

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Biodiversity Implementation Plan

April 2009 to March 2012

1. All of the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy recommendations that NIEA leads on are listed in the left-hand column of the attached table as NIBS 1, 2, 3, etc. along with relevant sub-headings from the Strategy.
2. The second column contains the recommendations as they were originally written. Committed actions for the NIEA are listed in the third column. The actions have been made as SMART (Specific/Measureable/Achievable/Reportable/Time-bound) as possible.
3. The “Who” column refers to internal units or sections within NIEA. The “When” column gives a date, dates or a quantity. In each case the reporting year ends on 31 March. The last column is used for progress reporting at various stages.
4. NIEA will review this BIP annually to keep it as up-to-date and effective as possible.

Biodiversity Implementation Plan
Northern Ireland Environment Agency
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Ref No.	NIBS Recommendation/ EU Action Objective	Supporting Action/Target	Who	When	Position report/Progress achieved to date
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Factors Affecting Biodiversity in Northern Ireland

NIBS 1 Biodiversity issues	Assess all new or revised policies and programmes for their impact on biodiversity and apply the precautionary principle.	Provide biodiversity policy responses to relevant public and inter-departmental consultations by agreed deadlines	BDU& ALL	As per deadlines	Bob D
		Ensure that AONB management plans are formulated and implemented to help deliver appropriate local action for biodiversity.	C&C	As per review cycles	Sandi
NIBS 2 Biodiversity issues	Increase the co-ordination of the work of all Government Departments and agencies on biodiversity to ensure integration and commonality of purpose	Attend meetings of the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group and provide papers as necessary.	BDU	6 for year	Pete
		Lead four Biodiversity Delivery Groups (Species, Wetlands, Peatland and Upland; and Coastal and Marine). Hold two meetings per year and at least one associated workshop or conference each.	BDU	2010	Mike
		Publish work programmes for 4 Biodiversity Delivery Groups for which NIEA is the lead	BDU	2010	Bob D Richard
		Support two DARD led Biodiversity Delivery Groups (Native Woodland and Farmland)	BDU	2 per year	Bob D Richard RJW

		Provide secretariat for quarterly meetings of the Local Biodiversity Officer's Forum	BDU	4 for year	Pete
NIBS 3 Biodiversity issues	Extend the application of the ecosystem approach to environmental management in Northern Ireland.	Organise an ecosystem services seminar for key stakeholders.	BDU/SU	2010	Bob D
		Publish a Natural Heritage Position Statement on priorities for climate change adaptation	BDU/SU	2010	Bob D
		Publish a strategy for landscape scale conservation	BDU	2012	Richard/ Bob D

Coastal development

Coastal development					
NIBS 28 Coastal and marine management	5. Ensure effective multi-agency emergency planning arrangements for marine pollution.	Respond to pollution incidents under the Northern Ireland Coastal Contingency Plan within agreed target times.	WMU	Annually	Bob Bleakley/ Joe Breen

Freshwater					
NIBS 34 Freshwater use and management	Draw up and implement a comprehensive strategy for river conservation in order to maintain and enhance the biodiversity of inland waterways.	Publish a River Habitat Action Plan	BDU	2011	<i>An environment and heritage service river conservation strategy was published in 2001.</i> Bob D
NIBS 35 Freshwater use and management	Develop and implement a eutrophication control strategy <u>which may involve new legislation</u> .	Publish 3 River Basin Management Plans Ensure that Programmes of Measures are appropriate for Natura 2000 sites	WMU WMU	2010 2010	<i>3 Draft River Basin management Plans published for consultation. December 2008</i> Gabriel Nelson
NIBS 36 Freshwater use and management	Engage all relevant users and riparian interests in the preparation and implementation of management plans for all catchments, in co-operation with the authorities in the Republic of Ireland where appropriate.	Nine catchment Stakeholder Groups have been established by NIEA. Two meetings of each group will be held each year.	WMU	18 meetings per year	Gabriel Nelson

Construction and development					
NIBS 38 Construction and Development	Address biodiversity priorities fully and consistently in all development plans.	Provide substantive input to Area Plan programmes as required. Meet Article 6 requirements for Area Plans at both Draft and Pre-Adoption stages.	C&C C&C	As per draft Area Plan programme As per draft Area Plan programme	Joyce Joyce
NIBS 39 Construction and Development	Review and, if necessary, strengthen the protection given to designated sites and sites of local nature conservation importance through the planning process.	Give advice as necessary to PEPG in the preparation of a revised Nature Conservation Planning Policy Statement (PPS2)	C&C	2010	Sandra

