

General information about WATER

Water can include a range of surface water and groundwater bodies or features such as lakes/ lochs, reservoirs, streams, canals, wetlands, aquifers, estuaries, coastal waters and marine waters.

Plans may influence activities which have the potential to significantly affect different aspects of water such as its quality, quantity and hydromorphology, and could therefore compromise the delivery of these services.

Typical effects of human activities on water in Scotland and Northern Ireland may include:

- Rivers, lakes/ lochs, wetlands, estuaries and groundwater polluted by diffuse agricultural pollution;
- Urban rivers polluted by sewer overflows and contaminated run-off from roads;
- Rivers and lakes/ lochs affected by abstractions and the construction of dams for hydropower and drinking water supply;
- Rivers and estuaries where damage to the physical condition (hydromorphology) has been caused by urban development and agricultural intensification; and
- Increase in flood risk associated with development in flood plains and/ or coastal areas.

All waterbodies are classified on a five point scale from Bad to High status under the Water Framework Directive.

In Scotland, waterbody status is set out in the Scotland and Solway Tweed River Basin Plans. Annex 2 of these RBMPs provide an overview of waterbody status across the River Basin District, while the individual Area Management Plans provide much more detailed information.

A web-based interactive map powered by a geographical information system (GIS) which offers information on individual rivers lochs, lakes, estuaries, coastal water and groundwater and provides details on the condition of each water body is also available for Scottish waterbodies