SCREENING REPORT

STEP 1 – DETAILS OF THE PLAN

Responsible Authority:	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Title of the plan:	Update of River Basin Management Plans
What prompted the plan: (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	Updating the reports is a legislative requirement
Plan subject: (e.g. transport)	Management of the Water Environment
Screening is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Based on Boxes 3 and 4, our view is that:	☐ **An SEA is required, as the environmental effects are likely to be significant:** Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within ☐ Section 5(3) ☐ Section 5(4) X☐ **An SEA is <u>not</u> required, as the environmental effects are unlikely to be significant:** Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within ☐ Section 5(3) ☐ Section 5(4)
Contact details:	SEPA Jackie.Galley@sepa.org.uk Strathallan House Castle Business Park Stirling FK9 4TZ
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STEP 2 – CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

Context of the Plan:	River basin management plans are required under retained EU law, which stipulates that they had to be completed by 2009, with updates in 2015 and 2021. There is a consultation on each update and the consultation on this update will be published by 22nd December 2020. However, the aim remains to improve and where necessary prevent deterioration of the water environment across Scotland. This update reviews progress against the original improvement objectives and sets revised targets based on updated information. It takes into account the changing priorities, such as climate change and biodiversity challenges, using existing and improved regulatory and partnership approaches. The Scottish Government, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), responsible authorities and all of Scotland's other public bodies are responsible for developing and delivering the river basin management planning actions. This will ensure that Scotland's rivers, lochs, estuaries, coastal areas and ground water can continue to supply drinking water; support fisheries; offer an essential resource for business and agriculture and serve as a source of recreation that promotes wellbeing. The improvements brought about by these actions will contribute to mitigation of floods and droughts and encourage sustainable water use.
Description of the Plan:	This update will cover all of Scotland and is for the six years between 2012 and 2027, with a forward look for some measures to 2033. It sets out the targets for improving and preventing deterioration of the water environment for our rivers, lochs, estuaries, coastal areas and groundwater. In doing so it also contributes to other improvement targets, such as those set out by retained EU law for flooding and bathing waters; biodiversity targets such as improvements for migrating fish; management of soils; and socio-economic improvements through the blue-green corridors in our cities and towns. All water bodies that are not currently meeting the required good status or potential must have an improvement objective. This information is held in an on-line Water Environment Hub, which covers over 3000 individual stretches of surface and ground water.
What are the key components of the plan?	The guiding principle for this update is to continue to work with other agencies and partners to bring about improvements to the water environment across Scotland and to ensure that there is no deterioration in its condition. Ensuring that other agencies and partners have access to this information is vital and this is done through the on-line Water Environment Hub, supporting report and the consultation on the draft update.

Have any of the components of the plan been considered in previous SEA work?	This plan represents a minor modification to a plan that has previously had an SEA. The Environmental Report is available on our website: https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/publications/ The Environmental Report considered: • national measures that are applied across Scotland; • regional measures that occur across part of the river basin district; and • local measures that are developed in response to a specific issue usually targeted at a particular water body or part of a water body. The SEA concentrated on assessing national measures, where there could potentially be the most significant impact. The SEA included a screening exercise for the list of regional measures, but none were deemed to have significant effects at the river basin district scale and hence were not included in the full assessment. This approach to the SEA ensured that it was meaningful and focused on the significant issues at the strategic level. There have been no new national measures developed since the original SEA.
In terms of your response to Boxes 7 and 8 above, set out those components of the plan that are likely to require screening:	In line with the strategic approach taken for the previous SEA, all measures to be included in the updated plan have been screened. There are no new additional measures. Evidence for this screening is provided in Annex 1 below.

STEP 3 – IDENTIFYING INTERACTIONS OF THE PLAN WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSIDERING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF ANY INTERACTIONS (Error! Reference source not found.)

	Environmental Topic Areas										Explanation of Potential Environmental Effects	Explanation of Significance
Plan Components	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air	Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Inter-relationship issues		
Update	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		See annex below	See annex below

Annex 1 – Assessment of previously predicted significant effects and forecast of any new significant effects