NIBS 40 Construction and Development	Review and, if necessary, amend planning regulations to ensure that Environmental Impact Assessments are carried out on all projects that may have biodiversity impacts and that these are carried out to recognised standards.	Advise Planning Service as necessary	C&C	As necessary	Sandra
NIBS 41 Construction and Development	Ensure all public bodies conserve and enhance biodiversity on their land and through their activities.	Review 15% of Nature Reserve plans annually incorporating action for biodiversity as appropriate	RO	Annually	Hugh McCann

Tourism and Recreation

NIBS 44 Construction and Development	Integrate sensitivity zones and carrying capacity estimates into all Strategic and Area planning.	Provide advice to PEPG and DRD through the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.	C&C	Ongoing	Joyce
NIBS 45 Construction and Development	Ensure that the impacts of recreational activities are well understood and that these impacts are ameliorated through the development of codes of conduct for individual recreational activities or by laws.	Provide support and funding for sustainable access to the countryside and develop or promote Codes of Conduct.	C&C	Ongoing	Maia
		Support the local implementation of the WiSe Scheme among NI skippers as a mechanism for promoting environmentally aware marine wildlife watching	BDU	Ongoing	Bob D
		Support the Strangford Lough Management Advisory Committee 'Out and About' grant aid initiative.	BDU	Ongoing	Bob D
		Provide advice to PEPG in the preparation of the Tourism PPS 16	C&C	As required	Bob D
			C&C	As required	Joyce

Invasive Alien Species					
NIBS 48 Impact of Invasive Species	Review the past and current effects of introduced species (and genetic material) in Ireland, assess the risks of further introductions, and apply the guiding principles of the Conference of Parties of the CBD.	Let a new contract jointly with NPWS to take the Invasive Species Ireland project forward for another three years.	BDU	2010	Bob D
		Publish management strategies for at least 10 Invasive Species	BDU	2011	Bob D
		Maintain Invasive Species Ireland Website	BDU	Ongoing	Bob D
		Run an All-Ireland Invasive Species Forum in conjunction with NPWS	BDU	Annually	Bob D
		Run an annual invasive species media campaign from 2011	BDU	Annually	Bob D
		Develop Invasive Species Codes of Good Practice for 3 key sectors	BDU	2012	Bob D
		Include Invasive species management priorities, where appropriate, in nature reserve management plans as they are reviewed.	RO/BDU	Annually	Hugh McCann
		Significantly reduce the population of 6 non-native invasive species that are having an adverse impact on 8 NIEA properties.	RO	2012	Hugh McCann

Protecting areas for biodiversity					
NIBS 50 Protecting special areas for biodiversity	Further develop guidelines for ASSI selection.	Liaise with colleagues in the Countryside Agencies to review existing SSSI guidelines and supplement where appropriate.	CS	Ongoing	Paul C
		Develop ASSI guidelines for a range of species (e.g. lower plants)	CS	Ongoing	Paul C
NIBS 51 Protecting special areas for biodiversity	Complete habitat and species surveys	Carry out Condition Assessments on all features in designated sites over the six year monitoring cycle.	CS	Ongoing	Paul C, Joe, Ian
NIBS 52 Protecting special areas for biodiversity	Designate qualifying ASSIs	Designate 25 ASSIs	CS/CDP/RO	2010	PC/Diane
		Designate 25 ASSIs	CS/CDP/RO	2011	PC/Diane
		Designate 20 ASSIs	CS/CDP/RO	2012	PC/Diane
		Submit Red Bay SAC to EC	CS/CDP	2010	JB/Diane
		Submit 3 further marine SACs to EC	CS/CDP	2012	JB/Diane
		Finalise seaward colony extensions for existing seabird SPAs.	CS/CDP	2012	Ian
	Contribute to the assessment of exclusively marine (inshore and offshore) candidate SPAs	CS	2012	Ian	
NIBS 53 Protecting special areas for biodiversity	Complete and implement conservation objectives or conservation plans for all ASSIs, SPAs and SACs	Prepare Views about Management for ASSIs as they are designated.	CS	As per NIBS 52 programme	Paul C
		Carry out Site integrity Monitoring on 90% of ASSIs and compliance monitoring on at least 10% of consents.	RO	Annually	Hugh McCann

