

Severn River Basin District

The Water Framework Directive in the Severn River Basin District

Welcome to the Third Severn River Basin District (RBD) newsletter. Find out more about how our Working Together Consultation was received, our current Significant Water Management Issues consultation and most importantly how you can get involved.

Working Together Consultation Response

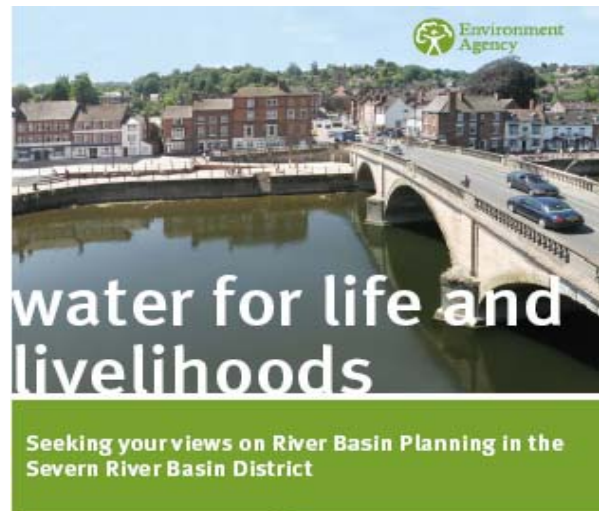
In December 2006 we published the River Basin Planning: Working Together consultation to explain the river basin planning process and how and when you can get involved. We would like to thank all of those who responded. We received thirty responses from a range of organisations and individuals in the Severn RBD. A summary of these responses and our feedback on specific comments are presented in a consultation response document. You can download this document from our website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd.

Significant Water Management Issues (SWMI)

The Summary of Significant Water Management Issues is the second consultation stage towards developing a Severn River Basin Management Plan by 2010. The consultation is live and runs until 24 January 2008.

The consultation document outlines what we think are the main issues that need addressing, the sort of actions that may be needed to tackle them and the sectors involved. We think the main issues affecting the water environment in the Severn RBD are the amount of water available for people and wildlife; pollution from various sources such as run off from agricultural land or discharges from industrial areas; non-native invasive animals and plants; and some historical changes to the natural form of water bodies.

You can help us create an effective River Basin Management Plan by answering the questions at the end of the consultation document. We encourage you to do this online at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd or, if you prefer, printed copies are available on request using the contact details at the end of this newsletter.



Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

SEAs look at the impacts that proposed actions in any plan may have on the wider environment. We have produced a report outlining which aspects of the environment we think should be included in the SEA. We welcome your views on our report and you can do this through our website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd

The formal consultation runs for five weeks until 16 November. However we will accept any responses until 24 January. The full SEA will be published for a 6 month consultation alongside the draft River Basin Management Plan in December 2008.

Developing a Programme of Measures

The main focus of river basin planning now is on developing a programme of measures (or actions) for the Severn RBD. A programme of measures will consist of a range of actions including some which are already established and others that are new but determined and funded at a national level. Within the Severn RBD, our principal focus is on identifying and agreeing those measures that will be determined solely within the RBD. To clarify the difference between measures, we are using the following categories:

- **M1 measures** - National measures already agreed and funded
- **M2 measures** - New national measures that will happen irrespective of the Water Framework Directive (WFD)
- **M3a measures** – New measures specifically for WFD objectives requiring national decisions
- **M3b measures** – Although led by national processes some of these will require RBD input for targeting
- **M4 measures** – New measures specifically for WFD objectives that do not require national decisions

Representatives from river basin liaison panels and Environment Agency staff attended a national workshop on 15 October 2007 to test an approach to developing the local (M4) measures.

The Severn Liaison Panel is holding a series of working groups during November to identify local measures that might be useful for tackling issues such as diffuse urban and rural pollution and alien species. The proposed measures will be discussed at the next full Liaison Panel meeting in December.

Further work to identify specific geographic areas where the measures should be targeted will be carried out early in the new year.

Severn RBD Liaison Panel

The Severn Liaison Panel met on 20 September. Discussions were held on the process for developing measures and setting objectives for water bodies. Defra's work on the cost effectiveness of national measures and implications for setting measures for the Severn RBD was also debated. John Lewis, the panel member for the business and industry sector, gave an interesting and informative talk on the issues and implications of the Water Framework Directive for the Minerals and Aggregates Industry.

The next panel meeting is taking place in Bristol on Wednesday 5 December and will include field visits to Bristol Port and sites within Bristol to see how the City Council is tackling urban pollution problems through their Living Rivers Project.

More information about our panel meetings, including summary reports, can be found on the Environment Agency website at: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd.

Key Dates

November 2007 – Ministerial Guidance to the Environment Agency on overall approach to WFD implementation, including environmental standards

December 5 2007 – Severn RBD Liaison Panel meeting in Bristol

2007 (TBC) – Defra Consultation on options for transposition of the WFD Daughter Directive on Priority Substances.

January 2008 – Defra consultation on options for transposition of the new WFD Daughter Directive on Groundwater

Early 2008 – Defra consultation on final WFD classification instrument for water bodies, covering biological, physico-chemical and chemical components, including full Regulatory Impact Assessment.

For more information about the Water Framework Directive in the Severn River Basin District and how to get involved with the Significant Issues public consultation:

- visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd
- email SevernRBD@environment-agency.gov.uk
- contact Mark Scott, River Basin Programme Manager on 0121 711 5915