

RIVER AXE

CATCHMENT ACTION PLAN



NRA

*National Rivers Authority
South West Region*

✓

C O N T E N T S

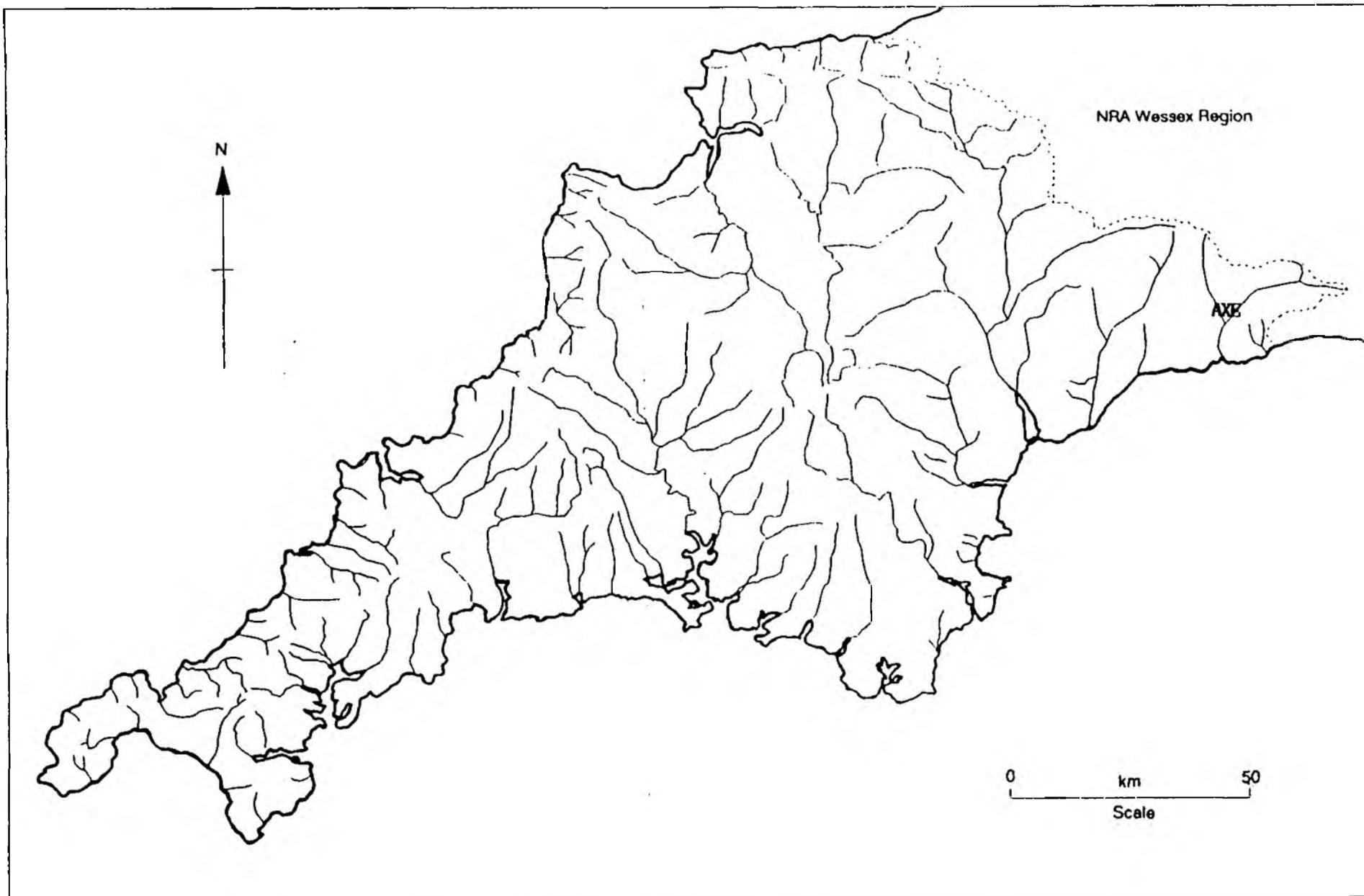
MAP OF NRA SW REGION SHOWING TARGET CATCHMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

CATCHMENT ACTION PLANS are designed to be a simple, practical means of directing resources to achieve environmental improvements on a priority basis, between and within catchments. They set out the essential routine tasks, and a five year programme of specific actions for each catchment to meet regional and national targets. Changes may occur where unplanned work such as an extreme drought requires priority.

