

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

**WATER QUALITY
STRATEGY**

11 DECEMBER 1996

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Due for return

30-05-01	

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
Guardians of the Environment

OUR VISION IS:

A better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations.

We will:

- protect and improve the environment as a whole by effective regulation, by our own actions and by working with and influencing others
- operate openly and consult widely
- value our employees
- be efficient and businesslike in everything we do

OUR AIMS ARE TO:

- achieve significant and continuous improvement in the quality of air, land and water, actively encouraging the conservation of natural resources, flora and fauna
- maximise the benefits of integrated pollution control and integrated river basin management
- provide effective defence and timely warning systems for people and property against flooding from rivers and the sea
- achieve significant reductions in waste through minimisation, re-use and recycling and to improve standards of disposal
- manage water resources to achieve the proper balance between the needs of the environment and those of abstractors and other water users
- secure, with others, the remediation of contaminated land
- improve and develop salmon and freshwater fisheries
- conserve and enhance inland and coastal waters and their use for recreation
- maintain and improve non-marine navigation.
- develop a better informed public through open debate, the provision of soundly based information and rigorous research
- set priorities and propose solutions that do not impose excessive costs on society

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE WATER QUALITY STRATEGY

AMP	Asset Management Plan
BATNEEC	Best Available Technique Not Entailing Excessive Cost
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GiA	Grant In Aid
GQA	General Quality Assessment
LEAP	Local Environment Agency Plan
OFWAT	The Office of Water Services
R&D	Research and Development
UN	United Nations
WSA	Water Services Association

OVERVIEW

The Environment Agency

On 1st April 1996 the Environment Agency took over the functions of its predecessors the National Rivers Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution, English and Welsh Waste Regulation Authorities and some parts of the Department of the Environment.

The Agency is the most comprehensive environmental protection body in Europe and has considerable resources including a staff of over 9,000 and an annual turnover of over £550m. It is concerned primarily with pollution prevention and control, the regulation of waste disposal and the management of water in the environment, including Flood Defence.

The Agency has been established in England and Wales under the Environment Act 1995. The Act defines the principal aim for the Agency: *"in discharging its functions, the Agency is required so to protect or enhance the environment, taken as a whole, as to make the contribution that Ministers consider appropriate towards achieving sustainable development."*

To fulfil this aim the Agency will provide effective protection, management and enhancement of the environment as a whole and in so doing, will provide a more efficient means of regulating a wide range of practices which impact upon the environment, to the benefit of both the regulated and to society in general.

The Strategic Approach

The Agency's Strategy for the Environment is our blueprint for a coherent and integrated approach to protecting and managing the environment. The strategy translates new ways of thinking about environmental issues and sets out our strategic aims and objectives, priorities and targets, contributing towards the goal of sustainable development.

Underpinning the Strategy for the Environment, the Agency's individual functions have produced strategies to describe in more detail how we will take forward the overarching aims and priorities. In particular, each functional strategy describes how we will maintain and improve our present levels of service, and how we will implement "new duties" introduced by the Environment Act 1995. The **Water Quality Strategy** is one in a set of eleven:

