

EA - NORTH WEST

EA-North West Box 4



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



Regional review
and forward look

ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE



It is widely accepted that emissions of “greenhouse gases”, such as carbon dioxide or methane contribute to climate change. They are released from industry, power stations, transport, agriculture and landfill sites - activities that deliver our everyday needs.

The Agency must deal with the causes and effects of climate change, and we work with those we regulate to achieve greater energy efficiency and reuse of gases. For example, we used our authorisation process to encourage ICI to install new equipment at its Runcorn site. This will reduce fluorocarbon emissions by around 2,000 tonnes a year, the equivalent to emissions from 3 million cars.



We also consider regional issues by working with the North West Climate Impacts Group, a partnership including universities, businesses and the North West Regional Assembly. This group produced the first regional study on the impacts of climate change in the UK in December 1998. It is now considering how to contribute to the Government’s commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

REGULATING MAJOR INDUSTRIES



The Agency regulates a variety of industries, from nuclear sites to sewage treatment. We take a tough stance with offenders, and in the last 12 months have prosecuted around 200 companies. Prevention is better than prosecution however, and wherever possible we work closely with industry to encourage best practice. For example,

with the Construction Industry Research Information Association, the Agency produced an information pack to help prevent pollution from the construction industry.

Details of the processes we regulate are on our public registers, and our Internet site now includes detailed information on pollutants from each industrial site regulated by the Agency.



MANAGING OUR WATER RESOURCES



The Agency protects and regulates water resources to balance the needs of the environment with those of people and industry. The region is traditionally seen to have abundant supplies of water, but in North and West Cumbria current usage levels will lead to a shortfall in times of drought. In these areas we are working with North West Water to reduce use and leakage.

In Lancashire, to address the low flows in the rivers Brennand and Whitendale, we are working on a study with interested parties to identify the best way to improve these rivers.

In Warrington, a project with the Sir Thomas Boteler High School measures the effectiveness of water-saving devices that could cut the school's water bill by up to 30 per cent.

The Agency and North West Water will use the information to manage the wider demand for water.

DELIVERING INTEGRATED RIVER-BASIN MANAGEMENT



Integrated river basin management looks at a river and its surrounding land. The North West has the highest proportion of poor-quality rivers and one of the oldest sewer networks.

We are improving over 400km of rivers and, with the Mersey Basin Campaign, we encourage river valley initiatives. These bring local people together to take action to improve their river environment.

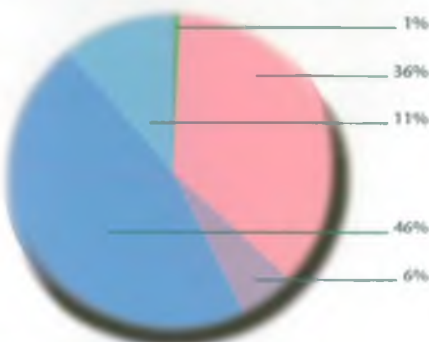
The quality of river water entering the sea is one of the many influences on bathing water quality. Much work has been done with North West Water to help clean up our rivers. A further five-year programme has been established which requires North West Water to invest £1,500 million in environmental improvements. The Agency is conducting a £1 million investigation into sources of bathing water contamination. Improvements will be long term - with still only 65 per cent of our bathing waters reaching the EC quality standard the region has a long way to go - but we are making good progress. Bathing water quality has improved greatly, 10 years ago six sites passed the water quality standard, now there are 24.

North West key statistics

Area (sq.km)	14,430
Population (millions)	7
Number of local authorities	48
Number of LEAP areas	15
Number of Water Quality discharge consents in force	7,426
Number of Integrated Pollution Control authorisations	414
Number of Radioactive Substances authorisations	90
Number of nuclear sites	11
Number of Radioactive Substances registrations	787
Percentage of waste produced in England and Wales	14
Number of Waste Management site licences	988
Average annual rainfall (mm/year)	1,201
Number of Water Resources abstraction and impoundment licences in force	3,949
Length of fluvial flood defences maintained (km)	5,564
Length of coastline (km)	765
Length of tidal and sea defences maintained (km)	176
Number of EC designated Bathing Waters	37
Number of Agency landholdings with potential for recreational use	9
Length of navigable rivers managed by the Agency (km)	n/a
Number of rod licences sold (coarse and non-migratory trout)	121,866
Number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest	1,682

TOTAL ANNUAL SPEND (1999/2000)

Regional direct and support costs only - excludes all national costs (£50,398k)



