

Catchment Stakeholder Groups

Terms of Reference

Revision: September 2008

Background

In Northern Ireland the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is taking the lead in implementation of the European Union Water Framework Directive (WFD) and is actively seeking to engage with all stakeholders interested in the water environment. NIEA has formed nine Catchment Stakeholder Groups (CSG) in Northern Ireland which meet bi-annually.

The nine CSGs are:

- Erne and Melvin,
- Upper Foyle,
- Lower Foyle,
- Lower Neagh Bann,
- Upper Neagh Bann,
- Bush and Glens,
- Belfast Lough and Lagan,
- Strangford and Lecale
- Carlingford and Mourne

The Catchment Stakeholder Groups consist of representatives from Government Departments/ Agencies, angling groups, NGOs, landowners, and members of the public, that work together to address local water management issues.

The CSG meetings will provide a forum to; discuss key local water management issues, influence decisions and assist in the implementation of solutions. They will allow wide participation in the development of River Basin Management Plans and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

Aim

The Catchment Stakeholder Group will enable stakeholders to engage with the statutory authorities in order to influence decisions on how the Water Framework Directive is implemented in Northern Ireland. The group will share local knowledge and expertise so as to address and resolve local water management issues.

Terms of Reference

The Catchment Stakeholder Group will:

- Increase awareness, inform and educate the public, business and government on local water management issues.
- Provide knowledge on the catchment to ensure issues of local significance are identified.



- Provide support and advice on resolving water management issues.



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Group Operation

The principles for the way the Catchment Stakeholder Group will work are as follows:

1. Membership of the group is open to all with an interest in the water environment.
2. Ideally, the CSG should elect a Chairman from their members. In the absence of an elected Chairman, NIEA will assume this role.
3. Members are expected to have a basic understanding of the Water Framework Directive in order to contribute. NIEA has made background information available on the WFD on its website.
4. NIEA will service the Catchment Group, including recording and communicating all decisions, which will be made available on the NIEA website.
5. Members will share information and provide support to help resolve water management issues of concern within the catchment.
6. NIEA will draw upon members when required to address specific water management issues.
7. Members that represent organisations will be responsible for highlighting issues raised at the CSG meetings to their parent organisation to aid with resolution.
8. Members will be expected, if necessary, to share a role in resolving conflict.
9. The Catchment Stakeholder Group will help and advise NIEA on the development and implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) to help ensure compliance by 2015.
10. NIEA will link with the WFD Stakeholder Forum and other stakeholder groups as appropriate
11. The Catchment Group will meet approximately 2 times per year.
12. Membership and the terms of reference will be reviewed annually.

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