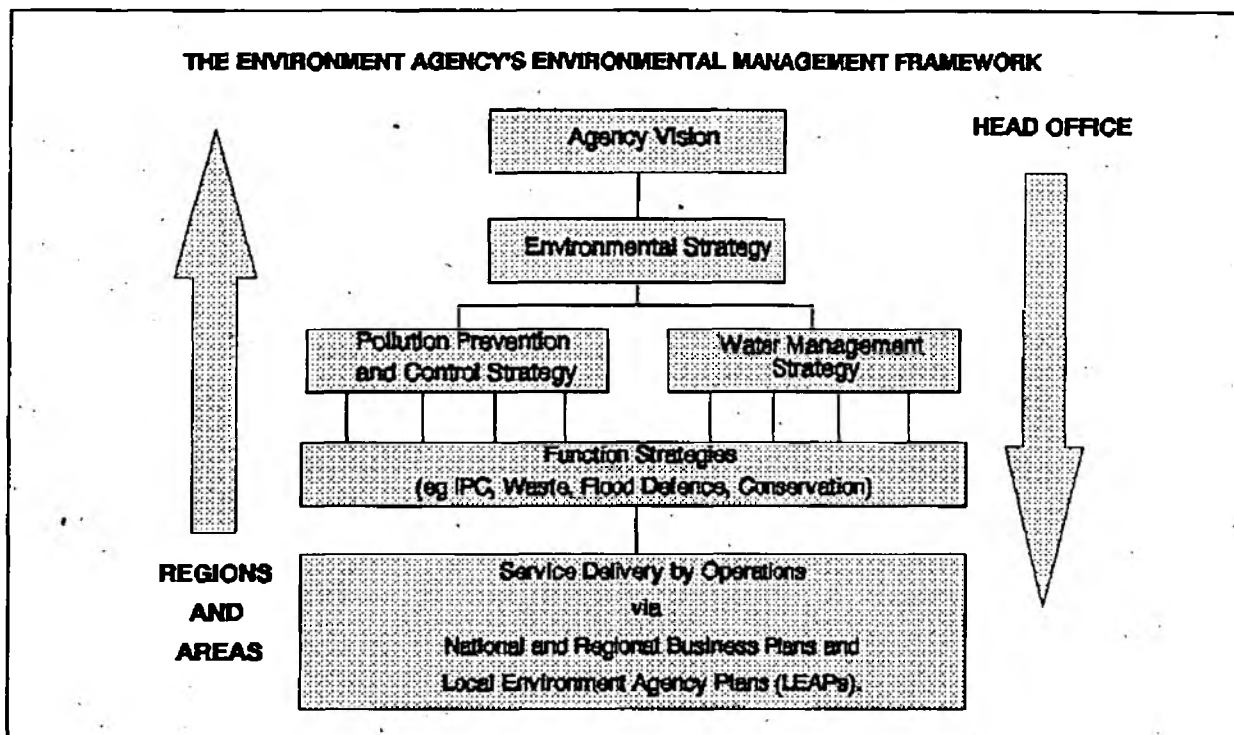
Integrated Pollution Control	Water Resources
Radioactive Substances	Flood Defence
Water Quality	Fisheries
Waste Management & Regulation	Recreation
Contaminated Land	Conservation
	Navigation

The Agency is developing, over five years, Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs) to integrate delivery of our regulatory and environmental management functions at the local level. LEAPs will be the primary way in which strategies for each function are implemented.

The Agency's Strategy for the Environment, function strategies, and its other business strategies, all form part of the Agency's overall Corporate Strategy. Key elements of each strategy are rolled forward in our annual Corporate Plan, the first of which was published for consultation in October 1996.

Environmental Management Framework

Within the overall Corporate Strategy, the Agency's Environmental Management Framework will become the basis upon which the effort and resources of the Agency are targeted in the Corporate Planning process, as policies are developed and the appropriate mechanisms for their delivery assessed. This is illustrated by the figure and table below:



STRATEGY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT	FUNCTIONAL STRATEGY
Environmental Strategy set policies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitor and assess the state of the environment - consider long term options that deliver a lasting improvement - ensure the Agency's science base 	Research and Development
Pollution Prevention and Control set policies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regulate to prevent and control pollution - mitigate and ameliorate the effects of pollution 	Integrated Pollution Control Radioactive Substances Water Quality Waste Management & Regulation Contaminated Land
Water Management set policies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regulate the management of water and water-related activities - ensure the adequacy of flood protection - conserve the aquatic environment. 	Water Resources Flood Defence Fisheries Recreation Conservation Navigation
Operations implement policies via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regions: - monitor and ensure implementation of national policies Areas: - deliver services in line with national policy - prepare Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs) 	

INTRODUCTION

We aim to achieve a continuing and overall improvement in the quality of rivers, groundwaters, lakes and canals, estuaries and coastal waters through the prevention and control of pollution

Protecting and Improving the Water Environment

Water is a fundamental requirement for all forms of life. It is an extremely important component of our environment, and is an essential resource for the well being of society that must be managed in a sustainable way. This can only be achieved by adopting the effective regulation of those activities that impact upon it.

