



Harmoni-CA

How have the lessons learned from involving stakeholders shaped the River Basin Planning Strategy for England & Wales?

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Abstract:

In February 2006 the Environment Agency will publish its River Basin Planning (RBP) Framework. This will set the framework for implementation of the Water Framework Directive in England & Wales for the nine years from 2006 through to 2014.

Much of the work in preparing this framework has been the work of a dedicated team of policy analysts and scientists within the Environment Agency. Some started work on this as long as six years ago.

But the framework has not been written in isolation. Consistent with the Directive, there has already been substantial stakeholder involvement in shaping the framework. This presentation will address the different ways in which the Environment Agency has learned from this process of involvement, including impacts on the content of the framework itself.

Building on a previous paper¹, this presentation will:

- ◆ Provide an outline of the processes of stakeholder engagement at international, national, regional and local levels over the period, including:
 - local pathfinder projects (SMURF, PURE, Water4All, Cycleau, Stockbridge), mainly EU funded;
 - the EU pilot project in the Ribble River Basin (North West England) focusing on public participation and river basin management;
 - three rounds of workshops with national and regional stakeholders during 2003-2004, to test and develop our thinking about stakeholder engagement and river basin management;
 - a 3-month formal consultation on our draft River Basin Strategy during spring 2005;
 - a more intensive period of engagement with the national WFD stakeholder group during summer 2005;
 - involvement in the European research projects SLIM, HarmoniCOP and HarmoniCA.

- ◆ Reflect on key lessons learned from this engagement - and reflected in the final RBP strategy - about the role of integrated catchment science in river basin planning. These key lessons include:
 - the need to develop new modelling approaches which focus on the whole catchment;
 - the need to develop interdisciplinary approaches involving natural and social scientists working together;
 - the need for a much closer relationship between scientists, policy makers and water managers

- ◆ Discuss the institutional barriers and opportunities we have encountered in drawing out and agreeing the lessons from our engagement with stakeholders.

¹ Orr, P, Colvin, J, & King, D (2005) Involving stakeholders in integrated river basin planning in England & Wales. Presentation to the International Conference on Integrated Assessment of Water Resources and Global Change, Bonn, February 2005.