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Planning for the third cycle River Basin Plan 2021-2027

December 2019



Consultation on Significant Water Management Issues

North Western, Neagh Bann & North Eastern River Basin Districts.

A living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

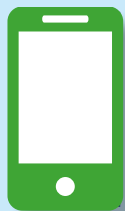
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You can also read it on our website. Go to www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/planning-third-cycle-river-basin-management-plan-2021-2027-consultation-significant-water-management

To get a copy of this document in another format,



- **Telephone: 0300 200 7850** and ask for a member of the **Catchment Planning Team**. If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via **Text Relay**. Dial **18001 028 9056 949**



- **Email: catchmentplanning@daera-ni.gov.uk**



- **Visit** our webpage at: www.daera-ni.gov.uk

About us

We are the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
(DAERA)

What do we do?

Here are some of the things we do.



- We look after the development of farming, forests and fishing in Northern Ireland.
- We provide a service to look after the health and welfare of animals, fish and plants.
- We look after environment and rural development in Northern Ireland.
- We provide research, expert advice and education.
- We look after some parts of public health in how food is made.

Water in Northern Ireland

- The environment is very important to all of us. We are all part of nature. Clean air and good water are important for our lives and health.
- Clean water is important for farming and industry as well as tourism and leisure.
- Water is found in rivers and lakes, in the sea and under the ground. All of the water is managed together. This is called a 'catchment based approach'.
- Water is protected through the development of a catchment management plan. This is called a River Basin Management Plan (hereafter, called the Plan). The Water Framework Directive, is the law which requires us to update the Plan every 6 years.
- This document highlights the main issues which make our water unhealthy. It also contains the steps that are currently being taken to protect our water and keep it clean.
- We would like to hear from you on the issues we have highlighted. We hope you respond to this consultation document with your suggestions on how to improve the health of our water.
- We will consider all the views that are sent to us. Then we will write a new Plan to protect our water from 2021-2027.

Is our water healthy?

- In our current Plan in 2015 we told you how healthy our water was. We told you that 37.4% was good.
- In 2015 our aim was to have 70% at 'good or better' by 2021.
- In 2018 we looked to see if we were going to meet our goal for 2021. Our water was slightly worse in quality in 2018 with only 36.6% at good.



- Pollution is a word for something in our water that should not be there.
- We found that some of the things people do cause pollution. Pollution can be caused by farmers, industry and households. Sometimes dirty water can get into a river and cause pollution.
- Dirty water can come from farm yards, toilets, sewers, showers, washing clothes and industry.
- Sometimes people can change the shape of a river or take too much water from a river. This can cause damage to the animals and plants that live in the river. It can also change the flow to be either much faster or sometimes much slower.

Why is some of our water not healthy?

- Water is a vital resource to all of us. We need to make plans and laws to keep our water healthy and clean.
- Farming and food production is very important in Northern Ireland and provides lots of jobs.
- We have seen a large increase in farming and food production in Northern Ireland since 2015.
- This can put extra pressure on the water environment so it is very important for us to look after our water carefully. We must make sure all our water is protected.
- New houses and businesses require clean water. This means more water is needed as more houses are built.
- Sewage is the waste that comes from toilets, bathrooms, kitchens and other sources. We need to invest money in our sewage systems to ensure that new buildings, houses, hotels, hospitals etc. can be connected to the sewer system and the waste water is treated so that it does not cause pollution.
- We need to be careful that rainwater does not get into the sewage system. Rainwater fills up the space in the pipes and makes more sewage and this adds to the cost of making the water clean again.

- We need to support the development of 'sustainable drainage systems'. These are areas where the rain water can be naturally stored and allowed to soak into the ground. This will help to reduce the risk of flooding and improve water quality.
- We need to make sure we look after all the clean water we use. We do not want to waste this water as we need it for drinking and other uses.
- We need to look after the protected areas in Northern Ireland. Protected areas include our beaches, our drinking water, nutrient sensitive areas, shellfish waters and areas which have lots of value for nature and wildlife.



Our questions for you

We included a list of ideas to make our water better at the end of the long report.

The 'Consultation on significant water management issues' is on our webpage: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/significant-water-management-issues-2019.

This list is called 'Draft programme of measures'.

We would like to hear from you. Please tell us your opinion on:

- What causes pollution of our water?
- Where could we use water in a better or different way?
- How can all people of Northern Ireland work together to make our water good?
- What do you think about the items on our list (draft programme of measures)?
- Do you have other ideas to make our water better?



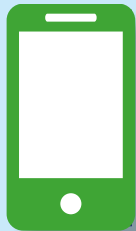
Summary

- Our water environment is not as good now as it was in 2015.
- It will be very hard for us to reach our target to have 70% of our water good by 2021.
- We have told you some causes of water pollution. Can you tell us any other ways in which water can be polluted?
- Can you tell us if there are other ways in which our water is wasted or not used as well as it could be?
- Let us know how we can work together to make our water better.



How you can respond to this public discussion document

- To find out more about this discussion document; or
- Tell us what you think about it.



- **Telephone: 0300 200 7850** and ask for a member of the **Catchment Planning Team**. If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via **Text Relay**. Dial **18001 028 9056 949**



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Department of
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