We make many and varied uses of the water environment. Our role is to ensure that water is of suitable quality to support these uses and to maintain diverse aquatic ecosystems. We will strive to protect the environment and seek improvements wherever possible and will take actions to ensure sustainable management of environmental resources. Recognised uses of the water environment include:

- abstraction of drinking water, including both public and private water supplies;
- abstraction for various industrial and agricultural purposes;
- disposal of waste in the form of liquid effluent from sewage treatment works, industrial processes, and agricultural activities;
- fisheries and fish stocks (requiring the protection of the ecosystems necessary to support them and sensitive ecosystems of high conservation value);
- recreational activities ranging from those that occur by the waterside, those that take place upon it, and those that involve immersion in it;
- enjoyment of the water environment in terms of amenity and aesthetic values.

In addition to these direct uses of the water environment, water quality may be influenced by diffuse-source pollution by, for example, transport including road run-off and fuel storage, mineral extraction and quarrying, and pesticide and fertiliser use by agriculture.

The Agency's strategy for water quality sets out the underlying principles and objectives for delivery of our responsibilities. We will protect, manage and where possible enhance the quality of all controlled waters including rivers, groundwaters, lakes and canals, estuaries and coastal waters, and thereby contribute to sustainable development.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Contributing to Sustainable Development

The Water Quality Strategy takes forward the overarching aims and priorities identified in our 'Strategy For The Environment'. It reflects the need for an integrated approach to managing and conserving the environment in a sustainable way.

In discharging all of its functions the Agency will make a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development in the following ways by:

- *taking an integrated approach that considers the environment as a whole;*
- *adopting a long term perspective that has regard to the needs of future generations and which anticipates risks;*
- *basing its decisions on sound science;*
- *recognising that precautionary action may be necessary where uncertainty exists and the consequences appear likely to be irreversible or reversible only at high cost;*
- *seeking to maintain and enhance biodiversity and heritage through our actions;*
- *ensuring that our actions are appropriately assessed with regard to their likely costs and benefits, including costs to the environment;*
- *ensuring that the polluter (or producer) pays the cost of necessary environmental measures and not the public at large;*
- *recognising the need for collaboration and co-operation with other bodies, regulated organisations and the public to ensure that necessary action is progressed;*
- *providing high quality information and advice which informs and enhances debate and decision making processes;*
- *maximising the scope for cost-effective investment by business through improved technologies and management techniques;*
- *making a contribution to the protection of global atmosphere, having regard to the Government's commitments under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;*
- *ensuring that our approach is relevant, proportionate, understandable, pragmatic and transparent, and using and developing general guidelines.*

Key features of the Water Quality Function's contribution to the goal of sustainable development, are shown in Box 1.

Box 1: Water Quality; Contribution to sustainable development

- balancing the needs of dischargers with those of the environment
- application of a continuing policy of no planned deterioration of water quality.
- encouraging development of improved pollution control methods and technologies that do not entail excessive costs
- potential future use of economic tools such as incentive charging as a means of ensuring sustainable use of the water environment
- further development and use of risk assessment techniques to inform regulatory effort, with due regard to the prevention of irreversible or long lasting effects
- action to control the levels of toxic, persistent and bioaccumulative substances reaching the water environment
- protecting the quality of groundwater as a valuable long-term resource
- use of non-statutory measures alongside statutory powers, in line with formal guidance from Government

An Integrated Approach to the Environment

Sustainable use of the water environment can only be achieved by an integrated approach to the regulation of activities that impact upon it. In protecting the quality of controlled waters an integrated approach has several aspects:

- our actions to protect and enhance water quality will be based on an understanding of the needs of all environmental media and of the activities and processes that impact upon them;
- integrated river basin management, where a river, together with the land, tributaries and groundwater connected with it are treated as a discrete catchment, will be a cornerstone of our Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs);
- the relationship between water quality and water quantity will be recognised by joint efforts on the part of our Water Quality and Water Resources Functions;
- efforts will be made wherever possible to integrate environmental regulation in the UK with practices within the European Union. We will support the Government in contributing to the development and subsequent implementation of EC Directives, in consultation with our European partners;
- we will work in partnership with others to bring about improvements in water quality.

