



# Water for life and livelihoods



## Part 1: South West river basin district

## River basin management plan

Updated: December 2015

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment and make it a better place for people and wildlife.

We operate at the place where environmental change has its greatest impact on people's lives. We reduce the risks to people and properties from flooding; make sure there is enough water for people and wildlife; protect and improve air, land and water quality and apply the environmental standards within which industry can operate.

Acting to reduce climate change and helping people and wildlife adapt to its consequences are at the heart of all that we do.

We cannot do this alone. We work closely with a wide range of partners including government, business, local councils, other agencies, civil society groups and the communities we serve.

## Contacts

For more details about river basin management plans contact:

Alan Burrows, Area Manager

Email: [Southwestrbd@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Southwestrbd@environment-agency.gov.uk)

You can also call the National Customer Contact Centre:

South West River Basin Management Plan

Bradmarsh Business Park, PO Box 544 Rotherham, S60 1BY

03708 506506 (local rate) Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm

### Published by:

Environment Agency

Horizon House

Deanery Road

Bristol

BS1 5AH

[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

Further copies of this report are available

on the [river basin management plan web pages](#)

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015>).

and via our National Customer Contact Centre:

Telephone: 03708 506506

### Email:

[enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk).

© Environment Agency 2016

All rights reserved. This document may be reproduced with prior permission of the Environment Agency.

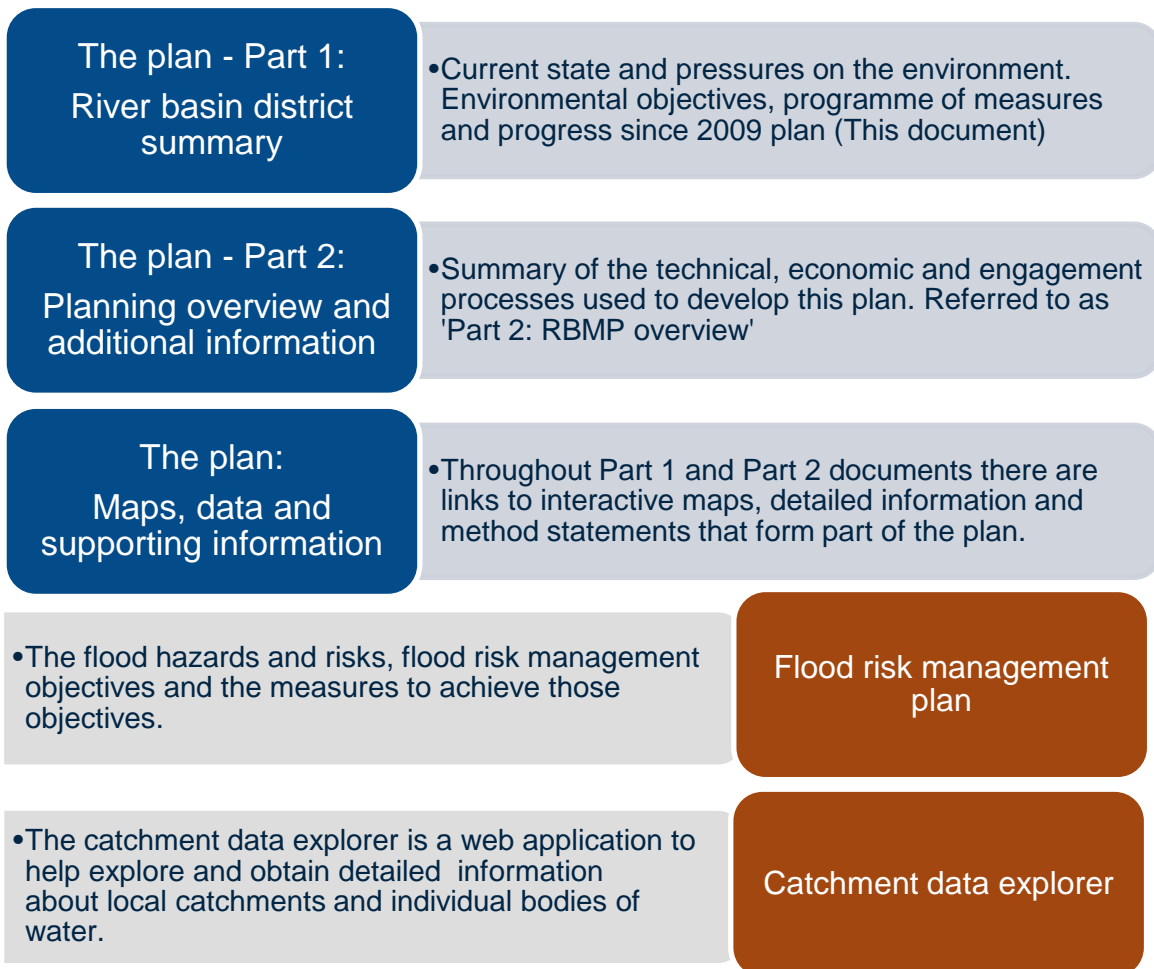
© Photo Copyright Teign Estuary by Barry Lewis and licensed for reuse under this [Creative Commons Licence](#)

# Contents

Using the plan: accessing the most relevant information .....	4
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1. The purpose of a river basin management plan .....	6
1.2. Who is responsible for implementing this plan .....	7
1.3. The South West river basin district .....	9
1.4. Significant water management issues.....	11
1.5. Working with others .....	14
1.6. Links to other major plans affecting water management .....	16
1.7. Reporting progress on this plan .....	17
<b>2. Current state of the environment, environmental objectives and outcomes.....</b>	<b>18</b>
2.1. Current state of the environment .....	19
2.2. Environmental objectives .....	21
2.3. Preventing deterioration.....	22
2.4. Protected area compliance and objectives.....	23
2.5. Water body objectives .....	27
2.6. Reversal of trends .....	31
2.7. Progressive reduction of pollution of groundwater .....	31
2.8. Environmental outcomes for 2021 .....	32
<b>3. Measures to achieve the environmental objectives .....</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1. Programme of measures: background.....	36
3.2. Measures to prevent deterioration .....	38
3.3. Main programmes of measures for 2021 outcomes .....	51
3.4. Local measures .....	63
3.5. Forward look at measures beyond 2021 .....	74
3.6. Additional measures to achieve protected area objectives.....	79
<b>4. Changes from 2009 to 2015.....</b>	<b>81</b>
4.1. Improvements in evidence .....	82
4.2. Measures implemented .....	84
4.3. Progress towards achieving the environmental objectives in the 2009 plan .....	88
<b>5. Summary statistics .....</b>	<b>92</b>

## Using the plan: accessing the most relevant information

The river basin management plan consists of a number of different documents, maps and datasets, of which this is just one. Below is a summary of the statutory components of the river basin management plan (in blue) along with associated documents and data sources outside of the official plan that support the plan (in brown):



Throughout this document there are light green boxes containing links to the further information relevant to each section.

### Further information

- You can access the river basin management plan and associated documents through the river basin management [web pages](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- A guide to accessing river basin management data and supporting information is available on the river basin management [web pages](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

# 1. Introduction

This section provides an explanation of the purpose of this plan, who it is for and how the river basin district is managed.

## 1.1. The purpose of a river basin management plan

Water is essential for life and livelihoods. It allows the natural environment to flourish, and businesses, agriculture and the economy to grow and prosper.

Rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal areas, wetlands and water under the ground provide many different benefits to society; from supplying drinking water and supporting fisheries to providing an essential resource for business and agriculture, transport routes and a source of recreation that promotes wellbeing.

It is critical that this precious resource is managed properly to ensure that the needs of society, economy and wildlife can be met and maintained over the long-term.

The purpose of a river basin management plan is to provide a framework for protecting and enhancing the benefits provided by the water environment. To achieve this, and because water and land resources are closely linked, it also informs decisions on land-use planning.

This plan contains 4 sets of information that groups who manage land and water should pay particular attention to:

- **Baseline classification of water bodies** - One of the main purposes of this plan is to prevent water bodies deteriorating. The first step to preventing deterioration is to understand the baseline status for all the quality elements in each water body. Deterioration from the baseline is not permitted, except in very specific circumstances that are described in this plan. Preventing deterioration is one of the biggest challenges in managing the water environment.
- **Statutory objectives for protected areas** - This plan highlights the areas of land and bodies of water that have specific uses that need special protection. These include waters used for drinking water, bathing, commercial shellfish harvesting and those that sustain the most precious wildlife species and habitats. The plan ensures that these areas have the legally binding objectives in place that protect those uses from potentially harmful activities and new developments.
- **Statutory objectives for water bodies** - This plan sets out legally binding objectives for each quality element in every water body, including an objective for the water body as a whole. The default objective is good status. Less stringent objectives have been set in some cases where natural conditions, technical feasibility or disproportionate cost make improvement impractical. The default deadline for achieving objectives is 2021. However, extended deadlines of 2027 or beyond have been set in some cases where it would be more appropriate, have less impact on existing activities or where the environment will need more time to respond to the planned measures.
- **Summary programme of measures to achieve statutory objectives** - This plan provides a framework for action and future regulation. To do this it summarises the existing mechanisms, both statutory and voluntary, that are used to manage the quality of the water environment. It also summarises the types of action and who needs to do this, to achieve the statutory objectives. Although it is not a detailed action plan it provides a clear signal to those who use and affect water about what they can do to make sure there is enough good quality water for life and livelihoods in England.

The river basin management plan has been approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. It has been prepared in line with Ministerial guidance and fulfils the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and contributes to the objectives of other EU directives. It is an update of and replaces the river basin management plan published in 2009 (referred to as the '2009 plan' in this document).

## 1.2. Who is responsible for implementing this plan

Many organisations are responsible for managing the water environment in the river basin district. These organisations are often grouped into sectors, such as water companies, agriculture and industry. Table 1 identifies these sectors and describes their role in managing the water environment.

The roles in managing the water environment are:

- **Regulator** - regulates and enforces the activities of operators
- **Operator** - undertakes activities that could potentially influence either directly or indirectly the quality of the water environment. Many of these activities are regulated.
- **Influencer** - educates, influences or advises others on how to reduce their impact on the water environment
- **Undertakes projects** - undertakes environmental improvement projects (for example, habitat restoration) to reduce the damage caused by others, usually in partnership with other groups

**Table 1: Main sector groups involved in river basin management**

Sector	Role in managing the water environment			
	Regulator	Operator	Influencer	Undertakes projects
<b>Agriculture and rural land management</b> - farming, forestry and horticulture		X	X	X
<b>Government and agencies:</b>				
Central government departments	X		X	
Environment Agency	X	X	X	X
Natural England	X	X	X	X
Forestry Commission		X	X	X
Marine Management Organisation	X		X	
Highways England		X	X	
Network Rail		X	X	
<b>Industry, manufacturing and other business</b> - including chemicals, construction, food and drink, power generation, paper, textiles and metals		X	X	
<b>Internal drainage boards</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Local government</b> - includes local councils, national park authorities and Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities	X	X	X	X
<b>Mining and quarrying</b> - coal mining, non coal mining and quarrying		X	X	

Sector	Role in managing the water environment			
	Regulator	Operator	Influencer	Undertakes projects
<b>Navigation</b> - inland waterways (Canal & River Trust), port and harbour authorities	X	X	X	X
<b>Non-governmental organisations</b> - user groups, catchment groups and environmental organisations (including local wildlife trusts and rivers trusts)		X	X	X
<b>Waste treatment, transfer, storage and disposal</b> - landfill, biowaste, waste treatment and transfer		X		
<b>Water industry</b> - water supply and sewage treatment activities	X	X	X	X



## 1.3. The South West river basin district

The South West river basin district (Figure 1) covers over 21,000km<sup>2</sup>. It includes Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and parts of Somerset, Hampshire and Wiltshire. The Isles of Scilly, a group of islands 25 miles south west of Cornwall, and Lundy Island are included in the district.

In total over 5.3 million people live and work in the south west, with a resident population fluctuating due to seasonal tourism. The south west has the lowest population density of any English region and includes urban areas such as Exeter, Plymouth, Torquay, Bournemouth and Poole.

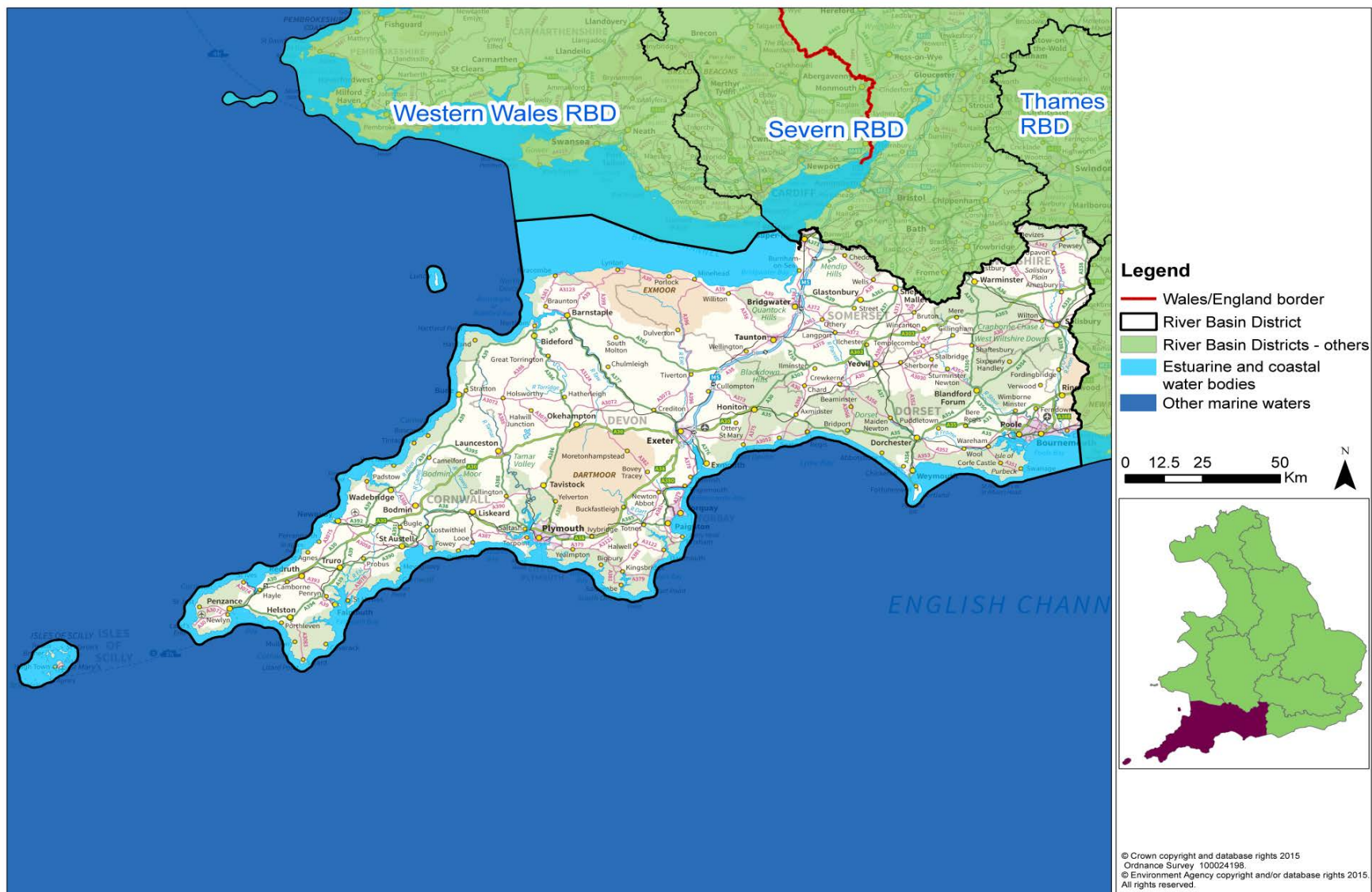
The South West river basin district has a rich diversity of wildlife and habitats, supporting many species of global and national importance. Freshwater habitats within the river basin district are very important for wintering wildfowl, and reservoirs, rivers, estuaries and coastal water bodies support fisheries and shellfish waters. Coastal waters are also very important and the river basin district has over half of the country's designated bathing waters.

There are 9 management catchments that make up the river basin district, which include many interconnected rivers, lakes, groundwater and coastal waters. These catchments range from the shallow aquifers and rocky rivers in Cornwall and Devon to lowland chalk rivers in Dorset.

Around 80% of the river basin district is rural, with dairy farming being the most common land use. This, and the legacy of mineral extraction, shape much of the landscape. In addition, the popularity of the district as a holiday destination means tourism makes a significant contribution to the local economy.

To support economic growth and development, significant or large scale infrastructure projects will occasionally take place within the river basin district. These projects must take account of the environmental objectives within this river basin management plan. Similarly, the potential benefits and impacts of such projects will, where relevant, be considered during future reviews and updates of the plan, including updates to the environmental objectives.

Figure 1: Map of the South West river basin district



## 1.4. Significant water management issues

The significant water management issues are the main issues that limit the uses and potential benefits of managing the water environment in the river basin district in a sustainable way. They have been identified based on the results of public consultation and assessments of the pressures caused by people now, in the past, and predicted in the future.

Many of these issues arise from current activities that provide a wide range of benefits. It may therefore not be possible or desirable to fully resolve the issues.

- **Physical modifications** - affecting 22% of water bodies in this river basin district

People have made many physical changes to rivers, lakes and estuaries, for example, flood defences and weirs, and changes to the size and shape of natural river channels for land drainage and navigation. These modifications alter natural flow levels, cause excessive build up of sediment in surface water bodies and the loss of habitats and recreational uses. In many cases the uses and associated physical modifications need to be maintained. In these circumstances it may not be possible to achieve good ecological status.

- **Pollution from waste water** – affecting 33% of water bodies in this river basin district

Waste water, or sewage, can contain large amounts of nutrients (such as phosphorus and nitrates), ammonia, bacteria, harmful chemicals and other damaging substances. It can enter water bodies where sewage treatment technology to remove enough of the phosphorus and harmful chemicals doesn't exist, from leakages from privately owned septic tanks and, in wet weather, storm overflows can discharge untreated sewage having a significant impact on bathing waters. Population growth and changes in rainfall patterns are increasing the pressure on the sewer network.

- **Pollution from towns, cities and transport** - affecting 4% of water bodies in this river basin district

Rainwater draining from roofs, roads and pavements carries pollutants, including grit, bacteria, oils, metals, vehicle emissions, detergent and road salt drains to surface water, including estuaries and coastal waters. Many homes and workplaces have 'misconnected' drains, meaning that dirty water often enters surface waters and groundwater rather than foul sewer drains.

- **Changes to the natural flow and level of water** - affecting 3% of water bodies in this river basin district

Reduced flow and water levels in rivers and groundwater caused by human activity (such as abstraction) or less rainfall than usual can mean that there is not enough water for people to use and wildlife might not be able to survive. Reduced flow affects the health of fish and exaggerates the impacts of barriers such as weirs. Climate change research shows that by 2050 England can expect significant seasonal variations, with higher winter and lower summer flows, and a reduction in flow overall. In the long term, there will be less water available to abstract for drinking, industry and irrigating crops.

- **Negative effects of invasive non-native species** - affecting 1% of water bodies in this river basin district

Invasive non-native species can have significant economic impacts. The cost of controlling invasive species to make sure that flood defences and the natural environment are not compromised is rising. American signal crayfish are becoming widespread and affect animals such as fish and invertebrates. Other species such as mitten crabs destroy habitats like reed beds and can cause banks to collapse by burrowing into them. Climate change is

thought to drive certain species northwards, increasing their frequency and variety in the future and affecting the condition of water bodies.

- **Pollution from rural areas** - affecting 44% of water bodies in this river basin district

Some approaches to land management have increased the amount of soils and sediment that are being washed off the land carrying phosphorus into waters which can cause excessive algae growth called 'eutrophication'. A changing climate means that more intense rainfall is likely to occur, increasing the risk of impacts further. Nitrate from fertilisers has built up in groundwater over decades and will take a long time to reduce. Sedimentation from erosion, forestry practices, saturated and compacted fields and livestock trampling on river banks has affected river ecology by smothering fish spawning grounds. Other impacts include bacteriological contaminations from animal faeces and inappropriately stored and applied livestock slurry being washed off the land, and pesticides from farming, forestry, golf courses and parks. These contaminants pose a particular threat to bathing waters, shellfish waters and drinking water.

