



# Conservation Strategy



ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY



Upper Tees

# North East Region



# Index



Thorpe Marsh Ponds

## Section

## Title

1.0	INTRODUCTION
1.1	AIMS
1.2	RELATIONSHIPS
1.3	BACKGROUND
1.4	LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES
1.5	FINANCES AND RESOURCES
2.0	PROMOTION AND CONSERVATION
2.1	EDUCATION AND INFORMATION
3.0	PROTECTION ENHANCEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ASSOCIATED FEATURES
3.1	LIAISON AND PROVISION OF ADVICE
3.2	REGULATION AND PLANNING
3.3	ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND APPRAISAL
3.4	SPECIES AND HABITAT PROTECTION
3.5	HABITAT IMPROVEMENT AND RIVER REHABILITATION
3.6	COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS
3.7	'NUISANCE' SPECIES WHICH IMPACT ON THE AGENCY'S OPERATIONS
3.8	ARCHAEOLOGY AND FEATURES OF HISTORIC AND ENGINEERING INTEREST
4.0	ASSESSING AND MONITORING CONSERVATION WITHIN THE WATER ENVIRONMENT
4.1	SURVEYING
4.2	INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
5.0	CONCLUSION

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

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NORTH EAST REGION

Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road,  
Newcastle Business Park,  
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE4 7AR

# Summary of

The Agency has a general duty to promote conservation in respect of the aquatic environment and associated land. It also has a specific duty to further conservation of the water environment and to have regard to conservation of the wider environment in relation to its activities.

## EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

The Agency has an important role to play in increasing public awareness of the significance and value of the environment, and the need to protect and enhance it.

The Region will promote the value and enjoyment of the environment and raising awareness, understanding and consideration of the issues involved in protecting and enhancing it. It will work with others to maximise promotional and educational opportunities associated with the environment.

## LIAISON AND PROVISION OF ADVICE

The Region recognises that it has a clear role to play in the dissemination of expertise relating to conservation and management of the environment, both internally and externally.

The Region will ensure that expert conservation advice is available internally to all functions and provide advice and expertise to the public and external bodies as requested.

## REGULATION AND PLANNING

The Agency has a clear role in respect of regulating the most polluting, or technically complex, processes in air, land or water and issuing relevant water abstraction licences. It is also a consultee for certain planning applications and has an internal mechanism for the integrated delivery of environmental improvements through the Local Environment Agency Planning (LEAPs) process.

The Region will impose conditions and make recommendations on authorisations, licences and consents in order to protect and enhance the environment. In its role as a planning consultee, it will highlight the value of the environment and advise on actions to conserve and enhance it. It will also ensure that conservation objectives are supported through the LEAPs process.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND APPRAISAL

Environmental appraisal is a process which aims to ensure that environmental impacts of schemes are identified prior to permission being granted or work carried out, so that proposals can be incorporated to minimise or avoid any adverse impacts.

The Region will carry out environmental appraisal on all its own capital and maintenance works. Expert conservation advice will be provided to ensure the satisfactory production of subsequent environmental reports or statements.

## SPECIES AND HABITAT PROTECTION

It is important to protect those species and habitats that are endangered or threatened for this and future generations to enjoy.

The Agency will fulfil its role as competent authority under the Habitats Directive and ensure the protection and enhancement of species and habitats during its operations.

## HABITAT IMPROVEMENT AND RIVER REHABILITATION

The quality of our rivers and their surrounding environment has been steadily degraded through land use changes and engineering works.

The Region will raise awareness of land use issues and undertake habitat improvement and river rehabilitation schemes on a prioritised basis throughout the Region according to the benefits to be derived from the work.

## COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

The Agency is limited in both its resources and powers and cannot work alone to protect and enhance the water environment. Many other bodies and organisations have responsibilities to the water environment and a role to play in improving it.

The Region will seek collaborative partnerships in all conservation activities.

# Main Points

## 'NUISANCE' SPECIES WHICH IMPACT ON THE AGENCY'S OPERATIONS

Under certain conditions, native and, more often, alien or introduced species become a 'nuisance' to a variety of aspects of river, lake or coastal management, including conservation.

The Region will seek to protect catchments and watercourses from the inadvertent introduction or spread of invasive plants by close liaison with planners, developers, landowners and operational functions within the Agency.



Thorpe Marsh Ponds

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND FEATURES OF HISTORIC AND ENGINEERING INTEREST

The Agency is entrusted with the protection, enhancement and wise management of buildings, sites and objects of archaeological, architectural, historic or engineering interest in carrying out our duties.

The Region will ensure that the Agency's regulatory, operational and advisory activities take full account of the need to protect these features.

## SURVEYING


In order to carry out its statutory duty to further conservation, it is essential that the Agency first understands the environment in which it operates and the value of this resource.

The Region will implement effective standard methods to describe, classify and monitor the environment.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

It is important that environmental data held within the Agency is managed in an ordered and accessible manner and can be readily analysed to provide expert advice on the status of the environment, best future management and the potential impact of any proposed developments/schemes.

The Region will establish an effective, accessible and up-to-date system for the storage, analysis and retrieval of conservation data.



“The principal aim of the Agency  
is to protect and  
enhance the environment”

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

### PRINCIPAL AIM

Our principal aim for conservation is to help protect the best conservation assets and improve the rest, for the benefit of the common good. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

### MAIN OBJECTIVES

The following objectives underpin our principal aim:

- making sure we take full account of conservation before taking policy and operational decisions;
- giving priority to the protection of statutory sites and implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan;
- setting an example, by demonstrating through our own work, the benefits of best environmental practice for conservation of wider countryside;
- clearly demonstrating how we apply conservation criteria when considering activities we authorise;
- taking a lead in influencing and facilitating action to promote the conservation of key water-related habitats and species;
- influencing, as both national and local government level, guidance and plans for rural and urban areas, to the benefit of conservation as a whole.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Aims

1.1.1 The Environment Agency is the guardian of the environment and is entrusted with conservation responsibilities in respect of wildlife, landscape and natural beauty, geological and physiological features, buildings and other objects of archaeological, architectural, engineering or historic interest. Conservation is an umbrella duty which encompasses all the activities of the Agency.

1.1.2 The principal aim of the Agency is to protect and enhance the environment, taken as a whole, in such a way as to contribute towards sustainable development. This will be achieved either directly, through the Agency's own operational and regulatory activities, or by working with or influencing the activities of others.

