



Scottish Environment LINK  
2 Grosvenor House  
Shore Road  
Perth  
PH2 8BD

Tel 01738 630804  
Fax 01738 643290

[enquiries@scotlink.org](mailto:enquiries@scotlink.org)  
[www.scotlink.org](http://www.scotlink.org)

## **NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES**

### **SCOTTISH ENVIRONMENT LINK REPRESENTED BY WWF SCOTLAND**

#### **Presentation to the inaugural meeting of the National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding Issues, Wednesday 17 December 2003 at the Scottish Executive, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.**

Scottish Environment LINK welcomes the formation of the National Technical Advisory Group by the Scottish Executive. In the WWF Scotland report, 'Turning the tide on flooding' Feb 2003, there is recognition that, despite much progress being made on flooding, there are still gaps. Amongst those was the need for a flood action plan developed by experts at a national level; the inclusion of flood planning in all river and sub basin plans and the need for the NPPG7 review to support these developments in national and local flood planning.

In the mid-1990s, Scottish environmental NGOs became increasingly concerned about the pressures on rivers and freshwater systems. WWF Scotland commissioned a report, through its Wild Rivers Project, from three scientists to investigate the pressures and impacts on rivers and their catchments. The results of their report were presented for discussion to a large group of stakeholders and priorities for future action were identified. High amongst those priorities was the promotion of the principle of integrated river basin management. Natural flood alleviation was acknowledged as a major component in this context. As part of a strategy to change government policy, the environmental NGOs, through Scottish Environment LINK, began a period of advocacy and lobbying for integrated river basin management and related issues.

The arrival of the Water Framework Directive has done much to raise the profile of integrated river basin management. Scotland led the way in the Common Implementation Strategy

by transposing the Directive into the Water Environment Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 in January 2003. The Executive and our new Parliament showed that they were willing to listen and learn during the development of the Act and responded sympathetically to the lobbying by including a duty to promote sustainable flood management in Part II of the Act. Scottish Environment LINK also contributed to the recent consultation on the NPPG7 review, soon to be published.

WWF Scotland's programme on sustainable flood management has three component projects. The first is a three and a half year process, working with local authorities and based in Clackmannanshire, to produce a catchment-based decision making handbook for flood management. The second is the production of a definition of sustainable flood management. This project is in its final stages and I hope to have a draft of the definition for preview at the inaugural meeting. The third project is the production of a sustainable flood management demonstration site, again in Clackmannanshire. This entails measurement of flood problems at a point in a catchment then identifying and managing those problems by incorporating natural features and soft engineering methods in areas further upstream. This project will also last for three and a half years.

Mike Donaghy  
Freshwater Policy Officer  
WWF Scotland  
December 2003