- **Pollution from abandoned mines** - affecting 5% of water bodies in this river basin district

Minewater is water that has naturally entered the mine workings. When the mines were operating the minewater was drained or pumped to keep it away from working areas. After mines close, mine workings flood. This results in both surface waters and groundwater being contaminated with dissolved metals such as iron, lead, copper, zinc or cadmium. In addition, impacts from the leaching of metals due to ore crushing and settlement lagoons can be a real concern because the resulting spoil heaps are often large and close to water.

### **Taking account of climate change**

The climate is changing as a result of greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activity. Latest UK climate projections show that temperatures will continue to rise, with increased winter rainfall and more rain falling in intense storms and continuing sea level rise. The impact on river flows, water quality and ecosystems is less clear. Studies to learn more about the effects of climate change on the river basin district are underway. In the meantime, it makes sense to implement measures that are flexible or increase resilience to extreme weather events and future warming.

### **Risk assessments**

Risk assessments are used to help identify significant water management issues by identifying where pressures could change in the future, potentially leading to a deterioration or reducing the effectiveness of measures to meet their objectives. The Environment Agency has reviewed and updated, where necessary, the risk assessments since the 2009 plan.

The risk assessments forecast risk up to 2027. Because of the relatively short timescale, the specific risks from climate change have been considered mainly in the faecal indicator organisms risk assessment and the abstraction-flow risk assessment.

#### Further information in this document

- You can find a summary of the impacts of significant water management issues by sector in section 5.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find GeoPDF maps, statistics and main findings for each risk assessment on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88>).
- More detail on risk assessments and links to the method statements behind them can be found in section 4.4 of [Part 2:RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- The [Inventory of emissions, discharges and losses of priority and priority hazardous substances](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sab675d1e4d74e5e8) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sab675d1e4d74e5e8>) provides information on priority substances at the river basin district scale.
- You can find more detail on how the inventory has been compiled in section 4.4 of [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## 1.5. Working with others

### **River basin district liaison panel**

The river basin district has a liaison panel. Members share their views as the representative of a sector that is responsible for implementing measures and carrying out projects.

The role of the liaison panel is to:

- contribute evidence to enable decision making and reporting on river basin management plans
- devise and track measures and projects as part of a programme of work to prevent deterioration and improve the environment
- work with members and their sectors to ensure a broad base for decision making and communication
- assist and champion the implementation of the catchment based approach

### **Catchment partnerships and the catchment based approach**

Taking a catchment based approach helps to bridge the gap between strategic management planning at river basin district level and activity at the local water body scale. The catchment based approach aims to encourage groups to work together more effectively to deal with environmental problems locally.

Catchment partnerships are groups of organisations with an interest in improving the environment in their local area and are led by a catchment host organisation. They inform the river basin management planning process and help implement measures by:

- providing local evidence
- targeting and coordinating action
- identifying and accessing funding for improvements in the catchment
- incorporating river basin management planning into the wider environmental management of the catchment

Some of the partnerships will produce their own catchment or local plans.

The partnerships work on a wide range of issues including, but not restricted to, the water environment and river basin management. Catchment partnerships also cover coastal and marine waters.

Table 2 lists the partnerships in this river basin district. Some partnership groups are in the early stages of being set up, while others have been active for years. Members from some catchment partnerships also sit on the river basin district liaison panel.



**Table 2: Catchments and partnership groups**

Catchment	Partnership group host
<a href="#">Dorset</a>	Wessex Water and Dorset Wildlife Trust
<a href="#">East Devon</a>	Devon Wildlife Trust
<a href="#">Hampshire Avon</a>	Wessex Chalkstream and Rivers Trust
<a href="#">North Cornwall, Seaton, Looe and Fowey</a>	Cornwall Wildlife Trust
<a href="#">North Devon</a>	Westcountry Rivers Trust
<a href="#">South &amp; West Somerset</a>	Farming Wildlife and Advisory Group South West Ltd
<a href="#">South Devon</a>	Westcountry Rivers Trust and South Devon AONB
<a href="#">Tamar</a>	Westcountry Rivers Trust
<a href="#">West Cornwall and the Fal</a>	Cornwall Wildlife Trust

### Incorporating information from others in river basin management planning

Some organisations have asked for the opportunity to share their environmental data to help improve river basin management and catchment planning. For example, sharing data and information to improve local evidence on the cause of a problem, such as the reason for not achieving good status, or a new response to a problem. The Environment Agency is working with the Catchment Based Approach National Support Group and others to confirm data sharing priorities. To learn more about sharing your information contact your local catchment partnership, see further information box.

#### Further information in this document

- You can find a map showing the location and boundaries of the catchments in section 3.4.
- Contact details for the catchment partnerships as well as a summary of the measures they are carrying out can be found in section 3.4.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find more information about the catchment based approach in section 3.4 of [Part 2: RBMP overview](#) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

#### Supporting information

- You can find more information on the liaison panel and details about membership in the [Record of consultation and engagement](#) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- You can find examples on how the Environment Agency has used information from others in the [consultation response document](#) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- You can find more information on the catchment based approach on the catchment based approach [web pages](http://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/) (<http://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/>)

## 1.6. Links to other major plans affecting water management

This plan provides a long-term framework for managing the issues that affect the quality of the water environment in the river basin district. However, many water management issues are so significant or complex that they demand their own more detailed plans. The public bodies that prepare these plans are bound by the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2003 to have regard to the river basin management plan when exercising their functions and in the case of many of the functions exercised by the Environment Agency and the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to exercise those functions so as to secure compliance with the requirements of the WFD.

Table 3 summarises the important water management issues that have their own planning processes and plans.

**Table 3: Other plans affecting water management**

Issue	Plans	Primary responsible bodies in England
<b>Flooding and coastal erosion</b>	Flood risk management plans Local Flood Risk Management Strategies Shoreline management plan	Environment Agency Lead local flood authorities Coastal groups (risk management authority partnerships)
<b>Climate change adaptation</b>	UK National Climate Adaptation Strategy and Adaptation Plan	Government's Committee on Climate Change Public bodies and utility companies
<b>Water supply</b>	Water resources management plans Drought management plans	Water companies
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services Natura 2000 site improvement plans	Defra Natural England
<b>Invasive non-native species (INNS)</b>	The Great Britain Invasive Non-native Species strategy and implementation plan	Defra's Great Britain invasive non-native species secretariat
<b>Marine waters</b>	Marine Strategy Framework Directive Marine plans	Defra Marine Management Organisation

### Supporting information:

- More information about the flood risk management plans can be found on the flood risk management plan [web pages \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-risk-management-plans-frmps-2015-to-2021\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-risk-management-plans-frmps-2015-to-2021).



## 1.7. Reporting progress on this plan

A formal assessment of progress with meeting the objectives in this plan will be reported in the 2021 update to this plan. An interim report on making measures operational will be produced and reported to the European Commission in 2018.

The Environment Agency and other organisations have extensive monitoring programmes to assess the state of the water environment. To help monitor progress with this plan and show how the quality of the water environment is changing, the Environment Agency will report on a range of quality indicators. These could include:

- status or risks facing protected areas: drinking water protected areas, Natura 2000 sites, bathing waters, shellfish waters, nutrient sensitive areas
- ecological status plus individual status of some quality elements: fish, macrophytes, invertebrates, diatoms, phosphorous, dissolved oxygen, ammonia, specific pollutants, acidity
- chemical status plus individual status of some quality elements
- the net change in status of each of the individual ecological status elements. This will be used as an indicator of overall progress towards good ecological status

As well as monitoring the state of the environment, the Environment Agency also plans to report on important activities that will eventually bring positive results. For example:

- numbers of fish passage improvements
- length of shoreline and river bank habitat enhancements
- area of priority habitat created or improved
- extent of new mitigation measures implemented on heavily modified and artificial water bodies

Those implementing measures should monitor and report their own progress. The following groups will be particularly important:

- catchment partnerships - progress on partnership projects, progress on securing additional funding and influencing others
- water companies - progress on implementing national environment programme schemes and other measures that relate to environmental performance agreed by the water company with their customer challenge group
- agriculture and rural land managers - progress on uptake of Countryside Stewardship schemes that benefit water and other sector related initiatives, for example, Campaign for the Farmed Environment
- local authorities - opportunities taken to encourage growth by green infrastructure and habitat enhancement
- ports and navigation authorities - implementing mitigation measures
- Highways England - progress on environmental aspects of their road investment strategy

The liaison panel, as a collective group representing the river basin district as a whole, provides an opportunity for monitoring progress against the plans, sharing best practice and helping catchment partnerships. As such, positive actions taken by partners to implement this plan can be reported and collated through the panels.

## 2. Current state of the environment, environmental objectives and outcomes

This section describes the current state of the environment and the environmental objectives for the river basin district. It also describes the planned progress towards achieving those objectives by 2021.

## 2.1. Current state of the environment

The WFD indicator of the health of the water environment is whether a water body is at good status or potential. This is an assessment of a range of quality elements relating to the biology and chemical quality of surface waters and quantitative and chemical quality of groundwater. To achieve good ecological status or potential, good chemical status or good groundwater status every single element assessed must be at good status or better. If one element is below its threshold for good status, then the whole water body's status is classed as less than good.

Surface water bodies can be classed as high, good, moderate, poor or bad status. Table 4 gives a description of each of those status classes.

**Table 4: Definition of status in the Water Framework Directive**

Status	Definition
<b>High</b>	Near natural conditions. No restriction on the beneficial uses of the water body. No impacts on amenity, wildlife or fisheries.
<b>Good</b>	Slight change from natural conditions as a result of human activity. No restriction on the beneficial uses of the water body. No impact on amenity or fisheries. Protects all but the most sensitive wildlife.
<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate change from natural conditions as a result of human activity. Some restriction on the beneficial uses of the water body. No impact on amenity. Some impact on wildlife and fisheries.
<b>Poor</b>	Major change from natural conditions as a result of human activity. Some restrictions on the beneficial uses of the water body. Some impact on amenity. Moderate impact on wildlife and fisheries.
<b>Bad</b>	Severe change from natural conditions as a result of human activity. Significant restriction on the beneficial uses of the water body. Major impact on amenity. Major impact on wildlife and fisheries with many species not present.

Table 5 shows the number of water bodies in the river basin district. It shows whether these are natural, artificial (such as canals and reservoirs) or have been modified ('heavily modified') for particular uses.

**Table 5: Number of water bodies in the river basin district**

Water body categories	Natural	Artificial	Heavily modified	Total
Rivers, canals and surface water transfers	521	21	48	590
Lake	9	33	19	61
Coastal	21	0	2	23
Estuarine	11	0	12	23
Groundwater	42	0	0	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>739</b>

Tables 6 and 7 summarise the current status of surface and groundwater water bodies in the river basin district.

**Table 6: Ecological and chemical 2015 classification for surface waters**

No. of water bodies	Ecological status or potential					Chemical status	
	Bad	Poor	Mod	Good	High	Fail	Good
697	21	94	420	160	2	30	667

**Table 7: Chemical and quantitative 2015 classification for groundwaters**

No. of water bodies	Quantitative status		Chemical status	
	Poor	Good	Poor	Good
42	4	38	22	20

The 2015 water body classification is the baseline from which deterioration is not permitted unless certain and specific conditions apply.

A summary of the current state of protected areas is included in section 2.4.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- For more information on how the current status of the water environment is assessed see section 4 of [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).
- You can access GeoPDF maps showing the current status of water bodies on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88)
- To obtain the 2015 classification results for each water body, download the [water body spreadsheet \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## 2.2. Environmental objectives

The environmental objectives of the WFD are:

- to prevent deterioration of the status of surface waters and groundwater
- to achieve objectives and standards for protected areas
- to aim to achieve good status for all water bodies or, for heavily modified water bodies and artificial water bodies, good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status
- to reverse any significant and sustained upward trends in pollutant concentrations in groundwater
- the cessation of discharges, emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances into surface waters
- progressively reduce the pollution of groundwater and prevent or limit the entry of pollutants

Environmental objectives have been set for each of the protected areas and water bodies in the river basin district. They were identified through a process involving technical and economic appraisals and formal public consultation. Achieving the objectives will optimise the benefits to society from using the water environment.

The environmental objectives summarised in this section are legally binding. All public bodies must have regard to these objectives when making decisions that could affect the quality of the water environment.

In certain specific circumstances, exemptions from some of these objectives may be applied. These exemptions are considered in the process used to set these objectives.

### **Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan**

- You can find more information on the process of setting objectives in section 5 of [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

## 2.3. Preventing deterioration

To protect the many uses and benefits the water environment provides, it is essential to prevent it deteriorating. The water industry and many of the businesses essential to the economy have invested billions of pounds in infrastructure that rely on secure supplies of clean water. Preventing deterioration also protects wildlife and people's health and wellbeing.

The requirement to prevent deterioration was taken into account when setting the water body status objectives. Each water body status objective in this plan is set no lower than the 2015 classification result for the water body. This applies to a water body's overall status and to the status of each element used in classification.

Section 3 contains a summary of the programmes of measures to protect and improve the beneficial use of the water environment in the river basin district. Without these measures, the quality of the water environment would deteriorate with associated loss of benefits. It is estimated that without these controls, 27% of surface waters in the river basin district would deteriorate by 2027 due mainly to an increase in the unmitigated physical modification of rivers and the spread of invasive non-native species. The increase in physical modification is driven by climate change and population growth resulting in the need for increased flood protection, land drainage, and the spread of urban areas.

An assessment of whether deterioration has occurred from the 2015 classification baseline will be carried out in 2021.

### **Further information in this document**

- You can find an assessment of whether deterioration in water body status occurred between 2009 and 2015 in section 4.3.

### **Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan**

- You can find information on the preventing deterioration in section 3.1 of [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).

## 2.4. Protected area compliance and objectives

There are many areas where the water environment is especially valued. These areas include rare wildlife habitats, bathing waters and areas where drinking water is abstracted. These areas are known as ‘protected areas’ and their uses are given particular legal protection. Protected areas are a priority for action to make sure they achieve their objectives and protect the benefits they provide.

This section presents information on the extent to which protected areas are compliant with their current standards and objectives.

### Drinking water protected areas

The objectives for drinking water protected areas are to ensure that:

- under the water treatment regime applied, the drinking water produced meets the standards of the Drinking Water Directive plus any UK requirements to make sure that drinking water is safe to drink
- the necessary protection to prevent deterioration in the water quality in the protected area in order to reduce the level of purification treatment required

These objectives are at risk when increasing pollution levels caused by human activity could lead to more treatment being needed in the future and where measures are needed to reduce pollution. For groundwater bodies only, not meeting these objectives may also mean the water body is classed as poor chemical status. Safeguard zones are non statutory areas identified for ‘at risk’ abstractions where land use management practices and other activities can affect the quality of the untreated water. Measures to prevent and reduce pollution are targeted within these zones.

**Table 8: Drinking water protected areas current status and at risk**

Water body type	Number of drinking water protected areas	Number ‘at risk’	Number at poor chemical status for drinking water protected area objectives
Surface water	76	18	Does not apply to surface waters
Groundwater	42	21	17

### Economically significant species (shellfish waters)

Some areas of estuarine and coastal waters are designated as shellfish waters. Shellfish waters are areas requiring protection or improvement to support shellfish life and growth in order to contribute to the high quality of shellfish for people to eat.

**Table 9: Shellfish water protected areas current status and objectives**

Number of shellfish waters	Objective	Currently achieving objective	Achieving objective by 2015	Achieving objective by 2021	Achieving objective by 2027
33*	<300 <i>E.coli</i> /100ml in the shellfish flesh and intravalvular fluid	2	6	4	23

\* 5 shellfish waters unmonitored or with insufficient monitoring to assess compliance during 2014 due to the lack of commercial harvesting activity

## Recreational waters (bathing waters)

Bathing waters are designated waters and beaches that large numbers of bathers use. The objective for bathing waters is to preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment and to protect human health by meeting the 'sufficient' water quality standards of the Bathing Waters Directive and to take such realistic and proportionate measures considered appropriate with a view to increasing the number of bathing waters classified as 'excellent' or 'good'.

**Table 10: Bathing water protected areas current status and objectives**

Number of bathing waters	Objective	Number which met at least the sufficient classification in 2014*	Number expected to achieve at least sufficient in 2015	Number at risk of not achieving sufficient in 2015
189	At least sufficient classification	179	179	10

\* This is the number that would have met at least the sufficient class if the new 2015 standards had been in force

## Nutrient sensitive areas (Nitrate vulnerable zones)

The objective of the Nitrates Directive is to reduce water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and to prevent further such pollution occurring. Nitrate vulnerable zones (NVZs) are designated where nitrate concentrations in water bodies are high or increasing, or water bodies are, or may become, eutrophic due to agricultural nitrate pollution. Farmers within NVZs must comply with mandatory action programme measures to reduce agricultural nitrate losses. In addition, a code of good agricultural practice has been established for voluntary implementation by all farmers.

**Table 11: Nitrate vulnerable zone protected areas extent**

Reason for designation	Number of NVZs	Land area(ha) covered by NVZ type	% of RBD covered by NVZ type
High nitrate in surface water	27	88,526	5
High nitrate in groundwater	14	379,979	21
Eutrophication in lakes or reservoirs	5	7,881	<1
Eutrophication in estuaries or coastal waters	4	253,800	14

## Nutrient sensitive areas (Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive)

The objective of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of waste water discharges. Sensitive areas are designated for water bodies affected by eutrophication or where surface water abstraction is affected by elevated nitrate concentrations. Reductions or emission standards for nutrients in sewage effluent must be met within areas sensitive to nutrient pollution.



**Table 12: Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive protected areas type and extent**

Reason for designation	Number of sensitive areas	Length (km) / Area (km <sup>2</sup> ) designated
Eutrophication in rivers	10	280
Eutrophication in canals	N/A	N/A
Eutrophication in lakes or reservoirs	N/A	N/A
Eutrophication in estuaries or coastal waters	3	65.87
High nitrate in surface fresh water	N/A	N/A

### **Natura 2000 sites: Water dependent Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas**

The overall objective of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community importance. The network of protected areas established under the Wild Birds and Habitats Directives is known as Natura 2000. Site conservation objectives are designed to maintain or restore Natura 2000 sites to favourable conservation status. The provisions of the WFD only relate to water dependent Natura 2000 sites or water dependent habitats and species on sites that combine wet and dry features. The objective is to protect and, where necessary, improve the water environment to achieve favourable conservation status for the water dependent features for which the site was designated as set out in the site's conservation objectives.

Natural England determines what favourable conservation status means in terms of the environmental conditions (targets) and ecology expected for designated habitats and species. The targets required are based on UK Common Standards Monitoring Guidance (CSMG), published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Some of the conservation objectives for attributes of Natura 2000 sites are the same or equivalent to objectives for elements of water bodies. Natural England reports on compliance with these objectives. Where there are CSMG targets for flow and water quality elements, they have been taken into account when setting water body status objectives. Where the deadline for achieving Natura 2000 water body objectives (CSMG target) has been extended beyond 2021, the Environment Agency has agreed interim goals locally with Natural England.

Ramsar sites are wetland sites of international importance. For the purposes of river basin management planning, Ramsar sites are considered in the same way as Natura 2000 sites

Table 13 contains a summary of the current condition and objectives for Natura 2000 protected areas.

**Table 13: Natura 2000 water dependent protected areas current condition and objectives**

<b>Current condition</b>			
<b>Area of SSSI underpinning Natura 2000 sites (Ha)</b>			
WFD - favourable	33,792		
WFD - unfavourable recovering	22,612		
WFD - unfavourable no change	2,053		
WFD - unfavourable declining	2,036		
WFD - destroyed/partially destroyed	34		
<b>Total areas</b>	<b>60,526</b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Number of protected areas</b>		
	<b>By 2015</b>	<b>By 2021</b>	<b>By 2027</b>
<b>All measures complete to enable conservation objectives to be achieved</b>	25	8	15

**Further information in this document**

- You can find a summary of the protected area action planning process and links to action plans for each protected area in section 3.6.

**Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan**

- For more information on all of the protected areas see section 4.2 of the [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)
- For a list of all the protected areas, associated objectives and information see the [register of protected areas \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s487ae61bf2a4b4fb\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s487ae61bf2a4b4fb).
- You can find detailed interactive maps of the different protected areas in the river basin district showing location, current status and monitoring points on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88)

**Supporting information:**

- The CSMG and interim progress goals for flow and water quality elements in Natura 2000 is available on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88)

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## 2.5. Water body objectives

For surface waters, objectives are set for ecological and chemical status. For artificial or heavily modified water bodies, objectives are set for ecological potential and chemical status. For groundwater, objectives are set for quantitative and chemical status.

Water body objectives consist of 2 pieces of information: the status (for example, good) and the date by which that status is planned to be achieved (for example, by 2021).

The status part of an objective is based on a prediction of the future status that would be achieved if technically feasible measures are implemented and, when implemented, would produce more benefits than they cost. The objective also takes into account the requirement to prevent deterioration and achieving protected area objectives.

The date part of an objective is the year by which the future status is predicted to be achieved. The date is determined by considering whether the measures needed to achieve the planned status are currently affordable, and once implemented, the time taken for the ecology or the groundwater to recover.

Aiming to achieve good status or potential by 2021 is the default objective for this plan. Where certain and specific conditions apply, alternative objectives (to good status by 2021) have been set. These either involve taking an extended time period to reach the planned status (for example, good by 2027) or aiming to achieve a lower status (for example, moderate by 2015).

The water body objectives in this plan are:

- **‘x’ status by 2015:** 2015 status matches the predicted future status or potential. Here the predicted future status has already been achieved and no further improvement in status is expected. The main environmental objective is to prevent deterioration in status between 2015 and 2021.
- **‘x’ status by 2021:** there is confidence that, as a result of the programme of measures, the water body will improve from its 2015 status or potential to achieve the predicted future status by 2021.

The ‘by 2015’ date has been used to clearly distinguish water bodies and elements where the reported 2015 status matches the predicted future status (and so no further improvement is expected) from water bodies and elements where an improvement from the reported 2015 status is required to achieve the predicted future status by 2021.

- **‘x’ status by 2027:** the deadline for achieving the status or potential has been extended to 2027. Where the time extension is due to ecological or groundwater recovery time, there is confidence that the measures needed to achieve the improvement in status are already in place or will be in place by 2021. Where the time extension is due to practical constraints delaying implementation of the measures, there is confidence the process of implementing the measures will begin before 2021. For the remaining objectives with a 2027 date, there is currently not enough confidence that the improvement in status can be achieved by an earlier date.
- **‘x’ status by 2040 or ‘x’ status by 2050 or ‘x’ status by 2060:** the deadlines for achieving the planned status or potential have only been extended beyond 2027 where either ecological recovery time or groundwater recovery time will delay the achieving of the planned status. In these cases there is confidence that the measures needed to achieve the improvement in status are already in place or will be in place by 2021.

Where the status is less than good, this means that a less stringent objective has been set.

The following two tables summarise the status objectives for water bodies, indicating how many of these are alternative objectives.

Table 14 summarises the ecological and chemical status objectives that have been set for the 697 surface water bodies in the river basin district. It shows for instance, that:

- 596 water bodies have an objective of maintaining or aiming to achieve good ecological status between 2015 and 2027
- 62 water bodies have already achieved their objective of moderate ecological status (a less stringent objective)
- 13 water bodies have been set an objective of reaching moderate ecological status (a less stringent objective) by 2027 (an extended deadline)

**Table 14: Summary of ecological status or potential and chemical status objectives for surface water bodies (number of water bodies) including those with less stringent objectives and extended deadlines (blue shaded cells)**

	Ecological status or potential						Chemical status			
	Bad	Poor	Mod	Good	High	Total	Fail	Good	Total	
By 2015	5	8	62	160	2	237	3	667	670	
By 2021	0	0	10	44	0	54	0	0	0	
By 2027	0	1	13	392	0	406	0	27	27	Extended deadline
Beyond 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	5	9	85	596	2	697	3	694	697	
	Less stringent							Less stringent		

Table 15 summarises the quantitative and chemical status objectives that have been set for the 42 groundwater water bodies in the river basin district. It shows for instance, that:

- 39 water bodies have an objective of maintaining or aiming to achieve good quantitative status between 2015 and 2027
- 36 water bodies have an objective of maintaining or aiming to achieve good chemical status between 2015 and 2027
- 3 water bodies have already achieved their objective of poor quantitative status (a less stringent objective)

**Table 15: Summary of quantitative and chemical status objectives for groundwater (number of water bodies) including those with less stringent objectives and extended deadlines (blue shaded cells)**

	Quantitative status			Chemical status			
	Poor	Good	Total	Poor	Good	Total	
By 2015	3	38	41	6	20	26	
By 2021	0	0	0	0	5	5	
By 2027	0	1	1	0	11	11	Extended deadline
Beyond 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	3	39	42	6	36	42	
	Less stringent			Less stringent			

Although 14% of water bodies have a less stringent objective for ecological status or potential, only 3% of elements have a similar objective. The difference is because the overall objective's status is determined by the lowest of the element level objectives. Therefore for many of the water bodies with a less stringent objective, most of the elements still have an element level objective of good status.

## Justification for alternative objectives

Table 16 shows how many times the different reasons for justifying the setting of alternative objectives (extended deadlines and less stringent objectives) were used across all water bodies (surface water and groundwater) in this river basin district. More than one reason may have been used to justify the alternative objective for any particular water body and therefore the numbers in the table do not equal the total number of water bodies.

The table also shows the reasons extended deadlines have been set for some shellfish waters and Natura 2000 protected areas.

**Table 16: Summary of the justifications for alternative objectives for water bodies, shellfish waters and Natura 2000 protected areas**

Alternative objective reason	Sub-reason	Number of water bodies or protected areas where reason has been used		
		Water bodies	Natura 2000	Shellfish waters
Technically infeasible	No known technical solution is available	11	6	0
	Cause of adverse impact unknown	70	12	0
	Practical constraints of a technical nature	3	13	14
	<b>Number of water bodies or protected areas where technically infeasible has been used</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
Disproportionately expensive	Unfavourable balance of costs and benefits	66	0	9
	Disproportionate burdens	412	9	0
	<b>Number of water bodies or protected areas where disproportionately expensive has been used</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
Natural conditions	Ecological recovery time	28	0	0
	Groundwater status recovery time	3	0	0
	Background conditions	43	0	0
	<b>Number of water bodies or protected areas where natural conditions has been used</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total number of water bodies or protected areas with an alternative objective (extended deadline and/or less stringent status objective)</b>		<b>513</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>

### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- More information on alternative objectives, including explanations of the justifications for alternative objectives can be found in section 5.4 and 5.5 of [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).
- A GeoPDF map of the types, location, boundaries, monitoring sites and current status of water bodies in the river basin district is available on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88)
- The current status and objective for each water body is available in a spreadsheet on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## 2.6. Reversal of trends

Actions to reverse any significant and sustained upward trends in pollutant concentrations in groundwater must be implemented as soon as a trend has been identified. It is not possible to propose an alternative that is less stringent or extend the deadline for this objective.

## 2.7. Progressive reduction of pollution of groundwater

Hazardous substances must be prevented from entry into groundwater and the entry into groundwater of all other pollutants must be limited to prevent pollution. Hazardous substances means substances or groups of substances that are toxic, persistent and liable to bioaccumulate, and other substances or groups of substances which give rise to an equivalent level of concern.

## 2.8. Environmental outcomes for 2021

To help determine the water body status objectives summarised earlier, a prediction was made about what the status of each element will be in 2021. Predicted improvements in status are based on measures where there is confidence that the:

- measures will happen by 2021
- location of the measures and the water bodies that will benefit are known
- change in element status will occur as a result of the measures

Confidence in this context means there is at least a reasonable expectation (more confident than not) that the measures will happen and the outcome will be met. Environmental processes are complex and investment plans of both public and private sectors change. Some of the predicted outcomes may therefore not be achieved. However, there will be opportunities to implement additional measures and potentially achieve further outcomes by 2021. These opportunities are discussed in section 3.5.

The water body status objective does not always show whether an improvement in status is predicted to occur by 2021. For example, an element or water body may require an extended deadline to reach good status and so have an objective of 'good by 2027'. However, it might be predicted to improve from poor to moderate status by 2021.

To help understand the improvements predicted to occur as a result of measures in this plan, the tables 17, 18, 19 and 20 summarise the current status and the predicted status in 2021 for:

- surface water bodies (ecological and chemical status)
- groundwater (quantitative and chemical status)
- all elements for all surface water bodies in the river basin district
- selected elements that contribute to the ecological status of surface waters

**Table 17: Current and predicted 2021 ecological and chemical status of surface water bodies (number of surface water bodies)**

	Ecological status				Chemical status	
	Bad	Poor	Mod	Good or better	Fail	Good
Current status	21	94	420	162	30	667
Predicted 2021 status	16	71	404	206	30	667
Predicted change	-5	-23	-16	44	0	0

**Table 18: Current and predicted 2021 quantitative and chemical status of groundwater bodies (number of groundwater bodies)**

	Quantitative status		Chemical status	
	Poor	Good	Poor	Good
Current status	4	38	22	20
Predicted 2021 status	4	38	17	25
Predicted change	0	0	-5	5



**Table 19: Current and predicted 2021 status of ecological elements and chemical elements (number of elements in surface water bodies)**

	Ecological status				Chemical status	
	Bad	Poor	Mod	Good or better	Fail	Good
<b>Current status</b>	40	216	670	4,232	41	1,000
<b>Predicted 2021 status</b>	21	168	640	4,328	41	1,000
<b>Predicted change</b>	-19	-48	-30	96	0	0

The predicted status in 2021 for all of the classified elements for each water body are available in a comprehensive data set that forms part of this plan. Table 20 summarises the current and predicted 2021 status for biological elements in surface waters.

**Table 20: Current and predicted 2021 status for biological elements in rivers (number of times element assessed)**

		Bad	Poor	Mod	Good or better
<b>Fish</b>	<b>Current status</b>	12	55	91	122
	<b>Predicted 2021 status</b>	7	39	83	151
	<b>Predicted change</b>	-5	-16	-8	29
<b>Invertebrates</b>	<b>Current status</b>	7	13	30	517
	<b>Predicted 2021 status</b>	7	12	30	518
	<b>Predicted change</b>	0	-1	0	1
<b>Plants (macrophytes and phytobenthos)</b>	<b>Current status</b>	2	45	209	226
	<b>Predicted 2021 status</b>	2	28	203	248
	<b>Predicted change</b>	0	-17	-6	22

**Further information in this document:**

- Further summaries of current status, 2021 predicted outcomes and water body objectives are presented in section 5.

**Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan:**

- The 2021 predicted outcomes for each water body are available to download on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538): (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538>).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## Additional environmental outcomes for 2021

For some measures, although there is confidence that the measure will happen by 2021, there is not enough confidence about the location or the scale of improvement to be able to predict outcomes for specific elements in specific water bodies.

These additional 2021 outcomes, which are not included in the tables above, are:

- Improvements to protected areas such as the quality of raw water at 34 Safeguard Zones due to actions targeting pesticides, reduced nutrient pollution at 5 Natura 2000 protected areas, and bathing and shellfish water quality as a result of 86 water company improvements to waste water discharges and initiatives such as the Taw and Torridge restoration project.
- Improvements to fish habitat and better conditions for invertebrates and plants in at least 7 rivers in west Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset and Hampshire. This is due to work such as creating 'leaky woody debris dams', creating spawning beds, wider river habitat enhancements and preventing river access by livestock.
- Further ecological improvements in at least 18 water bodies and the creation or improvement of over 844ha of wetland and 183km of river as a result of flood risk management schemes, for example, at Calstock.
- Improvements to fish populations, including eels, as a result of actions to improve fish passage in 15 water bodies, for example, the Tubbs Bottom fish pass on the River Frome.
- Reduced pollution from nutrients, pesticides and sediment in over 50 water bodies. For example, in Devon and Cornwall due to the 'Upstream Thinking' programme, the 'Hills to Levels' project, implementation of the Poole Harbour diffuse pollution reduction plan, and where Countryside Stewardship is adopted.
- Reductions in the bacterial pollution of bathing waters in North Cornwall and Dorset from contaminated streams, such as the Seaton and Bourne, as a result of work on misconnections and sewer blockages.
- Improvements to the flow of rivers as a result of the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction programme.

The environmental objectives in this plan will drive additional improvement in the water environment by 2021. Opportunities include the periodic review of water company price limits in 2019, government spending reviews, major infrastructure projects and the routine review of environmental permits.

### Supporting information:

- To see a summary of the effects of this plan on the wider environment read the [strategic environmental assessment](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- The impact assessment for the river basin management plans in England provides further information on the benefits this plan will achieve. It is available on the river basin management plan [web pages](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

# 3. Measures to achieve the environmental objectives

This section provides a summary of the programme of measures that are needed to manage the significant water management issues and achieve the objectives of this plan. The benefits of action and those involved are identified.

## 3.1. Programme of measures: background

This section provides a summary of the programmes of measures used to achieve the environmental objectives of this plan.

Table 21 provides an overview of the summary programmes of measures.

**Table 21: Overview of the programme of measures**

<b>Measures to prevent deterioration</b>		
<b>Summary of the programmes of measures to control the significant water management issues</b>	<p>These ongoing measures play a significant role in preventing deterioration.</p> <p>They protect all the current uses of the water environment and the benefits that society gets from it.</p> <p>The ongoing measures represent substantial investment and all sectors with an interest in the water environment have a role to play.</p> <p>These measures apply across the river basin district.</p>	Section 3.2
<b>Measures to achieve outcomes by 2021</b>		
<p><b>Main programmes of measures for 2021 outcomes</b> (Summary of the programmes of measures that will improve the water environment by 2021)</p>	<p>The main programmes have discrete funding streams to deal with particular issues.</p> <p>These programmes will achieve the biggest improvements in the water environment by 2021.</p> <p>They include the measures predicted to improve specific water bodies by 2021 and additional measures where it has not been possible to predict the geographic extent and/or size of environmental change they will result in by 2021.</p> <p>These measures apply in either specific locations or across the river basin district.</p>	Section 3.3
<p><b>Local measures</b> (Summary of the local measures identified by catchment partnerships)</p>	<p>Each catchment partnership has identified the measures they will implement by 2021.</p> <p>Some of the measures are reflected in water body specific outcomes by 2021.</p> <p>These measures apply within specific catchments.</p> <p>Catchment partnerships also identify what more they could achieve if additional resources could be realised in future.</p>	Section 3.4

<b>Forward look at measures beyond 2021</b>		
<b>Summary of the programmes of measures to meet objectives for water bodies with extended deadlines</b>	A summary of the additional measures needed to achieve objectives beyond 2021. These will be reviewed when the plans are next updated in 2021.  These measures are not linked to predicted outcomes for 2021.	Section 3.5
<b>Additional measures to achieve protected area objectives</b>		
<b>Summary and links to the action plans containing measures for protected areas</b>	A summary of and links to the action plans to meet protected area objectives in specific locations.	Section 3.6

Many of these measures, for example, land-based controls on pollutants, will also lead to improvements in marine waters not covered by the WFD.

#### **Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan**

- You can find a summary of the process for identifying of measures, including how costs and benefits were assessed in section 5 of the [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- More information about the mechanisms used to implement measures is available on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sabbd14301a44d5e9) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sabbd14301a44d5e9>).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## 3.2. Measures to prevent deterioration

This section summarises the ongoing measures that help prevent deterioration and protect the many uses of the water environment and the benefits it provides. Many of these measures also help improve the quality of the water environment.

The measures are presented for each of the significant water management issues described in section 1.4.

To identify which sectors are involved in implementing the measures, the main roles in managing the water environment (identified in section 1.2) are referred to below.

### Physical modifications

Physical changes such as widening, deepening and straightening rivers, estuaries and coasts help to meet the needs of society and the economy. Physical modifications allow the water environment to be used and valued for many purposes, including for navigation, flood risk management, fishing and other recreational activities that improve people's wellbeing and quality of life. These changes have helped towns and cities to develop and the economy to grow, but this can sometimes be at the expense of the water environment.

There are benefits to controlling new modifications and reducing the impacts of existing ones. While many modifications are, and will continue to be important to society, their potentially harmful impacts can be reduced and the resilience of aquatic communities improved. Taking action to address the impacts of physical modifications can have benefits for protected areas, in particular Natura 2000 sites. There is increasing evidence that in some cases, addressing the impacts of modifications (for instance by using natural water retention measures such as wetland creation and coastal realignment) could help alleviate flooding by slowing flows and making more space for water.

### How the issue is managed

Regulators and operators use and apply relevant legislation and policy:

- **Local government and internal drainage boards** grant land drainage consents under the Land Drainage Act 1991. **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** grant flood defence consents under the Water Resources Act 1991. Subject to parliamentary approval, flood defence consents will be replaced with flood risk activity permits from April 2016. All these authorities assess applications for schemes or activities for their potential effect on local flood risk and the environment.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** make sure new abstraction and impoundment licences and environmental permits include protection for freshwater and migratory fish where relevant and use powers to ensure fish passes and screens are in place where appropriate.
- **Government and agencies (Marine Management Organisation)** use marine licensing controls under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 for activities including construction, alteration or improvement works, dredging and removing substances or objects from the sea or sea bed.
- **All sectors** to consider the Marine Policy Statement and marine plans in decisions that affect marine and coastal environments. These plans set out the strategic framework for sustainable development of the sea.
- **Navigation (harbour authorities)** license dredging and works within harbour limits.

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** work with partners and interested groups to identify appropriate mitigation measures to achieve WFD objectives in Artificial and Heavily Modified Water Bodies. Mitigation measures are practicable steps that can be taken to mitigate adverse impacts from beneficial human activities such as impoundments for water resources, or structures that provide flood defence.
- **Local government** consider impact on hydromorphology when preparing spatial plans and local flood risk management plans, decisions on development management, new buildings and infrastructure.

Operators and project undertakers apply the following guidance:

- **Navigation (ports and harbours), industry, manufacturing and other business, non governmental organisations and central government** use the e-learning site for flood risk management to access expert information on mitigation measures.
- **All sectors** apply the Environment Agency's WFD compliance guidance, which covers a range of activities in estuaries and coasts.
- **Industry, manufacturing and other business** use the Environment Agency's 'Hydropower development: guidance for run-of-river hydropower'.
- **Navigation (ports and harbours), government and agencies (Environment Agency) and local government** use industry developed best practice guidance.

Influencers and regulators consider future management activities:

- **Local government, central government (Environment Agency)** refresh the strategic overview of sea flooding and coastal erosion to better manage environmental risk in the long term using Shoreline Management Plans.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** to explore effectiveness of existing approach to planning guidance on development in flood plains and coastal erosion risk areas.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** to review flood defence design standards for WFD and Natura 2000 sites.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** to carry out feasibility studies and designs for flood storage areas for environmental benefits.

#### Further information in this document

- Section 3.3 includes further information on flood risk management investment.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find more information about managing flooding and flood risk management plans in section 2 of the [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

#### Supporting information

- More information on marine plans can be found on the gov.uk [webpages](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/marine-planning-in-england) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/marine-planning-in-england>).
- The Environment Agency's compliance guidance for activities in estuaries and coasts can be found on the gov.uk [webpages](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complying-with-the-water-framework-directive-marine-dredging) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complying-with-the-water-framework-directive-marine-dredging>).
- The Environment Agency's guidance for hydropower development can be found on the gov.uk [webpages](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hydropower-schemes-guidelines-and-applying-for-permission) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hydropower-schemes-guidelines-and-applying-for-permission>).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>



# Managing pollution from waste water

Waste water, or sewage, can contain:

- nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrates
- harmful chemicals, including ammonia and metals and those used in homes and industry
- other harmful substances, including viruses and bacteria

Pollutants in waste water can affect the dissolved oxygen levels within the receiving waters and can impact on ecology. Nutrients can disturb the natural ecological balance of a water body and cause excessive growth of vegetation and algae, which may starve the water of oxygen. Other pollutants such as metals and everyday chemicals used in products around the home which are discharged in sewage may be directly toxic to plants or animals. Humans can also be affected, for example, through chemicals that accumulate in food or bacteria and viruses in waste water affecting bathing waters.