The NRA has inherited a legacy of environmental challenges arising from the use and abuse of our natural resources. Although significant progress has already been made it will be many years before all the work needed can be assessed, funded and carried out.

To achieve the environmental objectives will require not just the clear, vigorous direction of the NRA towards priority work but the help and support of the whole community.

The NRA has consulted with the Regional Advisory Board and Advisory Committees and the local interests about the draft action plans and the format is the outcome of those discussions.

Progress to achieve the Action Plan objectives will normally be reviewed on an annual basis but more frequently where severe problems have been identified.

2. ROUTINE SERVICES

Despite the fact that the NRA is largely a reactive, regulatory body it is possible to plan for much of the environmental protection work even the fact that unpredictable events will occur!

Much of the routine workload such as monitoring, enforcement of statutes and dealing with pollution and flooding incidents needs to have clear priority to ensure that it is dealt with to satisfactory standards throughout the region.

This essential work is carried out according to need in all catchments.

The NRA SW handles over 3000 pollution incidents a year, the majority of which are reported by members of the public. Many are attended within minutes and most within a few hours. In some cases major operations are undertaken to control the pollution and minimise impact on the environment.

Several thousand routine inspections of industrial premises, farms, weirs, fish passes and treatment works are also undertaken. In many cases improvements are required to minimise the risk of pollution or to ensure protection of fish and conservation of the water environment.

As part of the overall environmental protection exercise many flood defence schemes and thousands of planning applications are screened; hundreds of farm pollution grant proposals and effluent discharge applications are processed each year. Many new or varied abstraction licences and drilling consents are also processed to protect surface and underground waters.

Each year about 67,000 samples of rivers, lakes, ground and tidal waters and effluents are taken. Around 1.25 million chemical tests are made on these samples to ensure water quality standards are met and to identify where enforcement action is needed.

In addition detailed studies of samples of invertebrates, fish, algae and plants are undertaken to provide information on the status of the aquatic communities and to test the accuracy of the conclusions of chemical monitoring.

The key abstractions, discharges and monitoring sites for this catchment are marked on map(s) in Appendix 1.

Routine regulatory action is taken to ensure the conditions of thousands of discharges, abstractions and other legal requirements are enforced and illegal fishing is curtailed.

The NRA SW also handles many hundreds of letters and enquiries for information from the Water Act Register and provides press releases, reports and other information to a wide range of interests in the community.

5. CHALLENGES AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

The River Axe has supported good brown trout and sea trout populations and a fair run of salmon. Much of the information about these fish stocks was gained during the operation of an upstream and downstream fish trap by MAFF.

A serious decline in water quality associated with numerous pollution incidents was recognised during the early 1980's and systematic inspections of most farms and other premises in the catchment have taken place.

Despite some improvements in water quality the fish stocks have not recovered and more detailed actions are now planned.

Functional officers have identified the main challenges to the achievement of environmental objectives. Where solutions are clear they have been programmed. In other cases further investigations are needed to determine the way forward.

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>TIMETABLE</u>				
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
<u>FISHERIES</u>					
Enforce and monitor fixed net legislation	_____				
Monitor estuarial netting for sea fish	_____				
Review NLO by Dec 1991 Replace with byelaw	_____				
Survey all weirs/fish passes. Plan and implement fish pass installation/improvements	_____ - - - - -				
Install new fish passes at:					
Westwater (R. Yarty)	_____				
Westford (R. Axe)	_____				
Survey for trash dams/ plan clearance	_____ - - - - -				
Plan and implement gravel rehabilitation	_____				
Carry out regular juvenile surveys to assess recovery of stock	Programme to be determined				

ACTION

TIMETABLE

1991 1992 1993 1994 1995

Annual redd count
Priority to
rehabilitated gravels

Survey fish counter
site and install at
site to be
determined

Assess spate sparing

Assess causes of poor
recruitment

Assess effects of any
reservoir scheme

Investigate optimum
method for
re-introduction of fish
stocks

Trap/electro fish Axe
brown trout stock for
rearing to O+ fry and
plant

Develop programme for
salmon and sea trout and
implement

CONSERVATION

Environmental impact
assessment and monitoring
of major water resource
scheme and abstractions.