1.1.3 This document aims to:-

- Define a strategy for Conservation within the North East Region;
- Provide background for informed discussion and appropriate action on conservation within the region;
- Provide the basis for clear and cohesive local input into conservation;
- Identify how organisations with overlapping responsibilities can support conservation of the water environment;

1.1.4 The underlying principles of this strategy are to:-



River Derwent Near Hutton

- **Assess and monitor** the conservation status of inland and coastal waters and associated lands;
- Ensure that the Agency's regulatory, operational and advisory activities take full account of the need to sustain, to enhance, and where applicable, to further conservation;
- Promote conservation to enhance the quality of the environment for the benefit of wildlife and people.

### 1.2 Relationships

1.2.1 This document supports the National Conservation Strategy and provides a strategic framework for Local Environment Agency Plans and Area Business Plans, within which specific actions and targets will be identified.

1.2.2 This is one of a series of documents which set out the strategic framework for Fisheries, Recreation, Conservation and Navigation (FRCN) in this Region.

### 1.3 Background

1.3.1 Conservation is the protection and management of natural and man-made features and wildlife, particularly those of special interest, to ensure that the resource will be valued and made available for the benefit of future as well as present generations.

1.3.2 The North East Region has a rich diversity of wildlife habitats, supporting a great variety of plants and animals. In recognition of this resource, over 500 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) have been designated under UK legislation, covering almost 2000 km<sup>2</sup>, or 18% of the current resource of England and Wales. Fifteen of these sites have also been recognised as being of international importance and have been designated as Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive. A further fourteen are proposed for designation as Special Areas for Conservation under the Habitats Directive.

1.3.3 The Region is also endowed with a rich variety of landscapes and areas of natural beauty. As such, over 2000km<sup>2</sup> of the Region are designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and almost 200km of the coastline as Heritage Coast. Four National Parks also fall wholly or partially within the Region.

1.3.4 There are many features of archaeological and architectural significance within the Region, dating from the prehistoric period (Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages) to the modern day era. Many of these features have been recognised by English Heritage and designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

### 1.4 Legal Responsibilities

1.4.1 The duties of the Agency with regard to Conservation are contained in sections 6,7,8 and 9 of the Environment Act 1995. Section 6(1) places a general duty on the Agency, with respect to the aquatic environment and associated land, to promote conservation to the extent that the Agency deems desirable. Section 7 imposes specific conservation duties on all the Agency's functions in respect of proposals relating to their activities. The

Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) functions are required to have regard to conservation and the Water Management functions (ie Flood Defence, Water Resources and FRCN) have a duty to further conservation. The expression 'to further' requires a positive obligation towards conservation. Having regard to conservation requires the production of an auditable trail of how, and to what extent, conservation duties have been taken into account.



Upper Tees

1.4.2 Under section 8 the Agency has a duty to consult English Nature and the National Parks Authority before carrying out or authorising any activities which appear likely to damage the special interest of notified sites.

1.4.3 Practical guidance in respect of the Agency's environmental duties is given in a Code of Practice on Conservation, Access and Recreation approved by the Minister under section 9 of the Act. The Agency is also expected to follow the Conservation Guidelines for Drainage Authorities, issued by MAFF, DoE and the Welsh Office.

1.4.4 Other key conservation legislation relating to development control, environmental assessment and the protection of notified sites and species are of direct relevance to the Agency, eg the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 etc. The Agency has an important role as a statutory consultee in relation to this legislation. There is, however, a whole raft of legislation and associated technical guidance which impinges on the Agency's activities and hence its duty to further conservation, eg DoE Planning Policy Guidance note on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16) 1990, MAFF/DoE/WO Conservation Guidelines for Drainage Authorities, 1991 etc.

1.4.5 The legislation and technical guidance which impinges on the Agency's activities is outlined in appendix 1.

## 1.5 Finances and Resources

1.5.1 The majority of the Agency's conservation work is funded through its operational and regulatory activities, eg revenue raised through water abstraction licences, discharge consents and incorporation of environmental enhancements into flood defence schemes.

1.5.2 Some specific conservation projects are funded entirely, or partially in collaboration with others, by Grant-In-Aid from the Department of Environment.

1.5.3 In undertaking its activities the Agency will seek joint funding from external organisations and landowners as part of the collaborative process. It will also take opportunities to obtain matching funding from Lottery and European funds.

1.5.4 To maximise the benefit from Grant-In-Aid this Region will promote an objective review of funding needs and allocations.

1.5.5 The Region will ensure that the service it provides is effective, efficient and focused on achieving real, identifiable and measurable benefit for the environment.

1.5.6 The fulfilment of the Agency's objective towards conservation is guided and supported by co-ordinated teams of dedicated and expert conservation staff.

## 2.0 Promotion and Conservation

### 2.1 Education and Information

2.1.1 The Agency has an important and active role to play in increasing public awareness of the significance and value of the environment, and the need to protect and enhance it. Through the provision of specialist conservation information and education material, the important aspects and issues of the environment can be highlighted and explained.

2.1.2 There is also an opportunity to explain how the Agency and others contribute to the protection and enhancement of the water environment, in order to gain support for such works and facilitate further improvements.

2.1.3 Educational organisations (eg schools), local environmental groups, and advisory and user groups have a key role to play in promoting consideration of the environment and the Agency will actively support these efforts.

#### 2.1.4 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- raise awareness, understanding and consideration of the issues involved in

protecting and enhancing the environment;

- promote the value and enjoyment of the environment;
- work with others whose activities and responsibilities relate to the environment, to produce promotional material;
- provide information through literature and presentations to the general public, external bodies and schools on conservation matters relating to the environment;
- maximise promotional and educational opportunities associated with environmental enhancements achieved through collaboration with others.

## 3.0 Protection Enhancement of the Environment and Associated Features.

### 3.1 Liaison and Provision of Advice

3.1.1 The conservation duties of the Agency are applicable when it is formulating or considering proposals relating to any of its functions. Internal liaison is essential to maintain effective links in order to provide an accessible source of expertise for local operational and regulatory staff. This process ensures that proper consideration is given to conservation issues, that the potential environmental impact of all operational and regulatory activities are assessed, and that any potential conflict between conservation and other functions can be resolved at an early stage. This ensures that the environment benefits wherever possible from all internal activities. Conservation staff provide environmental interpretation, advice on best environmental working practice and management and maintain an independent overview to other functions.