Environmental issues identified in ER 2009 (Section 3)	**Relevant to the proposed revision? Yes / No**	**Any new issues? Yes / No**	**Significant positive effects identified in ER 2009 (Section 5) for:** **1. Reference / baseline measures** **2. Draft RBMP measures** **3. Continued Improvement measures**	**Significant adverse effects of measures identified ER 2009 (Section 5)**	**Any changes forecast to effects due to revision? Yes / No**
Biodiversity • Water quality, eutrophication, acidification and N and P levels in waterbodies; • Effects on habitats from flooding and droughts; • Habitat and biodiversity loss due to morphological changes; • Non-native species.	Yes	No	Measures to address diffuse pollution and point source pollution will improve water quality, reduce eutrophication and therefore have benefits for aquatic ecosystems. Water efficiency measures could potentially result in more water being available for aquatic ecosystems and for greater dilution of pollutants. Controlling the rate and timing of abstraction will reduce biological stress (especially during low flow periods) and also provides the additional benefit of a more “natural” hydrological regime. Measures to improve morphology will lead to direct improvements for aquatic and riparian habitats.	Transfer of impacts from one location to another.	No

			Measures to deal with non-native invasive species will likely lead to direct biodiversity benefits in the areas affected.		
Population • Recreational use of water; • Tourism and National Parks; • Commercial activities; • Bathing waters; • Shellfish waters; • Drinking water supply; • Fisheries.	Yes	No	Measures to reduce diffuse and point source pollution will help to protect human health through reducing pollutant loads to protected areas such as drinking waters and bathing waters. Water efficiency measures could potentially result in more water being available for the dilution of pollutants and hence provide additional protection for protected areas. Some measures may improve access to waters in the RBD, particularly where measures to improve water quality will enable greater access for bathing or other recreational pursuits. Water improvements may increase amenity value of water bodies in the RBD.	Possible changes in water supply output. Transfer of impacts from one location to another.	No
Water • Diffuse pollution; • Point source pollution; • Abstraction and flow regulation; • Alterations to morphology; • Non-native invasive species; • Sustainable water use.	Yes	No	Similar effects to those noted above for biodiversity, fauna and flora. All of the measures in the RBMP are designed to address a pressure that is adversely affecting a water body. Accordingly, all measures are designed to produce positive effects on water quality in the water bodies to which they apply.	Transfer of impacts from one location to another.	No
Air • No significant effects likely	No	No			No
Climate • Climate change mitigation / adaptation; • Flooding; • Droughts;	Yes	No	Many measures will result in positive effects, particularly in relation to sustainable flood management, mitigation of floods and droughts, and to climate change adaptation. Greater efficiency in water use may reduce the volume of raw water that has to be treated,	Increased energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.	No

• Carbon use.			which may result in some energy and greenhouse gas emission savings. Measures relating to abstraction and flow regulation in particular may have positive benefits for the management of floods and droughts.	Removal of engineering structures may increase flood risk.	
Soils • Forestry or other types of plant cover; • Land vulnerable to erosion; • NVZs; • Other land use practices.	Yes	No	Improvements in water quality caused by measures that tackle diffuse and point source pollution may result in improved soil quality as fewer pollutants will be deposited on land. Measures relating to abstraction and flow regulation may also lead to benefits for soils by reducing erosion by floods or soil loss through drought. Measures to improve morphological conditions of channel banks, shorelines, riparian zones and wetland habitats will help to improve infiltration rates, reduce runoff and therefore contribute to reducing erosion.	Changes in sediment maintenance regime may impact on soils if disposal of contaminated sediment is not according to best practice.	No
Cultural Heritage • Nationally designated sites close to water bodies; • Marine archaeology.	Yes	No	The majority of measures are not likely to have significant effects on cultural heritage.	Removal of barriers / engineering structures may result in loss of historic features / recreation opportunities.	No
Landscape • Areas of designated landscape quality (e.g. NSAs); • Sites listed in the inventory of gardens and designed landscapes.	Yes	No	The majority of measures are not likely to have significant effects on landscape, although measures to improve downgraded waterbodies (especially where they have been modified) will have positive landscape effects at the local level.	Inappropriate design may affect landscape aesthetics.	No
Material Assets • The protection of water related assets including flood defences, ports and harbours; • WWTWs; • Sustainable use of water.	Yes	No	Measures aimed at increasing water-use efficiency (e.g. leakage reduction) could result in better use of water and as a result better use of other resources e.g. energy. As a result of the above, it is possible that this could delay the need for additional new infrastructure.	Increased waste production. Ecological measures may reduce deployable output of reservoirs / renewable energy delivery.	No

STEP 4 – STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE SCREENING

Summary of interactions with the environment and statement of the findings of the Screening: (Including an outline of the likely significance of any interactions, positive or negative, and explanation of conclusion of the screening exercise.)	We do not consider that an SEA is required

When completed send to: SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or to the SEA Gateway, Scottish Government, Area 2H (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.