<p>NIBS 54 Protecting special areas for biodiversity</p>	<p>Introduce a positive management scheme for ASSIs</p>	<p>Develop and implement a MOSS-Remedies Policy</p>	CDP	2010	Diane
		<p>Devise and commission a scoping study to identify MOSS-Remedies Database requirements</p>	CDP	2010	Diane
		<p>Develop and implement MOSS-Remedies Woodland Recovery Scheme</p>	CDP	2010	Diane
		<p>Develop and implement MOSS-Remedies Fen Recovery Scheme</p>	CDP	2011	Diane
		<p>Develop and implement MOSS-Remedies Grassland Recovery Scheme</p>	CDP	2012	Diane
<p>NIBS 55 Protecting special areas for biodiversity</p>	<p>ASSIs – Encourage all relevant sectors to engage in the management of conservation sites</p>	<p>Develop and agree 4 Article 6 decision matrices to Departmental Consultations with the relevant public bodies</p>	CDP	2010	Diane
		<p>Formulate, sign and implement an MOU with CMB (DARD) for the agreed management of ASSIs</p>	CDP	2010	Diane
		<p>Respond to 90% of NICMS referrals within 2 month of receipt</p>	CDP	Annually	Diane
		<p>Carry out post-declaration liaison with at least 10% of landowners to ensure they understand the designation.</p>	RO	Annually	Hugh McCann
		<p>Liaise with ROI through the NIEA/NPWS cross border Natura 2000 group to deal with site specific issues.</p>	CDP	One meeting per year	Diane
		<p>Carry out customer feedback survey of ASSI landowners.</p>	CDP	2011	Diane

Protecting priority species and habitats

<p>NIBS 57 Protecting priority habitats and species</p>	<p>Contribute to UK habitat and species action plans through the preparation and implementation of costed Northern Ireland components of these plans.</p>	<p>A new tranche of UK habitat action plans are in preparation; NIEA will co-ordinate the process to agree relevant NI targets and subsume into relevant BDG work programmes</p>	BDU	2011	Bob and Richard
		<p>Implement a new signposting approach for conserving those priority species on the new UK list for which plans do not exist.</p>	BDU	2010	Richard
		<p>Manage Modiolus restoration project in Strangford Lough</p>	CS	Ongoing	Joe
		<p>Co-ordinate the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) for the UK 2012 reporting round</p>	BDU	2012	Richard
		<p>Minimise the impact of development on biodiversity and where possible, secure biodiversity gains through input to development control casework from Planning Service</p>	C&C	80% within 25 working days	Sandra
		<p>Publish a detailed report on the state of Northern Irelands biodiversity in 2010</p> <p><i>(See also NIBS 2 above in relation to the co-ordination of Government action)</i></p>	BDU	2011	Bob D
<p>NIBS 59 Protecting priority habitats and species</p>	<p>Review the lists of NI species of conservation concern and priority species and seek additional information and conduct further reviews as required</p>	<p>Review the Northern Ireland list of Priority Species and publish a new list.</p>	BDU	2010	Richard

NIBS 60 Protecting priority habitats and species	Prepare and implement costed action plans or species statements for additional Northern Ireland species which are not covered by UK action plans	Implement 41 Species Action Plans through Biodiversity Delivery Group work programmes.	BDU	Ongoing	Richard
		Complete Species Statements with actions for all NI Priority Species. <i>(See also NIBS 2 above in relation to the co-ordination of Government action)</i>	BDU	2011	Richard
NIBS 61 Protecting priority habitats and species	Prepare or update Irish Red Data Books where there are adequate data	In partnership with National Parks and Wildlife Service publish an Irish Red Data Book on bryophytes.	BDU/CS	2012	Richard

Conserving Genetic Biodiversity

NIBS 62 Conserving genetic biodiversity	Identify surviving plant cultivars and domestic livestock breeds of historic importance, and review the current arrangements for their conservation, and implement conservation action plans where appropriate.	Develop at least 4 conservation grazing projects using traditional breeds	RO	Ongoing	Hugh McCann/Maia Taylor
		Let a contract to support the Grazing Animals Project in NI	BDU	2010	
NIBS 63 Conserving genetic biodiversity	Identify and promote the conservation of native gene pools in Northern Ireland.	Establish a NHRP research cluster on conservation genetics.	CS	2010	Mark

