

## Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting

### Northern Ireland Water Framework Directive Stakeholder Forum

Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown

2 October 2006

Attendance:

Gordon Best	Quarry Products Association
William Caldwell	DOE (EPD) - Chair
Joanne Gaffney	Aquaculture Initiative
Clifford Henry	DOE (EHS)
Uel Irwin	AES Kilroot
Aileen Lawson	Ulster Farmers Union
Robbie Marshall	Fresh Water Taskforce (UAF)
Alex McGarel	Fresh Water Taskforce (WWF)
Philip McMurray	DOE (EPD)
Angus McRobert	DOE (EHS)
James Robinson	Fresh Water Taskforce (RSPB)
Trevor Wright	Port of Larne

Secretariat: Brenda Cunning DOE (EPG)

#### 1. Discussion on stakeholder event, engagement and role of Forum

There was an open discussion on the stakeholder event, with Forum members being asked to give their views. There was general agreement that the event went well, with special mention made of the presentation by the Association of Rivers Trusts. This local level of engagement was seen as very positive, although there were concerns that communities in Northern Ireland may not be as 'driven' to get involved, creating a vacuum for engagement in some areas.

It was put forward that there are plenty of good examples within Northern Ireland, particularly within angling clubs, which had the potential to develop into rivers trusts. Funding was highlighted as an issue, as well as apathy which engagement needed to counter (in both external and government stakeholders).

The discussion briefly touched upon a trend within Northern Ireland to 'pipe and culvert', or move streams from developments. It was stressed that there is a need to preserve streams as habitats for fish and birds.

Turning to the idea of catchment groups, it was suggested that the geographical divisions needed to be looked at, as they may not be realistic (for example, the Newry / Mourne divide). However, the maps provided on the day were seen as useful. The TELLUS project was mentioned (which is being carried out by the Geographical Survey of Northern Ireland) and the Forum were advised that any new information, such as that from the project, would be incorporated in future characterisation and mapping.

In response to a question on what influence DOE (and the Forum) have on other government departments (e.g. Planning Service, DRD water charging), it was pointed out that four main departments have a responsibility to implement the WFD (DOE, DRD,

DCAL and DARD). Forum members stressed that stakeholders felt the need to have the ability to ensure deadlines would be met, that there was accountability and that things needed to move forward to fulfil the need for public participation.

The discussion concluded with the idea that a 'large' meeting in each catchment area should be held to take forward the establishment of the catchment groups, and that although there were many small local interest groups (for example angling clubs), as long as there were representatives for each sector not all the individuals clubs needed to be on the catchment groups.

### **3. Agenda items for next meeting**

Robbie Marshall asked if Heavily Modified Water Bodies (and Artificial) could be addressed, i.e. what are the criteria for designating HM/AWBs, when would more information be available etc. He also asked if the identification of small water bodies could be considered.

Uel Irwin asked whether the environment was seen to be a high priority with political representatives, and how aware large water users were of the need for, and benefits of efficient use of water. He suggested information should be sent to finance officers in such organisations.

Joanne Gaffney asked that consideration be given to smaller scale reports within the SWMI, and as to how available resources could be used.

It was agreed that an update item on abstraction should be included on the next agenda, to briefly provide information on the results of the consultation.

**Action:** Agenda items on HMWBs / AWBs, small water bodies, progress on SWMI and an update on the abstraction licensing consultation will be taken forward at the next meeting of the Forum. Remaining issues to be considered for future meetings.

### **4. Date of next meeting**

Next meeting to be held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006.