Reducing the impact of pollution from waste water will provide many benefits and help support a wide range of water uses that society values. These uses include drinking water supply, agriculture (including commercial shellfish harvesting), water sports, angling, conservation, and wider benefits such as tourism and quality of life. Addressing pollution from waste water will have benefits for a large number of protected areas including bathing waters, shellfish waters, Natura 2000 sites and sensitive areas under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. It also benefits marine waters under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

## How the issue is managed

Regulators, operators and influencers use and apply relevant legislation and policy:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** grant and review environmental permits under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) 2010 to the **water industry, manufacturing and other business and other sectors** to protect the environment from pollutants such as chemicals, nutrients, bacteria, viruses, ammonia and organic material in discharged effluent.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** work with the **water industry** to develop a long-term strategy for sewerage to prevent deterioration of permitted discharges (for example, combined sewer overflows), resulting from pressures such as climate change, growth and ageing infrastructure; and to develop a long term strategy to reduce and minimise risks to the water environment from misconnected sewerage (foul sewage wrongly connected to surface water).
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** grant environmental permits for small sewage discharges in designated sensitive areas. In other areas, small sewage discharges (including septic tanks) are exempt from the need for a permit if they can meet a number of criteria.
- **Government (Environment Agency)** to carry out a review of areas sensitive to eutrophication, in relation to the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) and make recommendations to Defra.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency and Health and Safety Inspectorate)** enforce restrictions and bans on the use of certain chemicals.



- **Local government** considers the impact on water quality in their preparation of spatial plans, decisions on spatial planning, development management, new buildings and infrastructure.
- **All sectors** to consider the Marine Policy Statement and marine plans in decisions that affect marine and coastal environments. These plans set out the strategic framework for sustainable development of the sea.

**Further information in this document**

- You can find more information on water company investment in section 3.3.

**Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan**

- You can find more information on the National Environment Programme in Section 2 of [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).

## Managing pollution from towns, cities and transport

Rainwater draining from roads and pavements carries many pollutants. These include metals, vehicle emissions, silt, grit, bacteria from animal faeces and oil. Other issues arise from pollution from households and business, for example, misuse of the drainage network. Pollution can enter surface water sewers that discharge to rivers, estuaries and coastal waters, causing harm to animals and plants.

Dealing with pollution from towns, cities and transport is a complex task. Costs for the measures tend to be higher and ownership of the problem is less clear. Existing legal powers are designed to address specific sources of pollution rather than small-scale or cumulative impacts from many different sources. However, there are some ways in which the challenge can be addressed. Benefits from action include improved flood resilience, climate change adaptation, increased biodiversity and social cohesion. In addition, protected areas, particularly certain bathing waters and shellfish waters, can be improved when enough resources are targeted at a specific issue.

### How the issue is managed

Regulators and operators use and apply relevant legislation and policy:

- **Local government** uses planning conditions, legal agreements and enforcement powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to prevent or stop pollution from developments, roads and other infrastructure.
- **Local government** makes sure that new developments address potential pollution problems by using sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water.
- **Local government** uses powers under the Building Act 1984 to rectify misconnected waste water pipe work, and statutory nuisance powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to stop water pollution from unauthorised operations such as transient car wash operations.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** use anti-pollution works powers (including service of notices) under the Water Resources Act 1991 to prevent or clean up small scale pollution, for example, ensuring storage tanks are bunded or repairing misconnections.
- **Industry, manufacturing and other business** comply with existing regulations (for example, the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010) to make sure that chemicals are properly managed and surface water drainage is appropriately used and maintained.

Operators take action, where appropriate:

- **Industry, manufacturing and other business (construction industry)** use sustainable drainage systems to remove silt and minimise other chemicals to prevent polluting run-off.
- **Local government** considers urban diffuse pollution pressures when developing spatial plans, determining planning applications and designing and constructing local council owned buildings, infrastructure and grounds. These should incorporate sustainable drainage schemes and water efficiency measures where practical and affordable.
- **Local government** incorporates green and blue infrastructure into regeneration schemes where possible.

- **Local government and industry, manufacturing and other business** reduce the impact of pesticides by using Amenity Assured registered weed control contractors under the Voluntary Initiative.

Regulators and operators plan and work together:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency) and Highways England** apply the memorandum of understanding agreement covering the strategic road network and remediation of high risk outfalls.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency) and urban and transport (Network Rail)** operate under the terms of a memorandum of understanding covering contaminated land, water discharge and use of pesticides.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency and water industry)** investigate and deal with misconnections, for example, through the National Misconnections Strategy group and in accordance with Defra's diffuse urban action plan.
- **All sectors** to consider the Marine Policy Statement and marine plans in decisions that affect marine and coastal environments. These plans set out the strategic framework for sustainable development of the sea.
- **Industry manufacturing and other business, local government, navigation and general public** follow codes of conduct and non-statutory estuary and coastal management plans to protect and improve the water environment in specific locations.
- **Local government** works with **industry, manufacturing and other business (Local Enterprise Partnerships), and non governmental organisations** (catchment partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships) to develop joint improvement programmes.
- **Industry, manufacturing and other business (Local Enterprise Partnerships)** work in partnership with **all sectors** to help identify where money from the European Growth Programme is invested to develop local economies and enhance the environment.

#### Further information in this document

- You can find more information on Highways England's environment fund in section 3.3.

## Changes to natural flow and levels of water

Taking too much water from freshwater or tidal rivers, canals, lakes and groundwater damages the environment. Changes in the natural flow and level of water could affect some Natura 2000 sites; particularly water dependent Special Areas of Conservation. Improving the way water resources are managed will make sure that there is enough good quality water for a healthier water environment and secure supplies of water for people, businesses and agriculture. It will also provide more leisure opportunities and increase the amenity value of natural environments, leading to health benefits for people.

### How the issue is managed

Regulators and operators use and apply relevant legislation and policy:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** grant licences under the Water Resources Act 1991 to regulate how much water is taken from rivers, lakes estuaries and groundwater. The Environment Agency reviews the sustainability of time-limited abstraction licences as they expire and the licence holders seek replacement licences. The Environment Agency will take action to curtail time-limited licences that are not sustainable. Replacement licences are granted on a sustainable basis in line with water body objectives.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** change or revoke permanent licences to protect the environment from actual or potential damage, including serious damage under the Water Resources Act 1991.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** work to bring a number of currently exempt abstraction activities into regulation following public consultation and formulation of government policy and legislation. This includes dewatering, transfers for inland navigation and previously exempt irrigation activities. Some reductions in currently exempt abstractions that are causing serious damage to the environment may be necessary. This may result in an improvement in groundwater and flow in affected water bodies.
- **All sectors** consider the Marine Policy Statement and marine plans in decisions that affect marine and coastal environments. These plans set out the strategic framework for sustainable development of the sea.

Regulators and operators take action:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** identify water resource pressures due to abstraction and restore sustainable flows and groundwater levels through changes to abstraction licences and physical changes to river channels to improve flows. New licences must be sustainable and prevent future impacts.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** implement the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction (RSA) programme. This programme identified, investigated and is solving environmental risks or problems caused by unsustainable licensed water abstraction. The Environment Agency takes action to curtail abstraction licences that have been identified as causing an environmental problem under the RSA programme. The Environment Agency aims to complete the programme by the end of March 2020.

Regulators and operators plan and work together:

- **Water industry** complete statutory Water Resource Management Plans, setting out how supplies and demand for water will be managed over a 25 year period, and takes action to restore sustainable groundwater and flows where impacts due to abstraction have been confirmed.
- **Water industry** produce drought plans to make sure that public water supplies are maintained while minimising the environmental impact of drought.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** produce abstraction licensing strategies to help ensure a consistent approach to managing water resources and balancing the needs of water users and the environment.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** revoke unused licences where the licence holder does not have a reasonable need for the water.
- **Water industry** carries out Adaptive Management trials, to determine the best measures for improving heavily modified water bodies used for water supply.

Regulators, operators, influencers and project undertakers make sure water is used efficiently:

- **All sectors** take up or encourage water efficiency measures, including water industry work on metering, leakage, audits, providing water efficient products, promoting water efficiency and education.
- **Local government** sets out local plan policies requiring new homes to meet the tighter water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day as described in Part G of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010.
- **Industry manufacturing and other business** implement tighter levels of water efficiency, as proposed by changes to the Building Regulations.
- **Agriculture and rural land management** manage demand for water and use water more efficiently to have a sustainable water supply for the future.
- **Local government** commissions water cycle studies to inform spatial planning decisions around local water resources.

#### Further information in this document

- You can find more information on water resources sustainability measures and water company investment in section 3.3.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find more information about the management of abstraction and flow in [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

## Managing invasive non-native species

Some non-native animals and plants are invasive and can have significant social, economic and environmental impacts. Where they lead to greater erosion some plants, such as Himalayan balsam, can increase flood risk. Others like American signal crayfish can decrease river bank stability and most have negative impacts on ecology and leisure activities such as angling and water sports. There are also significant costs in controlling and safely disposing of invasive species such as Japanese knotweed on development sites and managing species such as zebra mussels, which can block pipes, intakes and other structures.

Many invasive non-native species spread rapidly and once they are established control is often prohibitively expensive or technically infeasible and ultimately unsuccessful.

The approach to dealing with invasive non native species is set out in the GB Invasive Non-native Species Strategy. The strategy aims to minimise the risk posed by, and reduce the negative impacts of invasive non-native species. It adopts a hierarchical approach stressing prevention, followed by early detection and rapid response and finally long-term management and control.

The most effective and least expensive measure is to reduce the number of new species introduced and slow the spread of those that are already present by applying good biosecurity (measures which reduce the risk of spreading diseases and invasive non-native plants and animals) and promoting the 'Check, Clean Dry' and 'Be Plantwise' campaigns.

Natura 2000 protected areas can be vulnerable to certain invasive non-native species. Intensive and often expensive control measures may be required to actively manage or eradicate them in specific circumstances. For example, at sites designated for their wetland habitat interest, Himalayan balsam can dominate and reduce the habitat space available for native plant species. Controlling the Himalayan balsam by targeted and intensive hand pulling or cutting over a number of years can reduce the pressure from this species and prevent further deterioration of the habitat.

### How the issue is managed

Regulators and operators use and apply relevant legislation and policy:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency and Natural England)** use the Keeping and Introduction of Fish Regulations 2015 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to control movements of invasive non-native species. A change in legislation, implemented in April 2014, introduced a ban on selling 5 high-risk plant species including water primrose and floating pennywort.
- **Agriculture and rural land management** is aware of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and does not allow certain species to escape into the wild.
- **Government and agencies (Marine Management Organisation)** use policies within emerging marine plans and marine policy statements to support controlling and mitigation against invasive non-native species.
- **Government and agencies** implement EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species. Implementation of the regulation is gradual and will take place throughout the period of this plan.

Regulators, operators, influencers and project undertakers plan and work together:

- **Government and agencies (includes Environment Agency and Natural England), non governmental organisations (including angling, conservation and recreation)** implement the updated Great Britain strategy on invasive species, which includes species impact risk assessments, action plans and rapid response.
- **All sectors work together to develop and implement codes of practice** to reduce the spread of invasive non-native species.

Regulators, operators, influencers and project undertakers take action:

- **Government and agencies (includes Environment Agency and Defra), non governmental organisations (angling, conservation and recreation) and navigation** implement rapid responses to contain and eradicate new invasions where practicable. This measure is aided by the addition of powers to make Species Control Agreements and Orders in the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Infrastructure Act 2015.
- **Government and agencies (Natural England)** manage invasive non-native species at selected protected sites as appropriate.
- **All sectors** can form Local Action Groups to deal with invasive non-native species and raise awareness.

Regulators, operators, influencers and project undertakers build awareness and understanding:

- **Government and agencies (includes Environment Agency and Natural England), non-governmental organisations (including angling, conservation and recreation), local government and navigation** work in partnership to influence recreational users to slow the spread of invasive non native species by promoting 'Check, Clean, Dry' actions.
- **Government and agencies (Defra) and all sectors** raise public awareness of the risk of transferring non-native species accidentally and of preventative approaches.
- **Central government** helps the non-native species secretariat co-ordinate alert systems, species records and a central repository for information, including public online and smart phone submission of species records.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find more information about the management of invasive non-native species in section 2 of [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).

#### Supporting information

- The GB Invasive Non-native Species Strategy can be found on the GB non-native species secretariat [webpages \(http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=55\)](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=55).



## Manage pollution from rural areas

Pollution from rural areas comes from the combined effects of numerous sources, including agriculture, roads, recreational land use such as golf courses and forestry activities. It is mainly caused by nutrients, contaminants, chemicals such as pesticides and sediment entering water bodies as a result of land management activities.

Dealing with pollution from rural areas will help society reap the benefits of a healthy water environment. Farmers will benefit from making sure soil and nutrients are retained on the land rather than losing them, through run-off, to water. Controlling this run-off will help reduce localised flooding, reduce the sedimentation of lakes and harbours, improve fisheries and reduce the amount of harmful chemicals entering water bodies. Water companies will spend less money treating water for colour, pesticides and nitrate contamination. A reduction in nutrients will also benefit water quality and habitat in estuaries and coastal waters.

A wide range of protected areas will see benefits, including bathing water, shellfish waters, drinking water protected areas, Natura 2000 sites and nutrient sensitive areas designated as nitrate vulnerable zones.

### How the issue is managed

Regulators and operators use and apply relevant legislation and policy:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** check and ensure compliance against environmental permits under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 and against requirements of a wide range of environmental legislation.
- **Agricultural and rural land management (farm businesses)** comply with permits granted under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010. Permitted activities include some discharges to groundwater, spreading of waste to land for agricultural benefit, pig and poultry units over a certain size and safe recovery of agricultural waste.
- **Agricultural and rural land management (farm businesses)** comply with the action programme measures within the Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2015 in all nitrate vulnerable zones.
- **Agricultural and rural land management (farm businesses)** comply with the requirements of the Control of Pollution (Silage Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulations 2010 (SSAFO).
- **Agricultural and rural land management (farm businesses)** ensure that polluting matter is not present at a place where it has or is likely to enter controlled waters to avoid enforcement action under Water Resources Act 1991.
- **Government and agencies (Farming Advice Service)** advise farmers on general requirements of cross compliance and regulations required under the WFD.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency and Natural England)** provide site-level advice on the specific requirements of regulations.
- **Government and agencies (Natural England)** provide advice on the specific requirements of regulation that relate to designated sites, and can prevent or stop potentially damaging activities.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency and Natural England)** provide advice and training to farmers in some priority catchments through an approach such as Catchment Sensitive Farming.

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** reviews the effectiveness of measures within catchments, and where there is sufficient need, considers whether further action should be proposed.
- **Government and agencies (Forestry Commission)** comply with the UK Forestry Standard, the government's approach to sustainable forestry.
- **Local government** uses planning conditions, legal agreements and enforcement powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to prevent or stop pollution from rural developments, roads and other rural infrastructure.
- **Local government** considers the impact of pollution when preparing spatial plans, minerals and waste plans and making decisions on development management, new rural buildings and rural infrastructure.

Operators, influencers and project undertakers take action:

- **Agricultural and rural land management (farm businesses)** meet cross compliance requirements of the Basic Payment scheme funded by the Common Agricultural Policy.
- **Agricultural and rural land management (farm businesses)** voluntarily participate in Countryside Stewardship and Countryside Productivity schemes to prevent deterioration, improve water quality and reduce flood risk.
- **Agricultural industry manufacturing and other business** participate in sector led approaches including farm assurance and the Campaign for the Farmed Environment schemes.
- **Water industry and rural land management** work together in drinking water safeguard zones to reduce the need for water treatment as a result of nutrients or pesticides to meet drinking water standards.
- **Government and agencies (Forestry Commission and Environment Agency)** use opportunity mapping to identify and promote locations where woodland creation can achieve multiple benefits for the environment.

#### Further information in this document

- You can find more information on Countryside Stewardship in section 3.3.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find more information about the management of pollution from rural areas in section 2 of [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).

## Managing pollution from minewaters

Mining has taken place across the country for hundreds of years and has left a legacy of pollution from abandoned waste and minewater drainage tunnels. Pollutants in minewater draining from abandoned coal and metal mines and leached from mining wastes cause water pollution and harm aquatic life, including fish and insects. It affects over 1,700 km of rivers in England and stops some rivers from achieving good status and groundwater bodies, the source of some minewater, from achieving good chemical status.

There are usually many sources of metal pollution in a catchment including point sources such as minewater drainage tunnels and diffuse sources such as waste heaps and groundwater inputs. Almost all mines closed before 2000 and so no one can be held liable for water pollution.

Dealing with pollution from minewaters will substantially improve water quality and help wildlife, including fish, insects and other aquatic life. It will also protect valuable drinking water supplies. Cleaning up pollution from minewater has other benefits, for example, treatment using wetland reed beds significantly enhances biodiversity and provides a rich habitat for birds.

### How the issue is managed

Regulators use and apply relevant legislation and policy:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** grant and review permits under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 to control the quality and quantity of treated minewater that is returned to the environment.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** grant licences under the Water Resources Act 1991 to regulate how much water is taken from groundwater as a result of minewater treatment schemes.

Regulators and project undertakers take action:

- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency)** carry out focused monitoring to identify the main sources of metals in catchments affected by abandoned metal mines, subject to funding.
- **Government and agencies (Environment Agency and Coal Authority)** work with **non governmental organisations (universities, National Trust, Rivers Trusts and others)** to research and provide low cost effective treatment schemes for metal minewaters.
- **Government and agencies (Coal Authority)** develop and build minewater treatment schemes at abandoned metal mines where there are technically feasible and cost beneficial solutions and funding is available.

Section 3.3 describes the programme of measures that will reduce the pressure from this significant water management issue and secure improvements for the water environment by 2021.

#### Further information in this document

- You can find more information on the abandoned metal mines programme in section 3.3.

#### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find more information about the management of pollution from minewaters in Section 2 of [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).

### 3.3. Main programmes of measures for 2021 outcomes

This section provides a summary of the main programmes of measures, grouped by funding sources, which will improve the water environment by 2021. The outcomes of these measures fall into 2 categories:

- measures which the predicted improvements in the status of water bodies by 2021 are based upon
- measures which will happen by 2021 and achieve environmental outcomes, but there is not enough confidence (in location or scale of improvement) to predict specific outcomes

The main programmes are:

- water company investment programme
- Countryside Stewardship
- Highways England's environment fund
- flood risk management investment programme
- catchment level government funded improvements
- abandoned metal mines programme
- water resources sustainability measures

#### Supporting information

- You can find a list of the measures used to predict improvements in status by 2021 for specific elements in specific water bodies, and a summary of the measures expected to result in additional environmental outcomes for 2021 on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](#)

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## Water company investment programme

Ofwat, the economic regulator of the water companies, reviews water industry investment plans every 5 years. As part of this process, known as the price review, the Environment Agency works with water companies, Ofwat and others to make sure that investment protects the water environment, increases resilience and secures long-term benefits for society and the economy. The Environment Agency sets out the environmental obligations, including work required to prevent deterioration and achieve protected area and water body status objectives.

Across England and Wales, water companies will be investing £3.5 billion in environmental improvements between 2015 and 2020. This equates to, when forecast over a 37-year period, a total of approximately £290 million being invested in this river basin district.

Significant investment will go into addressing point source impacts from sewage treatment works and discharges from the sewer network. This will reduce pollutants such as ammonia and nutrients that disturb the natural ecological balance of water bodies and cause excessive growth of vegetation and algae.