3.1.2 Effective liaison with, and provision of advice to, external agencies is equally important. The liaison process provides the opportunity for a two-way flow of information, knowledge and experience to be maintained and developed, reducing duplication of effort and the potential for conflict, and resulting in a net benefit to the environment and all those involved in the process. The provision of advice ensures that other organisations and individuals working within the environment employ best environmental working practices which result in a net benefit to the environment, and complement and extend the work of the Agency. It also raises awareness of environmental opportunities and impacts.



Giant Hogweed

3.1.3 The Region recognises that it has a clear role to play in the dissemination of expertise relating to conservation and management of the water environment and the wider environment where applicable. It is committed to fulfilling this obligation in a responsive and effective manner.

#### 3.1.4 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- ensure that expert conservation advice is available internally to all functions;
- provide advice and conservation expertise to the public and external bodies as requested and in accordance with the customer charter;
- develop and maintain effective liaison and communication links with external bodies.

## 3.2 Regulation and Planning

3.2.1 Conservation of the environment can be achieved and advanced through a variety of measures to do with improving water and air quality, setting consistent standards for waste management, provision of satisfactory river flows and water levels, and management of habitat. The powers that the Agency has in respect of these issues will be used as effectively as possible. The role of the Agency in this respect includes regulating the most polluting, or technically complex, processes in air, land or water through its PPC functions; regulating the treatment, storage, movement and disposal of controlled waste through setting consistent waste management standards and imposing obligations on those who produce waste to re-use, recover or recycle products and materials; the protection of river flows through the issue of relevant water abstraction licences; improvement in water quality by means of effective discharge consents; and carrying out proactive habitat management in the course of all its operational activities.

3.2.2 Many developments within the region, such as urban development, culverting, land use changes etc, can have a detrimental effect on the water environment. In the majority of cases, the detrimental effect can be minimised by the application of sensitive construction

practices, appropriate timing of works and general habitat/landscape enhancements. Alternative, sympathetic techniques and solutions can also be employed to limit any harmful effects. Where the impact of a development cannot be minimised using the above approaches, mitigation through compensatory works can be sought.

**3.2.3** The preparation of development plans and the development control process are governed by existing planning legislation (namely the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended). Section 54a of the Act states that planning applications should be decided in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the decision of the local planning authority in respect of any specific development can determine the impact on the environment. In its role as a planning consultee, the Agency will highlight the value of the environment, identify impacts on it and advise on actions to conserve and enhance it.

**3.2.4** Within the Agency, Local Environment Agency Planning (LEAP) provides a non-statutory mechanism for the integrated delivery of environmental improvements and maintenance either through direct action by the Agency, or by influencing other key stakeholders eg Local Authorities. This process identifies environmental objectives which will protect the resources of air, land, water, wildlife and heritage, together with the actions necessary for the Agency, and others, through negotiation and agreement, to achieve them.

### 3.2.5 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- impose conditions and make recommendations on authorisations, licences and consents in order to protect and enhance the environment;
- maximise potential benefit to the environment when commenting on draft development plans and planning applications by suggesting ways to incorporate and implement enhancement opportunities;
- work directly, and where possible at an early stage, with planning authorities and developers to identify and mitigate the impacts of major schemes, and incorporate environmental enhancements;
- ensure conservation objectives are supported in the LEAPs process.

## 3.3 Environmental Assessment and Appraisal

**3.3.1** It is important to ensure environmental concerns are addressed at the appropriate level of detail for all projects undertaken by the Agency. Environmental appraisal is a process which aims to ensure that environmental impacts of schemes are identified prior to permission being granted or work carried out, so that proposals can be incorporated to minimise or avoid any adverse impacts. It may involve just a phone call to environmental staff or more protracted discussions, site visits and data gathering. A preliminary appraisal may lead to formal Environmental Assessment if it is thought that harmful effects cannot be minimised sufficiently and the project will have significant impact. The environmental assessment process should ensure that the chosen option is environmentally as well as technically and economically acceptable.

**3.3.2** The EU Directive ( 85/337/EEC ) and UK legislation (Statutory Instruments SI 1199 and SI 1217) requires Environmental Assessments to be carried out on schemes which could have significant environmental impact and require a formal Environmental Statement to be produced. The Land Drainage Improvement at Work (Assessments of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988 (SI 1217) imposes upon the Agency the obligation to consider whether features such as the nature, size or location of any proposed works are likely to have a significant effect and thus ought to be subject to Environmental Assessment. Such assessment is also necessary for new works which require planning permission, under SI 1199, the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988. These considerations cover all capital schemes for all functions. On smaller projects which do not have significant impact, informal environmental appraisals are acceptable and need to be considered.

**3.3.3** As part of the Region's commitment to the environment and environmental assessment process, expert conservation support will be provided to ensure the satisfactory production of these statements and reports.

### 3.3.4 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- carry out an environmental appraisal on all its own capital and maintenance works and undertake any detailed assessment which is required under Environmental Assessment or Planning legislation;

- define standards for the quality of environmental statements/reports and ensure compliance in all documents produced.

## 3.4 Species and Habitat Protection

**3.4.1** When species or habitats are lost, the ability of this and future generations to experience and enjoy nature are diminished and the pool of



*Pipistrelle Bat*

genetic resources, from which natural evolution can develop, is reduced. It is important to promote an understanding of wildlife and an awareness of the threats to it, and to protect those species or habitats that are endangered or declining.

**3.4.2** Areas or sites of high conservation interest are currently protected by a variety of different designations. The most common designations are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are of national significance and Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) which are of significance at county level. Such sites are important in ensuring the protection of all types of habitat. A Memorandum of Understanding on river SSSIs has been drawn up between the Agency and English Nature to establish a mutual understanding and common purpose regarding the protection and management of these notified rivers.

**3.4.3** Rare plants and animals associated with a wide range of habitats are also specifically protected. To date, the protection of these species and habitats has largely been achieved through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and various international agreements and conventions (see appendix 1). More recent legislation includes the Habitats Directive which, in conjunction with the Birds Directive, seeks to contribute to biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and wild species through a network of designated sites within the European Union.

