

REPORTING PERIOD Q3 2008 2009 (Sept to Dec 2008)

1. SUSTAINABLE LAND USE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

<p>Overview of activity</p>	<p>The main components of this topic are currently Water Framework Directive and flood risk management</p> <p>WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE (WFD) Work continues on: enhancing biological classification tools (fish, river invertebrates and phytoplankton); improving the UK lakes typology for hydromorphology; supporting EA work in chemistry standards and developing a screening methodology for identifying obstacles to fish migration.</p> <p>UK TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (UKTAG) (WFD) During this period the UKTAG co-ordinator has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinated the development of 19 method statement documents for the biological classification tools that will be used in the UK. These method statements are important for the development of legal directions for Defra and the devolved Administrations. These have been agreed by habitat task teams across the UKTAG and the UK Administrations and are being published on the UKTAG website. The method statements can be found at the following link http://www.wfduk.org/bio_assessment • Developed a programme and identified speakers for the UKTAG international river basin planning workshop to be held in Jan 09. In addition commissioned consultants to summarise the key strategic approaches taken by the countries involved. <p>With coordination from SNIFFER, the environment agencies have now published their draft River Basin Management Plans</p> <p>FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT Preparations for the FRM Conference 2009 (being held on 24 & 25 February 2009 at the Glasgow City Chambers) are well underway and the conference is now fully booked. Phase 3 of the Benefits of Flood Warning project is underway(UKCC10 / UKCC10A)</p> <p>SNIFFER developed and delivered a dissemination event on research carried out relating to the Metropolitan Glasgow City Council Strategic Drainage plan and supporting the steering group identify and communicate the next areas of research and knowledge exchange needed.</p> <p>SNIFFER has been invited to manage the Scottish Governments Natural Flood Management scoping study project, on behalf of the Flooding Bill Advisory Group natural Flood Management sub group. Consultants have now been commissioned and work has commenced.</p> <p>SNIFFER, with agreement from Scottish Government, supported SEPA in delivering the Benefits of flood warning seminar.</p> <p>SNIFFER attended meetings of the Flood Risk Assessment and Mapping sub group of the Flooding Bill Advisory Group.</p> <p>The RISE website has been relocated to a new dedicated portal www.rise-frm.org.uk.</p>
<p>Project delivery</p>	<p>The following project completed during this period: WFD94 WFD and catchment restoration –scoping study</p>

European ERA-net project - INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (IWRM) UPDATE

Introduction

Focus for the past 3 months and the next 6 months will be developing the second call, due to be launched in Jun 2009.

Progress

The third research need identification meeting was held in Stockholm (Nov) with the support of IVL (Swedish Environmental Research Institute) and the Swedish Environment Protection Agency. Again with a small number of delegates it still remained a productive and positive workshop. All the information needs to be incorporated with into the IWRM-net research strategy that will then be used to develop the scientific specification for the joint call.

SNIFFER organised the Research Management workshop in Dec 2008. This involved 20 partners of IWRM-net and representatives of other era-nets to discuss and exchange information on the processes used for managing programmes at the members state and eranet level. It was deemed a success and SNIFFER is in the process of publishing the proceedings.

Future Developments

The Final research need identification workshop will be for the NW Europe and SNIFFER is trying to use this event to increase involvement in the era-net by Scotland and Northern Ireland partners. This will take place on 10-11 February.

The mid-term event will be in Brussels 11-12 Feb. SNIFFER will organise one of the workshops, relating to the development of an IWRM-net research strategy.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION PROGRAMME

Overview of activity	<p>The 09/10 prioritisation meeting was held on 2nd October with 7 projects/events agreed for funding the titles approved are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs and benefits of differing carbon abatement technologies for process and other regulation • Measuring landfill methane emissions to target mitigation • Assessment of carbon/ nitrogen ratios at various stages through different types of composting process • Sustainable economics workshop • Future air quality benefits from further industrial regulation • Risk based decision making in regulation • The influence of land and soil management practices on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the potential for mitigation. • Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Climate Change Guidance • Piloting the Ecosystems Approach to assess added value of peatland habitat restoration projects in Northern Ireland
	<p>SNIFFER is planning a better regulation workshop in 2009 to disseminate the results from a recent package of research projects. This event will also look for opportunities to extend the work of the better regulation topic area beyond the delivery of the environmental regulation research programme by engaging with new stakeholders.</p>
Project delivery	<p>UKLQ10 - Prioritisation of closed landfill sites for environmental monitoring</p>