Further investment will deal with abstraction and flow pressures. This includes reducing the amount of water that can be taken or measures to enhance habitats to compensate for damage caused by abstraction.

Habitat improvement schemes are planned to reduce the impact of physical modifications caused by water company operations and action is planned to deal with invasive non-native species on water company land. Further measures will ensure compliance with the Eels Regulations, which require water intakes to be screened to prevent eels and other fish from being drawn out of the river into drinking water treatment works.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation is an integral part of water company planning and is an essential part of assessing scheme options. This is particularly important for water resources planning, where water companies must plan up to 25 years in advance to make sure that there is enough water to meet future demands.

Most of the measures are well-established engineering solutions that are proven to be effective. Changes are secured through amendments to environmental permits.

There are some catchment and habitat improvement schemes that are less well established, including measures to reduce pesticide pollution. Some of these schemes rely on voluntary behavioural change affecting agricultural practice. These can be less effective when compared to engineering solutions.

A 'fair share approach' is applied to the selection of measures, which assumes there is a proportional reduction in polluting load from each of the contributing sectors. For example, when identifying measures for phosphorus in a catchment, the amount coming from sewage treatment works and the amount from other sources, such as rural diffuse pollution was calculated. If the sewage works was responsible for 70% of the phosphorus load, then the measure identified is to achieve 70% of the required phosphorus reduction. In this situation achieving an improvement in status is reliant on other sectors putting additional measures in place.

Water company investment will directly contribute to predicted improvements in status by 2021 for specific elements in specific water bodies. A large proportion of this will be achieved by installing phosphate-stripping equipment at sewage treatment works. In addition, measures to reduce the amount of water taken out of the environment for public water supply will make sure that there is enough water left in rivers and lakes to support good ecological status. This will be achieved through changes to water company abstraction licences.

A wide range of measures will secure additional outcomes for the environment, but are not linked to specific improvements in element status by 2021 because there is insufficient confidence about the scale of improvement. This includes measures for eel passage, measures to protect drinking waters and improve bathing waters and measures to improve river habitat and flow regime where it is affected by impoundment for public water supply.

Water companies are also investing in the Chemicals Investigation Programme, a multi-million study to better understand the impacts of chemicals in treated sewage and to trial new treatment technologies and catchment measures to reduce these impacts. The results from the Chemicals Investigation Programme will be used to implement measures to reduce the impacts of chemicals discharged in sewage in the future.

## **Examples of these measures in the South West river basin district**

### **Water resources**

Reservoirs can have a detrimental effect by reducing downstream flow, potentially impacting the ecology of their associated rivers. South West Water is taking action to improve the situation at sites, including Wimbleball and the Kennick, Trenchford, Tottiford Reservoir system. A number of different actions are planned to improve the environment downstream of these reservoirs including releasing additional water from Trenchford Reservoir to increase flows, which will benefit the ecology in the Beadon Brook. Habitat restoration will also take place at a number of sites using gravel augmentation to improve fish spawning. Some of this work will tie in with existing projects and funding streams to help maximise environmental improvements.

### **Water quality**

Burnham Jetty North bathing water is located within the Severn Estuary and under the Bathing Water Directive, water quality is projected to be classified at poor status. After periods of heavy rainfall water quality can be adversely impacted by run-off from agriculture and urban sources and sewage systems. The Environment Agency is working with Wessex Water, the farming community and the local authority to improve water quality.

Significant improvements by Wessex Water have taken place in previous investment rounds and further improvements are now planned. Wessex Water will be enhancing treatment at 3 sewage treatment works, and flows from these works will receive ultraviolet disinfection. Wessex Water will also be carrying out work to 13 intermittent discharges to reduce the number of times these operate after heavy rainfall. This reduction will be made providing more storage and removing surface water inputs to the sewerage system.



## Countryside Stewardship

Countryside Stewardship is a new scheme that is open to all eligible farmers, woodland owners, foresters and other land managers through a competitive application process. It is entirely voluntary and is part of a wider investment of £3.5 billion in England under the Common Agricultural Policy for 2016 to 2020. It will contribute £900 million of new funds to enhance the natural environment, particularly the diversity of wildlife and water quality. Of this funding, about £400 million will be invested over a 5-year period to improve water quality and increase resilience against flooding.

By 2020, it is expected that 30% to 40% of rural England could be part of a Countryside Stewardship agreement. Countryside Stewardship supports the implementation of measures over and above legal requirements and good practice. It will address soil management and reduce the effect of nutrients, sediment and faecal contamination. This will reduce the impact of eutrophication and benefit bathing waters, shellfish waters and drinking water. This is achieved through measures categorised by the following groups:

- enhanced field management, including seasonal livestock exclusion, winter cover crops, buffer and riparian management strips next to watercourses and reduced nutrient applications from fertilisers
- land use change, including woodland and wetland creation or converting arable land to grassland which requires less fertiliser
- water and woodland capital grants, including sediment traps, fencing of watercourses and tree planting
- re-naturalising rivers and coast defences, including making space for water and coastal realignment

Countryside Stewardship will support climate change resilience, for example, by planting trees next to rivers and streams, which can reduce river temperature and the risk to salmonid fisheries. It will also reduce sedimentation of rivers, making rivers better able to store more flood water.

Individually these measures can be effective at a field scale but a number of land managers need to take up measures across the whole catchment for the measures to be really effective. As a result, improvements to the environment from Countryside Stewardship are not linked to specific improvements in water body element status by 2021. The uptake of measures is voluntary, with the first agreements commencing in January 2016.

The individual nature of catchments including soils, topography and rainfall make it difficult to quantify the benefits of these measures. Countryside Stewardship is expected to achieve additional environmental outcomes for 2021. Preliminary research suggests that for nutrients and sediment it may provide elemental improvements of approximately 2 to 10% from the current position where supported with advice. In some discreet locations an improvement of up to 18% may be achieved, but the precise locations will depend on the level of uptake of measures by farmers and the supporting advice provided. Further research is planned that will help to evaluate the likely benefits of Countryside Stewardship for water.

It is not yet possible to describe the detail of schemes or exact location of investment, however improvements are anticipated within the river basin district.



## Highways England's environment fund

Highways England is the government company that manages motorways and major A roads. It manages around 6,500 miles of trunk roads that accommodate 33% of all road travel and 50% of lorry travel. Over the next 5 years, Highways England's environment fund will invest £300 million in the existing strategic road network for environmental improvements. A proportion of this will address pollution from highway run-off.

Highway run-off is waste that collects on roads made up of silt and grits mixed with contaminants, including metals from brake pads and oil from engines and vehicle emissions. During storms this is washed off the road and can reach rivers, lakes or groundwater without being treated. The metals, nutrients and sediments can harm the ecology of the water environment. This is made worse by the effects of physical modifications required by the road network, such as bridges and culverts.

Highways England takes a risk-based approach to decide how and where to invest, using modelling that looks at factors including road length drained and climatic conditions. The actual impact of a measure on the receiving water body can't be entirely predicted, although the standard techniques are relatively reliable and well understood.

Outfalls will generally be treated with sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), which is a broad term of measures from those that can trap pollutants at the side of the carriageway through a swale (shallow grassy ditch) to large balancing ponds that regulate flow quantity as well as allowing pollutants to settle out. To address physical modification pressures, techniques such as fish and eel passes are installed to allow fish migration.

SuDS are moderately resilient to climate change as they use natural processes and cope well with fluctuations, although prolonged drought may restrict their effectiveness. They can achieve a range of benefits, when used on the strategic road network these include water quality improvements, flood risk reduction and water availability.

Improvements to the environment from Highway England's investment programme are not linked to specific improvements in water body element status by 2021. Highways England has not yet announced the location of investment so improvements in specific locations cannot be predicted. Further detail is expected during 2016.

Implementing the programme will result in additional environmental outcomes for 2021. The pressure from sediment and chemical loadings will be reduced by an order of magnitude and there will be reductions in metals and nutrients alongside improvements in dissolved oxygen levels. Eel passes on culverts will allow upstream migration resulting in more sustainable eel populations.

It is not yet possible to describe the detail of schemes or exact location of investment, however improvements are anticipated within the river basin district by 2021.

## Flood risk management investment

The Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management capital investment programme aims to reduce the risks of flooding and erosion to people's homes and the economy over the next 6 years to 2021. Projects will focus on protecting people and avoiding other economic damage (including farming business). Some may also contribute towards improving the status of water bodies, protecting valuable wildlife sites and creating new habitats.

Flood and coastal erosion risk management is a legitimate use of many water bodies but has in some cases resulted in significant modification and alterations in hydromorphology. Activities to improve water body conveyance and reduce flood risk, such as construction and reinforcement of banks, channel re-sectioning and vegetation management often have a negative impact on the condition of water bodies.

The capital investment programme aims to reduce the impact of these activities by, where possible, working with natural processes. This includes using natural flood management measures to slow, store and filter floodwater. This will achieve more sustainable flood risk management schemes, often with significant additional environmental and social benefits. This approach is used together with traditionally constructed hard defences to increase the resilience of communities to extreme events, both floods and drought.

In identifying and designing schemes the impacts of climate change, such as more winter rainfall, more intense rainstorms and sea level rise are taken into account.

Meeting statutory obligations, improving the natural environment and mitigating climate change will be achieved through 'win-wins' at the same time as reducing flood and coastal erosion risk (for example, through natural flood management). Achieving environmental outcomes is integral to flood and coastal risk management, for example, where possible when improving defences opportunities to reduce any barriers to eel passage will also be sought.

Improvements to the environment arising from the capital investment programme are not linked to predicted improvements in status by 2021 for specific elements in specific water bodies due to insufficient confidence about the scale of improvement or exact location of investment.

### **An example of these measures in the South West river basin district**

#### **Exe Estuary strategy**

The Exe Estuary is designated as SSSI and Special Protected Area. An Environment Agency strategy completed in 2012 identified the requirement for 14ha of intertidal habitat (mudflat and saltmarsh) to compensate for coastal squeeze losses due to rising sea levels against hard defences. The project aims to create this habitat by 2020 and is currently investigating several locations where this may be achieved. It is also intended to deliver Water Framework Directive mitigation measures and contribute to Biodiversity 2020 objectives, using external funding and working in close partnership with landowners.

#### **Helston flood alleviation scheme**

The River Cober flows through Helston before entering Loe Pool. Loe Pool is a freshwater SSSI that replaced the estuary when Loe Bar formed across the estuary mouth, preventing the sea encroaching. The River Cober discharges via a tunnel under Loe Bar and when the flow exceeds the tunnel capacity, water levels rise in the pool placing Helston at risk of flooding.

The Environment Agency is investigating options to reduce the risk of flooding which includes an option for an emergency flood relief tunnel under Loe Bar. These proposals include a modified outlet structure that allows greater control of water levels and greater flood storage in Loe Pool. As part of the process an updated Water Level Management Plan (WLMP) will be developed with Natural England and the land owners, the National Trust. In addition to reducing the impact of emergency over pumping activities, there is a range of environmental benefits that can be integrated into the flood alleviation scheme, for example the potential to expose 10 hectares of marginal habitat around Loe Pool, the flushing of nutrients, improving fish passage and using the marginal areas to buffer pollutants resulting in an overall improvement in the condition of the SSSI.

## Catchment level government funded improvements

As part of the commitment to the catchment based approach, Defra has made £10.1 million available during 2015 to 2016 for voluntary action to improve the water environment through the Catchment Partnership Action Fund (CPAF) and the Environment Agency's Environment Programme. The Environment Agency will invest £4.64 million through its Environment Programme, with more than 50% of this being specifically for partner-led projects.

CPAF will invest £5.1 million in 2015 to 2016. £1.3 million of this supports the role of catchment hosts with the remainder going to projects carried out by voluntary groups. Of the CPAF and Environment Programme funding, at least £2 million will be used for dealing with urban pollution issues.

A wide variety of measures are funded at a catchment level. This includes advisory and action based schemes to reduce the impact of pollution from rural and urban areas along with habitat improvement measures to increase biodiversity.

Natural England will continue to invest in protected areas measures. This will focus on safeguarding and, where necessary, improving the condition of Natura 2000 sites using measures such as river restoration, lake restoration, diffuse pollution, management of freshwater invasive species and habitat restoration on wetland sites.

The effectiveness of measures within this programme is variable. Measures such as removing barriers to fish migration are well established engineering solutions and are effective. However, there are some catchment and habitat improvement schemes that are less well established, including measures to reduce pesticide pollution or undertake wider river habitat restoration. Some measures rely on behavioural change in agricultural practice, so may be less effective compared to engineering solutions.

Projects need to be resilient to a changing climate, performing under a variety of conditions and supporting the long term health of the catchment. When developing its investment programme, the Environment Agency considers the contribution each action will make to reduce climate change risks and works with partners to manage these risks and help catchments adapt.

Catchment level government funded improvements address a range of pressures and will secure a variety of improvements to the environment, but are not linked to outcomes for 2021 because of insufficient confidence about the scale of improvement.

### **An example of these measures in the South West river basin district**

#### **Hampshire Avon - Diffuse Pollution Reduction Strategy**

The purpose of the project is to provide consistent agriculture diffuse pollution prevention advice across the Hampshire Avon to meet Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Habitats Directive objectives. This is a joint project with water companies, the Environment Agency, local government and other local organisations focusing on agriculture sources of diffuse pollution to improve water quality in both ground and surface water and to ensure consistency of advice to farmers.

Farmers will be encouraged to apply best farming practices and all reasonable measures to maximise their nutrient efficiency and soil management. This will be achieved through targeted liaison with farmers, complimenting existing farm advice to avoid more than one advisor visiting a farm. A risk-based approach based on crop and soil type, farm size, WFD water body status and designations will be taken to identify priority catchments and farms to target.

The project will be carried out over the next 5 to 6 years at an estimated cost of £1.1 million. The project hopes to achieve a reversal in nitrate levels and sediment loss, alongside reductions in phosphate and metaldehyde, and result in efficiency savings for farmers.

## Abandoned metal mines programme

In England, abandoned metal mines pollute up to 1,700km of rivers with cadmium, lead, zinc, copper and iron. Defra set up the 'Water and Abandoned Metal Mines Programme' in partnership with the Environment Agency and the Coal Authority to begin to address this pollution.

In 2015 to 2016, nationally Defra has allocated £4.5 million to deal with water pollution from abandoned metal mines including operation of existing schemes. The programme is carried out through a partnership. The Environment Agency is funded to carry out focused monitoring to identify the main sources of metal pollution in impacted river catchments. Where studies highlight a significant impact, identifiable sources and where treatment appears likely to clean up the pollution, the Coal Authority leads the development of measures. Subject to funding and outcomes of prioritisation, the Coal Authority will provide feasible remedial measures. This will begin to clean up polluted rivers, and stop groundwater discharges causing pollution.

Climate change is expected to lead to more frequent intensive rainfall and increased river flows. This is likely to increase the significance of diffuse sources of metals. In identifying treatment options, climate change mitigation is considered.

Treatment technologies for point sources at abandoned metal mines range from proven active chemical treatments to less well proven innovative passive systems that do not require ongoing supply of chemicals or energy. Measures to deal with diffuse inputs include civil engineering options such as capping or removing metal rich material, as well as green engineering techniques that rely on plants and small-scale riverbank restoration to limit the entry of metal rich soils to rivers. The programme includes investigation and testing of new treatment technologies to develop new, low-cost but effective measures. Outcomes are secured through voluntary action by government subject to availability of funds, with treatment schemes being regulated through abstraction licences and environmental permits.

Environmental improvements from the Water and Abandoned Metal Mines Programme are linked to predicted improvements in status for 2021 for iron, zinc and invertebrates in specific water bodies.

### **An example of these measures in the South West river basin district**

Abandoned metal mines pollute up to 500km of rivers in the river basin district. Investigations are underway or planned for most of the rivers affected by metal mines. The feasibility of building measures that provide environmental and economic benefits will be investigated during the second cycle.

An existing measure to deal with pollution from metal mines is at the former Wheal Jane tin mine. This measure was implemented after an uncontrolled release of an estimated 50,000 m<sup>3</sup> of acidic metal-rich water over a 24 hour period in 1992 caused significant pollution of the Carnon River and Fal Estuary. Defra provided funding for an active chemical treatment system to be built, which removes the metals by oxidation and neutralisation in a lime-dosing high density sludge plant. Since 2011, the Coal Authority has operated the scheme on behalf of Defra. Operating costs are about £1.5 million per year. Although the treatment system is very effective, there are numerous other sources of metals in the catchment and so the river fails to achieve good status for several metals, invertebrates and fish. However, the measure does prevent deterioration of the Fal Estuary downstream of the site.

## Water resources sustainability measures

Abstraction and other changes to river flows and groundwater levels are putting pressure on the water environment, and, in some cases, are causing environmental damage. Dealing with abstraction and flow pressures now will address damage that is already occurring and also help support sustainable supplies of water for the future.

Measures grouped within this programme are based on applying existing provisions under the Water Resources Act 1991. Current tools will be fully used to achieve environmental objectives ahead of abstraction reform which will create a system that has built in long-term flexibility to help deal with future challenges of changing climate, population and economic growth whilst protecting the environment and trying to ensure water is used efficiently.

Most measures will be applied through the current abstraction licensing system and involve the following types of action:

- constraint or refusal of applications to renew time limited licences
- changes to or revocation of abstraction licences necessary to protect the environment from serious damage
- working with licence holders to voluntarily apply to change licences to make them sustainable
- bringing previously exempt abstractions under regulation (new authorisations)
- implementing the Restoring Sustainable Abstractions (RSA) programme
- revoking unused licences

The existing abstraction licence charge scheme funds these measures. (Note water company actions are included in the section titled 'Water company investment programme').

Licence change measures are well established and proven to result in environmental benefits once the change becomes effective, and will achieve environmental outcomes. Some water bodies will respond quickly to changes in timing and volume of water abstracted. Surface water bodies suffering from serious damage will see flows increased, and the damage being caused will be stopped. However, for licence changes made to groundwater abstractions, benefits may take longer to take effect, and can be over many years. This is particularly true when considering groundwater recovery times within some major aquifers.

Climate change will affect the future demand for water as well as its availability and quality. Rivers and groundwater water bodies are already under pressure. Demand for water is increasing due to population growth, urban development and land-use change. Climate change is expected to alter the frequency and distribution of rainfall, increasing temperatures and increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. Dealing with unsustainable abstraction and implementing water efficiency measures is essential to prepare and be able to adapt to climate change and increased water demand in future.

Not all of the measures can be linked to outcomes in specific water bodies by 2021 because there is insufficient confidence in the exact scale and timing of improvement. However, classification change may be seen in some, as yet unspecified, water bodies. All the measures will bring about additional environmental outcomes, these are described below:

- Through the RSA programme, the Environment Agency will take action to change or revoke abstraction licences that have already been identified as causing an environmental problem.
- The Environment Agency is using government guidance and evidence to take a prioritised approach to assessing whether licence changes are needed to protect the



environment from serious damage. All abstractors should anticipate changes to their licences in water bodies suffering from serious damage.

- Following public consultation and formulation of government policy, a number of currently exempt abstraction activities are expected to come under regulation. This will give greater ability to control the environment and prevent damage.

RSA is a programme of work that identifies, investigates and solves environmental risks or problems caused by unsustainable licensed water abstraction throughout England and Wales. RSA work is undertaken by the Environment Agency, water companies, local authorities, conservation bodies and site owners.

The Environment Agency works with abstractors to find solutions that will increase water levels in certain rivers, streams, lakes and other natural wetland habitats. It is an umbrella programme or work required under the European Habitats and Wild Birds Directive (HD), designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) and designated sites of local importance. It focuses on sites where plants and animals are dependent on good levels of water.

For all river basin districts there are 81 non-water company licences in the RSA programme.

