

# Annual Operating Plan 2026–2027

## Easy Read Version



## Who we are

SEPA is Scotland's environment protection agency.

This means we:

- protect and maintain the environment for the people of Scotland
- make sure that businesses are following the law and looking after the environment
- warn and inform the public about environmental incidents like flooding or pollution

There are lots of words in this guide that you might not use every day, like environment, pollution, climate change, economy and regulation. If you go to the last page, we have put together a list of these words and phrases to explain them.



## What this plan is

This plan explains:

- what SEPA will do this year (2026–2027)
- how we will use public money



This plan is for:

- the public
- communities
- businesses
- organisations that we work with

## Our main purpose

To protect and improve the environment while also supporting:

- people's health and wellbeing
- a strong and fair economy



## Why this work matters

Scotland's environment is important for everyone.

Climate change and pollution is affecting Scotland's environment.

This is causing:

- more flooding
- water shortages
- damage to nature and wildlife

We must act now to protect people and the environment.

This will ensure the environment stays healthy for the future.



## Our values

Our values guide how we work.

We are:

- **Purposeful** – we focus on what matters
- **Professional** – we do our work properly
- **Passionate** – we care about Scotland's environment



## Our priorities for 2026–2027

### 1. Net zero

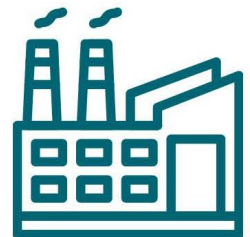
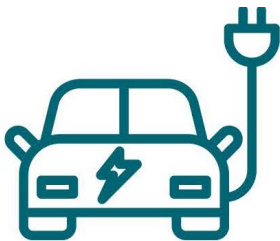
Net zero means much less pollution from greenhouse gases. This is also known as reducing your carbon footprint.

We will help Scotland:

- reach net zero by 2045
- reduce pollution from businesses

We will work to reduce our own carbon footprint:

- cut greenhouse gases from our buildings and vehicles
- move towards vehicles that produce no greenhouse gases

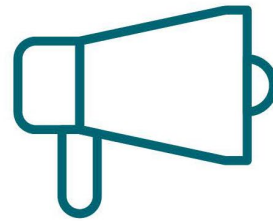


## 2. Climate resilience

Resilience means being ready for climate change.

We will:

- help communities prepare for flooding
- give clear flood and water shortage warnings
- improve flood maps and data
- ask people and communities to help make our services better

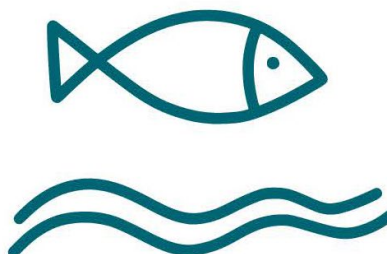


### 3. Water environment

Water is vital for life but is being impacted by climate change, pollution and loss of wildlife.

We will:

- protect and restore rivers, lochs and seas
- stop pollution from damaging water
- improve rivers where they are damaged
- protect wildlife
- make sure reservoirs are managed safely



#### 4. Resource efficiency

We want to waste less by helping Scotland to become a circular economy. This means we reuse more things instead of throwing them away which can harm the environment.

We will:

- reduce waste going to landfill
- help recycling work better
- support businesses to prepare for new rules on waste and support how we track what waste is being produced

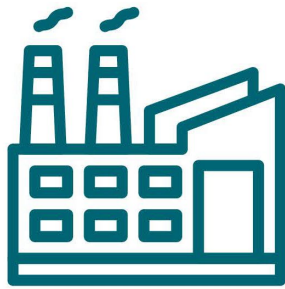


## 5. Business environmental performance

Some businesses affect the environment because of what they do.

We will:

- support businesses and make sure they follow environmental rules
- take action against people and businesses who pollute the environment
- build better digital systems to help businesses work with us



## 6. Our organisation and transformation

We must be a strong organisation to protect Scotland's environment.

We will:

- improve digital services so they are easier to use and faster
- use information better to help us make decisions
- improve the support to our staff and make them feel more included
- make the services we provide to customers better



## How we measure success

We check how well we are doing what we said we would.

We look at:

- environmental data such as our greenhouse gases and those from businesses
- how well we have warned people about flooding and water
- water quality
- how well businesses follow the rules

This helps:

- improve our work
- people check what we are delivering



## Our money and resources

For 2026–2027 we have about £113 million to spend. This is called our total budget.

This money is used for:

- staff
- buildings
- transport
- services



The money comes from:

- Scottish Government funding
- money paid to us by regulated businesses for services we provide

## Equality, diversity and inclusion

All people are different and that's a good thing. We believe everyone should be treated fairly and have the same opportunities.

This includes people in the communities and businesses we support and the people that work in SEPA. Our plan shows where we want to make things better for specific groups of people:

- disabled people
- people of different ages
- people from different ethnic communities
- women



## Getting involved

We look to hear from our communities, the businesses we regulate and our partners on the things we do. This is called a consultation.

We listen to feedback and use what we've heard to try to improve our services.

If you have something to tell us about our plan, you can contact SEPA:

- online through our website – go to [www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk) and select contact
- by phone on 0300 099 6699



## The words we use

Climate Change - This means the normal weather and temperatures are changing over a long period of time.



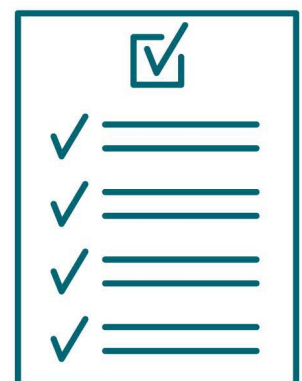
Economy – The economy means people and businesses being able to work, deliver services and make money.

Environment – The environment means everything around us that affects life like the air, land and water.



Greenhouse gasses – These are gases which trap heat from the Sun, keeping the Earth warm. They are released from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas.

Regulation – Regulation means putting rules in place to control how something works so it doesn't harm the environment. Then checking people follow the rules and taking action if they don't.



Reservoirs – Reservoirs are storage spaces for water. They can be natural like a loch or built by people.

For information on accessing this document in an alternative format or language, please contact SEPA by emailing [equalities@sepa.org.uk](mailto:equalities@sepa.org.uk)