

Angling, fisheries and conservation

What action for water means for you

South East



Action for water

Everyone benefits from clean water, and a healthy water environment.

The end of 2009 marks the beginning of a new journey for the south east's water environment. The Environment Agency will publish the South East River Basin Management Plan, a long term programme of environmental improvements to make the south east a better place.

The environment of the south east is very special, and water quality has improved significantly in recent decades. However, it will take more time, effort and resources to deal with the pressures that still remain – as well as the future challenges of climate change and development.

Everyone can take action for water, to create an environment we are all proud of and can enjoy.



Kingfisher by Lukasz Lukasik

What are the challenges?

The south east's large population puts pressure on the environment through discharges from sewage works. Many urban and rural rivers have been modified for flood defence or navigation, often at the expense of ecological quality. Also, the way land is managed has given rise to a host of complex pollution issues in rural as well as urban areas.

There are also concerns over maintaining the water resources available for people and the environment. The south east is a water scarce region and we must reduce household and non-household consumption. We need to

balance our needs with the resources we have by using less, providing new resources and preparing for the impacts of climate change.

The river basin management plan

The South East River Basin Management Plan is a statutory plan, required under the European Water Framework Directive. One of 11 plans in England and Wales It covers the South East River Basin District, which extends from the Thames estuary in the east and almost as far west as Salisbury, and taking in the four county councils of Kent, East and West Sussex and Hampshire.



The South East River Basin District

The plan introduces new ways of measuring the health of our waters based on the Water Framework Directive's tougher environmental standards. It describes the pressures on the whole water environment, it's status and our targets for 2015, and the action required.

A range of actions are set out in the plan. They will require everyone to be involved – water companies, farmers, environmental organisations, local authorities, industry, individuals, communities and others. We need your help.

We are aiming for a 4 per cent improvement in the number of waters at 'good status' by 2015. By 2021, we expect this to increase to 60%. By 2027, we will work to improve this further – and as close to 100% as possible.

Angling, fisheries and conservation has a major role to play

The angling and conservation sector has a large role to play in delivering local 'on the ground' improvements to the water environment as well as working to establish new mechanisms. It engages communities and individuals, building on their skills and experience and actively involves them in making these improvements. Angling is a popular past time that can provide local intelligence on environmental quality – over 120,000 rod licences are sold each year in Hampshire, Sussex and Kent.

Many environmental organisations can influence environmental quality through the land they own or manage. Riparian owners have specific responsibility for the management of their watercourses so their support, involvement and investment in implementing the actions is crucial.

Relevant actions

Example actions

Establish a '**better rivers programme**' to improve habitat and ecology in a first round of 35 water bodies.

- Specified water bodies

Implement a **regional fish passage programme** to remove 25 priority physical obstructions to fish.

- Specified water bodies

Investigate then implement actions in the **sea trout and salmon technical documents**, to contribute to good status waters.

- Across the river basin district

Promote the '**Angler's Monitoring Initiative**' to assess the status of river health.

- Across the river basin district

Contain and control invasive non-native species at priority sites, guided by the South East England Non-Native Invasive Species Action Group.

- New Forest, Arun and Western Streams, Test and Itchen, Cuckmere and Pevensy Levels



Young Anglers Day

Case Study: Making room for fish

Barriers to fish passage are one of the big issues affecting the ecology of rivers. This plan's fish pass programme will make more room for fish, by addressing 25 priority obstructions. These include gauging stations and flood gates as well as privately owned structures like mills. Together they will contribute to the ecological health of over 450 kilometres of river in the South East River Basin District.



A recent success has been the creation of the Botley Mill Fish Pass (pictured), which will enable sea trout and eels to migrate freely up the Hamble, in Hampshire, for the first time in hundreds of years, and open up some 15 kilometres of river.

Contact us

The River Basin Liaison Panel steers this work in the South East River Basin District. You can contact your sector representative via the Environment Agency, or get in touch with us directly as shown below.

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