Undertake environmental
assessment of NRA river
maintenance works and
implement, where possible,
the recommendations of
the river corridor survey.

POLLUTION CONTROL

Review causes of water
quality deterioration in
Axe u/s of Kit Brook.

Programme to be determined

Programme to be determined

Programme to be determined

ACTION

TIMETABLE

1991 1992 1993 1994 1995

WATER RESOURCES

Assess SWWS public supply scheme.

Assess need for low flow alleviation measures at 2 sites

Review water resource strategy in the catchment.

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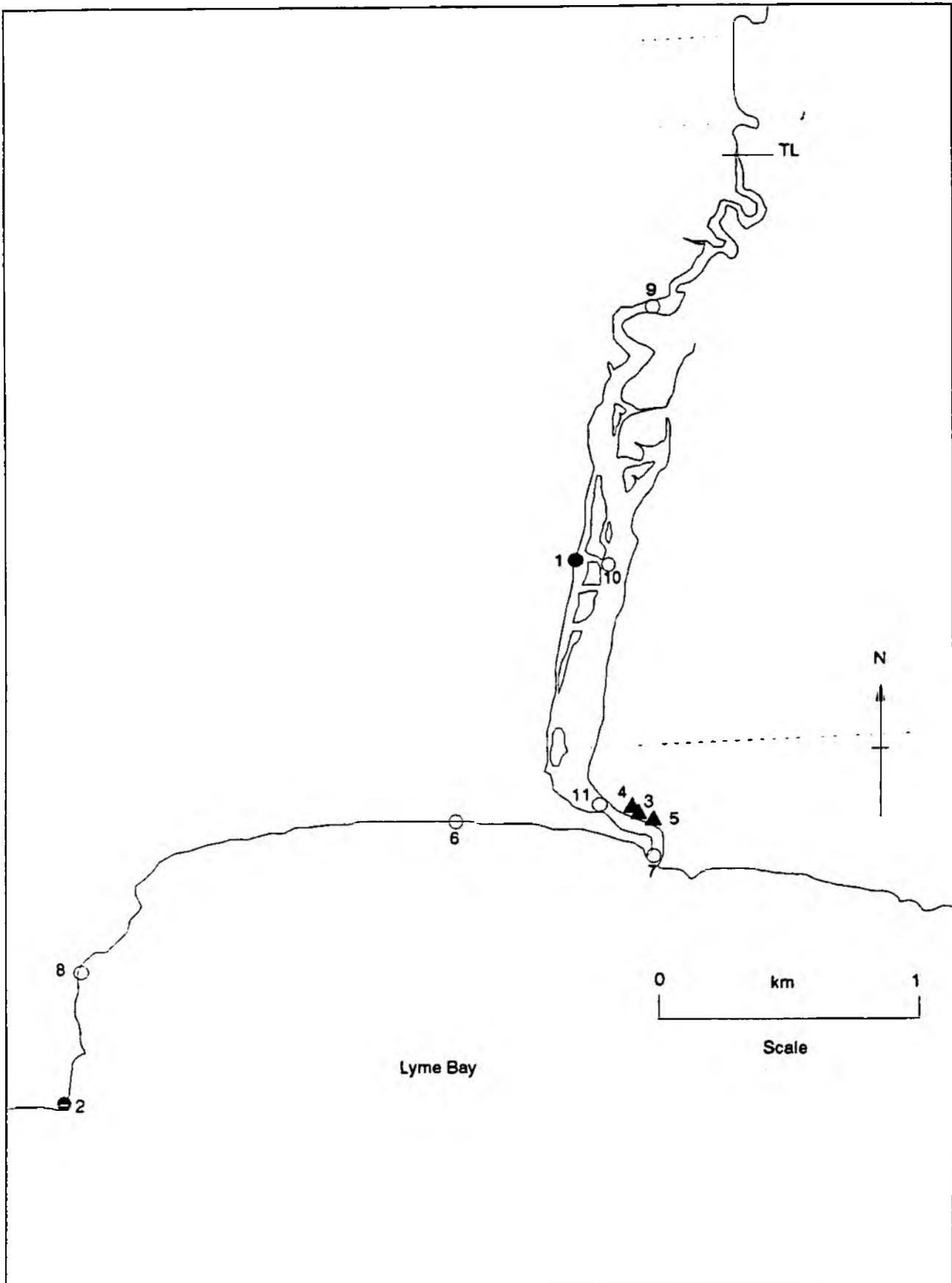
APPENDIX 1