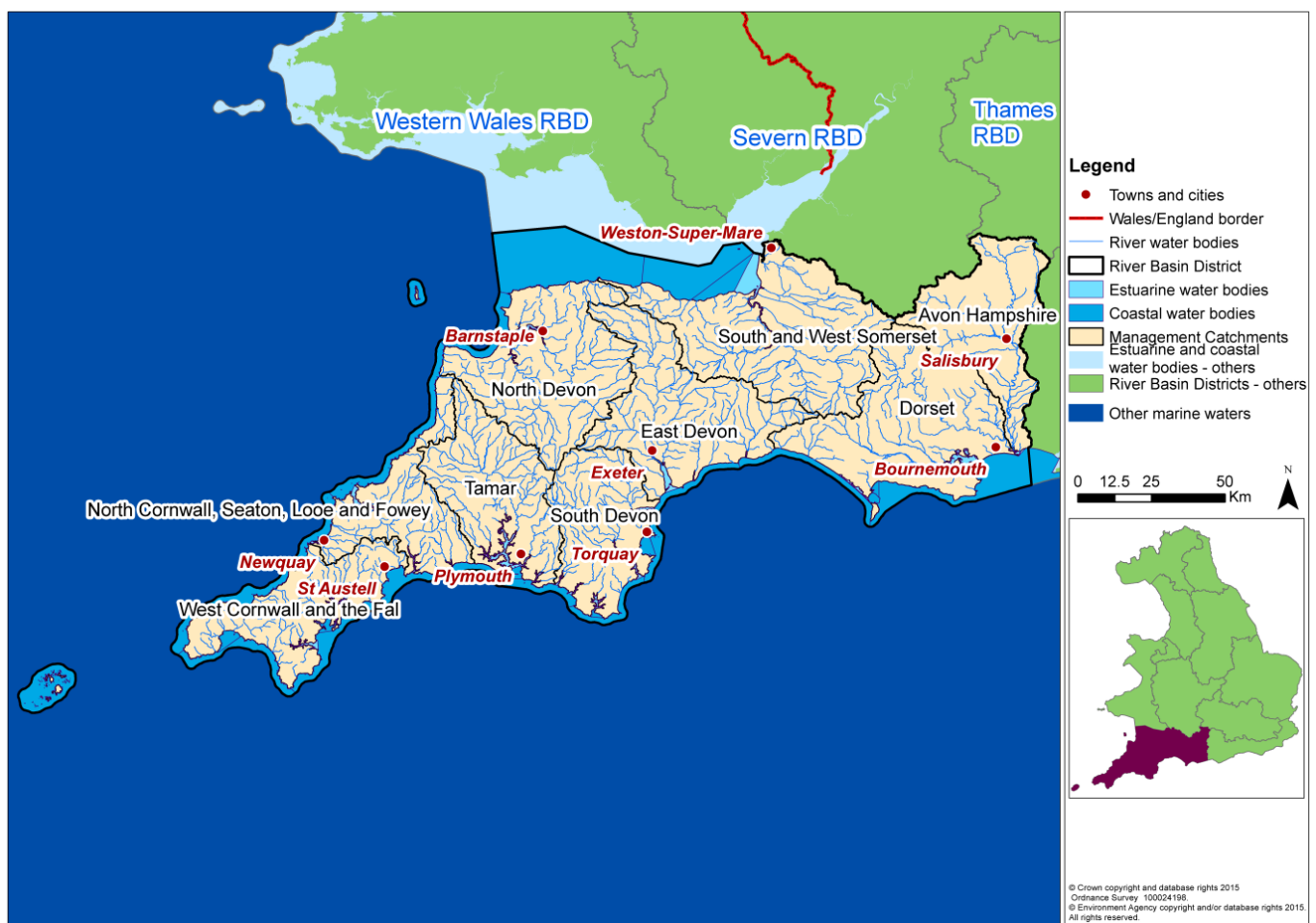
### **An example of these measures in the South West river basin district**

Under the RSA programme for the South West river basin district, there are a total of 18 non water-company abstraction licences. These licences are split into different sectors. There are 9 licences for agriculture, 5 used for the production of energy, 3 licences for amenity and 1 abstraction licence that is for industrial, commercial and public services. 4 of these licences will be changed to protect the Dartmoor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and 1 licence on the River Avon SAC. The remaining 13 licences have a local driver and will be changed by March 2020. 9 of these licences are on the River Exe in the Devon and Cornwall Area.

### 3.4. Local measures

Catchment partnerships are a major initiative to encourage local action to protect and enhance the water environment. The catchment based approach allows flexibility in the geographic scale at which catchment partnerships operate. Most catchment partnerships operate at the water ‘management’ catchment scale. Some operate at a smaller catchment scale. The partnerships consist of a wide range of groups with an interest in the water environment. This includes, but is not limited to, local government, angling interests, wildlife organisations, water companies, land managers, business representatives and government agencies. Figure 2 shows the management catchments in the river basin district.

**Figure 2: Management catchments within the South West river basin district**



Each catchment partnership is committed to working together to share evidence, develop common priorities and carry out work on the ground. Many partnerships are producing catchment plans that will detail local actions related to the measures in this plan. Partnerships are at different levels of maturity, so while some may have a detailed plan for measures in their catchment, others may be newly formed and may not have such a detailed view at this stage.

The following section has been developed by the catchment partnerships (plus other interested groups) and reflects their views on current priorities and future ideas. It includes a summary of the main measures that partnerships are contributing to.

These local measures ideas have been suggested by catchment partnerships and reflect local priorities which can often be around achieving 'multiple benefits' for shared outcomes through collaborative working. Such multiple benefits include improved water quality, habitat and biodiversity as well as contributing to some flood and climate resilience.

The partnerships seek funding for these local measures from a range of sources including government, other national and international providers such as the Big Lottery or EU LIFE as well as local partners and stakeholders who have an interest. Normally, to secure funding, projects would need to be fully developed with all the necessary permissions secured in advance.

Each summary identifies measures that are linked to water body outcomes for 2021 and also measures which will improve the environment, but cannot be linked to water body outcomes for 2021 (for example, because the exact outcome or location is not confirmed). These measures are mainly funded through local funding streams and where this is not the case it is explained within the text.

This is followed by a description of some of the additional measures the partnerships would like to do if they were able to secure additional funding. They have presented their initial ideas of what they would do with £100,000 per year and with £1,000,000 per year to help to show their short term and longer term local ambition.

#### **Supporting information**

- More information on the location of water bodies and catchments, along with associated data, can be found on the [Catchment data explorer](http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/) (<http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/>).

### Measures in the Dorset catchment

**Catchment partnerships:** There are 2 partnerships in Dorset, hosted by Wessex Water and the Dorset Wildlife Trust. They support implementation and influence decision making on a range of issues affecting all aspects of the water environment in the Dorset management catchment. Partners include water companies, land managers, businesses, nature conservation charities, statutory bodies, local authorities and universities.

The priority river basin management issues in the catchments are water quality (diffuse sources of nitrate, phosphorus and silt from rural areas), habitat degradation (e.g. physical modification of the channel) and water quantity (e.g. low flows and surface water flooding).

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- Dorset Wild Rivers will work with the catchment partnerships to implement 2 projects on the Corfe River that will improve riparian habitat management and prevent access to the river by livestock; a project on the Tarrant to reduce surface water flooding and improve water quality by trialling the use of sward enhancement as a phosphate sink; a project on the Frome that will focus on enhancing and restoring river habitat to improve water quality, ecology and flood resilience.
- Wessex Chalk Streams and Rivers Trust and the Barbel Society will implement a project to manage ditches and riparian habitats to improve the ecology of the River Stour.
- Poole Harbour Diffuse Pollution Reduction Plan will reduce the amount of nitrate flowing into the harbour by working with farmers in high risk parts of the catchment.
- 'Only rain down the drain' project - Dorset Coast Forum and Bournemouth Borough Council will implement an engagement and education project on the Bourne Stream and Bournemouth beaches. Work will focus on reducing the impact of litter, bird faecal contamination and human influences on water quality in urban areas.

#### Future aims

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- 'Community partnership led approach' to improve the rivers of West Dorset working with parish councils and other partners.
- 'Dorset County Council rural runoff' pilot project to identify and find solutions to road and agricultural surface run-off to improve water quality and reduce flooding.
- Roll out 'only rain down the drain', which aims to tackle misconnections and water quality issues in Bournemouth, to other high risk urban areas in Dorset.

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year:

- Develop and promote 'earned recognition award scheme' for training agronomists and farmers in nutrient efficient farming to reduce leaching of pollutants into rivers.
- 'Habitat connectivity project', a strategic, multi-beneficial approach to verge, ditch and hedge management, linking watercourses and important habitats, improving public access to rivers via existing infrastructure.
- 'Habitat creation project', creating woodland, rough grassland and multifunctional wetland through the reversion of arable land and the restoration of former mineral extraction sites to improve water quality in the rivers and transitional water bodies.

Further information is available at: [www.pooleharbourcatchment.co.uk](http://www.pooleharbourcatchment.co.uk) and [www.stourcatchment.co.uk](http://www.stourcatchment.co.uk).

### Measures in the East Devon catchment

**Catchment partnership(s):** The East Devon catchment partnership is hosted jointly by Devon Wildlife Trust and the Westcountry Rivers Trust, supported by the Environment Agency, together with Natural England, South West Water Ltd, Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Clinton Devon Estates, East Devon AONB, Exe Estuary Management Partnership, Exmoor National Park, and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) South West. The partnership covers the hydrological catchments of the River Exe, Clyst, Culm, Creedy, Sid, Otter, Lim and Axe river systems.

The priority river basin management issues for the East Devon catchment are:

- agricultural diffuse pollution
- protected areas
- invasive and non-native species

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- The partnership has developed an integrated evidence base for the catchment that has been used to produce the catchment action plan. The plan includes projects that will work to improve ecological status, achieve protected area objectives and prevent deterioration.
- The partnership will implement a rural diffuse pollution project. This will work with landowners in the Clyst, Otter and Axe catchments on positive measures that can be taken to reduce the sediment and diffuse pollution impacts of maize growing. The project will cost approximately £45,000 and be carried out throughout 2015 to 2016.

#### Future aims

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- Identifying and reducing diffuse pollution from agriculture through advice and targeted capital grants to reduce soil erosion, compaction and phosphate pollution.
- Reduce and control non-native invasive species, particularly Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed, taking a whole catchment approach and liaising with local communities.
- Involving communities to take ownership of their local water environment and providing access to the water environment.

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year (as above plus the following):

- Achieve improvements in water bodies by identifying and reducing pollution throughout the catchment.
- Remove barriers to fish and eel migration in the catchment.
- Identify and implement opportunities for river restoration and habitat creation that can provide multiple benefits, including green infrastructure, flood resilience and river basin management measures.

Further information on the partnership is available on the catchment based approach [web pages: http://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/south-west](http://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/south-west).

### Measures in the Hampshire Avon catchment

**Catchment partnership:** The Hampshire Avon catchment partnership is hosted by the Wessex Chalk Stream and Rivers Trust and comprises statutory agencies, local councils and water companies as well as wildlife trusts, local environmental groups, fishery groups and wildlife organisations with interests in the catchment.

The priority river basin management issues are poor water quality (particularly diffuse sources of phosphorus, nitrate and sediment from rural areas), water quantity (low flows and flood conditions) and habitat degradation (over-widening of the river channel, disconnection with the flood plain and in-channel obstructions).

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- A targeted project will improve riffles and associated habitats for the in-river lifecycles stages of salmonids at specific locations in the Wylde and Nadder tributaries. The project will work alongside scheduled and future projects to ensure they will also achieve improvements to spawning and other important lifecycle habitat. The project will help prevent deterioration of water bodies and contribute towards meeting objectives for protected areas and protected species on the rivers Nadder and Wylde.
- A sediment pathways project on the headwaters of the major tributaries (Wylde, Nadder and Avon) will tackle sediment inputs reaching the rivers via conduit tracks, highways and other pathways. The project aims to work with Catchment Sensitive Farming and other partners to reduce sediment run-off at source.
- An awareness-raising project around domestic waste water inputs (to address phosphate pollution).

These projects will contribute to a range of protected area and 'no deterioration' objectives.

#### Future aims

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- Water Friendly Farming project tackling losses to watercourses of nitrates, phosphates and pesticides to support the work of Catchment Sensitive Farming in catchments outside existing priority areas.
- Expanding the work of the Sediment Pathways project to tackle inputs in additional sub-catchments. These would be prioritised based on protected area risks/WFD status.
- A habitat enhancement project tackling habitat degradation through river restoration and habitat enhancement in non-designated area. The works would support the Environment Agency's River Avon Restoration Plan, which looks to improve WFD status and protected area objectives.

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year (as above plus the following):

- Major river restoration scheme on the tributaries above Salisbury and in the Lower Avon, aimed at integrating meeting biodiversity 2020 targets, natural flood management, water quality improvements and sustainable farming practices. The scheme would identify areas where integrated catchment management can complement traditional flood defence measures with natural processes, improve habitat for protected species, tackle diffuse and point source pollution and ensure farm and land management productivity is retained. The scheme would link in with other habitat and restoration schemes as part of the project.

Further information is available at: [www.hampshireavoncatchmentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.hampshireavoncatchmentpartnership.org.uk)



### Measures in the North Cornwall, Seaton, Looe and Fowey catchment

**Catchment partnership:** The North Cornwall, Looe and Seaton Catchment is hosted by the Cornwall catchment partnership, which has representation from Cornwall Council, the Local Nature Partnership, the Environment Agency, Natural England, South West Water, the National Farmers' Union, the Country Landowners' Association, the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Duchy Forestry, Visit Cornwall and the Westcountry Rivers Trust. The partnership sits within the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership and has strategic links with the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The priority river basin management issues are point source pollution, diffuse source pollution, and flood alleviation through land management.

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- Looe and Seaton Clean Streams and Beach project objectives are to reduce faecal indicator organisms and phosphate levels in East Looe River and Seaton River by March 2016; raise awareness of the bathing water quality issues in Looe and Seaton and demonstrate to individuals and businesses what they can do to help so that sewer blockages and misconnections are reduced; reduce point source pollution from domestic properties and businesses in a targeted area, contributing to reducing diffuse urban waste water pollution.
- Upstream Thinking Programme 2015 to 2020 - partners are working with South West Water. The objectives are to improve water quality by reducing pesticide and nutrient inputs to the River Fowey catchment; and provide wider benefits, including biodiversity enhancement, carbon storage, flood alleviation and protection of landscape character.

#### Future aims

The partnership was established in July 2014 and is developing projects and initiatives to achieve the following agreed shared outcomes:

- reduced point source pollution from domestic, industrial and agricultural sources
- reduced diffuse source pollution - by pollution-type (nutrients, pesticides, minerals)
- sustainable water resources
- flood alleviation through land management

Each initiative will be implemented by gaining the support and involvement of local people and communities through good communication. This will then lead to informed involvement and local action integrated land use and management to achieve multiple benefits and resilience; environmental growth; evidence-based action; and collaborative working. Actions will focus on protected areas.

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- Projects at sub-catchment level that achieve the partnership's priority shared outcomes

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year:

- Major projects that fit the partnership's priorities, implemented in partnership, attracting match funding

Further information on the partnership is available by contacting:  
<mailto:pattie.richmond@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk>.



### Measures in the North Devon catchment (Taw, Torridge, North Devon and Hartland Streams)

**Catchment partnership(s):** The North Devon Biosphere Catchment Group, hosted jointly by the Westcountry Rivers Trust and Devon Wildlife Trust is supported by the Environment Agency, North Devon Biosphere Reserve Service, North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Catchment Sensitive Farming Strategic Partnership and Natural England.

The priority river basin management issues in the catchment are diffuse pollution from rural catchments, bathing water quality and invasive non-native species.

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- Co-ordination: reinforce and engage the current catchment based activities across the area to establish links between groups and carry out an audit of interested groups, current projects, data and plans.
- Mapping and data: map the benefits derived from catchments. These maps can then be used to show where there is overlapping interest or conflicts. From this, future projects and activity plans will be developed.
- Support existing and developing projects in the area: including the Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area, Culm Creation project, Sustainable Intensification Platform, Taw Diffuse Pollution Project and Upstream Thinking (Barnstaple Yeo).
- Develop new projects according to priorities in the developing Partnership Action Plan.
- Public involvement: liaise with interested groups in the area, encouraging them to become involved in this process, and with the wider community.

#### Future aims

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- Identifying and reducing diffuse pollution from agriculture through advice and targeted capital grants to reduce soil erosion and compaction and phosphates (£50,000 will provide advice to 50 farmers to reduce pollution and access other capital grants).
- Remove barriers to fish migration in the catchment (Weir removal £50,000; fish pass £100,000, fish easement and eel pass £40,000; costs vary from site to site).
- Encouraging communities to take ownership of their local water environment and providing access to the water environment.

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year (as above plus the following):

- Improve the connectivity of habitats, especially woodland and Culm grassland, through land management advice and grant support, realising ecosystem service benefits such as flood risk management from Culm grassland and wood fuel.
- Reduce and control non-native invasive species, particularly Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed, on a whole catchment basis and involve local communities.
- Intertidal conservation and reverting areas back to their natural state.

Further information on the partnership is available at:

<http://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/caba-project.html>

### Measures in the South and West Somerset catchment

**Catchment partnership:** The Somerset catchment partnership is comprised of the Environment Agency, Natural England, the National Trust, the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West (FWAG SW), Somerset Wildlife Trust, Wessex Water, the RSPB, Somerset County Council, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Wild Trout Trust, the Country Landowners' Association, the National Farmers' Union, Catchment Sensitive Farming and farmer representatives from the upper and lower catchment.

The top 3 issues in the catchment are flooding, diffuse and point source pollution from rural areas and physical modification/fish passage issues.

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- The Hills to Levels Project, a partnership of FWAG SW, Royal Bath and West Society, the RSPB and Somerset Wildlife Trust aims to join up the effects of water and land management in the upper catchment with the lower catchment areas. £750,000 is available through the People's Postcode Lottery Dream Fund during 2015 and 2016, of which £200,000 is for capital grants.
- In addition, £550,000 has been offered over the same period through the Somerset Rivers Authority by the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership for capital work linked to the Hills to Levels project. This project work will reduce run-off from upper catchment areas by intercepting and attenuating flow pathways, improving soil management and reducing sediment loss from fields into streams and rivers. The Hills to Levels project will also build flood resilience in wetlands and protected areas.
- Prince's Countryside Funding has been secured to develop opportunity map areas of the catchment where the greatest impact can be made on flow pathways.
- A project will be carried out in 2015/16 promoting the use of leaky woody debris dams in the upper catchment to reduce siltation, improve fish habitat and conditions for invertebrates/macrophytes.
- Three farmer-led soils discussion groups in West Somerset, South Somerset and North Somerset have been set up to share best practice and set up a series of farm demonstrations.
- The Somerset Rivers Authority provides a new approach to managing water across the whole of the catchment. This could include some water management measures that also integrate with land management.

#### Future aims

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- a specific project on making the most of raised water level areas within protected sites on the Somerset Levels and Moors
- river restoration works in the upper reaches of the Tone, Parrett, Isle, Brue and Cary

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year (as above plus the following):

- addressing the highest priority sites for improving fishery habitat and passage
- wet grassland habitat creation within the Sowey flood plain to find the most sustainable ways of using the Sowey system
- continue the Hills to Levels catchment based approach works beyond 2017
- slurry store improvements on main point source pollution hotspots

Further information on the partnership is available at: <http://www.fwagsw.org.uk/news/hills-levels-project-launch/>

### Measures in the South Devon catchment

**Catchment partnership(s):** The South Devon catchment partnership is co-hosted by the Westcountry Rivers Trust and South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The partnership has a number of interest groups, including a host group, working group and interest group. The partnership includes the Environment Agency, Transition Totnes, Natural England, Plymouth University, the Woodland Trust and Field Studies Council.

The priority river basin management issues that have been identified in the catchment can be grouped into broad themes:

- agricultural and non-agricultural diffuse pollution
- point source pollution
- habitats and conservation

Within these 3 themes the partnership hopes to include a significant amount of education, awareness and public campaigning.