The Legislative Framework

Our responsibilities with regard to water quality derive principally from the Water Act 1989, the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Environment Act 1995, which also serves to consolidate many earlier statutes. In addition, EC Directives are legally binding on Member States, and play a major role in the regulation of water quality in the UK. International Conventions do not necessarily have the status of law but, through signature and ratification, members of the convention have signed their commitment to the convention's goals.

Box 2: Water Quality; Sources of our duties and powers	
<i>classification of water quality</i>	duty to use our powers to ensure that statutory water quality objectives are met and we must monitor the extent of pollution
<i>pollution of controlled waters</i>	discharging effluents without the consent of the Agency constitutes an offence in all but the most exceptional circumstances. We are required to enforce these provisions and have the power to prosecute.
<i>issue of discharge consents</i>	issue consents for discharges to controlled waters. So that members of the public can make their views known, consent applications must be advertised, unless the discharge will have no appreciable effect.
<i>provision of a public register</i>	duty to maintain and make available to the public a register recording applications for consents to discharge, records of consents given, samples of water or effluent, and other related information.
<i>pollution prevention</i>	under the Environment Act 1995, issue works notices where action is required to reduce the risk of pollution. Also, the Secretary of State can issue regulations (generally on Agency advice) obliging precautionary measures to prevent pollution to be taken by people in control of polluting matter. Their enforcement is an Agency duty once set. Examples include regulations controlling slurry, oil storage and agricultural fuel oil.
<i>recovering costs</i>	applying the "polluter pays" principle, power to recover costs incurred in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● issuing and enforcing discharge consents; ● monitoring effluents and their impact on the environment; ● carrying out works to prevent pollution; ● dealing with pollution incidents and restoring waters to their previous condition.

Statutory Guidance

Beyond our legislative duties and powers, the Government has provided us with formal Statutory Guidance on our overall objectives and the way we should seek to achieve them. This sets down principles governing how we should work with our customers and our partner bodies and organisations. These principles include duties on us to;

- work in partnership with regulated organizations;
- encourage voluntary action to improve environmental performance;
- encourage knowledge and understanding of environmental issues and techniques;
- develop a close and responsive relationship with our customers;
- provide clear and accessible advice and information on our work and on best environmental practice.

Principal Stakeholders

The principal stakeholders for Water Quality are shown in Box 3.

Box 3: Water Quality; Principal stakeholders	
<i>Customers</i>	<i>Partners</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the public at large in England and Wales• Water Industry, as represented by the Water Services Association (WSA) and Water Companies Association, etc• other national Trade and Industry Groups, such as the National Farmers Union, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), and many others• Office of Water Services (OFWAT)• interest groups, such as Friends of the Earth, the Environmental Industries Commission, Surfers Against Sewage, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government, notably the Department of the Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, and the Welsh Office• local authorities• domestic and European environmental regulators• international bodies, such as the European Union and the Oslo/Paris Commission• partner organisations with statutory powers, such as English Nature• academic institutions and research councils

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Principal Aim

The Agency's principal aim for water quality is to achieve a continuing and overall improvement in the quality of controlled waters through the prevention and control of pollution.

Within this broad aim, we will:

- prevent or minimise pollution of the water environment wherever possible, and prosecute polluters and recover the costs of restoration where appropriate;
- develop an approach to the protection and enhancement of the water environment alongside the other environmental media by addressing pollution from all significant or potentially significant sources;
- work in partnership with industry, agriculture and other interested parties to bring about lasting improvements to the water environment;
- ensure that all waters are of suitable quality for the uses to which they are put; to improve waters of poor quality whilst maintaining those that are already of high quality;
- control and prevent pollution caused by discharges to controlled waters from both point sources and diffuse sources;
- ensure that dischargers pay the costs of the consequences of their discharges;
- assist the Department of the Environment in its contribution to the development of EC Directives and UK legislation affecting water quality, not least by advising on the likely costs and benefits of implementation;
- operate to high professional standards based on the best possible information on the water environment and on the promotion of sound environmental practices;
- serve the Environment Agency's many and varied customers with interests in water quality through the adoption of an open and consultative approach.

