Administration and its respective Agencies were tasked with developing an approach for these over-arching objectives at a regional level. Although further work is still required to finalise the approach, a number of recommendations have been decided and will be subject to confirmation once the updated Common Standards Monitoring (CSM) guidance, used to monitor the condition of Natura 2000 sites, is published.

Water bodies are the basic management units for reporting and assessing compliance with the Directive's environmental objectives. For the first river basin plan in 2009 size thresholds taken from the Directive were used to delineate surface water bodies (rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal). During the first cycle we have been able to improve on our water body sets through better understanding of catchment characteristics and increased knowledge through river walks, routine monitoring and targeted LMA investigation work. This has resulted in a reduction of the number of water bodies in Northern Ireland, from 575 river water bodies to 450, but the total area covered by the Plan is not affected.

The tables presented in the following sections are an update of the Natura 2000 site condition as reported in the 2009 plan which also stated how many water bodies were failing to achieve good status within the designated site.

The First Cycle Plan (2009) reported that in the North Western River Basin District there were a total of 28 water dependent Natura 2000 sites. Of these sites 7% were favourable, 79% were unfavourable and 14% were yet to be assessed. As of 2015, no further water dependent Natura 2000 sites have been declared, however 32% are now favourable and 68% are unfavourable.

2 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in the North Western River Basin District

2.1 Slieve Beagh SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	2	1	Blanket Bogs Dystrophic lake	Blanket Bogs	Burning; Over-grazing (including deer browsing)	No specific measures for water dependent features as no water quality related activities are causing condition	

* Based on current 575 water bodies

** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.2 Teal Lough SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Favourable	Favourable	0	0	Blanket Bogs	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

* Based on current 575 water bodies

** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.3 Carn-Glenshane SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	0	0	Blanket Bogs	Blanket Bogs	Water management (including drainage, dredging or alterations to the water table).	Land use changes required	Agri-environment schemes in place
						Overgrazing (including deer browsing)		

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.4 River Foyle and Tributaries SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Not Assessed	Unfavourable	17	13	Otters; Salmon; Water course <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i>	Water course <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i>	Investigation ongoing	Please refer to Programme of Measures on website	Off site factors are being considered

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.5 Magilligan SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	1	0	Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes'); Humid dune slacks; Marsh fritillary butterfly; Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>)	All features	Under grazing; Water management (including drainage, dredging or alterations to the water table, including groundwater impacts).	Land use changes required	Management agreement with the Ministry of Defence and other stakeholders to tackle under grazing and drainage conditions.

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.6 Owenkillew River SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	9	5	Bog woodland; Otters; Freshwater Pearl Mussel; Water course <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation; Salmon	Bog woodland Freshwater Pearl Mussel	Overgrazing (including deer browsing) Water management (including drainage, dredging or alterations to the water table). Also Water quality including silt, water pollution (direct or diffuse), etc	No specific measures for water dependent features as no water quality related activities are causing condition of woodland Consider the findings of Interreg IVA Freshwater Pearl Mussel project and implement appropriate measures	Agri-environment schemes include Riparian Zone Management (RBAN) including fencing. Riparian zones are important for acting as buffer zones, reducing polluting incidents, soil erosion and river siltation. Also implementation of action plans for designated freshwater pearl mussel SAC (please refer to Programme of Measures on website).

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.7 Moneygal Bog SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Favourable	1	1	Active raised bogs	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.8 Black Bog SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Favourable	0	0	Active raised bogs	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.9 Fairywater Bogs SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	2	2	Active raised bogs	Active raised bogs	Burning; Water management (including drainage, dredging or alterations to the water table).	Land use changes required	NIEA proactively working with landowners to minimise local damage

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.10 Pettigoe Plateau SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	3	1	Blanket bogs; Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ; Oligotrophic lakes	Blanket Bogs	Overgrazing (including deer browsing); Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	No specific measures for water dependent features as no water quality related activities are causing condition	Agri-environment schemes in place

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2.11 Cladagh (Swanlinbar) River SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	3	1	Freshwater pearl mussel Water course of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	Freshwater Pearl Mussel	Water management (including drainage, dredging or alterations to the water table). Also Water quality including silt, water pollution (direct or diffuse), etc	Consider the findings of Interreg IVA Freshwater Pearl Mussel project and implement appropriate measures (please refer to Programme of Measures on website)	Agri-environment scheme are a further enhancement option for riparian zones including fencing to protect the river bank

* Based on current 575 water bodies

** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.12 Cranny Bogs SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	2	3	Active raised bogs	Active raised bogs	Water management (including drainage, dredging or alterations to the water table).	Change in land use required	Natural recovery has been recorded as ongoing.

* Based on current 575 water bodies

** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.13 Cuilcagh Mountain SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	4	2	Blanket bogs; Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	Blanket Bogs; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	No water related adverse activity identified	No specific measures for water dependent features as no water quality related activities are causing condition	Signs of recovery, site is improving in condition. Lower grazing pressures and controlled burns.

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2.14 Deroran Bog SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Favourable	1	1	Active raised bogs	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

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2.15 Fardrum & Roosky Turloughs SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	0	0	Turloughs	Turloughs	Under-grazing Overgrazing (including deer browsing); Water management (including drainage, dredging or alterations to the water table including groundwater impacts).	Investigation ongoing	Hydrological and local management works ongoing

* Based on current 575 water bodies

** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.16 Faughan River & Tributaries SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Not Assessed	Favourable	6	4	Otters; Salmon	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

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2.17 Lough Melvin SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	1	1	Mesotrophic Lough; Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clay-silt laden soils (<i>Molinia caeruleae</i>); Salmon	Mesotrophic Lough Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soil (<i>Molinia caeruleae</i>)	Water quality (including silt, water pollution (direct or diffuse), run-off, nutrient enrichment, eutrophication etc) No water related adverse activity identified	Please refer to Programme of Measures on website	

* Based on current 575 water bodies

** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.18 Magheraveely Marl Loughs SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	3	2	Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> ; White-clawed crayfish; Marl lakes; Alkaline fens	All features	Under-grazing; Water quality (including silt, water pollution (direct or diffuse), run-off, nutrient enrichment, eutrophication etc)	Investigation of groundwater inputs; Investigation to determine natural water levels at Kilrooskey Lough.	Further research required.

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2.19 Moninea Bog SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	1	1	Active raised bogs	Active raised bogs	Burning; Over-grazing (including deer browsing)	Overgrazing (including deer browsing) and an ammonia issue	Management activities in place to reduce main source of diffuse ammonia issues - may be improving

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2.20 River Roe and Tributaries SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Not Assessed	Unfavourable	7	3	Otters; Salmon; Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation	Otters Salmon Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation	Unknown Unknown None - feature is recovering	Investigation required Investigation required	Off site factors are being considered (Salmon at sea not coming back in sufficient numbers).

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2.21 Tonnagh Beg Bog SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Favourable	1	3	Active raised bogs	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

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2.22 Tully Bog SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	1	1	Active raised bogs	Active raised bogs	Invasive species (including bracken and scrub)	No specific measures for water dependent features as no water quality related activities are causing condition	

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2.23 Upper Lough Erne SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	13	9	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>); Otters; Eutrophic Standing Waters	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>); Eutrophic Standing Waters	Overgrazing (including deer browsing); Invasive species (including bracken and scrub) Nutrient enrichment due to diffuse and point source pollution	Please refer to Programme of Measures on website	

* Based on current 575 water bodies

** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

2.24 West Fermanagh Scarplands SAC

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	4	3	Blanket Bogs; Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soil (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>); North Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	Blanket Bogs Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soil (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) North Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	Overgrazing (including deer browsing) Agricultural operations (e.g. ploughing, fertiliser, pesticides) Overgrazing (including deer browsing); Burning	No specific measures for water dependent features as no water quality related activities are causing condition	Agri-environment Scheme in place, site is expected to be improving, due for assessment

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

3 Special Protection Areas (SPA) in the North Western River Basin District

3.1 Lough Foyle SPA

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Favourable	7	4	Bar-tailed godwit; Bewick's swan; Golden plover Light-bellied brent goose; water bird assemblage	Bewick's swan	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

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3.2 Pettigoe Plateau SPA

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Unfavourable	Unfavourable	3	1	Golden Plover	Golden Plover	Unknown	Require investigation to identify external and internal factors.	The issues are unclear; may be changes in migratory patterns, disturbance to high tide roost sites, water quality and/or ecological factors. National or global issues as opposed to site specific.

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3.3 Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea SPA

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Not Assessed	Favourable	6	4	Hen harrier	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies

3.4 Upper Lough Erne SPA

2009 Condition status	2014 Condition status	Number of water bodies at less than good status		Designated water dependent habitats/species	Feature(s) not meeting objective	Reason for not meeting objective	Action required	Comments
		2009*	2015**					
Favourable	Favourable	14	9	Whooper swan	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	Not applicable: feature in favourable condition	

* Based on current 575 water bodies ** Based on second cycle 450 water bodies