Research and Monitoring					
NIBS 64 Research and monitoring	Assess the conservation status of poorly known elements of biodiversity	See NIBS 61, 65 and 67	CS/BDU	Ongoing	Mark
NIBS 65 Research and monitoring	Review CEDaR procedures to support the activities of the Northern Biodiversity Strategy and prepare a five-year plan.	Initiate new arrangements or CEDaR 2009-2019	CS	2010	Mark
		Support CEDaR and CEDaR Initiatives through financial support and CEDaR Management Group	CS	Ongoing	Mark
NIBS 66 Research and monitoring	Monitor the extent, distribution, variation and quality of broad and priority habitats	Publish preliminary results of Northern Ireland Countryside Survey.	CS	2010	Mark
		Publish final results of Northern Ireland Countryside Survey.	CS	2011	Mark
		Agree future arrangements for Northern Ireland Countryside Survey	CS	2012	Mark
		Continue the Sublittoral Survey NI (SSNI) (A CEDaR initiative)	CS	Ongoing	Joe
		Initiate additional Seabed Mapping through INTERREG IVA call	CS	2011	Joe
		<i>Also see NIBS 51 above</i>			
NIBS 67 Research and monitoring	Monitor species of conservation concern	<i>Comment – monitoring focuses on priority species rather than species of conservation concern.</i>			
		Co-ordinate a Research Programme to deliver biodiversity priorities through mechanisms such as the Natural Heritage Research Partnership, CEDaR and NI Countryside Survey.	CS	Ongoing	Mark

		Publish a discussion paper on biodiversity surveillance needs	CS	2010	Bob D
		Publish results of research projects. (For example, otters, lichens, water beetles, invertebrates, moths, plants, bryophytes, Irish hares, bats, pine martens, orchids)	CS	Annually	Mark
		Ensure ongoing monitoring of breeding and wintering birds. (For example, Wetland Bird Surveys, tern colony counts, seabird colony surveys, Breeding Bird Surveys, BTO Atlas work, raptor surveys)	CS	Ongoing	Ian
		Co-ordinate the NI seal monitoring programme	CS	Ongoing	Joe
		Co-ordinate the NI cetacean monitoring programme	CS	Ongoing	Joe

Knowledge, Participation and Understanding

NIBS 68 Knowledge, understanding and participation	Make more locally relevant information on biodiversity available within Northern Ireland.	Implement ongoing Biodiversity Publicity and Awareness campaign.	BDU/Corp Comm	Ongoing	Pete
		Provide information on Local Wildlife Sites on the Web.	BDU	2011	Richard
		Provide information on revised list of priority species and species of conservation concern on the Web	BDU	2011	Richard
		Support CEDaR (See NIBS 65)	Corp Comm	2010	
		Promote biodiversity of Nature Reserves through events and produce 10 new Nature Reserve leaflets	BDU	2 per year	Darrell

		Publish and distribute the NIEA Coast magazine.	BDU	2010	Pete
		Support the Natural History of Ulster Publication	BDU	2010	Renny
NIBS 71 Knowledge, understanding and participation	Include biodiversity as an element of all teacher training.	Deliver biodiversity education training to all (approx 650) trainee teachers through Initial Teacher Training Days (QUB x 1, UU x 2, Stranmillis x 3)	Corp Comm	5 days per year	Anne Hayes
NIBS 73 Knowledge, understanding and participation	Develop and implement a strategy for biodiversity education involving all main providers both inside and outside the formal schooling system.	Deliver NIEA Environmental Education programme to schoolchildren at key NIEA properties.		2010	Anne Hayes
		Include biodiversity as part of a wider NIEA Environmental Education Strategy		2010	Anne Hayes
		Support the Environmental Educators Forum		4 meetings per year	Anne Hayes
		Provide biodiversity education resource material and make it available through the NIEA website.		Ongoing	Anne Hayes
Local Action					
NIBS 74 Local Action	Enhance local biodiversity conservation particularly through the development of Local Agenda 21 initiatives.	Publish a report on the achievements of the Natural Heritage Grant Programme	C&C	2012	Maia
		Facilitate consultation between Local Councils and CNCC to declare Local Nature Reserves	BDU	As necessary	Pete
		Manage INTERREG funding for regional biodiversity projects.	BDU	Ongoing	Richard
NIBS75 Local Action	Develop plans for urban green spaces to enhance local biodiversity.	Address Urban Biodiversity issues through the Local Biodiversity Officer's Forum	BDU	Ongoing	Pete

NIEA Units:

BDU	Biodiversity
CS	Conservation Science
Corp Comm	Corporate Communications
C&C	Countryside and Coast
CDP	Conservation Designations and Protection
RO	Regional Operations
SU	Strategy Unit
RO	Regional Operations
WMU	Water Management