3.4.4 In 1992 the UK, along with 150 other nations, signed the Convention on Biological Diversity, making a commitment to do something to stop the loss of plants, animals and their habitats. One of the main commitments of the Biodiversity Convention was that each contracting party shall, as far as possible and appropriate, rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems and promote the recovery of threatened species, through the development and implementation of plans and other management strategies. In response to the Convention, the UK Action Plan was launched in 1994. Action Plans have been produced for 116 species and 14 habitats, clearly identifying specific actions and agencies responsible for their implementation. Of the species and habitats listed, the Agency is a Contact Point for 12 species and chalk streams and a Lead Agency for 11 species and chalk streams (see appendix 2). The Agency will also have a key part to play in many other species and habitat plans (approximately 100 actions in 60 plans), because of its wide-ranging environmental protection responsibilities. Implementation of these actions within the Agency will be driven through the LEAPs process, with the aim of focusing resources to conserve and enhance biodiversity by means of local partnerships, taking account of both local and national priorities. Some LEAPs will cover more than one local authority area and some species will occur in more than one LEAP, hence close liaison will be needed between the Agency and local authorities, to ensure a consistent approach.

3.4.5 The Agency's own operational activities have the potential for causing significant impact on the environment. In those cases where adverse impact is unavoidable, mitigation and enhancement measures must be undertaken. All activities must be carried out in compliance with the raft of conservation legislation that is of direct or indirect relevance to the Agency (see appendix 1).

### 3.4.6 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- ensure the protection of species and habitats during its operations;
- ensure that the Agency fulfils its role as the competent authority under the Habitats Directive;
- pursue the enhancement of existing habitats and species through improved maintenance and best practice during Agency activities, and encourage others to do the same;
- create and encourage new opportunities for species and habitats;

- work with the UK Biodiversity Action Plan to achieve targets relevant to the water environment;
- assist with measures to protect rare native species associated with the water and related environments, in collaboration with others;
- support other organisations in the protection of species and habitats where their aims and objectives are compatible with those of the Agency;
- take into account any historical evidence relating to the nature of the site when considering enhancement or rehabilitation of sites.

### 3.5 Habitat Improvement and River Rehabilitation

3.5.1 The quality of our rivers and their surrounding environment has been steadily degraded through straightening, deepening, diversion and containment. Uplands, river valleys and floodplains have become more intensively farmed or developed, resulting in the loss of wildlife, habitat and landscape quality.



River Skerne Restoration

3.5.2 The Agency has an obligation under the Biodiversity Convention which includes the need to rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems and promote the recovery of threatened species.

3.5.3 The Agency is reviewing the current conservation potential of its own land-holdings and will implement site management plans to sustain and enhance this interest. Establishing nature reserves on suitable land will be fully considered as part of this process.

3.5.4 Habitat improvements to increase the wildlife diversity of a site or improvements for one particular species will normally be carried out in collaboration with other organisations. The Agency will undertake such improvements as part of its operational activities in the environment, and where appropriate resources become available, take the opportunity to undertake rehabilitation projects. It should also be looked at in conjunction with long-term flood defence plans and general improvements in operational practices. The support for these schemes will be determined on the basis of the benefit to be derived from the work and will be considered during the Agency's LEAP process.

### 3.5.5 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- raise awareness of land use issues;
- identify and undertake habitat improvement and river rehabilitation schemes on a prioritised basis throughout the region according to the benefits to be derived from the work and seize opportunities when

resources become available;

- seek partnerships with external bodies to carry out habitat and landscape improvement works;
- develop and implement site management plans to sustain and enhance conservation potential for all suitable Agency land holdings.

### 3.6 Collaboration with External Organisations

3.6.1 The Agency is limited in both its resources and powers and cannot work alone to protect and enhance the water environment. Many other bodies and organisations have responsibilities to the water environment and a role to play in improving it.

3.6.2 Partnerships, in the form of pooled resources and expertise, are often the key to success when addressing a major challenge.

3.6.3 Collaboration can bring about significant environmental benefits, provide greater flexibility and release funding which would not otherwise be available to the Agency. It can also bring in new skills to the Agency through working with external organisations, and may provide increased educational and promotional opportunities.



Gibson Mill

3.6.4 Regional FRCN guidelines have been developed to assist with the appraisal of projects, to ensure consistent and effective targeting of resources (see appendix 3).

#### 3.6.5 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- ensure effective targeting of resources through consistent prioritisation of projects based on the recommendations laid out in the Regional FRCN guidelines;
- maximise the efficiency of the Agency's inputs (financial, technical and material) whilst still enabling successful delivery of the project;
- seek collaborative partnerships in all conservation activities.

### 3.7 'Nuisance' Species Which Impact on the Agency's Operations

3.7.1 Under certain conditions, native and, more often, alien or introduced species become a 'nuisance' to a variety of aspects of river, lake or coastal management, including conservation. These 'nuisance' species may affect nature conservation interests by having a negative impact on more valued species or ecosystems and the Agency needs to consider the most appropriate management techniques to deal with them. The identification of these species is likely to be particularly Agency specific, being based to some extent on their impact on the Agency's operations.

3.7.2 The Agency has completed or is in the process of carrying out R&D into most of these species. Except in very isolated areas the control of these species is beyond the resources of the Agency alone. Such work must be undertaken in conjunction with other functions and organisations.

#### 3.7.3 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- assess the potential impact of 'nuisance' species in the water environment and identify the most effective methods for dealing with them;
- undertake appropriate control measures in those areas where 'nuisance' species have been identified as causing specific operational problems or are having an adverse impact on the water environment in a limited area;
- implement a more extensive control strategy, with the objective of eliminating nuisance species from the catchment or watercourse, in collaboration with other organisations, and where it is necessary, practical and cost effective to do so;
- raise awareness of 'nuisance' species and their control in order to minimise their spread;
- seek to protect catchments and watercourses from the inadvertent introduction or spread of invasive plants by close liaison with planners, developers, landowners and operational functions within the Agency.



RMS Survey

### 3.8 Archaeology and Features of Historic and Engineering Interest

3.8.1 The Agency is entrusted with the protection, enhancement and wise management of buildings, sites and objects of archaeological, architectural, historic or engineering interest in carrying out its duties. These responsibilities relate to all functions of the Agency.

3.8.2 These statutory duties are in place due to the wide range of activities which the Agency undertakes and their potential impact on archaeology and other features of interest. Practically every aspect of the Agency's work has a potential impact on these features, eg the alleviation or re-distribution of water may protect sites by maintaining suitable water level, but fluctuations in water level, changes in water quality and sedimentation patterns may damage sites.

3.8.3 In all aspects of the Agency's work, these features should be given equal consideration to that of nature conservation and landscape.