Objectives

To secure our aims, we have set the following objectives.

A National Planning Base for Water Quality

Detailed water quality planning at a catchment level is an established practice being taken forward within Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs). Building on this approach, we will develop an Environment Agency National Plan for Water Quality to secure a firm planning base for the maintenance and future improvement of water quality.

Water Industry Investment

The privatised Water Companies are responsible for sewage disposal and water supply in England and Wales, and have the single most significant impact on the water environment.

Improvements in water quality are expected to result from investment by water companies from 1995 to 2005, as defined by the second Asset Management Plan negotiations (AMP 2). We will monitor the implementation of environmental improvement schemes agreed within AMP 2 and provide input to the next planning review (AMP 3), scheduled for 1999, through a considered approach to investment needs for both water quality and water quantity.

Discharge Control

We will continue to regulate discharges to water through consents and will vigorously enforce discharge control standards. We will review and improve the mechanisms imposed by discharge consents as a result of R&D, dialogue with industry and developments in the UK and abroad. Our Discharge Consents Manual will be further developed and will serve as the primary policy document in this field.

We will adopt new control mechanisms where appropriate. For example, we will introduce the use of direct assessments of the toxicity of discharges to inform the chemical standards we apply through discharge consents. We will also seek to work in partnership with dischargers to improve the overall environmental performance of their processes, rather than just the quality of the eventual discharge.

Monitoring

We will monitor discharges to ensure compliance with consents, and monitor compliance with EC Directive standards and statutory and non-statutory water quality objectives. We will also assess levels of substances of particular concern in the water environment. Environmental quality and effluent monitoring provide the key to effective use of resources, protection of the water environment and targeting of our effort. Our monitoring programme will be reviewed from time to time to ensure its effectiveness in these terms, and to seek greater efficiency.

Pollution Prevention

In order to prevent pollution we will adopt three approaches. These are education, partnership and the implementation of our legislative powers. Education of our customers is vital to demonstrate the effects of pollution and practical and often simple measures to prevent it.

Promotion of codes of practice jointly agreed with commercial, industrial, agricultural and other organisations will minimise the risks of pollution that threaten the environment. In addition to education and partnership we will implement, in a consistent, even-handed manner, our new legislative powers to prevent pollution.

We will also further develop our use of risk assessment for preventing pollution and targeting our effort. Our production of Groundwater Vulnerability Maps is one example of this risk assessment approach, which seeks to ensure that water quality issues are fully considered before development takes place.

Enforcement

We will at all times seek to prevent pollution from breach of consents or unauthorised discharges. Where our best efforts cannot prevent pollution, we will take firm enforcement action, through prosecution where necessary, ensuring that the polluter pays for the damage caused and its remediation.

Rural Land Use

Agricultural practices and the way land is managed have a significant impact on water quality, not least through nitrate pollution and pollution from farm wastes. Reductions in the levels of pollution reaching the water environment from diffuse sources, as well as from discharges at specific locations, are essential in bringing about improvements in water quality. This will be achieved by working with both agricultural organisations and individual farmers as well as through education. We will influence the government's contribution to the development of EC legislation on rural land use in its early stages. In addition we will vigorously enforce pollution control legislation.

EU Water Policy and Directives

We will ensure that the requirements of EC legislation are properly implemented and maintained and that maximum environmental improvement is gained in the process.

Being responsible for the implementation of many EC Directives relating to water quality, we have a key role to play alongside Government in the UK's input to the development of EC Directives and EU water policy. We will pursue all opportunities to influence the formulation of EU Water Policy and EC Directives to ensure that they are both scientifically sound and appropriate to the environmental needs of England and Wales.