£428k	Conservation & Recreation
£18,192k	Environmental Protection
£2,960k	Fisheries
£23,003k	Flood Defence
£5,815k	Water Resources

TOTAL STAFFING (1999/2000)

(1,144 full time equivalents - includes 156 support staff)



44	Conservation & Recreation
520	Environmental Protection
84	Fisheries
404	Flood Defence
92	Water Resources

IMPROVING AIR QUALITY



The quality of the air we breathe concerns us all; and the Agency plays a key role by regulating emissions from major industrial processes. We are helping to develop local authority air quality reviews and assessments and are contributing to the National Air Quality Strategy, with particular interest in the industrialised area around the Mersey Estuary.

On the wider issue of general air quality, odours can sometimes be a problem at waste sites. For example, at Distington in Cumbria the Agency, local authorities and waste site operators were involved in a scientific study into odour problems. The study confirmed two adjacent waste disposal sites as the source. As a result, the companies are now tackling the causes of odour and the Agency is amending site licences and requiring installation of comprehensive gas management systems.

MANAGING WASTE



The region's heavily populated areas and major industry put pressures on land used for waste disposal. We work to ensure that landfill sites are tightly regulated, and to encourage waste reduction, reuse and recycling.

Illegal dumping of waste is a problem that makes the environment unattractive, leads to pollution and can harm people and wildlife. To prevent it we have worked with local authorities in Merseyside and Cumbria on anti-fly-tipping campaigns. Sentences for illegally depositing waste can be tough: this year one offender was jailed for eight months.

Co-operation is the key to success in waste management, and the Agency works with local authorities, the Regional Assembly and industry. For example, with Groundwork Trust and English Partnerships, we have sponsored green business parks on industrial estates and supported East Lancashire Waste Minimisation Partnership, involving 21 companies. This has achieved savings of more than £3 million in waste, water and energy.



The Environment Agency takes a strategic and integrated view of managing and improving the environment across England and Wales. In carrying out our work we aim to be open and business-like in all that we do.

The themes identified in the Agency's Environmental Strategy have been drawn together in an illustration which, along with its components, appears throughout this document.

ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE



REGULATING MAJOR INDUSTRIES



IMPROVING AIR QUALITY



MANAGING WASTE



MANAGING OUR WATER RESOURCES



DELIVERING INTEGRATED RIVER-BASIN MANAGEMENT



CONSERVING THE LAND



FLOOD DEFENCE



MANAGING FRESHWATER FISHERIES



ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



Clovercoat

Printed on Clovercoat, the Environment Agency's own recycled, totally chlorine free paper. Clovercoat is made from 100% post consumer waste - including the Agency's own waste paper - supplied to the mill through a paper recycling merchant. The making of this paper meets all of the Agency's stringent environmental standards.

CONSERVING THE LAND



The North West Region covers a range of environments from rural areas such as the Lake District to heavily industrial urban areas such as Liverpool and Manchester. The region faces the challenges of the legacy left by textile, chemical and armaments industries. Resolving the problems of contaminated sites will play an important role in improving the environment.

Consequently, we work with local authorities to identify these contaminated sites. For example, Riversway in Preston is a £2 million three-year project to restore the site of a former oil terminal to appropriate commercial use.

To prevent further damage to land, we are actively involved in helping the Regional Assembly with its strategy for the North West. In this way we hope to ensure that the environment is protected, especially in plans for development, transport, minerals and waste.

FLOOD DEFENCE



The North West Region has 5,564km of flood defences on rivers and 176km of tidal and sea defences, which the Agency safeguards.

Last year we completed flood defences on Chorlton Brook in Manchester, Poise Brook in Stockport and Whitehaven Harbour in Cumbria. Work continues on the rivers Irwell in Salford and Etherow in Stockport. New schemes will start in Cockermouth, Cumbria and on Black Brook, Derbyshire. We used 28 per cent recycled building materials to minimise the impact of our work on the environment.



In 1998/99 we offered flood warnings to almost 10,000 properties. Our staff helped people during 15 different floods, which affected nearly 900 properties. As part of a national plan we are investing over £3 million to improve flood-warning systems in the region and better co-ordinate responses with the emergency services.

Introduction

This regional review illustrates what we have achieved in the North West Region in 1998/1999, what we do routinely to improve the local environment and what our future priorities are. By publishing this document we aim to inform a wide audience, including local authorities, industry, secondary schools, libraries, MPs and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), about our role in the environment as a regulator, operator and adviser so that they can interact with us more easily.