3. SUSTAINABLE PLACES

<p>Overview of activity</p>	<p>The following projects are in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKCC12, Scoping Study for Public Body Biodiversity Guidance. Revised Completion date May 2009. • UKCC07, ESRC / CASE Research Studentship “Strategic Environmental Assessment and its potential to contribute to environmental justice”. PhD due for completion in June 2009. • SNIFFER continues to provide secretariat function for SESEG and SESEN and will assist in the organising of the launch of SESEN and the findings of the Scottish Environmental Attitudes and Behaviours Survey 2008, in March 2009. Insert weblinks to sesen • URBAN-NET (reported separately) <p>SNIFFER is involved with SNH in planning their series of sustainable places good practice events and their review. The last of these is “sustainable communities and sustainable places”.</p> <p>SNIFFER and EA working together to develop SUDS Retrofit workshop in England, to be held on 26/3/09 at Defra Innovation Centre, Reading.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion underway to develop a follow-on urban biodiversity project to UEUB01 with the possibility to feed into guidance to manage biodiversity in the urban environment.
<p>Project delivery</p>	<p>The following projects have recently been completed and reports available from the website;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UE2b(05)GR5, Greenspace literature review based on GS’ five themes to identify research gaps. • UEUB02, Implications of Land Use and Demographic Change for Biodiversity in Urban Areas. • UEUW01 Source Control of Pollution in Sustainable Drainage.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE

Overview of activity	<p>Climate change activity for SNIFFER is currently focused upon the Scottish Climate Change Impacts Programme, the Northern Ireland Climate Change Impacts Partnership (NICCIP) and a number of other research projects from the Environmental Regulation Programme and one Climate Change topic area project.</p> <p><u>SCCIP</u> Highlights for the quarter include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SCCIP work on arranging training events has been postponed to 2009, as was work with SNH on developing Sharing Good Practice event aimed at communicating climate change (now September 2009)• SCCIP met with Scottish Government to discuss the development of an overview of public sector adaptation roles and responsibilities in Scotland. SCCIP will help SG in holding an event in February 2009.• A meeting with Scottish Enterprise identified various opportunities for SCCIP/SE joint working including SCCIP input into SE Staff training and possible presentations to Priority Economic Sector Leadership Groups in 2009. Also, the potential development of information sheets for priority sectors – to be discussed in 2009.• SCCIP met with Church of Scotland to discuss their work on climate change, which is focussed on mitigation, but identified the possibility of promoting adaptation information towards eco-congregations as a way of reaching local communities.• SCCIP attended the UK Interregional Climate Change Group, which provided insights into work being done elsewhere.• Attended UKCIP event – Changing Climate for Business. Useful exposure to working via business sector intermediary/umbrella business organisations.• The website was maintained and updated with new content. Ideas on developing thematic/sectoral pages.• The LCLIPs Phase 1 project is at final stages and proposals have been put forward for Phase 2 of the project. A dissemination seminar will be held at the SSN Quarterly Meeting in January 2009 <p><u>NICCIP</u> Highlights for the quarter include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided information and advice for the NICCIP launch in November. Presentations will be released via the SNIFFER website• Provided secretariat service for December meeting of main NICCIP Group.• Strong support emerged at last meeting to broaden NICCIP work to include mitigation alongside adaptation. Terms of reference, membership, structures, sub-groups and working methods will be reviewed early in 2009..• SNIFFER is currently developing a newsletter for NICCIP and initiating a directory of climate change expertise in NI, similar to the one developed for SCCIP. <p>The following climate change research projects are managed under this area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Climate change, land management and erosion in the organic and organo-mineral soils in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and organic carbon stocks (UKCC21)</u> This SNH-led project is nearing completion and should publish in early 2009. SNIFFER will be planning and running a dissemination seminar aimed at a high level policy audience in the 2nd quarter of this year.• <u>Differential Social Impacts of Climate Change in the UK (UKCC22)</u> Two spin-off projects are being pursued with various partners. A dissemination
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	<p>seminar will be planned for April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>LCA Project (CC10)</u> This project is currently seeking further funding and is expected to run Expressions of Interest in April. A Project Steering Group has been established (SEPA, NIEA, CEBC, UKERC, NERC).
Publicity	<p>SNIFFER spoke at two conferences this quarter: The Royal Town Planning Institute's Annual Conference on climate change and Scottish Agricultural College's animal health and welfare conference.</p> <p>SNIFFER exhibited at two conferences: The Cost of Inaction conference in Edinburgh in October and the United Nations Conference on Climate Change Impacts in Belfast in November.</p>