#### 3.8.4 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- ensure that the Agency's regulatory, operational and advisory activities take full account of the need to protect and conserve buildings, sites and objects of archaeological, architectural, historic or engineering interest;
- promote awareness within the Agency of its duty to such historic features of interest.

## 4.0 Assessing and Monitoring Conservation within the Water Environment

### 4.1 Surveying

4.1.1 In order to carry out its statutory duty to further conservation, it is essential that the Agency first understands the environment in which it operates and the value of this resource. This depends on the development and implementation of effective standard methods to describe, classify and monitor the environment. In this way scarce resources can be effectively targeted to protect the best sites and rehabilitate degraded areas.

4.1.2 Two survey methods have been developed specifically to describe and classify rivers, and are employed within the region at present. They are River Corridor Surveys (RCS) and River Habitat Surveys (RHS).

4.1.3 RCS was developed over ten years ago when the prime requirement was to provide information for stretches of river where management work was proposed so that the most important habitat features and rare communities could be conserved and maximum benefit derived from the potential for enhancing degraded habitats. Whilst this remains the prime use of the data collected, it can be used in a variety of other ways, such as auditing works and post project appraisal. RCS is principally a map-based system of surveying 500m lengths of river. It provides information about the location of habitats and plant assemblages within river channels, margins, banks, riparian zones and corridors.

4.1.4 RHS aims to produce a simple classification of rivers based on the physical features of the channel, banks, and riparian corridor. The national reference network of sites provides an objective baseline for the development of river types and a national inventory of river habitat features, which can be statistically analysed, compared and readily accessed. Like RCS this system is based on 500m sample units, and so the two can be undertaken together, to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the river corridor.

4.1.5 In specific cases, such as the need for environmental assessment of major new works, data gathering may need to be more extensive and/or more intensive than the above. These surveys should follow approved standard methodologies, details of which can be found in R & D Note 107 "Review of Conservation Survey Methodologies." In addition, aerial photographs and phase I habitat survey information should be used at every available opportunity.

### 4.1.6 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- contribute fully to the development and maintenance of the national RHS database;
- undertake additional RHS where necessary for Local Environment Agency Plans, flood defence, water resource and planning issues;
- ensure that all River Habitat Surveys are undertaken by accredited surveyors;
- undertake specific assessments and investigations where necessary, using approved methods;



River Derwent at West Ayton

- carry out further surveying, in conjunction with external bodies, where mutual benefits are derived.

### 4.2 Information Management

4.2.1 In order to provide an efficient, effective and timely service it is important that environmental data held within the Agency is managed in an ordered and accessible manner. This data can then be readily analysed to provide expert advice on the status of the environment, best future management and the potential impact of any proposed developments/schemes.

4.2.2 Under the EC Directive on Freedom of Access to Information on the Environment, the Agency is obliged to ensure freedom of access to, and dissemination of, this information where it is held in an accessible form.

### 4.2.3 RESOLUTIONS

This Region will:

- establish an effective, accessible and up-to-date system for the storage, analysis and retrieval of conservation data;
- develop links with other organisations to enable access to a wider range of environmental and conservation information;
- provide data to external bodies in compliance with the EC Directive on the Freedom of Access to Information on the environment.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This document outlines the approach of the Environment Agency, North East Region, to fulfilling its duties in relation to conservation within the region.

5.2 The North East Region urges those authorities and agencies whose responsibilities and activities may affect the water environment to endorse the principles presented within this document and to establish policies and practices which develop the objectives of the Region and advance the conservation of wildlife and features within it.

### 5.3 The Region is committed to:-

- discharging its responsibilities to sustain and enhance conservation, within the limits of its resources and relevant legislation, through the regulation of all the Agency's activities and the provision of expert advice and support;
- promoting conservation to enhance the quality of the aquatic environment for the benefit of wildlife and people;
- local consultation and the effective co-ordination of all activities.

# Appendix 1

## CONSERVATION LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE WHICH IMPINGES ON THE AGENCY'S ACTIVITIES.

### KEY LEGISLATION

Key conservation legislation directly relevant to the Agency includes:

#### Environment Act 1995

Section 6(1) imposes a general duty on the Agency to promote, to such extent as it considers desirable,:



River Skirfare

(i) the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and amenity of inland and coastal waters and of land associated with such waters

(ii) conservation of flora and fauna which are dependent on an aquatic environment.

In respect of all functions other than pollution control section 7(1)(a) states the Agency must exercise any power so as to further the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and the conservation of flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest, but only so far as they are consistent with the purposes of any enactment relating to its functions and the objective of achieving sustainable development (which is set out in section 4 of the Act).

In addition, by virtue of section 7(1)(b), when formulating or considering proposals relating to any of its pollution control functions (as defined in section 5 of the Act) the Agency must have regard to the desirability of conserving and enhancing natural beauty and of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest.

Under section 7(1)(c) the Agency is obliged in formulating or considering any proposals relating to any of its functions to:

(i) have regard to the desirability of protecting and conserving buildings, sites, and objects of archaeological, architectural, engineering or historic interest

(ii) take into account any effect which the proposals may have on the beauty or amenity of any rural or urban area or on any such flora, fauna, features, buildings, sites or objects.

Under section 8(1) the Nature Conservancy Council for England (English Nature) and the Countryside Council for Wales are obliged to inform the Agency of any land which in their opinion is both:

(i) of special interest by reason of its flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features, and;

(ii) may be affected by activities carried out or authorised by the Agency.

Section 8(2) places similar obligations on National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority in respect of land which they consider to be of particular importance.

In turn, section 8(3) imposes a duty on the Agency to notify the above bodies in advance before carrying out or authorising any activities which appear likely to damage the special interest of the land in question, except in an emergency.

Section 9(2) obliges the Agency when carrying out any of its duties under section 6(1), 7 or 8 to have regard to any Code of Practice approved under section 9(1). The Code of Practice contains three sections which are relevant to conservation:

Section I deals with general policies and procedures for river basin management, including conservation;

Section II details recommendations for conserving and enhancing the environment in terms of landscape, wildlife, and the man-made heritage;

Section V makes recommendations for special sites and areas: Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and Listed Buildings.

## Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act, as amended, provides the cornerstone for nature conservation legislation. In addition to detailing procedures with regard to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), this Act gives protection to certain species. Much of this protection is contained in the Schedules to the Act, which are periodically updated.

## Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural and Semi-Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora)

Implementation of this Directive, through Statutory Instrument No 2716 The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994, is the most significant piece of nature conservation legislation since the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It introduces special conservation measures for habitats of certain types and supporting certain rare species. It also sets out a more general requirement to maintain rare species and protect threatened habitats.

## EC Directive 85/337/EEC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment

This Directive has been implemented in the UK by a number of Statutory Instruments, of which the most important for the Agency are:

## Land Drainage Improvement Works (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations SI 1988 No 1217

This Regulation gives effect to the Directive with respect to improvements to land drainage and flood defence work which, as permitted development, do not require planning permission. Where these operations are likely to have a significant effect on the environment, an Environmental Assessment (EA) must be carried out. The Schedule to the regulations specifies the type of information required in the EA.

## Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations SI 1988 No 11

These Regulations give effect to the Directive with respect to projects requiring planning permission, where they are likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

### **Land Drainage Act, 1994, Sections 61A and 61C**

This Act places a duty on the Agency, internal drainage boards and local authorities to have regard to the environment and conservation when considering or carrying out land drainage and flood defence proposals. There is also a requirement to consult statutory environmental bodies in relation to activities that could adversely affect sites of special interest notified to them by those bodies.

### **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979**

This Act provides for the compilation and maintenance of a schedule of Ancient Monuments. Special consent is required from DoE/WO before any potentially damaging works are carried out.

### **Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

Local planning is governed by this Act. It sets down procedures for the preparation of statutory Structure Plans and Local Plans, which include conservation related elements. The Agency is a statutory consultee in this process and is bound by its duty to further conservation when providing advice.

This Act empowers local planning authorities to formulate Tree Preservation Orders for amenity purposes. In Conservation Areas, all trees may be so protected. Local authority permission must be sought before works affecting these trees are carried out, but the Agency can avoid seeking such permission if the works are for operational purposes.

### **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

This Act provides for the maintenance of lists of buildings of special interest (Listed Buildings), for which local authority consent is required for any works potentially detrimental to their character. It also provides for designation of Conservation Areas (CAs) by local planning authorities. Within these areas, planning controls are stricter and all buildings and trees are protected, so demolition requires a special consent (Conservation Area Consent).

### **Planning and Compensation Act 1991**

This Act requires development plans to include policies on the conservation of

natural beauty and amenity. By replacing a general presumption in favour of development with a presumption in favour of development as defined in the development plan, it has greatly strengthened development control by local authorities.

### **Legislation Relating to Conservation Bodies and Areas Administered by Them**

The responsibilities and functions of statutory conservation organisations, namely the NCC (and its successor bodies), the Countryside Commission, the National Parks Authorities and the Broads Authority, are set out in several acts which date from 1949.

### **National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949**

Establishment of National Parks, National Nature Reserves, and SSSIs. Local authorities empowered to create Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).

### **Countryside Act 1968**

Duty imposed on government departments and public bodies with respect to conservation of natural beauty and amenity. Establishment of Countryside



Staithes

Commission. Provision for SSSI management by NCC.

### **Protection of Wrecks Act 1973**

This Act established restricted areas around shipwrecks of historical, archaeological and artistic importance. The consent of the Department of National Heritage is required to survey or excavate these sites. Forms and advice are also available from ADU.

### **National Heritage Act 1983**

Establishment of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage) and its Welsh equivalent, Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments. Amendment of parts of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

### **Environmental Protection Act 1990**

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 established 3 conservation councils and the JNCC to replace the NCC.

### **Other Relevant Conservation Legislation**

#### **Coast Protection Act 1949**

Grant aid from MAFF/WO for coastal protection works; NCC (now EN/CCW) a statutory consultee.



River Derwent at West Ayton

### **Conservation of Seals Act 1970**

Protection of Grey and Common Seals during close seasons.

### **Badgers Act 1973 (as amended)**

Protection of badgers from killing or ill treatment.

### **Agriculture Act 1986**

Implementation of EC Directive 797/85/EEC, setting up ESAs and introducing payment for farmers willing to maintain or introduce environmentally beneficial farming practices. Specification of conservation responsibilities of Agriculture Minister.

### **Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Authority Act 1988**

Establishment of the Broads Authority, with functions similar to those of the National Park Authorities.

### **Badgers Act 1991**

This extends the protection given by the Badgers Act (1973). In particular, bodies undertaking developments in areas known to have badger setts must first obtain a licence from EN or CCW. MAFF/WOAO is the licensing authority for disturbance to badger setts as a result of flood defence works.

### **Statutory Instruments (SIs)**

**SI 1994 No 2716 Wildlife Countryside. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Regulations.** Implementation of Directive 92/43/EEC(c) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. (Referred to as the Habitats Directive).

**SI 1981 Ancient Monuments (Application for Scheduled Monuments Consent) Regulations 1981.** Form of application for consent to carry out works on scheduled monuments.

**SI 1986 No 1510 Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986.** Made the under Food and Environment Protection Act 1985. Protection of the aquatic environment from use and storage of pesticides (including herbicides).

**SI 1988 No 1813 Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988 (as amended).** Planning authorities required to consult EN/CCW before granting permission for land development

**(No 2) Regulations.** Implementation of Directive 85/337/EEC for harbour works below medium low water, for which planning consents are not needed, including works under the Coastal Protection Act 1949.

### **EC Directives and Associated Regulations**

**Regulation 797/85/EEC on Improving the Efficiency of Agricultural Structures.** Introduction of the concept of ESAs (Article 19).

**Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds.** Amongst other protection measures, the establishment of SPAs to conserve habitats of rare or vulnerable species and regularly occurring migratory species. In the UK (not Northern Ireland), these are already notified as SSSIs under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

**Directive 85/337/EEC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment.** Establishment of methodology, scope and application of EA procedures for development projects.

**Directive 90/313/EEC on the Freedom of Access to Information on the Environment.** Environmental information collected by public authorities to be freely available.

**Directive 91/271/EEC concerning Urban Waste Water Treatment.** Requirement for more stringent waste water treatment in 'sensitive areas'. These have not yet been defined in the UK but may include some SSSIs and other conservation areas.

**Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural and Semi-Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.** Introduction of special conservation measures for habitats of certain types and harbouring certain rare species. Also a more general requirement to maintain rare species and protect threatened habitats.

**Draft Directive on Ecological Quality of Surface Waters.** Will oblige Member State to draw up programmes for the assessment of all surface waters (including coastal waters) and their maintenance at or improvement to specified quality levels.