Input to the proposed Framework Directive on Water Resources is a major priority as this will shape future EU water policy. Planned revision of existing Directives, notably the Bathing Waters Directive and Dangerous Substances Directive, will also be of major importance.

Dangerous Substances and Trade Effluent Control

We have responsibility for the regulation of discharges of Dangerous Substances via the public sewerage system, as well as directly to the water environment, within the framework set by the Dangerous Substances Directive and UK legislation. We will examine control options both at source and at sewage treatment plants. We will assess the hazards and risks associated with Dangerous Substances reaching the environment through wastewater discharges and the disposal of wastewater treatment sludges.

Sewage and Water Treatment Sludges

Quantities of wastewater treatment sludges to be disposed of are increasing, and will increase further with the implementation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. We will develop a strategy with the water industry and others for the safe disposal or beneficial use of sludges, with particular regard to the environmental impacts of spreading to agricultural land.

Research and Development

We will apply appropriate funds to research and development work, but will also work in partnership with other research funding organisations to ensure that the benefits of a much larger pool of work can be realised. Where appropriate, we will work with industry, for example in developing practical mechanisms to meet legislative requirements. The overall objectives for our Water Quality R&D programme are to:

- provide underpinning information for the derivation of environmental quality standards and to assist in the formulation and implementation of statutory water quality objectives and the General Quality Assessment Scheme;

- provide methodologies and techniques for assessing the impact of discharges to controlled waters and to develop new methods for controlling pollution arising from such sources;
- provide information and introduce best practice for assessing and controlling diffuse pollution from agricultural activities and forestry practices;
- provide methods for wherever possible preventing pollution, assessing the extent of, and subsequently controlling, the pollution of groundwaters;
- develop and introduce new techniques for preventing and controlling pollution from road run-off, firewater and other accidental and deliberate un-authorized spillages;
- provide information and best practices for the assessment and control of trade effluents, particularly where these may contain dangerous substances, and to support the identification of the best practicable environmental option for the disposal or beneficial use of sewage sludges.

The Scale of the Task

The list of important water quality issues that we must address goes beyond those introduced above. A brief summary is provided in Box 4, which by necessity includes issues ranging from the specific to the far reaching. In all cases we will fulfil our role as the prime environmental regulator in England and Wales, through an approach combining the benefits of education, prevention and strong enforcement.

Box 4: Water Quality; Key issues	
<p><i>Ongoing Priorities</i> sustainable development completion of the current Water Industry investment programme (AMP2) Statutory Water Quality Objectives preventing pollution incidents dealing with pollution incidents and recovering costs enforcement of pollution control legislation quality of bathing waters regulation of dangerous substances control of nutrient levels pollution prevention campaigns abandoned mines diffuse source pollution charging schemes soil conservation site visits urban run-off Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)</p> <p><i>Pressures</i> increasing environmental expectations reduced government funding changing agricultural practices increasingly complex pollutants</p>	<p><i>New Challenges</i> National Plan for Water Quality preparation for the next water industry investment plan (AMP3) revisions to European Union water policy costs and benefits duty new powers to prevent pollution increasing volumes of sewage sludge Direct Toxicity Assessment (DTA) self monitoring by dischargers adjudication of requests for sewerage in previously un-sewered areas best management practices proposed oil storage regulations reform of Common Agricultural Policy quality management systems</p> <p><i>Uncertainties</i> climate change changes in local/national Government the economy european politics industrial investment demand for water abstraction, public and industrial</p>

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Developing Policies

Policy on water quality issues will be developed by our Head Office staff in conjunction with expert staff from our eight regions, to ensure that direct experience of environmental problems informs policy decisions. In addition, we will consult widely on policy issues and will maintain relationships with industries, interest groups and Government departments to ensure that all policy making is undertaken with a sound understanding of the interests and needs of our customers.

