

WFD Implementation Working Group Meeting (19th)

Draft Minutes

Wednesday 8th April 2009, 14.00 – 16.00

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Boardroom, WMU Lisburn
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ATTENDEES:

Name	Dept / Agency
Gabriel Nelson (Acting Chair)	NIEA Water Management Unit
Diane Arthur (Sec)	NIEA Water Management Unit
Alison McCaw	NIEA Water Management Unit
Julian Smyth	DRD Water Policy
Angela Halpenny	NI Water
Marcus McAuley	DCAL Salmon & Inland Fisheries
Victoria Crone	NIEA Water Management Unit
Pamela Patterson	NIEA LRMU
Berni Corr	NIEA Drinking Water Inspectorate
Philip McMurray	DOE, PEPG
Anthony Courtney	DOE, PEPG
Ronnie Wilson	DRD Roads Service
Linda McGoldrick	DARD, En. Pol. Branch
Alan Morrow	DARD Countryside Management
Ian Irwin	DARD Forest Service
Bob Foy	AFBI
David McCullough	DRD, Ports and Transport

APOLOGIES:

Name, Organisation	Name, Organisation
Keith Forster	DRD Economics Branch
Dave Foster (Chair)	NIEA Water Management Unit
Alvin Wilson	NIEA Water Management Unit
Paddy Boylan	Loughs Agency
Seamus Connor	FCBNI
Richard Schaible	DARD Forest Service
Margaret Herron	NIEA Drinking Water Inspectorate
Tom Adamson	NIEA Water Management Unit
Bob Davidson	NIEA Natural Heritage
Diane Stevenson	NIEA Natural Heritage
Norman Simmons	DOE, PEPG
Paddy McCrudden	DARD Rivers Agency
John McCartney	Loughs Agency
Stuart Wightman	DRD Water Policy
William Caldwell	DOE PEPG
Brian Ervine	DARD, Policy
Michael McSorley	DRD Regional Planning

1. Welcome

The Acting Chairman welcomed attendees to the 19th 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 18th IWG meeting (28th Jan) and matters arising.

All matters arising from the meeting were complete or were tabled for update on the Agenda for the 20th meeting. A short discussion was held on the process of distribution of the draft plans to the various committees. The Minutes were agreed and approved for publication and addition to the website.

4. River Basin Management Plans – update

GN gave a short summary to the group on the work in progress to produce the final plans. The draft plan consultation runs until 22nd June and a response document will be produced by the end of September. This response document may require input from the Group and the also feedback to the Committee would be necessary.

GN thanked those who had attended the information days to date. JS commended the organisers on the setup and displays and added that the attendance was disappointing. GN explained the difficulties of this despite a wide advertising being undertaken. VC advised the Group that the web tool would be displayed at the agricultural shows. AM supported this at the shows and other events. GN also noted that the information would also be presented at the various Catchment Stakeholders Group meetings.

DMcC notified the Group of the Marine Workshop to be held on 22nd April. It was agreed this would be timely considering the consultation exercise. GN had attended a conference in Brussels and gave feedback to the group on the status of plan publication across the EU. In summary there was a range of ambition for meeting good status by 2015 across the EU. GN relayed that those countries that were not ambitious in their targets would be scrutinised. Costing and how the plans would be made in practice was also discussed.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Circulate report from Brussels	GN	End April	Complete

5. Programme of measures – practical implementation

AMcC gave a presentation on the practical implementation covering the bilateral meetings that had been held to date. This had included colleagues from DCAL, NIEA Natural Heritage, Forest Service, NIEA LRMU, Rivers Agency and DOE PEPG. Pending meetings include DARD, Planning Service, Lough's Agency and DRD Water Policy. AMcC advised the Group that telephone and email communications were also on going and that documenting the information was work in progress. The aim is to identify potential projects and measures through the next Programme for Government.

Morphology measures will have to be identified through a priority restoration programme. DCAL inputs through the bilateral have provided example costs of typical schemes for funds that could be secured through a cross-departmental bid. Other possibilities have been identified e.g. Rivers Agency - restoration schemes, habitat improvements and amendments to the agri-environment schemes (Environmentally Sensitive River Maintenance)

Forest Service has identified potential for positive planting and guiding of planting, in collaboration with NIEA mapped areas. A further element of the Northern Ireland Countryside Management Scheme may have capability for this.

Measures identified for NIEA LRMU have the funding required in place already. NIEA Natural Heritage funding for works for alien species are also in place however there may be some scope for education and awareness training. Priority target areas are to be identified for this pressure.