### **Guidance Documents and References**

#### **Government Guidance Documents**

#### **DoE Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG'S)**

PPGs are aimed primarily at planning authorities, although they contain much relevant information on legislation and policies.

**PPG 7** The countryside and the rural economy.

**PPG 9** Nature Conservation.

**PPG 12** Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance.

**PPG 16** Archaeology and Planning. (Separate WO version for Wales).

**PPG 17** Sport and Recreation. (Includes guidance on the interaction of nature conservation with sport and recreational issues).

**PPG 20** Coastal Planning.

### **DOE Circulars**

**DoE Circular 8/87 (1987).** Historic buildings and Conservation Areas - policy and procedures (WO Circular 61/81).

**DoE Circular 15/88 (1988).** Environmental Assessment (WO Circular 23/88).

**DoE Circular 30/92 (1992).** Development and Flood Risk Areas (MAFF Circular FD 1/92; WO Circular 68/92).

### **General Guidance**

**DoE/MAFF (1982).** Code of Guidance for Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

**MAFF (1985).** Guidelines for the Use of Herbicides on Weeds in or Near Watercourses and Lakes. MAFF Booklet 2078.

**DoE (1988).** The Green Belts.

**DoE/MAFF/WO (1989).** The Water Act 1989: Code of Practice on Conservation, Access and Recreation. 39pp.

**DoE/WO (1989).** Environmental Assessment: a guide to the procedures. 64pp.

**MAFF/DoE/WO (1991).** Conservation Guidelines for Drainage Authorities.

**DoE (1991).** Fit for the Future - a statement by the government on policies for the National Parks.

**DoE (1991).** Policy Appraisal and the Environment: a guide for government departments. 67pp.

**MAFF/English Nature/NRA (1992).** Environmental procedures for inland flood defence works. A guide for senior managers and decision makers in the



*Gibson Mill*

within a SSSI or in any consultation area around an SSSI defined by EN/CCW. Also required to consult with certain conservation bodies when considering planning applications.

**SI 1989 No 424 Harbour Works (Assessment of Environmental Effects)**

National Rivers Authority, Internal Drainage Boards and Local Authorities. 17pp.

MAFF/WO (1993). Strategy for Flood and Coastal Defence. MAFF publications. PB 1471.

MAFF (1993). Flood and Coastal Defence, Project Appraisal Guidance Notes. 63pp.

MAFF (1993). Coastal Defence and the Environment. A guide to good practice. 156pp.

MAFF (1993). Coastal Defence and the Environment. A strategic guide for managers and decision-makers in the National Rivers Authority, local authorities and other bodies with coastal responsibilities. 17pp.

MAFF (1994). Water Level Management Plans. A procedural guide for operating authorities. 23pp.

### International Agreements and Conventions

The 'Ramsar' Convention, known more formally as the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat, came into force in 1975. It is a world-wide convention but has had a positive impact on the conservation of wetlands in many European countries, 24 of which are contracting parties. One of the main commitments made by the contracting parties is to designate suitable wetlands within their territory for inclusion in a list of wetlands of international importance which is maintained by the Ramsar Bureau. They must also formulate and implement their planning procedures so as to promote the conservation of the wetlands inscribed in the list and, as far as possible, the wise use of wetlands in their territory.

The 'World Heritage' Convention, or the Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, entered into force in 1975. Over 80 countries are now contracting parties to the convention, the objective of which is the protection of natural and cultural areas of "outstanding universal value". These areas are selected by the World Heritage Committee and make up the World Heritage List or, for seriously threatened sites, the List of World Heritage in Danger. Each contracting party is obliged to take all possible measures to protect the sites included in the lists, and support for these efforts is available through the World Heritage Fund, to which all parties contribute. However, because the

convention aims to protect only the exceptionally valuable areas, its broad value for nature conservation will always be limited.

**Biosphere Reserves.** First promoted by UNESCO in 1974 as a worldwide network of sites protected for the purpose of conservation and exchange of scientific information. All the 13 British Biosphere Reserves (designated in 1976 and 1977) are also NNRs.



*Pond Dipping*

The Bonn Convention, or the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, came into effect in June 1982. The Convention was developed by the Council of Europe and now includes 25 contracting parties including most Western European countries, the European Community, Bulgaria and two West African countries - Burkina Faso and Senegal. In addition to the principle aim of ensuring the conservation of flora, fauna and their habitats, the convention seeks to encourage co-operation between contracting parties and to direct particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species, including migratory species. The species requiring either "strict protection" or protection are listed in three annexes. There is a standing committee with responsibility for monitoring the application of the convention which meets regularly and organises studies and seminars, as well as adopting recommendations on particular species and individual habitats of conservation importance.

The Bonn Convention, or the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, entered into force in November 1983. The convention arose from one of the recommendations of the

Action Plan adopted at the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972. One aim of the convention is to provide strict protection for a number of listed migratory species in danger of extinction in all or part of their range. There are firm conservation obligations on the contracting parties which are considered to fall into the range of the species concerned. The second main objective is to persuade the "range states" to conclude formal agreements for the

conservation and management of a second group of migratory species with an unfavourable conservation status which need or would benefit from international agreement. This group of species is listed in a second appendix. However, such agreements have proved difficult to negotiate and progress has been slow.

At the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, the Prime Minister signed the Biodiversity Convention, along with 150 other Heads of States and Government, making a commitment to do something to stop the loss of plants and animals and their habitat which were - and are - disappearing at an alarming rate. The Convention recognised that every country had its part to play in conserving the richness of life. The United Kingdom's response was the Biodiversity Action Plan, 1995, which took stock of the UK's biodiversity and identified a number of ways of doing something to protect it through targeted Species and Habitat Action Plans.

