

Joint Water Environment Programme

About

- JWEP reflects the aim for closer working across the Defra group to maximise value for money and the benefits for the environment and people. It brings together the water-related research of Defra and the Environment Agency and is overseen by a joint programme board. We collaborate with Natural England and the Forestry Commission on projects of mutual interest.
- We work together on applied R&D to meet our needs for the water environment and water services.
- We make the best use of research and existing knowledge to develop our evidence base and translate it into policy and practice.
- We identify shared priorities and jointly commission new research where it is needed.
- We communicate with a single voice to help other research funders and providers understand our aims and collaborate with us.
- We work alongside the Joint Defra/Environment Agency Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management R&D Programme and consider flooding where it interacts with water quality or water resources.

Our priorities

Our overall aim is for a healthy water and wetland environment in England, providing the ecosystem services on which society and the economy depend. Our research priorities will be driven by Defra's 25-year environment plan and will be reviewed annually in the autumn. The scope of JWEP is summarised below.

Water Environment

Ecosystems, Pressures and Impacts: to measure and understand the present and future impacts of catchment pressures, especially diffuse pollution and multiple pressures, on surface water quality, ecology and groundwaters.

Management: to evaluate the most cost-effective measures to tackle water pollution and habitat degradation. To identify the best ways to work with people and businesses to implement solutions and increase resilience to climate change and other risks. To understand the economic benefits and develop financing systems.

Water Services

Demand management and resilience of supply: to assess opportunities and barriers for water companies to achieve an optimum water supply-demand balance, including effective demand management and options for local or regional grids.

Drainage: to develop a more strategic approach to drainage planning and standards to manage the risks of surface water flooding, asset deterioration, population growth and development. To improve our understanding of the costs, benefits and barriers to the adoption of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), local rainwater harvesting and storage schemes.

Sustainable water measures and innovation: to explore water conservation, water efficiency and measures to keep water in catchments. To drive innovation on a domestic and global scale within the water sector and supply chain to secure water resources for the future. To understand public attitudes and promote more sustainable use of water.

Water reform: to complete development of the evidence base for reform of the water abstraction regime. This includes options to meet environmental flow targets; the distribution of impacts on abstractors; enhanced upstream and retail competition in the water industry; affordability; and future policy on water charging.

Evidence Reviews

We have worked with partners to develop methods for conducting Evidence Reviews that are designed to make the most of existing research investment.

- Evidence Reviews follow a Systematic Review approach but are less resource intensive while maintaining rigour and transparency.
- The work is based on Civil Service Guidelines for producing Evidence Reviews and focuses on 2 types: Quick Scoping Reviews (QSRs) and Rapid Evidence Assessments (REAs).
- A QSR is quicker and less detailed than a REA which will provide a critical appraisal of the results. Details can be found in [The Production of Quick Scoping Reviews and Rapid Evidence Assessments – A How To Guide](#).

JWEP Projects and reports

Defra research projects and reports can be found at <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/>

Environment Agency research reports can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&publication_filter_option=research-and-analysis&topics%5B%5D=all&departments%5B%5D=environment-agency&official_document_status=all&world_locations%5B%5D=all&from_date=&to_date=&commit=Refresh+results

Contact us

Please email any enquiries to the JWEP mailbox at Water.Evidence@defra.gsi.gov.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible.