



The EU Water Framework Directive

Land Use and Spatial Planning
Conference
Dublin Castle - 26 February 2003

Pat Duggan
Department of the Environment and
Local Government



WFD Status and General Objectives

- Entered into force on 22 December 2000
- Water Quality Objectives (at least 'Good Status') established for all waters
 - ✓ prevent deterioration
 - ✓ protect, enhance and restore
 - ✓ progressively reduce pollution by priority substances
 - ✓ trend reversal (groundwater)
 - ✓ exceptions provided for (eg good ecological potential)
- Environmental objectives apply to 'water body'

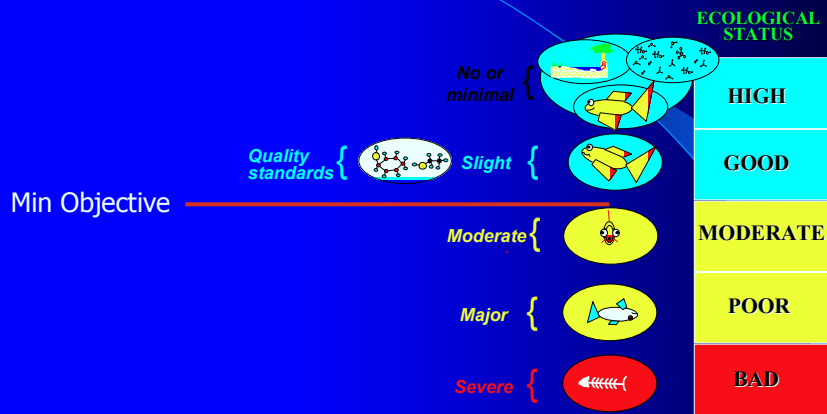
River Basin Districts (RBD)

- Administrative area for implementing rules of Directive
 - ▣ individual neighbouring river basins may be combined
 - ▣ RBD must include associated groundwaters
 - ▣ RBD must include coastal waters
- Management measures must be co-ordinated within RBD
 - ▣ must produce single river basin management plan
- International River Basin Districts
 - ▣ Member States must ensure co-ordination

Water Body

- Water body is the basic 'compliance checking' and 'management unit'
 - ✓ 'discrete and significant element of surface water'
 - a lake, reservoir, river, canal (or part of)
 - a stretch of coastal water
 - ✓ 'distinct volume of groundwater' within aquifer
 - ✓ hierarchial / technical approach
 - surface water category (river, lake, transitional, coastal)
 - surface water 'typology'
 - surface water status and 'protected areas'
- Water bodies may be grouped for monitoring, management and reporting purposes, e.g. representative sampling

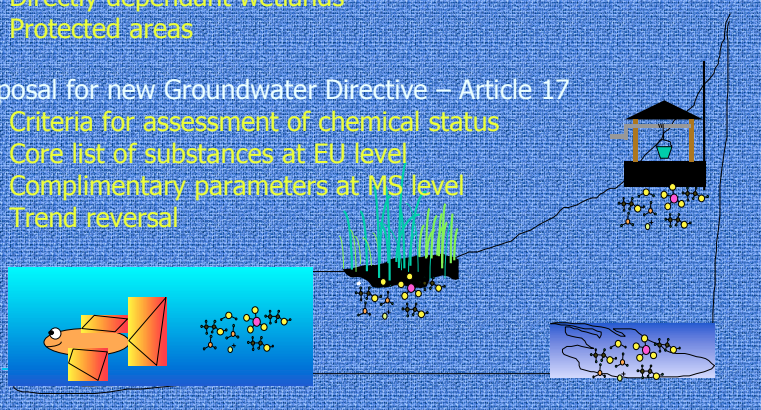
Good Surface Water Status equals good ecological status and good chemical status



- Applies to rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters
- Ecological Status determined by level of deviation from unimpacted conditions
 - ✓ biological quality elements, and
 - ✓ supporting physico-chemical and hydromorphological quality elements

Good Groundwater Status equals good chemical status and good quantitative status

- Must take account of
 - ✓ Associated surface water systems
 - ✓ Directly dependant wetlands
 - ✓ Protected areas
- Proposal for new Groundwater Directive – Article 17
 - ✓ Criteria for assessment of chemical status
 - ✓ Core list of substances at EU level
 - ✓ Complimentary parameters at MS level
 - ✓ Trend reversal



WFD - A Systematic Approach

- Map all surface water bodies, groundwater bodies and protected areas within RBD
 - ✓ 'water body' is the basic compliance checking and management unit
- Undertake 'risk assessment' and impact review
- Set objectives (for each waterbody)
- Implement programmes of measures
- Monitor progress and review measures
- Report and consult via RBMP

Immediate Timeframes

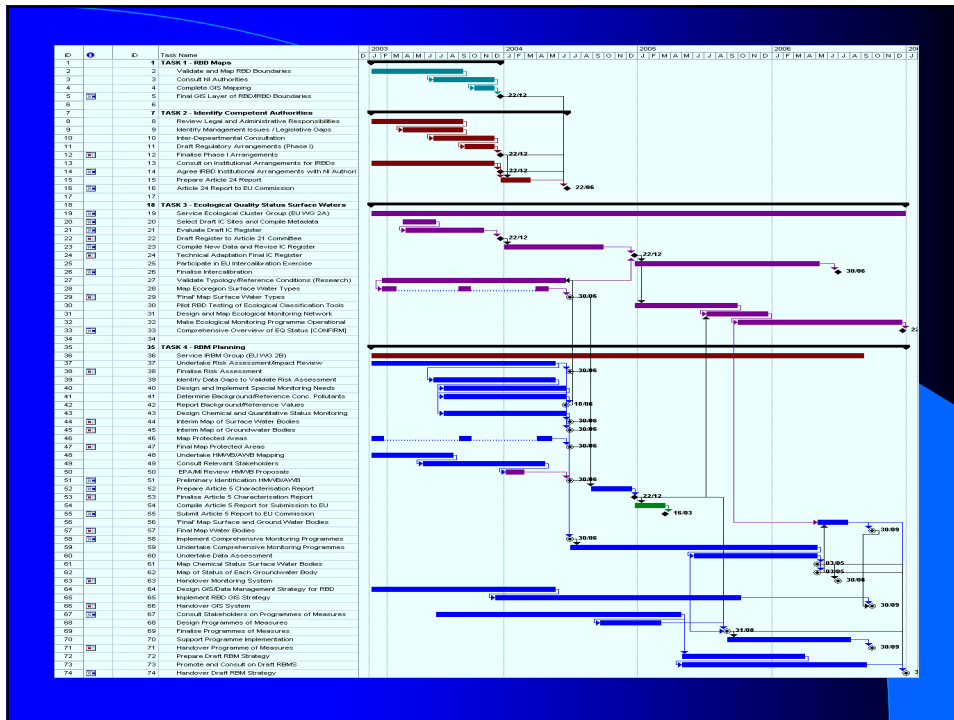
- River basin districts to be identified by 2003
- Competent authority or authorities to be identified by December 2003
 - ✓ main requirement is that measures are co-ordinated for the whole of the RBD/IRBD
- Characterisation report and review of environmental impacts by December 2004
 - ✓ many technical, institutional and organisational challenges
- Register of protected areas by December 2004

WFD Activities

- National WFD Co-ordination Group
- EU Common Implementation Strategy
 - ✓ technical guidance
- North-South Co-ordination
 - ✓ shared river basin districts
 - ✓ all freshwaters on island of Ireland lie within same ecoregion
 - ✓ shared ecoregion for marine waters (IRL-UK)
- Strategic Approach to GIS (EPA, 2002)
 - ✓ data management
- EPA research to support WFD
 - ✓ ERTDI Programme 2000-2006

River Basin Management Projects

- Characterisation report required by December 2004
 - ✓ local authority led
 - ✓ funded by DELG
- must deliver cost effective and sustainable monitoring arrangements at river basin scale
- must develop supporting data handling arrangements
- must support implementation of measures
- must facilitate stakeholder involvement and public consultation



WFD Project Requires Integration

- Water resource management at the river basin scale
 - ▢ Need to integrate diverse information
 - ▢ Need to integrate and collaborate between disciplines
 - ▢ Partnerships that cross local, regional and national jurisdictions
 - ▢ Integration of stakeholders and civil society in decision making
 - ▢ Integration of water management between Member States