National Centres

In support of our activities, we will develop a small number of National Centres, specialising in key technical and scientific areas. These will include centres addressing chemicals and toxicity, groundwater and contaminated land, and monitoring. Our National Centres will work with both internal colleagues and external organisations as well as with our partners at home and abroad.

Delivering the Service

We will continually review the level of service we provide to our customers and the resources required to do so. Guidance on the basis for and implementation of our policies will be made available to customers.

Priorities

Our short term and longer term priorities are shown in boxes 5 and 6.

Box 5: Water Quality; Short term priorities and targets to December 1997

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● develop an Environment Agency National Plan for Water Quality● oversee the implementation of environmental improvement schemes defined within the current Water Industry investment programme (AMP2)● develop an Environment Agency strategy for the control of eutrophication● ensure effective regulation of Dangerous Substances discharged to water | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● implement new powers within the 1995 Environment Act● input to the revision of existing EC Directives● establish the best option for the disposal or beneficial use of sewage sludges● establish National Centres to deal with issues such as chemicals and toxicity and groundwater and contaminated land |
|--|---|

**Box 6: Water Quality; Medium term priorities and targets
January 1997 to December 1999**

- input to the next Water Industry investment plan (AMP 3)
- influence the development of EU water policy and specifically the proposed Framework Directive
- complete implementation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive
- review and where necessary revise the Charging for Discharges scheme
- develop an integrated Agency waste minimisation strategy
- introduce toxicity-based assessments of discharges
- develop a strategy for soil conservation to reduce diffuse pollution from agriculture
- deliver effective pollution prevention campaigns
- develop approaches to the assessment of costs, benefits and risks
- pursue and implement practical R&D initiatives
- implement with the Coal Authority a programme for the remediation of minewater discharges

Beyond the Year 2000

Looking further ahead, it is possible to predict some of the issues that will become increasingly important as we move into the 21st Century. These include:

- working in partnership with Government, look at opportunities to invoke economic tools such as incentive charging schemes as a contribution towards sustainable development;
- as information becomes available on the effects of climate change, investigate the likely impacts on water quality and the best means of managing them;
- promote the importance of managing contaminated urban run-off to the future quality of surface and groundwaters in urban areas;
- look at real-time control of discharges as this becomes an increasingly cost-effective proposition, to the point where this may offer the best available technique not entailing excessive cost (BATNEEC) for the control of major discharges to the water environment.

RESOURCES

Organisation

We have over 1,200 water quality function staff, excluding National Laboratory Service staff. The majority of these are technical staff based at Area level, including 550 Pollution Control Officers.

Government Funding and Charging

Our annual expenditure on water quality currently totals £89million, which is largely funded by charges levied on dischargers (under the Charging for Discharges Scheme) and government Grant in Aid (GiA). We will observe the principle that the majority of our work should be funded by those whose activities impact upon the environment, rather than from the public purse. In line with this principle, we will seek reasonable means of accepting decreasing support from GiA (currently at £38million per annum) by ensuring that charging schemes are appropriate.

Costs and Benefits

Our regulatory decisions can have significant impacts on the resources of other organisations. With our regulatory role comes the responsibility to ensure that the benefits of our actions and decisions outweigh the costs, including costs borne by industry and the public at large.

MEASURING SUCCESS

The key indicator of our success will be the quality of the water environment. The quality of rivers, still waters, groundwaters, estuaries and coastal waters will be monitored and reported on thoroughly and regularly. Compliance with discharge consents and numbers of pollution incidents will also be regularly reported.

We will also expect to be judged by our customers, partners and the general public on delivery against the targets set out in our strategy. In addition, we will continue to apply a comprehensive range of operational performance measures within the organisation as a sound means of ensuring effective regulation of the water environment on a year-round and day-to-day basis.

Box 7: Water Quality; Measures of success

- percentage compliance with EC Bathing Water Directive standards
- length of river and canal in each class of the General Quality Assessment (GQA) scheme
- numbers of substantiated pollution incidents
- percentage compliance with discharge consent conditions
- number of pollution prevention visits
- number of pollution prevention campaigns
- number of Groundwater Vulnerability Maps produced