CATCHMENT MAPS

KEY

- Tidal Water Monitoring Point
- Routine River Monitoring Point
- Discharges – pic
- Discharges – Fish Farms
- ▲ Discharges Deemed Consents – Copa Variation non pic
- ▼ Discharges Deemed Consents – Copa Variation pic
- + Discharges – non pic
- x Waste Disposal Sites
- TL Tidal Limit
- * No receiving water control sites

Axe Estuary 2A

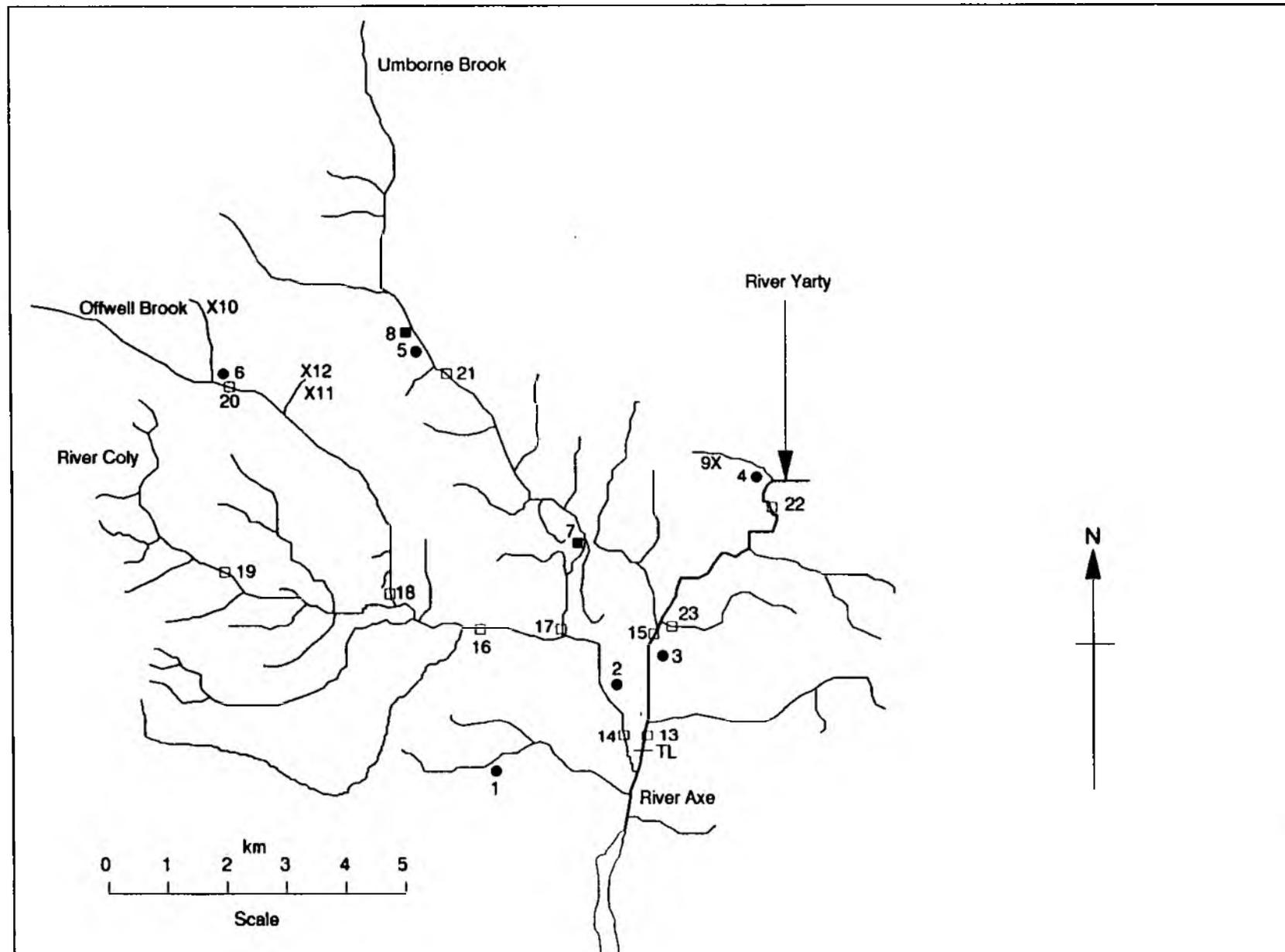


Version 2 / May 1991

AXE ESTUARY 2A

NO	NGR	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
1	SY24809080	Seaton	Sewage treatment works Dangerous substances site
2	SY23108920	Beer Head outfall	Dangerous substances site
3	SY25458989	The Moorings	
4	SY25498989	Harbour Cottage	
5	SY25508985	Old Harbour House	
6	SY24508985	Seaton Beach	
7	SY25608970	Axe estuary/mouth	
8	SY23158910	Beer Beach	
9	SY25659205	Upper Estuary	
10	SY25359075	Mid channel	
11	SY253899	D/S of Seaton STW	