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- An action plan is being developed to address the issues identified and recorded from workshops with interested groups in the catchment.
- The 'Addressing Nutrients in South Devon' project will address non-agricultural diffuse pollution in the Slapton Ley and Salcombe/Kingsbridge catchments. The project amounts to £43,000 over 1 year and will be carried out by a range of partners.
- An Interreg bid for 'NeoSeas' has been submitted, part of which will include research into toxic dinoflagellate blooms in the Kingsbridge creeks.

#### Future aims

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- extending 'Addressing Nutrients' project across all South Devon catchments
- tackle remaining barriers to fish migration
- multi-beneficial habitat creation
- developing educational resources for school curriculum

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year (as above plus the following):

- expand current South West Water 'Upstream Thinking' Payment for Ecosystem Services style project across all South Devon catchments
- historic mine mitigation to improve metal failures
- sustainable urban drainage systems across all South Devon catchments
- integrated green infrastructure and development

Further information on the partnership is available at: [http://swcatchments.info/?page\\_id=41](http://swcatchments.info/?page_id=41)  
<http://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/south-west/south-devon>

### Measures in the Tamar catchment

**Catchment partnership:** The Tamar partnership is hosted by the Westcountry Rivers Trust and involves representatives from the Environment Agency, South West Water, Devon and Cornwall local authorities, Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Devon and Cornwall Wildlife Trusts, South West Rivers Association, the Woodland Trust, the Forestry Commission, the National Farmers' Union, Tamar Valley Organics Group, Plymouth University, Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum, Natural England, Catchment Sensitive Farming, non governmental organisations (NGOs), local businesses, tourism recreation, food, farming and community interests.

The priority river basin management pressures in the catchment are diffuse pollution from agriculture, pollutants originating from (mainly historic) mining and quarrying activities and fish failures.

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- Local NGOs closely linked to the partnership are providing a new round of 'Upstream Thinking' funded 100% by South West Water; the fund for 2015 to 2020 is more than £800,000. This will improve the status and/or prevent deterioration of phosphate and fish in particular across 29 water bodies by 2021.
- The '3 Rivers Restoration project' has been developed to deal with diffuse and point source pollution from both agriculture and domestic/urban sources and will also improve status/reduce deterioration for phosphate and fish across 3 water bodies by 2021.
- There are two other confirmed projects. 'WaterLIFE' is a partnership project with WWF UK and the Rivers Trust aimed at raising awareness and encouraging communities, government and business to get involved in protecting the freshwater environment to meet Water Framework Directive (WFD) targets, worth £300,000 over 3 years until 2017. Tamar Citizen Science Investigations (CSI) has secured £10,000 from 'Awards for All' towards a pilot project to develop a web platform and phone app for the public to record small-scale pollution incidents. This can be used to map trends and work with the Environment Agency and South West Water to investigate sources.

#### Future aims

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- Putting the pilot Catchment Fisheries Plan into action by developing in-channel habitat enhancements, barrier removals or fish easements to improve fish populations (and other biological elements) across a number of catchments.
- River Deer Phosphate Focus; includes actions to reduce diffuse and point source pollution from domestic and agricultural origins in the River Deer upper catchment.

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year (as above plus the following):

- A project to investigate and apply practical remediation options via land management in the lower Tamar Mining to reduce impacts from post-industrial metal mining; (passive treatment systems or revegetation). This will be combined with best practice advice to the rural sector to buffer water bodies from soil and nutrients.
- Major rural and urban sustainable drainage system work in the Kensey catchment to integrate multiple services derived from the river corridor: strategic woodland and habitat provision and enhancement for flood attenuation, plus recreational access opportunities.

Further information on the partnership is available at: <http://swcatchments.info/>

### Measures in the West Cornwall and Fal catchment

**Catchment partnership:** The West Cornwall and Fal management catchment is hosted by the Cornwall catchment partnership with representation from Cornwall Council, the Local Nature Partnership, the Environment Agency, Natural England, South West Water, the National Farmers' Union, the Country Landowners' Association, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Duchy Forestry, Visit Cornwall and Westcountry Rivers Trust. The partnership sits within the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership and has strategic links with the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The priority river basin management issues for Cornwall are point source pollution, diffuse source pollution and flood alleviation through land management.

#### Contribution to environmental outcomes for 2021

- River Cober Floodplain Restoration Project (2015/16), objectives are improvement and restoration of riparian habitat; reduction in nutrient and metal levels to help meet protected area objectives; reduced impact of man-made structures on wildlife in watercourses; reduced diffuse and point source pollution (faecal indicator organisms and phosphate levels) from farms and adjacent land; and multiple benefits for urban population.
- Upstream Thinking Programme (2015-20) objectives are to improve water quality by reducing pesticide and nutrient inputs to the River Cober, Argal, College and Drift reservoirs and to provide wider benefits, including biodiversity enhancement, carbon storage, flood alleviation and protection of landscape character.
- Joint bids for European Union Structural Investment Fund (under development).

#### Future aims

Established in July 2014, the partnership is developing projects and initiatives to achieve the following agreed shared outcomes:

- reduced point source pollution from domestic, industrial and agricultural sources
- reduced diffuse source pollution by pollution-type (nutrients, pesticides, minerals)
- sustainable water resources
- flood alleviation through land management

Each initiative will be met by communicating well with local people to encourage them to get involved and take action; integrated land use and management to provide multiple benefits and resilience; environmental growth; evidence-based action; and working together. Actions will focus on protected areas.

Ideas for additional measures with £100,000 per year:

- Projects at operational catchment level that meet the partnership's priority shared outcomes.

Ideas for additional measures with £1,000,000 per year:

- Major projects that fit the partnership's priorities, achieved together, attracting match funding.

Further information on the partnership is available by contacting:  
[catchmentpartnership@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:catchmentpartnership@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk).

## 3.5. Forward look at measures beyond 2021

This section provides a summary of the measures which are envisaged as necessary for protected areas and water bodies to achieve their objectives for 2027 and beyond. It also describes opportunities which could enable additional measures to be implemented by 2021.

### Measures to 2027

Table 22 contains a summary of the types of measures which are envisaged to be necessary to address each significant water management issue up to 2027. This is not exhaustive and will inevitably change. Change can occur for a variety of reasons including, new evidence, changes in water body status, funding availability, government policy changes, development impacts and climate change.

The measures in table 22 are required in addition to the measures to address the significant water management issues described in section 3.2.

The summary programmes of measures and environmental objectives in this plan will be reviewed and updated in 2021. The WFD does not generally allow the timescale for the achievement of environmental objectives to be extended beyond 2027. Therefore as part of the plan update in 2021, choices will have to be made about the appropriate use of less stringent objectives.

**Table 22: Summary of types of measures envisaged as necessary to achieve objectives for each significant water management issue**

Types of measures envisaged in the river basin district	Main sectors involved in implementing the measures
<b>Measures to address physical modification</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal or easement of barriers to fish migration</li> <li>• Improvement to condition of riparian zone and/or wetland habitats</li> <li>• Improvement to condition of channel/bed and/or banks/shoreline</li> <li>• Change to operations and maintenance</li> <li>• Removal or modification of engineering structure</li> <li>• Vegetation management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government (central and local government)</li> <li>• Industry services and infrastructure (non governmental organisations)</li> <li>• Rural land management</li> <li>• Water industry</li> </ul>
<b>Measures to address pollution from waste water</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigate/Remediate point source impacts on receptor</li> <li>• Reduce diffuse pollution at source</li> <li>• Reduce point source pathways (i.e. control entry to water environment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government (central government)</li> <li>• Industry services and infrastructure (industry, manufacturing and other business, mining and quarrying)</li> <li>• Water industry</li> </ul>



Types of measures envisaged in the river basin district	Main sectors involved in implementing the measures
<b>Measures to manage pollution from towns, cities and transport</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce diffuse pollution pathways (i.e. control entry to water environment)</li> <li>• Mitigate/Remediate diffuse pollution impacts on receptor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry services and infrastructure (mining and quarrying, urban and transport)</li> </ul>
<b>Measures to address changes to natural flow and level of water</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement to condition of channel/bed and/or banks/shoreline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government (local government)</li> </ul>
<b>Measures to address pollution from rural areas</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce diffuse pollution at source</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural land management</li> </ul>
<b>Measures to manage invasive non-native species</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigation, control and eradication (to reduce extent)</li> <li>• Early detection, monitoring and rapid response (to reduce the risk of establishment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government</li> <li>• Industry services and infrastructure (non governmental organisations)</li> </ul>
<b>Measures to manage pollution from minewaters</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigate/Remediate point source impacts on receptor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government (central government)</li> <li>• Industry services and infrastructure (mining and quarrying)</li> </ul>

Section 3.6 contains further information on measures to achieve protected area objectives, including those with extended deadlines.

The cost of programmes of measures provides a good indication of the scale and phasing of action. Table 23 shows the current assessment of the potential costs of measures to achieve the water body and protected area objectives in this plan. The costs of measures are broadly allocated to the sectors whose activities cause the problem in line with the 'polluter pays principle'. Beyond the known funding to 2021, no decision has been made on where the costs will fall. In some cases, the sectors may not pay their own costs. Note figures are rounded to the nearest £10 million.



**Table 23 Summary of estimated costs and phasing of action**

<b>Sectors</b>	<b>Total cost of measures over 37 years (undiscounted) to achieve objectives (£m)</b>	<b>Phasing to 2021 (% of total cost envisaged to 2021)</b>	<b>Phasing post 2021 (% of total cost envisaged after 2021)</b>
<b>Government</b>	450	<10%	>90%
<b>Rural land management*</b>	3600	<10%	>90%
<b>Industry, services and infrastructure</b>	40	<10%	>90%
<b>Water industry</b>	1300	20-30%	70-80%

\*The rural land management costs are based on a range due to different scenarios of cost allocation. The midpoint is presented here to be consistent with other costs.

### **Opportunities for additional measures**

There will be greater certainty on the measures that will be required between 2021 and 2027 when this plan is updated in 2021. Before then, a number of strategic reviews and funding streams could enable additional measures to be confirmed and/or implemented before 2021. Some of these opportunities are described below.

### **External funding sources**

The following funding sources could be used to implement measures.

- The LIFE Regulation, which was published on 20 December 2013, sets a budget for 2014 – 2020 of €3.4 billion for projects to invest in the environment and climate change. Calls for applications are annual, for priorities including nature, biodiversity, water, floods and drought.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund invests £375 million each year, a portion of this being available to environmental improvement projects through the 'Parks for People' (£100,000 to £5 million) and 'Landscape Partnerships' (£100,000 - £3 million) programmes. Calls for applications can be once or twice a year and are often a 2 stage process.
- The government has asked Local Enterprise Partnerships to prepare economic strategies to inform the allocation of domestic and European 'growth funds', for example, the Single Local Growth Fund and the European Structural and Investment Funds. The criteria for allocation of these funds include environmental protection and sustainable development, providing an opportunity for water infrastructure that supports efficient and sustainable use of water.

## **Review of Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive designations**

The Urban Waste Treatment Directive aims to protect the water environment from the adverse effects of discharges of urban waste water and certain industrial discharges by specifying minimum treatment requirements as well as more stringent tertiary treatment when needed to protect designated sensitive receiving waters.

Sensitive area designations are currently reviewed every 4 years, the latest review was completed in December 2015. The Environment Agency would like to see a move towards 6 yearly cycles to align with WFD but this would require changes to legislation.

## **EU Priority Substances Directive**

The 2013 revisions to the Priority Substances Directive have been transposed into domestic legislation. To comply with the new requirements, by 22 December 2018, the Environment Agency will submit a supplementary monitoring programmes and a preliminary programme of measures to the European Commission, with the aim of achieving good chemical status by 2027. The required measures will need to be considered in water company investment plans, as part of the 2019 Price Review and will be finalised in the 2021 update of the river basin management plans. All of the required measures will be made operational by 2024.

Preliminary investigations of chemicals with new European standards indicate that they could have a significant impact on good status in future. Sewage may be a significant source of some of these chemicals. Whilst sewage treatment is generally effective at reducing inputs this may not always be sufficient. Some substances have restrictions or bans on usage but these may take many years to result in lower environmental concentrations.

## **Review of water company price limits**

Ofwat is expected to review the prices that water companies can charge their customers in 2019. As part of this process, water companies will need to update their business plans to include (among other things) additional environmental improvements agreed with their customers and the Environment Agency.

## **Common Agricultural Policy**

The current agreement for funding from the Common Agricultural Policy, including the basic payment scheme and rural development programme that encompasses Countryside Stewardship, ends in December 2020. Negotiations for continued funding for the period 2021 to 2027 have not yet begun.

## **Water resources management plans**

Water companies will publish new plans in 2019. These plans set out how they will balance supply and demand for water over a 25 year period. The new plans will enable them to take account of expected changes in demand for water and in their available supply as a result of climate change and population growth as well as any new measures needed to deliver environmental objectives.

## **Review of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones designations and action plans**

Every 4 years, the UK is required to review the evidence in relation to the extent of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZ) and the effectiveness of the action programme introduced by the Regulations and to implement changes where required. NVZs are a means of reducing or

preventing water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources. The next review is underway and any changes are expected to be implemented in January 2017.

#### **Further information in this document**

- You can find more information on the ongoing measures to prevent deterioration for each significant water management issue in section 3.2.

#### **Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan**

- You can find more information about the catchment economic appraisal in section 5.5 of [Part 2: RBMP overview \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).

#### **Supporting information**

- You can find a list of the measures needed to achieve water body objectives for 2027 and beyond on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service \(https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sabbd14301a44d5e9\)](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sabbd14301a44d5e9).
- You can find the impact assessment on the river basin management plan [web pages \(www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## 3.6. Additional measures to achieve protected area objectives

Measures have been developed for protected areas that are at risk of or do not currently meet their objectives. Table 24 summarises the action planning process.

**Table 24: Summary of measures for protected areas**

Protected Area	Programme
<b>Drinking water protected areas - surface water and groundwater</b>	Safeguard zones have been established for water sources in drinking water protected areas where extra treatment is likely to be required in the future. Safeguard zone action plans have been developed including measures needed to manage activities that may threaten raw water quality for surface waters and ground waters.
<b>Economically significant species (shellfish waters)</b>	Shellfish water action plans have been produced for all designated shellfish waters, which include measures aiming to observe the microbial shellfish flesh standards.
<b>Recreational waters (bathing waters)</b>	Bathing water profiles have been produced for all designated sites. They include details of the measures needed to achieve compliance with the revised standards that came into force in 2015. Further information is available on the measures for those bathing waters at risk of not achieving sufficient in 2015 in the bathing water action plans (continuing at risk).
<b>Nutrient sensitive areas (Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive)</b>	Measures have been identified to make sure that all relevant discharges from waste water treatment plants within the sensitive area have appropriate phosphorus or nitrogen emission standards.
<b>Nutrient sensitive areas (nitrate vulnerable zones)</b>	The objective of the Nitrates Directive is to reduce water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and to prevent further such pollution occurring. Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) are designated where nitrate concentrations in surface and/or groundwaters are high or increasing, or where waters are, or may become eutrophic, due to agricultural nitrate pollution. Farmers within NVZs must comply with mandatory action programme measures to reduce agricultural nitrate losses. In addition a code of good agricultural practice has been established, for voluntary implementation by all farmers.
<b>Natura 2000: Water dependent Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas for Wild Birds (SPAs)</b>	Natural England has developed site improvement plans (SIPs) for water dependent sites. SIPs provide an overview of issues affecting the site condition; identify priority actions, timescales for implementation and potential funding sources. Natural England monitors, reviews and updates SIPs where appropriate.

### Supporting information:

- You can find more information on the measures in protected areas at the following locations:
  - For drinking water protected areas for [surface water](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-scac3ff7da4a424eb) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-scac3ff7da4a424eb>) and for [groundwater](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa22fd79de304532a) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa22fd79de304532a>)
  - For [economically significant species](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s84c5554e50947dbb) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s84c5554e50947dbb>)
  - You can access more information on recreational waters on the [Bathing Water Explorer](http://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/) (<http://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/>) and in the bathing water action plans (continuing at risk) on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s2c9919e38f04798b) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s2c9919e38f04798b>)
  - For Nitrate vulnerable zones visit the [NVZ web pages](https://www.gov.uk/nitrate-vulnerable-zones) (<https://www.gov.uk/nitrate-vulnerable-zones>)
  - The Natura 2000 site improvement plans are available on Natural England's [website](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4878851540779008) (<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4878851540779008>)

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

# 4. Changes from 2009 to 2015

This section contains an assessment of what has been achieved and what has happened since the first river basin management plan was published in 2009.

It includes a summary of the improvements made to the evidence used in river basin management planning, a report on the implementation of measures, and a summary of progress towards achieving the environmental objectives in the 2009 plan and where progress has not been made.

## 4.1. Improvements in evidence

Over the last 6 years the Environment Agency has done much to improve the understanding of the water environment. The quantity and quality of the evidence available has grown because of significant investment.

- In England, an additional £4.7 million pounds has been invested in a new ecological monitoring programme for rivers and an additional £1.5 million pounds invested in chemical monitoring technology. This means that the number of element classification results in the river basin district has increased from 6,883 in 2009 to 7,645 in 2015.
- In the river basin district, more than 1,900 investigations have been carried out to identify the reasons (pressures, and the sources of the pressures) why good status and protected area objectives have not been achieved.
- The actions that would be needed to achieve good status and protected area objectives have been identified.
- Through detailed economic appraisal, there is an improved understanding of the benefits the water environment can provide and the cost of the measures needed to realise the benefits.
- The latest generation of environmental assessment criteria has been introduced in collaboration with a range of partners and leading scientists. These improvements to methods mean that the classification results are now a better interpretation of the general health of the water environment. These changes include:
  - new standards for additional chemical substances
  - updated standards for existing physico-chemical elements
  - new and improved biological assessment tools and new intercalibrated biological classification boundary values.
- Improvements have been made in mapping of the water body network.
- Improved risk assessments have been introduced to help target future monitoring programmes, and predict and help prevent potential deterioration in the water environment.

This new evidence was used in the review and update of the environmental objectives in the 2009 plan.



### Further information in this document

- You can find summaries of the latest water body classification results and the reasons for not achieving good status in section 5.
- You can find more information on risk assessments in section 1.4.

### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- You can find more information in [Part 2: RBMP overview](#) available on the river basin management plan web pages ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)) for:
  - the process used to review and update the environmental objectives in the 2009 plan, in section 5.2
  - measures identification in section 5.2
  - economic appraisals in section 5.3
  - review of the water body network in section 4.1
  - review and update of heavily modified water body designations in section 4.1
  - revised risk assessments in section 4.4
- GeoPDF maps showing the latest classification results can be found on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-sa1cd85664d149a88>)
- You can find a spreadsheet containing the reasons for not achieving good status on the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s0faa355450243538>)

### Supporting information

- You can find the full description of changes to environmental standards on the [UKTAG website](http://www.wfduk.org) (<http://www.wfduk.org>).
- The full description of changes to biological methods can be found on the [UKTAG website](http://www.wfduk.org) (<http://www.wfduk.org>).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## 4.2. Measures implemented

### Planned measures implemented since 2009

Most of the measures (over 95%) summarised in the 2009 plans have been completed.

A few measures have not been completed in the river basin district for the following reasons:

- 5 measure has been reassessed and is no longer needed or considered effective
- 13 were not funded (funding withdrawn)
- 1 there was no mechanism to implement the measure

### Additional measures implemented since 2009

As well as the measures in the 2009 plans, a significant number of other measures have been implemented. For instance in England, the government provided £90 million between 2010 and 2015 for additional measures to improve the physical water environment, reduce pollution, and reduce the impact of invasive non-native species.

It is estimated that the additional measures in the river basin district represent a further investment of at least £18.4 million. Table 25 gives a summary of the issues addressed and an indication of the scale of additional measures.

