

Nutrient Management Plans – Steer

Relieving pressures on Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) river catchments to support delivery of affordable housing: [Action plan](#)

Action 1.3 - NRW and WG will work with NMBs to draft a Nutrient Management Plan template.

While the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are providing a steer to the Nutrient Management Boards (NMBs) on the development of Nutrient Management Plans (NMPs) to enable consistency across Wales, it is acknowledged that no SAC river is the same and therefore the content of NMPs should be developed and tailored to suit the needs of each SAC river.

Ultimate accountability for the development, monitoring and reporting of the NMP rests with the Chair of NMB and lead Local Authorities and National Park.

Nutrient Management Plan Scope

In accordance with the Welsh Government's Statement of Direction, the NMBs are to *produce an actionable NMP which sets out agreed actions, roles and responsibilities required to achieve the twin aims of reaching and maintaining favourable conservation status of the SAC, whilst also facilitating nutrient neutral development.*

While the immediate requirement of the NMP is to prioritise initiatives to unlock affordable housing at pace within the agreed Welsh Government funding period (by April 2025), NMBs should also set out the foundation and requirements for longer-term improvements with the aim of achieving and maintaining favourable conservation status of the SAC. The NMP should therefore set out short (1-5 year), medium (5-15) and long-term (15 years and beyond) measures, or in a format NMBs favour, ensuring the plan is carefully evidenced.

NMBs are encouraged to develop strong, effective, and cohesive partnerships by identifying and involving local communities, water companies, landowners, agricultural groups, environmental organisations, and regulators throughout the development of the NMP in order to generate buy-in from key stakeholders within the SAC catchment.

Key considerations for Nutrient Management Plan

Please note that the following information should be considered when developing an NMP and is provided for the purpose of alignment of NMPs across Wales.

Catchment Profile

A detailed profile of the SAC catchment that outlines specific factors that have/may impact on the water quality status of the river, for example population, density, land use practices, climate etc.

Evidence Assessment

Referring to the reference documents listed below, outline current condition of the river with regards to SAC compliance and sources of phosphorus pollution, in order to establish an evidence base and inform mitigation measures specific to the SAC catchment. This will also help to highlight gaps in evidence where further research/investigations may be useful to inform additional mitigation measures. Data sources available, but not limited to, include:

- NRW Phosphate compliance review for SAC rivers in Wales
- DCWW SAGIS modelling for SAC rivers
- DCWW Asset Management Programme 6 investigation
- NRW River Basin Management Plans
- River Pollution Summit Evidence Pack
- NRW Core Management Plans
- Priority Improvement Plans (PIPs)
- Links to current evidence available in the NMB Evidence Pack

Options Appraisal

Using the Mitigation Measures Menu developed by NRW, selection of mitigation measures appropriate for the catchment to reduce nutrient loading, along with a catchment-based impact assessment of each measure against the objectives of the NMP. For each measure, the assessment may consider:

- The projected amount of phosphorus that will be removed.
- The timescales required to achieve the phosphorus reduction.
- The methodology to determine the effectiveness of the measure.
- The scientific and practical certainty that the measure will deliver the phosphorus reduction.
- Identification of relevant legislative drivers to deliver Nutrient Neutrality measures and consideration of long-term requirements to achieve SAC compliance.
- Identification of any permits or planning permission required for any mitigation measure.

When assessing each measure, it is advisable to take a precautionary approach and add a buffer to phosphorus figures calculated for developments.

Action Plan

The evidence assessment and options appraisal should inform an action plan that clearly sets out deliverable actions, timescales, costs and stakeholder responsibilities in order to allow new development to occur within the catchment and pave the way for longer-term water quality improvements.

Monitoring and Review

Development of a reporting mechanism to communicate progress, achievements, challenges, and updates to relevant stakeholders and regulatory bodies in order to maintain transparency in all aspects of the NMP.

Identification of periodic reviews of the NMP to evaluate its effectiveness, address any new challenges, and incorporate scientific advancements or regulatory changes.

NMP Reference Documents

A list of available evidence in Wales from NRW, Welsh Government and other organisations for the Nutrient Management Boards. Further environmental data can be requested via [Natural Resources Wales / Request environmental data](#).

- NMB Coordination Group Terms of Reference
- Individual Grant offer letters to respective Competent Authorities
- Wye Nutrient Management Plan

- Dee Catchment Phosphorus Reduction Strategy
- Relieving Pressures on SAC River Catchments to Support Delivery of Affordable Housing Action Plan
- NRW mitigation measures database
- NRW - NMB Evidence Pack