In summary the aim is to put together a cross departmental bid under the 'River Restoration and Improvement Program'. Phase one of this will be the request for monies, e.g. £3-5million and phase two will be linked to the work being carried out as part of the Regulatory Impact Assessment to accompany the final River Basin Management Plans.

MMcA highlighted the issue of costs (resources and capital) and that the example costs provided are small piecemeal costs and so actual costs could be larger.

GN gave an update on the likely timescale for the cross departmental bid including when the call might be made. Collaborative working and liaison between agencies was noted and it was suggested NIEA would possibly take the lead and put resources into leading some of these measures to ensure co-ordination is in place.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Complete outstanding bilateral meetings	All	Mid May	Complete

6. Hydromorphology legislative review

Two papers were circulated to the group:

- Legislation related to the control of changes to hydrology/morphology
- Control Of Hydro-Morphological Changes - Summary document

PMcM explained to the group that the draft document was to be reviewed and the updated paper would be available for the next meeting. The hydromorph group had met and thanks were passed on, encouraging any outstanding responses. Observations and comments are welcomed on these papers and can be submitted via the IWG Group Secretary.

A meeting is pending with Lough's Agency to bring forward guidance in real situations, this may form part of the NI response paper.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Circulate updated paper	PMcM	24 th June	Ongoing, carried to meeting in September

7. POM Regulatory Impact Assessment

PMcM explained that the list of measures for the final plans must be drawn together to allow the selected contractor to assess them. It is expected that a contractor will be in place in May therefore work will have begun before the end of the consultation. The contract will work with the agency with the aim of producing an impact assessment that will go along with the final plans in September. They will be contacting the Departments outside the DOE remit possibly through this Group at the next meeting. Cooperation with the contractor was encouraged to meet the tight deadlines.

AMcC pointed out that the stakeholders have an interest in costs, the value of ecosystems and the benefits of protecting and improving them.

8. Bids for POM 2011 – 2014 “River Restoration and Improvement Program”

The group agreed this had been largely covered under earlier agenda items and noted the timetable for the Departments to submit a bid.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Contact DFP for update		On or before 24 th June	Complete

9. Project funding - INTERREG IVA

It was confirmed that Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) are opening this mid May. BD asked if the criteria were available for this. When considering how best to take these projects forward it was suggested the Group should look to how the project type supports the measures and river basin plans.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Pass on criteria information to BD	GN	17 th April	Complete

Lough Melvin Rural Environmental Co-operative.

Donnacha Doody of AFBINI presented this proposed application for funding to establish the Rural Environmental Co-operative. This would have multiple project strands including environment, economic, institution, monitoring and evaluation with a heavy investment in programme of measures implementation.

Some concerns were raised amongst the Group over the cross over between ROI and NI agencies for example agricultural policy differences cross border. Different baselines, in terms of regulations, would require that staff involved on the ground would need a sound understanding of the requirements under both jurisdictions. It was agreed this may provide an opportunity to engage with the project to avoid duplication. The strengths of a bottom up approach, displayed by previous work in Lough Melvin, was emphasised.

Project to assess the cost benefit of measures to improve the passage of salmon and eels at the hydro-electric dams.

MMcA described to the Group that L. Erne does not have a self-sustaining salmon population or eels and so it does not have good ecological status. This is due to the hydroelectric dams and fish passage. Management recommendations are a solution to the passage of fish. The Erne Salmon Management Group was established and DCENR, DCAL, ESB, NFB, Marine Institute and AFBI are represented. The key elements to identify are the cost/benefit analysis of upstream and downstream passage.

LIFE in lakes project - Magheraveely marl lakes, Co. Fermanagh.

No update made.

SEUPB will seek views from NIEA on project applications and NIEA would make direct links to the River Basin Plans and the WFD.

10. Feedback and Information Exchange:

- **Public Authority Forum**

No update made.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Update	PB	24 th June 2009	Ongoing, carried to meeting in September

- **NASCO Report**

There will be a NASCO annual meeting in Norway to review this report in June. Salmon stocks across their North Atlantic range remain under pressure with particular concerns about falling marine survival. Further measures are required and the focus report prepared this year for NASCO is on protection, restoration and enhancement of habitats. The focus area report has been produced to demonstrate compliance and progress with NASCO resolutions and agreements and was submitted in February.

Actions	By Whom	Target Date	Status
Circulate TRIM link to IWG	MMcA	24 th June 2009	Complete

- **CSG Meetings**

These groups meet twice yearly with stakeholders and this round is focussing on the draft plans with breakout groups forming part of the meetings to specifically discuss the consultation questions in the draft RBMPs. The output of this process will form part of the official consultation response.

11. AOB

None.

12. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 24th June

DIANE ARTHUR
Secretary
Implementation Working Group