**Table 25 – Summary of additional measures in the river basin district**

Significant water management issue	Number of measures	Cost (£Million)	Number of water bodies benefitting
Physical modifications	82	9.4	243
Pollution from rural areas	22	2.6	83
Pollution from town, cities and transport	8	0.8	22
Pollution from abandoned mines	0	0	0
Invasive non-native species	12	1.3	42
Other	17	4.3	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>443</b>

#### Supporting information

You can download a spreadsheet of the additional local measures implemented from 2009 from the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s13e5e39caef432d9) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s13e5e39caef432d9>).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

## Effectiveness of measures implemented since 2009

Most of the measures implemented between 2009 and 2015 have resulted in improvements to the quality of the water environment, providing significant additional benefits. However, the scale of the improvements has not always been enough to fully secure compliance with WFD environmental objectives (protected area and water body status objectives) set in the 2009 plan. Section 4.3 identifies some of the reasons for this.

Table 26 contains a summary of how effective the measures implemented since 2009 were at achieving WFD environmental objectives. Measures are grouped by each significant water management issue. The assessment is based on the measures implemented across England and not just in this river basin district.

**Table 26: Summary assessment of the effectiveness of measures for each significant water management issue (England level assessment)**

<b>Physical modifications</b>
<b>Obstructions</b> Removing or lowering weirs and building fish passes has generally been effective. In some cases, it has not been possible to fully remove the pressure because of the obstruction's historic value or the need to prevent erosion or mobilisation of contaminated sediments. In some cases full compliance with WFD environmental objectives has not yet been achieved because other barriers elsewhere in the catchment are still present.
<b>Habitat improvement</b> Habitat improvements, from large-scale river restoration to relatively minor schemes on small watercourses, have generally been effective. They have led to improvements in fish populations and other wildlife. The effectiveness of these schemes at achieving compliance with WFD environmental objectives will only become apparent once the new habitat and associated wildlife has matured. In some cases, it is expected that additional restoration elsewhere in the catchment will be required to support a fully functioning ecosystem.
<b>Pollution from waste water</b> There were over 300 improvement schemes implemented at sewage treatment works since 2009. These have been effective at helping to achieve compliance with WFD environmental objectives.
<b>Pollution from rural areas</b>
<b>Government advice</b> Catchment Sensitive Farming was effective at encouraging farmers to take up measures to help achieve WFD environmental objectives (mainly for protected areas). In areas where Catchment Sensitive Farming was targeted, between 2006 and 2013, the estimated quantity of pollutant (including phosphorus, nitrate, sediment and faecal indicator organisms) released from agricultural sources reduced by between 4% and 12% (on average).
<b>Regulation</b> Regulation has reduced the impact of pollution incidents and helped to prevent deterioration. There is some evidence that action plans for nitrate vulnerable zones helped to reduce pollution from nutrients. The overall effectiveness can only be assessed over a longer period.

### **Industry initiatives**

A number of schemes have promoted voluntary action including, advice and grants through local catchment groups, advice through the Campaign for the Farmed Environment, and work lead by water companies to improve the quality of water they abstract for public water supply. Advice is effective at promoting good farming practice. Measures that go beyond good practice greatly increase where grants have been provided. Many of these schemes resulted in improvements to the local water environment.

### **Environmental Stewardship (2006-14)**

There was good uptake of measures to protect the water environment. Measures were not always placed where most benefit could be gained or the uptake sufficiently concentrated within a catchment to reduce pressures enough to achieve compliance with WFD environmental objectives.

### **Cross compliance**

Compliance with environmental conditions attached to the Single Farm Payment was high. The environmental conditions were strengthened in 2010 and 2015. The associated measures had a small impact on the quality of the water environment

## **Changes to the natural flow and level of water**

### **Changes in abstraction licences**

The national Restoring Sustainable Abstraction programme has been effective at improving habitat for fish and other wildlife. Voluntary and compulsory action has resulted in changes to over 200 abstraction licences (by the Environment Agency and government. As a result of this, 27 billion litres of water has been returned to the environment.

Nationally this programme has been effective at helping to achieve compliance with WFD environmental objectives, in particular those for Natura 2000 protected areas.

### **Demand management**

Demand management and water efficiency techniques have been implemented by many sectors including government, water industry, independent bodies and trade associations.

Local Development Plans/Frameworks have been introduced, which set out local plan policies requiring new homes to meet the tighter water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day as described in Part G of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010.

Water companies have reduced leakage from their supply networks and increased the number of homes with meters across water stressed areas.

Most of these have been effective at a local scale.

## **Pollution from towns, cities and transport**

A variety of measures have been implemented to reduce pollution from urban areas. These include: contaminated land restoration; installation of sustainable drainage systems for new and existing developments; treatments to remediate road run-off; regulatory action following pollution incidents; initiatives to resolve misconnected foul drainage systems; and pollution prevention advice to occupiers of industrial estates.

Most of these measures have been effective at the local scale. However, in some cases the effectiveness is low, as there needs to be more measures within an area if improvements are to be sustained over the long term. Given the scale, cost and complexity of this issue, the measures have not been effective at reducing the pressure enough to achieve compliance

with WFD environmental objectives.

### **Invasive non-native species**

A variety of measures have been implemented to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive non-native species. These have been moderately effective and have slowed the deterioration in the biodiversity of affected waters and the spread to unaffected waters. Measures to remove invasive non-native species from affected waters are only effective for a minority of species where a rapid response to their presence is possible. Evidence gathered in cycle 1 has confirmed that it is technically infeasible to remove most species once they are established. At locations such as Natura 2000 sites, intensive (and ongoing) action can mitigate the pressure, but not remove it.

## 4.3. Progress towards achieving the environmental objectives in the 2009 plan

### Preventing deterioration

To assess compliance with the WFD objective of preventing deterioration, 2015 classifications results (based on data up to the end of 2014) using the standards and classification tools used in 2009, were compared with the 2009 classification baseline. The assessment considered whether the water body had deteriorated from one status class in 2009 to a lower one in 2015. This was applied to a water body's overall status and to the status of each element used in classification.

The results of this assessment for water bodies in the river basin district are summarised in Table 27. Table 34 in section 5 provides a breakdown by elements.

**Table 27: Water bodies that have deteriorated (at >75% confidence)**

Water bodies	Number	Percentage
Surface water ecological status	14	1%
Surface water chemical status	1	<1%
Groundwater quantitative status	0	0%
Groundwater chemical status	0	0%

Where deterioration of status has occurred, the cause needs to be identified and measures to restore the water body to its previous status put in place as soon as possible.

In some cases, reported deterioration may be a result of changes to monitoring programmes or be an artefact of monitoring and assessment processes (sampling error). Distinguishing these changes from real deterioration in the quality of the environment that has been caused by a new activity or a change in an existing pressure in a catchment can be difficult.

Table 34 in section 5 contains a summary of the causes of deterioration that have already been identified. This summary is for each element by pressure and sector. You can also download a spreadsheet containing the water body elements that have deteriorated in status since 2009 (see further information box at the end of this section).

In certain and specific circumstances deterioration of status is permitted. These circumstances are described in Article 4.6 (temporary deterioration) and Article 4.7 (new modifications) of the WFD. No cases that meet these requirements have been identified in this river basin district.

### Protected area objectives

#### Drinking water protected areas

The Drinking Water Inspectorate is the competent authority for the drinking water directive. They publish an annual report detailing compliance with the directive's water quality requirements.

The Environment Agency has established safeguard zones and produced associated action plans for all relevant drinking water protected areas to manage the risk of water quality deteriorating.

Following improvements in the knowledge of the pressures in catchments, improved monitoring programmes for chemicals and new abstractions which have come about, the number of drinking water protected areas classified as at risk of water quality deterioration or

at poor chemical status (for groundwater only) has increased. Measures such as providing advice and guidance to stakeholders, capital grants for infrastructure improvements (for example biobeds) and payment for ecosystem services have been used to protect water quality in drinking water protected areas.

#### Economically significant species (freshwater fish)

The freshwater fish directive was repealed in December 2013. Environmental objectives for freshwater fish protected areas ceased to have effect from that date. An equivalent level of protection is provided by the water body objectives in this plan.

#### Economically significant species (shellfish waters)

The shellfish water directive was repealed in December 2013. Shellfish waters protected areas have been maintained and an equivalent level of protection is being provided by domestic legislation. Monitoring used to assess compliance with the shellfish flesh standards has significantly increased. Although there has been no significant change in the quality of the water environment in the protected areas, the improved monitoring has led to a reduction in reported compliance.

The current status of shellfish protected areas is summarised in section 2.4.

#### Recreational waters (bathing waters)

A revised bathing water directive introduced new water quality objectives for bathing water protected areas from 2015. Projected classification of bathing waters against the new standards is summarised in section 2.4. Compliance with the water quality standards of the old bathing water directive was assessed for the final time in 2014. These results are summarised in Table 28. This shows an increase in compliance since 2009.

**Table 28: Bathing water compliance with old (1976) Bathing Water Directive objectives:**

Year	Number of bathing waters	% compliant with mandatory standards	% compliant with guideline standards
2009	187	97	76
2014	189	99	85

#### Natura 2000 sites: Water dependent Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas

In 2009 48 Natura 2000 protected areas in the river basin district had an objective of maintaining or achieving their water dependent conservation objectives by 2015 (assessed on basis of measures being underway/complete, known pressures, anticipated measures and likely improvements in condition). Of these, 25 had all measures completed (i.e. no further intervention is required) to enable their water dependent objectives to be achieved by 2015, based on knowledge of current pressures on the sites.

#### **Water body status objectives**

As a result of the improvements in monitoring, standards and classification tools described in section 4.1, it is not possible to identify environmental change by simply comparing the 2009 and 2015 classification baselines. Instead, a set of 2015 classifications results (based on



data up to the end of 2014) has been produced using the standards and classification tools used in 2009. This helps identify where they may have been an actual environmental change since 2009.

Table 29 shows the percentage of water bodies at good status for the:

- 2009 baseline
- predicted outcomes in 2015 envisaged in the 2009 plans
- 2015 classification results produced using the 2009 methods

**Table 29: Comparison of 2009 baseline with 2015 predicted and actual results (using the water body network, standards and classification tools used in 2009)**

Percentage of water bodies at good or better status	2009	2015 predicted	2015 actual
Surface water ecological status	33	42	24
Surface water chemical status	5	5	12
Groundwater quantitative status	84	84	91
Groundwater chemical status	64	64	51
Overall status	34	43	25

Although many of the measures completed over the last 6 years have improved the quality of the water environment in the river basin district (584 individual water body elements have improved by more than one class), the comparison in table 29 shows a reduction in the number of water bodies at good status. The change between 2009 and 2015 does not necessarily constitute a real deterioration in the state of the environment and can be attributed to the additional biological monitoring the Environment Agency put in place after 2009 and the improved design of the monitoring network.

The reasons why the predicted improvement in status has not yet been seen include:

- the measures have not been as effective at reducing pressures at the water body scale as expected
- the environmental standards which the measures were designed to achieve were not tight enough to fully protect the biological elements
- there are pressures acting on the water bodies that were not known in 2009
- some classification elements have improved in status, but no improvement in the status of the water body has been reported due to the use of the 'one out all out' classification rule

### Further information in this document

- You can find a summary of the causes of deterioration that have already been identified in section 5.

### Information elsewhere in the river basin management plan

- A more detailed explanation of the approach to preventing deterioration can be found in can be found in section 2.2 of [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- You can find detail on the circumstances in which deterioration may be permitted (temporary deterioration and new modifications) in section 3.1.4 of [Part 2: RBMP overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)).
- You can download spreadsheets containing:
  - a spreadsheet containing the 2009 classification baseline, predicted and actual results for 2015 using the standards and classification tools used in 2009
  - a map of the 2015 classification results using the standards and classification tools used in 2009
  - a spreadsheet containing the water body elements that have deteriorated in status since 2009from the Environment Agency's [ShareFile service](https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s13e5e39caef432d9) (<https://ea.sharefile.com/d-s13e5e39caef432d9>).

**Sharefile links have been updated** – please use the [guide to accessing data and information](#) to access files <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-accessing-data-and-information-guide>

# 5. Summary statistics

This section provides a summary of the key statistics for the river basin district at water body and quality element level.

## Summary statistics tables

The tables in this section provide a summary of the plan data for the river basin district and can be used for quick reference. To understand the purpose of the data and how it has been generated see the relevant sections earlier in this document. The detailed data behind the summaries can also be accessed by following the links in the relevant sections.

The following descriptions explain the content of the tables and the further information box shows where more information can be accessed.

- **Table 30: Summary statistics for the South West river basin district: Water bodies:** shows the status, by percentage, of the different types of water bodies in the river basin district. It also shows the predicted outcome by 2021 and the objective.
- **Table 31: Summary statistics for the South West river basin district: Elements:** shows the status, by percentage, of the water body elements in the river basin district. It also shows the predicted outcome by 2021 and the objective.
- **Table 32: Pressures preventing waters reaching good status and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact (reasons for not achieving good status):** shows the number of reasons for water bodies not achieving good status for each pressure and which sector is contributing to this. The table shows individual counts and there may be more than one reason in a single water body.
- **Table 33: Significant water management issues (SWMIs) preventing waters reaching good status and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact (reasons for not achieving good status):** shows the number of reasons for water bodies not achieving good status because of each significant water management issue and which sector is contributing to this. The table shows individual counts and there may be more than one reason in a single water body.
- **Table 34: Reasons for deterioration by one or more status class between 2009 and 2015 and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact:** shows the number of reasons for water body elements deteriorating by one of more status class, with 75% confidence, for that pressure and which sector is contributing to the deterioration. The table shows individual counts, if there is more than one element deteriorating in a water body, then there will be more than one reason assigned.

### Further information in this document:

- You can access the detail behind Table 30 and Table 31 on the current status, predicted outcomes and objectives for water bodies and elements in section 2.
- The detail behind Table 33 on the significant water management issues can be found in section 1.4.
- You can find more information on Table 34 and the reasons for deterioration in section 4.3.

**Table 30: Summary statistics for the South West river basin district: water bodies**

	Rivers, Canals and SWTs*	Lakes	Estuaries	Coastal	Surface Waters Combined	Ground water	All Water Categories
% of water bodies at good or better ecological status/potential now	22%	25%	17%	65%	23%		
% of water bodies predicted to be at good ecological status/potential or better by 2021	27%	34%	22%	78%	30%		
% of water bodies with an objective of good ecological status/potential or better	85%	100%	61%	87%	86%		
<b>% of water bodies at good chemical status now</b>							
% of water bodies at good chemical status now	95%	100%	96%	91%	96%		
% of water bodies predicted to be at good chemical status by 2021	95%	100%	96%	91%	96%		
% of water bodies with an objective of good chemical status	99%	100%	100%	100%	>99%		
<b>% of water bodies at good chemical (groundwater) status now</b>							
% of water bodies at good chemical (groundwater) status now						48%	
% of water bodies predicted to be at good chemical (groundwater) status by 2021						60%	
% of water bodies with an objective of good chemical (groundwater) status						86%	
<b>% of water bodies at good quantitative status now</b>							
% of water bodies at good quantitative status now						90%	
% of water bodies predicted to be at good quantitative status by 2021						90%	
% of water bodies with an objective of good quantitative status						93%	
<b>% of water bodies at good or better overall status now</b>							
% of water bodies at good or better overall status now	22%	25%	17%	61%	23%	45%	24%
% of water bodies predicted to be at good or better overall status by 2021	27%	34%	22%	74%	29%	57%	31%
% of water bodies with an objective of good or better overall status	85%	100%	61%	87%	85%	79%	85%

\*SWTs are surface water transfers

**Table 31: Summary statistics for the South West river basin district: elements**

	Rivers, canals and SWTs*	Lakes	Estuaries	Coastal	Surface waters combined	Ground-water	All water categories
% of ecological elements at good or better status now (biological, physico-chemical and specific pollutants)	82%	68%	83%	94%	82%		
% of ecological elements predicted to be at good status or better by 2021 (biological, physico-chemical and specific pollutants)	84%	71%	84%	94%	84%		
% of ecological elements with an objective of good status or better (biological, physico-chemical and specific pollutants)	97%	100%	91%	98%	97%		
<b>% of chemical elements at good status now</b>							
% of chemical elements at good status now	96%	100%	99%	97%	96%		
% of chemical elements predicted to be at good status by 2021	96%	100%	99%	97%	96%		
% of chemical elements with an objective of good status	>99%	100%	100%	100%	>99%		
<b>% of chemical (groundwater) elements at good status now</b>							
% of chemical (groundwater) elements at good status now						81%	
% of chemical (groundwater) elements predicted to be at good status by 2021						85%	
% of chemical (groundwater) elements with an objective of good status						97%	
<b>% of quantitative elements at good status now</b>							
% of quantitative elements at good status now						96%	
% of quantitative elements predicted to be at good status by 2021						96%	
% of quantitative elements with an objective of good status						97%	
<b>% of elements at good or better status now</b>							
% of elements at good or better status now	84%	74%	88%	95%	84%	88%	85%
% of elements predicted to be at good or better status by 2021	86%	77%	89%	95%	86%	90%	86%
% of elements with an objective of good or better status	97%	100%	94%	98%	97%	97%	97%

\*Surface water transfers

**Table 32: Pressures preventing waters reaching good status and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact (reasons for not achieving good status) in the South West river basin district**

<b>Pressure</b>	<b>Agriculture and rural land management</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Mining and quarrying</b>	<b>Navigation</b>	<b>Urban and transport</b>	<b>Water Industry</b>	<b>Local &amp; central government</b>	<b>Domestic general public</b>	<b>Recreation</b>	<b>Waste treatment and disposal</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>No sector responsible</b>	<b>Sector under investigation</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Abstraction and flow</b>	5	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	1	0	4	19	6	<b>46</b>
<b>Chemicals</b>	18	3	153	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	3	45	22	<b>248</b>
<b>Biochemical oxygen demand</b>	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>3</b>
<b>Dissolved oxygen</b>	26	1	0	0	3	7	0	0	0	0	10	14	1	<b>62</b>
<b>Ammonia</b>	10	1	0	0	2	8	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	<b>26</b>
<b>Fine sediment</b>	74	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	9	0	<b>89</b>
<b>Invasive non native species</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	<b>4</b>
<b>Nitrate</b>	13	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	<b>18</b>
<b>Phosphate</b>	508	31	0	0	37	354	4	7	0	1	15	49	15	<b>1021</b>
<b>Physical modification</b>	46	5	0	4	32	33	40	0	3	0	31	20	37	<b>251</b>



**Table 33: Significant water management issues preventing waters reaching good status and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact (reasons for not achieving good status) in the South West river basin district**

Significant water management issue	Agriculture and rural land management	Industry	Mining and quarrying	Navigation	Urban and transport	Water Industry	Local & central government	Domestic general public	Recreation	Waste treatment and disposal	Other	No sector responsible	Sector under investigation	Total
Physical modifications	51	5	0	4	32	51	40	0	3	0	38	0	39	263
Pollution from waste water	1	40	3	0	20	352	4	8	0	1	4	3	1	437
Pollution from towns, cities and transport	0	2	0	0	28	1	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	46
Changes to the natural flow and level of water	5	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	1	0	7	0	1	27
Invasive non-native species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	8
Pollution from rural areas	639	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	641
Pollution from abandoned mines	0	0	161	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	161

**Table 34: Reasons for deterioration from one or more status class between 2009 and 2015 and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact in the South West river basin district**

Pressure causing deterioration	Agriculture and rural land management	Industry	Mining and quarrying	Navigation	Urban and transport	Water Industry	Local & central government	Domestic general public	Recreation	Waste treatment and disposal	Other	No sector responsible	Sector under investigation	Total
Abstraction & Flow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Chemicals	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	6
Biochemical oxygen demand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dissolved Oxygen	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	6
Ammonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Fine sediment	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Invasive non native species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nitrate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phosphate	4	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	17
Physical Modification	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1

**Would you like to find out more about us  
or about your environment?**

**Then call us on**

**03708 506 506** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

**email**

**enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk**

**or visit our website**

**incident hotline 0800 807060** (24 hours)

**floodline 0345 988 1188** (24 hours)

Find out about call charges: [www.gov.uk/call-charges](http://www.gov.uk/call-charges)



Environment first: Are you viewing this on screen? Please consider the environment and only print if absolutely necessary. If you are reading a paper copy, please don't forget to reuse and recycle if possible.