

- UE2b(04)GR5: **Scoping study for a database of greenspace and quality of life research and case studies.** The final report for this short project has now been produced by Greenspace Scotland and OPENspace.
- SUDS01: **Social perspectives of SUDS.** (Agency reference P2-261/16/TS.) The final report for this project includes valuable case studies comparing how public and professional stakeholders in Glasgow, London and Athens perceive stormwater management practices.
- **PUR: Pollutants in the Urban Environment.** SNIFFER is the non-academic champion for a £2 million research programme funded by EPSRC under the Sustainable Urban Environment Programme. This project aims to develop a decision-support tool linked to a variety of GIS-enabled datasets. This tool will help end-users (regulators, industry, researchers) assess different urban scenarios and predict the impacts of pollution. The Environment Agency is represented directly on the project steering group.
<http://www.surrey.ac.uk/eng/ces/pubs/poster4.pdf>

Ongoing research commissioning

During the reporting period, progress was made with developing the following proposals and projects:

- **UE3(05)UW5: Retrofitting sustainable urban water solutions.** A SNIFFER-led proposal has gained BOC Foundation (related to a separate Environment Agency project number SC030157).
- UE2b(05)GR5 – **Greenspace research and case study database.** SNIFFER is developing this project in partnership with the following organisations: SNH; Greenspace Scotland; Communities Scotland and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- UE2a(05)UB1b: **Biodiversity in Urban Gardens.** SNIFFER is investigating the possibility of extending this University of Sheffield research programme (funded by a range of partners including Defra, NERC, and English Nature) to include a Scottish case study.
- EJ8/9: **Investigating methods to include community perceptions of environmental impacts in policy making and regulation.** SNIFFER and SEPA hope to undertake this research in partnership with the Environment Agency and Department of the Environment Northern Ireland.

Who should be aware of this initiative?

Research and policy managers working on chemicals, sustainable development, conservation and recreation, air quality and the urban environment.

Background to research

Urban areas account for 90 per cent of the UK population and 91 per cent of economic output. Cities can all too often, though, be dirty, noisy and threatening places.

In England, the sustainable communities programme and the urban white paper promote a vision of better urban developments for the benefit of all. In Scotland, the government has given major undertakings to achieve environmental justice. It is essential that urban regeneration be sustainable. Poorly planned development (green or brownfield) and the process of urbanisation, though, pose serious threats to the environment. Threats include pollution from diffuse sources, flooding and the loss of biodiversity. These challenges cannot be addressed by single organisations working in isolation.

A particular challenge is for government, planners and other stakeholders to develop integrated and holistic approaches to delivering sustainable communities. They can do this by sharing knowledge and learning from each other's experiences. A number of organisations and sectors will benefit from a greater coordination of research and development activities. Ultimately, this will help society achieve the goal of sustainable development.

Keywords:

Urban environment, stormwater management, SUDS, river management, pollution, public perception, public involvement, environmental justice, planning, community engagement, green space, open space

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Further copies of this summary are available from our National Customer Contact Centre by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk or by telephoning 08708 506506.