The Environment Agency is one of the largest and most powerful environmental protection agencies in Europe. Our primary aim is to protect and improve the environment throughout England and Wales and to contribute to sustainable development through the integrated management of air, land and water. We were established by the 1995 Environment Act and became fully operational on 1 April 1996. Each of our regions will be making its contribution to addressing the major environmental issues that affect England and Wales. Our national priorities for 1999/2000 are to:

- *deliver a more effective flood forecasting, warning and emergency response service;*
- *ensure that the water companies commit over £6bn to protect and improve the quality of our rivers, bathing waters and wetlands;*
- *take action to reduce over-abstraction at six priority Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);*
- *restore healthy fish populations to 150km of selected rivers;*
- *ensure that all Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) sites have a current risk assessment in order to set regulatory priorities;*
- *make public the quantities of chemicals released to air, land and water from IPC regulated processes;*
- *introduce Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) successfully with all support systems in place, and secure agreement with local authorities on our respective roles;*
- *complete the national waste survey of 20,000 industrial and commercial sites to enable the development of local and national waste strategies;*
- *ensure that the Agency operates effectively across the year 2000 ("Millennium bug") divide, and reinforce the need for industry to have in place contingency plans to protect the environment;*
- *complete all Local Environment Agency Plan consultation reports.*

FLOOD DEFENCE

8. We have completed improvements to flood defences on Chorlton Brook to protect a densely urbanised area in Manchester where about 500 houses were at risk from flooding.



MANAGING FRESHWATER FISHERIES

9. Working with anglers we have improved fisheries in the Wigan area. With Liverpool City Council we are giving a new lease of life to fisheries in three park lakes.



ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY

10. In Cumbria, Lancashire and Cheshire, with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group we have run successful trial sustainable river management projects, demonstrating the benefits of protecting wildlife and rivers.



Key

— Area Administrative Boundaries

— Region Boundary

● Area Office

▲ Regional Office



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

Regional General Manager's foreword

The Environment Agency is committed to working with people throughout north-west England to promote sustainable development. We work hard to protect and improve our environment by improving the quality of land, air and water.

Our work includes regulating major industries; improving standards of waste disposal and encouraging people to reuse and recycle; protecting people and property from flooding; ensuring efficient use of water; encouraging conservation of natural resources, animals and plants; maintaining and developing salmon and freshwater fisheries; and educating and informing people about environmental issues.

In the North West Region we recognise that the most successful environmental improvements are usually based on collaboration, and strive to develop partnerships with those who share our objectives. We do this by consulting widely on our work. Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs), for example, provide communities with a local agenda for environmental improvement, and help us to concentrate on the issues that matter. Our regional committees and area environment groups have comprehensive memberships from local government, industry and interest groups and continue to be a valuable source of direct input into the Agency's work.

The Agency aims to keep people well informed on environmental issues. Our recently published *North West State of the Environment Report* provides an authoritative view on a wide range of environmental indicators and a clear baseline against which to measure improvements. We have also worked with others to publish a regional biodiversity audit, and a climate change impacts report.

We are also working hard to ensure that the needs of the environment are considered early in the planning and development process. To this end, we are helping the Regional Assembly with regional planning guidance, and are providing advice to the North West Development Agency on the regional economic strategy.

In this brief review we cannot cover everything we are doing, but we aim to give you a flavour of the type of activities we undertake.

I hope you find this review interesting and informative. If you would like further information, or would like to make any general or specific comments on our priorities and future plans, please contact Harry Stopforth, Corporate Planner on 01925 653999.

Justin McCracken, Regional General Manager





This year we are holding national Annual General Meetings (AGMs) in England and Wales and nine regional events across England. Our aim in doing so is to demonstrate real commitment to openness and accountability in our work.

Regional reviews are available at each regional event. They aim to provide a link between our Environmental Strategy, the Agency's Corporate Plan and our Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs). This document is structured around the themes of the Environmental Strategy (see the key). It highlights how we have made an effective contribution to sustainable development and how we intend to take forward an integrated and long-term approach to the management of the environment.

A map showing some of the local actions to improve the environment is included on the reverse of this leaflet for cross-reference with the text. You can also read and download this

document, and other publications, from our Internet site at www.environment-agency.gov.uk or obtain copies from our offices. Addresses are listed on the back of this leaflet.

MANAGING FRESHWATER FISHERIES



The region has a wide range of salmon, sea trout and coarse fisheries. Our aim is to improve fishing opportunities and restore fish to rivers as water quality improves.