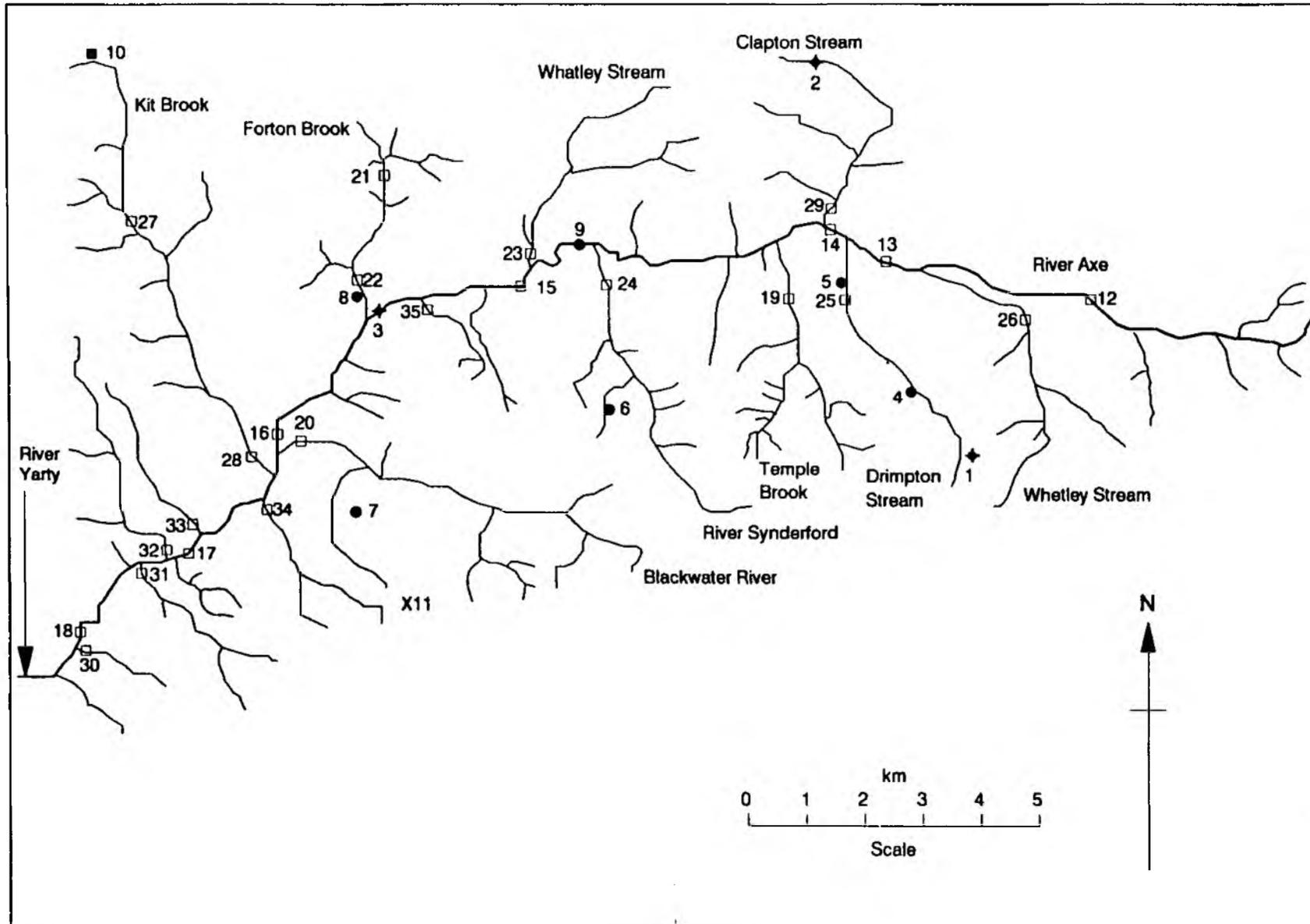
Coly & Umborne Catchment 2B



COLY AND UMBORNE CATCHMENT 2B

NO	NGR	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
1	SY23509220	Holyford	Sewage treatment works
2	SY25409300	Colyton	Sewage treatment works
3	SY26409520	Musbury & Whitford	Sewage treatment works
4	SY27809750	Axminster	Sewage treatment works
5	ST21700020	Wilmington	Sewage treatment works
6	SY19209890	Offwell	Sewage treatment works
7	SY24609630	Axminster	
8	ST21300050	Wilmington	
9	SY275977	Axminster	
10	SY188999	Honiton	
11	SY205988	Honiton	
12	SY205990	Honiton	
13	SY25939269	Axe Bridge	Chemical/biological site Red list site
14	SY25359270	Colyford	Chemical/biological site freshwater Fish Directive
15	SY26239538	Whitford Bridge	Chemical/biological site Freshwater Fish Directive Exchange of information site Dangerous substances site
	SY26189532	Whitford	EC surface water abstraction directive monitoring site
16	SY23559430	Heathayne Farm	Chemical/biological site
17	SY24859425	Umborne Bridge	Chemical/biological site
18	SY21509532	Roadpitt Farm	Chemical/biological site
19	SY18889563	Woodbridge	Chemical/biological site
20	SY19289876	Offwell	Chemical/biological site
21	SY22389943	Triffords Farms	Chemical/biological site
22	SY28009670	Slymlakes	Chemical site Dangerous substances site
23	SY26339533	u/s Whitford Bridge	Biological site