5. URBAN NET UPDATE

Introduction

The URBAN-NET project is an “ERA-NET” (European Research Area Network) project funded by the European Commission. SNIFFER is the Coordinator. The project started on the 1 August 2006 and will run to 31 July 2010. The project comprises 16 partners from 13 European countries. Total budget is €3M.

Progress

The 18 month report has been approved by the EC subject to clarification of some minor details and submission of revised documentation from two partners.

The Amendment to Contract has been submitted to the EC and we await final approval before next stage pre-financing is agreed.

The evaluation of the pilot call proposals is now complete and a leaflet has been produced summarising the call outcome.

An extraordinary Steering Group meeting was held in December to discuss the strategic way forward, in particular to consider and identify the preferred options for continued collaboration beyond 2010. A discussion paper is being prepared by the Management Group to include ideas, preferences and priorities expressed by the Steering Group. The discussion paper will inform SNIFFER project deliverable 1.7 “Durable Cooperation Agreement”.

Drafting of the “European Thematic Urban Research Framework” is well advanced. Following an initial hearing phase within the Steering Group broader consultation will take place shortly with the wider research community and stakeholders. Following delivery of the final document a summary leaflet will be published in April 2009 to help promote the key messages and priorities

A networking sub-contract, let by SNIFFER, is due to report late January. This will provide a valuable resource in targeting subsequent efforts to raise the profile of URBAN-NET as a recognised European urban research funding platform and strengthen the urban agenda at the European level. It will help to secure synergy and support with other European networks and organisations and with the European Commission.

A number of project papers and abstracts are in the process of being submitted for key conferences and events including:

- “Research Connections 2009” European Commission
- “City Futures in a Globalising World” the European Urban Research Association (EURA) and the Urban Affairs Association (UAA)

SNIFFER has mounted a further campaign to enlist funding and engagement by relevant UK funders and programme managers of the key research councils and government departments. With greater interest from Germany in funding there is a high risk that the UK remains the sole partner not committed to funding of the full call.

Future Developments

18/19 February: Funder’s Meeting; Developing criteria etc. for funding full call in autumn 2009; Paris.

	<p>31 Mar/1 April: Stakeholder Workshop 3 “Bridging the gaps - developing joint activities between urban programmes; attendance by all partners and invited stakeholders; Vienna or The Hague.</p> <p>May: Steering Group and Network Meeting 5 preparations for the full call; Stockholm.</p> <p>October: Stakeholder Workshop 4 “Funding the long-term agenda for EU urban research”</p> <p>URBAN-NET has evaluated all proposals for the pilot call. The amendments to contract have been submitted to the Commission for sign-off and subsequent release of period 2 payments. The database of research programmes will go live shortly on the URBAN-NET website. The Strategic Research Framework is reaching final draft.</p>
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6. EMERGING ISSUES

<p>Overview of activity</p>	<p>SNIFFER delivered a stakeholder workshop on behalf of the Environmental Nanoscience Initiative: Understanding the Risks. This was attended by 32 stakeholders from policy and academic communities and was supported by NERC and the Environmental Nanoscience initiative.</p> <p>SNIFFER has submitted a proposal to provide secretariat for the Scottish Horizon Scanning Community. This has been circulated to a range of organisations (NB this is broader than environmental) and a response is awaited.</p>
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