In 1998/99 we restored fish to 50km of river and canal, including the rivers Darwen, Douglas, Yarrow and Tawd, where fish were released for the first time. With anglers, we have improved fisheries in the Wigan area and with Liverpool City Council we are giving a new lease of life to fisheries in three park lakes.

We are protecting our threatened salmon population in the North West and developing plans with owners and clubs to safeguard them. We have completed plans for the rivers Lune and Leven and will consult on plans for the Ribble, Eden, Derwent, Ehen and Calder this year.



ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY



Biodiversity, the variety of life on earth, is declining. The Agency's role is to conserve and restore natural habitats. For example, with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group we run the successful sustainable river management project, which demonstrates to farmers the benefits of adopting good practice to protect wildlife and rivers. Another major



project, the Bowland Initiative, has attracted European and MAFF funding to promote sustainable rural development.

The Agency was also a key partner on the North West Regional Biodiversity Forum, which has produced information on the state and distribution of the region's species and habitats.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



The Environment Agency is committed to being open, efficient and responsive to its customers. The Agency's standards are published in the Customer Charter.

We consult regularly with our statutory regional committees as well as our area environment advisory groups to bring our actions and decision-making process into the open. Our committees cover environment protection, flood defence and fisheries, conservation and recreation. Members represent a cross-section of the local community, including local authorities, industry and interest groups. The local authority members of our environment protection committee also serve on the Regional Assembly.

In consultation with local communities, the Agency is developing 15 Local Environment Action Plans. These plans take a long-term view of the environment and set out a five-year plan for achieving local objectives to make significant improvements. They are reviewed annually. For further details about your Local Environment Action Plan, please contact your nearest Agency office - addresses are in this leaflet.

Examples of local success include Whittle Brook in Warrington which has been transformed from an engineered and managed stream into a valuable habitat for wildlife and a local amenity as part of a two-year river rehabilitation scheme. In the Lake District the Agency has been working with a group of interested parties to produce a Lakes business plan which secures their long-term use and protection.

The Agency values the comments of local communities and we consult widely on applications from industry which impact on the local environment. For example, we conducted extensive consultations on recent applications from BNFL in Sellafield, Cumbria, and from Castle Cement in Clitheroe, Lancashire.

We have developed local education initiatives across the region, including a new education facility in our Penrith office in Cumbria, and a permanent display at Blackpool Sea Life Centre. The appointment of a regional education co-ordinator means that our educational activities will be further developed this year.

The Agency is continuing to develop its own stringent environmental policy and practices, covering energy and water use, waste minimisation and transport. In particular, Agency staff are also reducing emissions from cars by travelling by public transport whenever possible.

Regional review and forward look

Map legend

ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

1. We have encouraged ICI to install new equipment at its Runcorn site. This will reduce fluorocarbon emissions by around 2,000 tonnes a year, the equivalent to emissions from 3 million cars.



REGULATING MAJOR INDUSTRIES

2. A review of authorisations held by Glaxo Operations UK Ltd (Ulverston) indicated that effluent may be contributing to our bathing-water quality problems. We have modified their authorisation and a treatment plant is planned to come into operation in 2000.



IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

3. The Agency, local authorities and waste site operators have led a scientific study into odour problems at Distington and we are amending site licences and requiring installation of comprehensive gas management systems.



MANAGING WASTE

4. With Groundwork Trust and English Partnerships, we have sponsored green business parks on industrial estates and supported East Lancashire Waste Minimisation Partnership which has achieved more than £3 million savings in waste, water and energy.



MANAGING OUR WATER RESOURCES

5. In North and West Cumbria current usage levels would lead to a shortfall in times of drought. We are working in partnership with North West Water to reduce use and leakage.



DELIVERING INTEGRATED RIVER-BASIN MANAGEMENT

6. The Agency is conducting a £1 million investigation into sources of bathing water contamination.



CONSERVING THE LAND

7. Remedial action is being taken to clean up land at a former oil terminal site at Riversway, Preston, adjacent to Preston Docks, which has soil contaminated with petroleum products.



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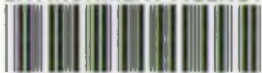
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Internet World Wide Web
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

NATIONAL LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICE

For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

ANGLIAN REGION

Kingfisher House, Goldhay Way,
Orton Goldhay,
Peterborough PE2 5ZR

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE

0645 333 111

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
EMERGENCY HOTLINE

0800 80 70 60



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