

UK-ADAPT

www.uk-adapt.org.uk

June 2007 Newsletter

This newsletter is the thirteenth in the series of monthly updates on the UK-ADAPT initiative. It is provided to all registered users on the UK-ADAPT website. Please forward to any colleagues that might be interested in UK-ADAPT and encourage them to use the website and register their projects.

Case Study

If you would like your project to be featured in subsequent months newsletters then send us an email at uk-adapt@adas.co.uk and it can be arranged, all we need is a short summary of the project.

Featured Case Study

Each newsletter features a flagship project that is registered on the UK-ADAPT website. This month we focus on a project entitled **Better land for better water**. An 18-month project jointly funded by the RSPB, Water UK and WWF, and developed with technical support from ADAS. The projects aim was to explore the changes in farmed land-use and management that might be necessary to achieve nutrient levels in rivers compatible with healthy aquatic ecosystems.

Better land for better water: Scenarios for change

The study aimed to calculate the current national river phosphorus status and the gap in terms of meeting the WFD. This was done through modelling 6 representative catchments from within England, which had differing land uses (intensive dairy, intensive arable, upland, grassland, general arable and mixed farming) and identifying the different impacts they had on phosphorous losses to water. In addition, land-use change scenarios were developed and modelled for their potential benefits for reduction of nutrient losses.

The findings were thus:

Nutrient pollution of water damages ecosystems and costs water customers money. The results of this project showed that over half of UK rivers may be at risk of damage from phosphorus pollution.

Discharges from sewage works are still a significant source of pollution in the water environment. In the six catchments modelled, the estimated contribution from sewage outfalls ranged from 9% to 60%.

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform measures alone are unlikely to lead to a healthy water environment. However, good practice techniques and simple, low-cost agri-environment measures, combined with CAP reform, could make a real difference, but only if widely and consistently applied.

The creation of more areas of wildlife habitat, combined with support for extensive and low-input farming, would have multiple benefits, and help achieve required water standards.

In some areas, land-use change may be needed to tackle chronic pollution problems, or protect ecologically sensitive sites or drinking water sources. This could involve taking land out of intensive arable production or significant reductions in livestock numbers.

The land use patterns identified by this project, which meet WFD standards and biodiversity targets, will have major implications for agricultural systems, agri-environment resources, and advisory support. An important next step will be to develop our understanding of ways to meet forthcoming water legislation and maximise other environmental benefits for wildlife and landscape, whilst ensuring that farm businesses can adapt and remain profitable.

The full report is available from:

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/farming/policy/policyissues/diffuse.asp>

UK-ADAPT – other news:

Overview

There has been limited activity on the UK-ADAPT website during June. We are still slowly expanding the database of relevant diffuse pollution projects but there is always scope for more, if you have any that you haven't yet added then do so!!!

New Projects

There are still 189 projects currently listed on the website. Please continue to review all diffuse pollution projects undertaken by your organisation since 2000 and consider registering them on UK-ADAPT. If anyone has a large number of projects to register, or any problems please contact Matthew Taylor for assistance on 01623 844331 or at uk-adapt@adas.co.uk

UK-ADAPT Feedback

If you have any comments on the website or require assistance with registering and editing projects or updating contact details, please contact us at uk-adapt@adas.co.uk