

SOUTH EASTERN RIVER BASIN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

INITIAL CHARACTERISATION REPORT

CONTENTS

Executive Summary

	Pg No.
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 CHARACTERISATION STUDIES	5
3.0 PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION	11
4.0 HUMAN ACTIVITIES	45
5.0 EXISTING MONITORING PROGRAMMES	60
6.0 EXISTING STATUS	71
7.0 ESTIMATED NUTRIENT LOAD BY SECTOR	143
8.0 OVERVIEW OF EXISTING WATER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	163
9.0 CONCLUSIONS	191
REFERENCES	196

Under Separate Cover

APPENDICES

- A. Ground Water Body Delineation
- B. Summary of Geology and Hydrogeology of the South Eastern River Basin District
- C. Flora and Fauna of the South Eastern River Basin District
- D. Extracts for EPA Kilkenny Regional Inspectorate's Analysis of River Water Quality in South-East Ireland 2001
- E. Details of Hydrometric Stations within the South Eastern River Basin District (Hydrometric Areas 11–17)

MAPS & REGISTERS

- Map 3.1 South Eastern River Basin District
 - Map 3.2 Principal Population Centres and Road Network
 - Map 3.3 Geographical Location
 - Map 3.4 Population Density
 - Map 3.5 Population Trends
 - Map 3.6 Topography
 - Map 3.7 Bedrock Geology
 - Map 3.8 Preliminary Vulnerability
 - Map 3.9 Soils by Association
 - Map 3.10 Rainfall Intensity and Gauges
 - Map 3.11 Potential Evapotranspiration
 - Map 3.12 Land Cover
 - Map 3.13 Special Protection Areas
 - Map 3.14 Special Areas of Conservation
 - Map 3.15 Natural Heritage Areas
 - Register 3.15 Natural Heritage Areas

 - Map 4.1 Wastewater Treatment Plants
 - Register 4.1 Wastewater Treatment Plant Register
 - Map 4.2 Section 4 Licensed Industries
 - Register 4.2 Section 4 Licensed Industries Register
 - Map 4.3 Section 16 Licensed Industries
 - Register 4.3 Section 16 Licensed Industries Register
 - Map 4.4 IPC Licensed Industries
 - Register 4.4 IPC Licensed Industries Register
-

Map 4.5	Licensed Waste Facilities
Register 4.5	Licensed Waste Facilities Register
Map 4.6	Water Abstractions
Map 4.7	Livestock Density
Map 4.8	Nitrate in Rivers
Map 4.9	Nitrate in Groundwaters
Map 4.10	Forestry
Map 4.11	Peatlands
Map 4.12	Active Mines, Pits and Quarries
Register 4.12	Active Mines, Pits and Quarries Register
Map 5.1	Biological Monitoring Sites
Register 5.1	Biological Monitoring Sites Register
Map 5.2	Physico-chemical Monitoring Sites
Register 5.2	Physico-chemical Monitoring Sites Register
Map 5.3	Hydrometric Monitoring Sites
Register 5.3	Hydrometric Monitoring Sites Register
Map 5.4	Lake, Bathing & Transitional Waters
Register 5.4	Designated Bathing Water and Lake Register
Map 5.5	Groundwater Monitoring Sites
Register 5.5	Groundwater Monitoring Sites Register
Map 5.6	Location of Agricultural Studies
Map 6.1	Overall Biological Water Quality Status
Map 6.2	Phosphorus Status
Map 6.3	Slaney Tributaries
Map 6.4	Barrow Tributaries
Map 6.5	Nore Tributaries
Map 6.6	Suir Tributaries
Map 6.7	Areas 11, 13 and 17 Tributaries
Map 6.8	Status of Hydrometric Gauges
Map 7.1	Principal Subcatchments

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Water Framework Directive requires characterisation of each river basin district by December 2004.
- This initial characterisation report describes the baseline condition of the South Eastern River Basin District with regard to water body delineation and assessment of pressures in accordance with the requirements of Article 5 (Annex II) of the Water Framework Directive.
- The report is based on analysis of existing datasets and has enabled identification of data gaps which need to be addressed before the final characterisation report is submitted to the EU by December 2004.
- Trials are being undertaken by technical advisory groups (established to assist with implementing the Water Framework Directive) in order to provide guidance on delineation of water bodies. These procedures are likely to become available to the Project during 2003 allowing the development of water bodies maps for the South Eastern River Basin District.
- A preliminary assessment of human activities within the river basin district has identified the key drivers and pressures on the water environment.
- Datasets from existing monitoring programmes have been assessed to establish the condition of surface and ground waters and the impacts of point and diffuse activities.
- Estimates of input sectoral nutrient load contributions have been developed for each principal subcatchment to determine the relative significance of pressures and the risk they pose to water quality.
- An overview of existing management practices in relation to water issues is presented to assess current compliance with existing legislative requirements and consider the effectiveness of existing measures in order to guide the development of an Environmental Management System for the Project.
- Information gaps and actions required to enable final characterisation are highlighted. These gaps will be addressed by future project activities such as monitoring programmes or at a national level.