# Appendix 2

NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES



Otter

## PRINCIPAL AIM

Our principal aim for the conservation is to help protect the best conservation assets and improve the rest, for the benefit of the common good. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

## BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN SPECIES AND HABITATS RELEVANT TO THE AGENCY

### CONTACT POINT

Otter\*

Water Vole\*

White-Clawed Crayfish\*

Vendace

Glutinous Snail

Shining Rams-Horn Snail

Freshwater Snail, *Anisus Vorticulus*

Pea Mussel\*

Depressed River Mussel\*

Ribbon-Leaved Water Plantain

River Jelly Lichen

Chalk River Habitat\*

### LEAD PARTNER

Otter\* (EA/ Wildlife Trusts)

Allis Shad (EA/MAFF)

Twaite Shad EA/MAFF)

Vendace Glutinous Snail Southern Damselfly

Depressed River Mussel\*

Pea Mussel\* EA/SNH)

Pearl Mussel\*

Freshwater Snail - *A. vorticulus*

River Jelly Lichen

Ribboned-Leaved Water Plantain (EA/EN)

Chalk River Habitat\*

\*present in North East Region

Where the role of the Contact Point is to:

- stimulate action for the achievement of targets;
- set standards for monitoring and reporting progress;
- act as an initial contact point and to field general enquiries;
- agree the overall work programme with the Lead partner;
- report to the UK Biodiversity Group on progress, particularly where work is not to the agreed standard or progress maintained.

and the role of the Lead Partner is to:

- prepare work programmes;
- establish an information network for the plan and stimulate action;
- establish a partnership network with key sectors to ensure that the work programme may be delivered;
- direct resources and manage publicity;
- report progress.

# Appendix 3

## CRITERIA FOR EXTERNALLY LED COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

The following criteria are intended to aid in the selection of projects and to ensure a uniform, consistent and equitable approach to such projects by the Agency in the North East Region.

These criteria apply only to projects led by organisations other than the Agency. Collaborative projects which the Agency leads will require approval through normal project management procedures. Externally led collaborative projects where the Agency contribution exceeds £10,000 must also follow the Agency project management procedures in addition to meeting the criteria below.

### Definition

For the purposes of these criteria, the definition of a collaborative project as used for reporting OPMs is an external project with Agency input where each member of the partnership is essential to the success of the project.

### Criteria

1. A de minimus limit of £1,000 is placed on these criteria. Below this level the area officer involved in the collaboration may exercise judgement in determining the appropriateness of entering into the collaboration.
2. For all collaborations where the Agency input would amount to £10,000 or more, in addition to satisfying the criteria below, the project must be submitted for consideration at the Regional Ecology and Recreation Managers meeting in order to ensure that Regional and National priorities are being satisfied.
3. All projects must have a strong association with water, wetlands or land associated with water. Schemes on still waters, wetlands, canals and non-main rivers as well as main rivers can all be considered for Agency support.
4. The Agency contribution to any externally led project should not exceed 50% of the total cost of the project in accordance with DoE regulations. Where the Agency contribution is in terms of land or staff resources these should be costed at normal contractor rates.
5. The combined contributions of any DoE funded organisations (eg the Agency,

Countryside Commission, English Nature etc) should not exceed 50% of the total project cost. The remainder should be sought from other sources by the lead organisation. This is a requirement laid down by DoE.

6. Assurances must be given by the lead organisation regarding the viability of the proposal.
  7. There should be a clearly identified need for the project which can be supported by market research, surveys or other collected evidence. Only discrete, project based schemes may be considered. Non-specific financial support for organisations or sponsorship of individuals or events MUST NOT be considered due to the difficulty in monitoring and assessing spend and the risk of criticism over use of public funds for private gain.
  8. A simple cost-benefit analysis or justification report must be undertaken to show good value for money from the Agency input into the project (this could be part of SOD approval or PM1). This may be a comparison of costs against numbers of people estimated to benefit from additional facilities or a justification of the importance of created or protected habitat.
  9. The project must be shown to be environmentally acceptable and will not lead to the degradation of landscape or habitat. An environmental appraisal of the project should be undertaken.
  10. Consultation with other Agency functions (where applicable) should be sought at an early stage to avoid any conflict of interests. If any Agency tenants or licensees are likely to be affected by the project they must also be consulted. If it is likely that any adjacent interests may be affected, the lead organisation should be asked to consult fully with anyone who may be affected.
  11. Where work is to be undertaken by a contractor employed by the collaborating organisation, a specification should be written and details submitted to the Agency in advance of the work actually taking place. Selection of the contractor should be made giving due consideration to the cost, technical merit and competence of the potential contractors.
- (Note: Although we cannot impose our tendering procedures on external organisations, they must be able to show that the Agency is achieving best value for

money in its contribution to the project before Agency assistance can be provided).

12. The object or aim of any collaborative project must satisfy the same criteria as it would in order to be run as an in-house project. It must also fall within the priorities of the Agency in terms of the Area and also Regionally and Nationally.
13. Any recreation facilities created as a result of Agency collaboration must be made available with reasonable ease for public use. Any charges for use of facilities provided by the project shall be reasonable. They should not be used as or as part of a commercial business.
14. Where appropriate, suitable provision for the disabled or chronically sick MUST



Transporter Bridge Tees Estuary Teeside

- be incorporated into the project. It is particularly important to consider access and safety features for disabled people when designing the project.
15. Assurance should be sought in writing at the start of the collaboration that any signs, leaflets, publicity material, press releases, radio interviews etc relating to the project will make appropriate reference to the Agency. Where appropriate, a promotion campaign should be drawn up in consultation with the Agency PR department. Priority should be given to projects which raise the public profile of the Agency.
  16. No collaboration can be entered into retrospectively. Sufficient time should be allowed for the Agency to consider the project in advance of the start date.
  17. The Agency reserves the right to withdraw from or refuse support for any project.

## NORTH EAST REGION ADDRESSES

### REGIONAL OFFICE:

Environment Agency  
Rivers House  
21 Park Square South  
Leeds LS1 2QG  
Tel: 0113 244 0191  
Fax: 0113 246 1889  
Minicom: 01904 692 297

### NORTHUMBRIA AREA

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Tyneside House  
Skinnerburn Road  
Newcastle Business Park  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR  
Tel: 0191 203 4000  
Fax: 0191 203 4004  
Minicom: 01904 692 297

### DALES AREA

Environment Agency  
Coverdale House  
Amy Johnson Way  
Clifton Moor  
York YO3 4UZ  
Tel: 01904 692 296  
Fax: 01904 693 748  
Minicom: 01904 692 297

### RIDINGS AREA

Environment Agency  
Olympia House  
Gelderd Road  
Leeds LS12 6DD  
Tel: 0113 244 0191  
Fax: 0113 231 2116  
Minicom: 01904 692 297



For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

### ENVIRONMENT AGENCY GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE

**0645 333 111**

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

### ENVIRONMENT AGENCY EMERGENCY HOTLINE

**0800 80 70 60**



**ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY**



# Conservation Strategy