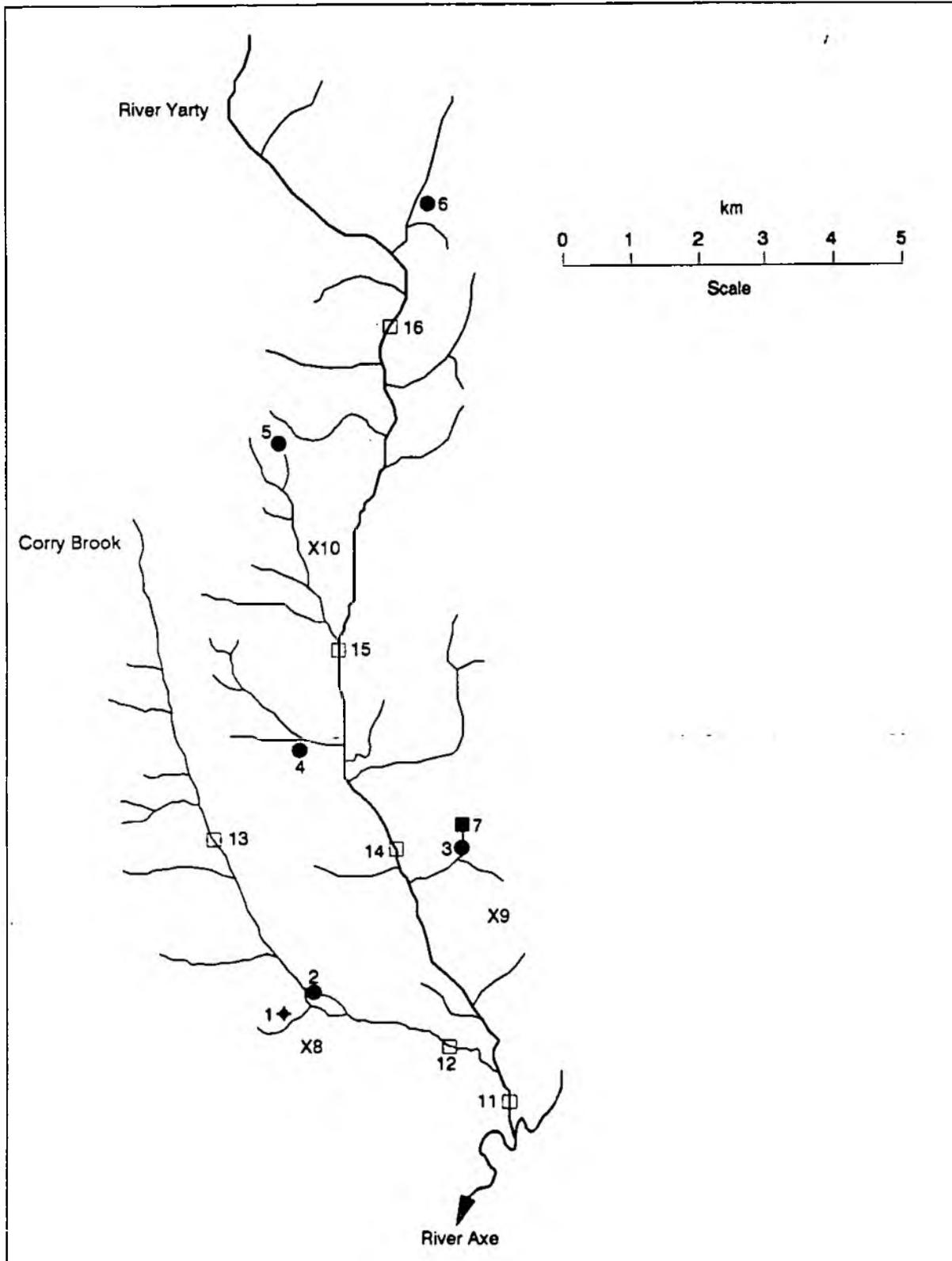
Upper Axe Catchment 2C



UPPER AXE CATCHMENT 2C

NO	NGR	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
1	ST43850250	Broadwindsor	Sewage treatment works
2	ST41170955	Crewkerne	Caravan site STW
3	ST33800460	Chard	Dairy factory
4	ST43200320	Broadwindsor	Sewage treatment works
5	ST41700570	Drimpton	Sewage treatment works
6	ST37800330	Thorncombe	Sewage treatment works
7	ST34200080	Hawkchurch	Sewage treatment works
8	ST33800480	Tatworth	Sewage treatment works
9	ST29200850	Chard	
10	SY352993	Hawkchurch	
11	ST45730526	A3066 Br/Mosterton	Chemical/biological site
12	ST42960574	Seaborough	Chemical/biological site
13	ST40480605	Oathill Farm	Chemical/biological site
14	ST36220535	Forde Bridge	Chemical/biological site
15	ST32630248	Broom	Chemical/biological site Freshwater Fish Directive
16	ST30730001	A358 Br/Weycroft	Chemical/biological site
17	SY29019823	Bow Bridge	Chemical/biological site Red list site
18	ST40720590	Oathill Bridge	Chemical/biological site
19	ST33080220	Buddlewall	Chemical/biological site
20	ST34010730	Forton	Chemical/biological site
21	ST33680485	Tatworth	Chemical/biological site
22	ST36500556	Ammerham	Chemical/biological site
23	ST37750573	Beere Farm	Chemical/biological site
24	ST41650548	Netherhay	Chemical/biological site
25	ST44740487	Potwell Farm	Chemical/biological site
26	ST29610629	Narfords	Chemical/biological site
27	ST31990162	Axe Farm	Chemical/biological site
28	ST41620715	Clapton Dairy Farm	Chemical/biological site
29	SY29099798	50m u/s Axe Confl	Biological site
30	SY29659921	20m u/s Axe Confl	Biological site
31	ST30450000	60m u/s Axe Confl	Biological site
32	ST30880037	25m u/s Rail Bridge	Biological site
33	ST32020100	50m u/s Axe Confl	Biological site
34	ST34620498	40m u/s Axe Confl	Biological site

