

WFD Implementation Working Group Meeting (18th)

Draft Minutes

Wednesday 28th January 2009, 14.00 – 16.00

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Resource Rooms, WMU Lisburn

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ATTENDEES:

Name	Dept / Agency
David Foster (Chair)	NIEA Water Management Unit
Diane Arthur (Sec)	NIEA Water Management Unit
Gabriel Nelson	NIEA Water Management Unit
Alison McCaw	NIEA Water Management Unit
William Caldwell	DOE PEPG
Philip McMurray	DOE, PEPG
Paddy Boylan	Loughs Agency
Alvin Wilson	NIEA Water Management Unit
Paddy McCrudden	Rivers Agency
Angela Halpenny	NI Water
David Wright	DCAL IW & IF Branch
Linda McGoldrick	DARD, En. Pol. Branch
Heather McSparran	DOE Planning Service, Development Plans and Policy Section
Julian Smyth	DRD Water Policy
Bob Davidson	NIEA Natural Heritage
Diane Stevenson	NIEA Natural Heritage

APOLOGIES:

Name, Organisation	Name, Organisation
Norman Simmons	DOE, PEPG
George Butler	NI Water
Victoria Crone	NIEA Water Management Unit
Claire Vincent	NIEA Water Management Unit
Seamus Connor	FCBNI
Anne Blacker	NIEA Land & Resource Management
Ronnie Wilson	DRD Roads Service
Keith Forster	DRD Economics Branch
Raymond McCullough	DRD, Ports and Transport
Alan Morrow	DARD Countryside Management
Tom Adamson	NIEA Water Management Unit
John McCartney	Loughs Agency
Brian Ervine	DARD
Randal Scott	NIEA Drinking Water Inspectorate
Bob Foy	AFBI
Ian Irwin	DARD Forest Service
George Alexander	NI Water
Stuart Wightman	DRD Water Policy
David McCullough	DRD, Ports and Transport
Marcus McAuley	DCAL IW & IF Branch
Pamela Patterson	NIEA Land & Resource Management

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed attendees to the 18th meeting of this Group and offered apologies as detailed above.

2. Approval of draft Agenda.

The agenda for the meeting was approved with no AOB offered.

3. Minutes of 17th IWG meeting (4th November 2008), 15th meeting (8th July 2008) and matters arising.

The minutes of the 15th and 17th meetings were both agreed and approved for publication and addition to the website.

4. River Basin Management Plans (RBPs) – Update

The draft RBPs have been published and NI has met the deadline for this. GN told the Group that 15 other countries had also met this target, 3 were pending and others unknown. The Republic of Ireland also released their draft plans within the stipulated time. GN commended the Group on their input to the plans and thanked them for their work. The Group were advised that hardcopies of the plans were available however, the use of the range web based resources was encouraged.

GN then gave feedback from a recent conference attended by NIEA staff and other agencies across Europe. Information was brought to the Group on the approach to the plans by other authorities and how monies for implementing measures had been secured in some countries committed to RBPs.

GN advised the Group that the final RBPs are now the focus for NIEA and continued involvement of the Group will be essential. GN mentioned the recent launch of the plans and the need to further promote them. The Group were put on notice of the forthcoming information days to raise public awareness of the RBPs and consultation phase. The details of these events are to be agreed taking into consideration financial pressures, which will influence the timetable. Group members were invited to attend some of the events given that the Programme of Measures has been developed by the Group.

GN made the Group aware of pending conferences of interest and a discussion followed on the attendance of the Committees at the information days.

WC gave a brief update on the timescale for the production of the final RBPs and associated Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIA). The overlap

between measures identified in the POM and those already adopted to meet the requirements of other Directives was noted. It was agreed that this would not be new monies however certain measures are new and will require new money. It was envisaged that further integration of the North South plans may be possible for the final plans. However this would be further discussed at the NS WFD Coordination Group meeting on 4th March.

The Group accepted the suggestion that early consultation feedback, in March, on the draft plans would be welcomed. Scottish colleagues aim to have comments back by 22nd March to allow a feedback on comments received to date in a response document.

A wider distribution of the draft plans to DARD and DCAL committees was agreed.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Confirm number of copies of draft plans deposited in Parliament Buildings	GN	4 April 2009	Completed
Distribution of draft plans to DARD and DCAL committees	GN	end May 2009	Ongoing

5. Programme of measures (POM) – Practical Implementation

AMcC lead the Group through the POM section of the draft plans specifically drawing attention to the last section of each pressure by sector. AMcC explained that the next task is to start to break down these new measures to identify who will be responsible for the practical implementation and where/how financial support will be secured. The Group were guided through three examples with identified data fields requiring input from the Group e.g. lead organisation, new/ongoing measure, extent of funding required, project type. This information will assist in making the measures operational. The Group advised that the table would be completed with their assistance and this would be facilitated through a series of bilateral meetings of NIEA and the various representatives around the table. The timetable for the meetings is to be agreed and completed during February/March. The costing of these measures was referred to and agreement was reached that hard estimates would be necessary to inform the RIA and bidding for funding.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Timetable of bilateral meetings to be agreed.	All	11 Feb	Ongoing
Complete series of bilateral	All	31 Mar	Ongoing

meetings to be populate POM implementation table.			
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6. POM – Regulatory Impact Assessment

PMcM talked to the Group on this item advising that the specification for the RIA is being worked on. A partial RIA would be produced for the final plan. Those measures requiring new or amended legislation would require an RIA in line with current practice. The specification should be ready for Economics Branch to consider by mid February. The assessments are to be finalised by end September 2009. GN noted that the Scottish Government and Environment Agency have produced impact assessments for the draft RBMPs.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Update on RIA to colleagues	PMcM		On going

7. Bids for POM 2011 – 2014 – ‘River Restoration and Improvement Program’

GN updated the Group on a meeting with DFP to confirm the process for establishing a case to bid for new cross departmental monies for implementation of the POM. The next Programme for Government (PfG) call is due in April/May and the Departments/Agencies would be written to and requested to consider their budgets for 2009/2010, 2010/2011 and naturally towards the next PfG. It is understood this process is to complete by December 09.

The brand name ‘River Restoration and Improvement Program’ for the bid has been suggested by NIEA. A list from the Departments/Agencies on schemes and costs etc. would be required by April/May. PMcM explained that to make the bid successful it should be a cross cutting bid that emphasised its potential for tourism, jobs, the environment plus avoiding infraction proceedings.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Suggestions or comments on the proposed brand name ‘River Restoration and Improvement Program’	All	End February	Completed

8. Project funding - INTERREG IVA

GN explained that INTERREG IVA is the environmental part of the INTERREG programme and the launch is expected at the end February. Monies have been set aside for biodiversity, marine and water related projects. €10 million is available for “water” projects, with possibly up to €8 million of this being available for Water Framework Directive related projects and applications submitted should demonstrate a cross border approach implementing what the plans say, to achieve improvements on the ground. A discussion followed on the timing of applications and procurement of projects. DF requested that to advance this item, ideas for projects should be sent to NIEA by the end of February. BD advised that for such projects to meet suitability requirements e.g. jointly staffed and administered on the ground in the North and South Project must meet two of the stipulated requirements.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Project proposals to NIEA	All	8th April	Ongoing

9. Future workings of the Group

DF introduced the item describing how the Group has been meeting for a number of years and the focus of the Group to date has been production of the final RBPs.

AMcC suggested that since the Group possesses a wide range of expertise, it would be of benefit to communicate topical items to the Group as a standing item for the meeting agenda. For example related programmes and plans could be selected and a short presentation given by the lead organisation. The purpose of integrating such informative talks is to encourage more two-way feedback. These topics could be further discussed during the pending bilateral meetings.

PMcM and AMcC took the opportunity to highlight that allied to this were issues raised at the Catchment Stakeholder Group (CSG) meetings. Concerns raised at the CSG meetings are recorded and these could also form part of this item. This would allow the Group to discuss any cross-cutting issues which, although raised at the local-level, perhaps have wider implications, or require the input of members of IWG. This was agreed. DF encouraged the Group to offer ideas, from both within the Group and also from colleagues.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Offer ideas for item future workings of the	All	Bilateral meetings during Feb/Mar for next IWG meeting	Ongoing

Group i.e. topical work areas, CSG matters.			
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10. AOB

PB requested approval that notes from this meeting could be carried forward to the Public Authority Forum in the Republic of Ireland. The Forum engages representatives from the County Councils, EPA and other Government officials. This was agreed and considered beneficial to gather ROI colleagues ideas on various items discussed during this meeting.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Feedback from Public Authority Forum	PB	24 th June	Ongoing

Date of next joint meeting

Wednesday 8th April

Diane Arthur

Secretary

Implementation Working Group