Yarty Catchment 2D



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YARTY CATCHMENT 2D

NO	NGR	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
1	ST25009904	Andrewhayes	Caravan park STW/domestic
2	SY25109980	Dalwood	Sewage treatment works
3	ST27500200	Membury	Sewage treatment works
4	ST24800400	Stockland	Sewage treatment works
5	ST24700800	Yarcombe	Sewage treatment works
6	ST26601350	Buckland St Mary	Sewage treatment works
7	ST27500220	Membury	
8	SY254988	Axminster	
9	ST280010	Axminster	
10	ST252069	Yarcombe	
11	SY28159801	Gammons Hill	Chemical/biological site Freshwater Fish Directive
12	SY28089820	Prior River Yarty	Chemical/biological site Freshwater Fish Directive
13	ST24200239	Rose Farm	Chemical/biological site
14	ST26520150	Beckford Bridge	Chemical/biological site
15	ST25510551	Longbridge	Chemical/biological site
16	ST25881098	Newhaven Bridge	Chemical/biological site

NRA DUTIES AND POWERS

The Authority has statutory duties and powers in relation to water resources, pollution control, flood defence, fisheries, recreation, conservation and navigation along with various other functions given under the 1989 Water Act.

Whilst most of the Authority's duties and powers are exercised in respect of inland waters in England and Wales, it also has substantial responsibilities for the marine environment around the coast of England and Wales. For pollution control and fisheries purposes it has duties and powers out to distances of three nautical miles and six nautical miles respectively, the six miles being for salmonid protection. For flood defence it is responsible for a large number of sea defences (but not coastal protection which falls within the remit of local authorities).

As well as new duties, the NRA has also inherited other duties and powers under earlier legislation such as the 1963 Water Resources Act, 1975 Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act, and 1976 Land Drainage Act.

The Authority also has responsibility for implementing a number of Statutory Instruments, Orders, Notices and Directives relating to the 1989 Water Act. Various European Community Directives on the protection of the aquatic environment eg. Bathing Water Quality, Surface Water Quality, and Freshwater Fishlife also strongly influence its work.

NRA MISSION STATEMENT

The National Rivers Authority will protect and improve the water environment. This will be achieved through effective management of water resources and by substantial reductions in pollution. The Authority aims to provide effective defence for people and property against flooding from rivers and the sea. In discharging its duties it will operate openly and balance the interests of all who benefit from and use rivers, ground waters, estuaries and coastal waters. The Authority will be businesslike, efficient and caring towards its employees.

NRA AIMS

To achieve a continuing improvement in the quality of rivers, estuaries and coastal waters, through the control of water pollution.

To assess, manage, plan and conserve water resources and to maintain and improve the quality of water for all those who use it.

To provide effective defence for people and property against flooding from rivers and the sea.

To provide adequate arrangements for flood forecasting and warning.

To maintain, improve and develop fisheries.

To develop the amenity and recreation potential of waters and lands under NRA control.

To conserve and enhance wildlife, landscape and archaeological features associated with waters under NRA control.

To ensure that dischargers pay the costs of the consequences of their discharges, and as far as possible, to recover the costs of water environment improvements from those who benefit.

To improve public understanding of the water environment and the NRA's work.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The overall priority is to continue the improvements which were started in the last year in the following key areas.

WATER RESOURCES

- Develop regional strategy document.
- Improve response to licence applications.
- Establish Water Resources planning forum.
- Progress schemes to ameliorate low flows.
- Implement groundwater protection policy.

POLLUTION CONTROL

- Develop regional strategy document.
- Introduce charging for discharges scheme.
- Implement new consenting policy; begin review of deemed consents.
- Complete 1990/91 survey and consult on water quality objectives.
- Carry out EC Directive requirements.
- Introduce new monitoring programmes for effluents and controlled waters.
- Establish a regional laboratory service.

FISHERIES

- Develop regional strategy document.
- Review licence and other charging schemes.
- Harmonise stock assessment techniques.
- Extend programme of restoration and rehabilitation of fish stocks.
- Increase action to control illegal fishing.
- Submit new fishery byelaws to MAFF for confirmation.

RECREATION

- Continue implementations of Water Act Code of Practice.
- Produce strategy for regional sites.
- Improve cost recovery from the recreation service.

CONSERVATION

- Establish database for regulatory purposes.
- Produce strategy for regional sites.
- Promote conservation schemes.