

Chalk rivers

Full report outputted on the 30/07/2003 16:13:34

1. Status of the habitat / species

Please give your most accurate assessment of the status of your species or habitat for the UK and for each country. Leave the row blank where the species or habitat does not occur in that country.

| | Amount: | Units: | Year: | Accuracy: | Reference for data: |
|----|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| UK | 161 | <input type="text"/> | 2002 | Partial or sample survey | Environment Agency Chalk River Digital Map. Mainstone,C.P., 1999. Chalk Rivers, Nature Conservation and Management. |
| E | 161 | <input type="text"/> | 2002 | Partial or sample survey | Environment Agency Chalk River Digital Map. Mainstone,C.P., 1999. Chalk Rivers, Nature Conservation and Management. |
| NI | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| S | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| W | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

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2. Trend in Biological Status

Please give your best estimate of the current trend for your species or habitat for the UK, and each appropriate country, using the following categories. Please give an estimate unless there is absolutely no information on which to assess status.

| | Trend: | Accuracy: | Reference for data: |
|----|------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| UK | Declining (slow ing) ▼ | Partial or sample survey ▼ | River Habitat Survey, River Corridor Survey, National General Quality Assessment w ater quality and invertebrate data, National salmon data, w ater resource strategies, chalk river flagship species information ref. otter, w ater vole, native crayfish, southern damselfly, salmon, brow n trout, aquatic flies, ranunculu |

| | | | |
|----|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| E | Declining (slow ing) | Partial or sample survey | River Habitat Survey, River Corridor Survey, National General Quality Assessment w ater quality and invertebrate data, National salmor data, w ater resource strategies, chalk river flagship species information ref. otter, w ater vole, native crayfish, southern damselfly, salmon, brow n trout, aquatic flies, ranunculu |
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| W | | | |

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3. Status of knowledge

To what extent is our scientific knowledge of the habitat / species (e.g research information, autecological knowledge, knowledge for effective re-introduction or habitat restoration/re-creation) sufficient to deliver the plan targets?

Please give an assessment for the UK overall but if there is significant difference in knowledge between different countries this should be noted.

Status of knowledge: Knowledge sufficient to make some impact, but more research needed.

Notes:

A "State of the Nation's Chalk Rivers" report is currently in production (Due to be launched June 2003). This highlights the key issues facing chalk rivers and draws upon national datasets where they are available, notably water quality and macroinvertebrates. Where national datasets are not available, e.g for river flow, case studies have been used. At present there is no defined specific assessment criteria for chalk rivers i.e. which characterises good/medium/poor chalk river habitat. However, a draft set of criteria have been produced. There is also further work needed to determine the environmental standards for chalk rivers most particularly for flow requirements. Water quality standards are being established for phosphorus levels in SAC designated chalk rivers but this needs to be applied more widely to the whole chalk river resource. There is also a need to establish the environmental requirements of key chalk river flagship species. This is being progressed by Species BAP groups.

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4. Progress on targets

Each of the revised targets from the 2001 Targets Review is listed below.

For each one please give a qualitative assessment of progress for the UK and each country. You can also enter quantitative information on progress by entering data in each of the target boxes and entering the current amount in the amount box. For more information see Help.

T1: Maintain the characteristic plants and animals of chalk rivers, including their winterbourne stretches.

Target start date:

Target end date:

Target units:

| | Progress | Target | Current | Accuracy | Monitoring |
|-----------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| UK | <input type="text" value="Some progress (behind schedule)"/> | <input type="text" value="161"/> | <input type="text" value="0"/> | <input type="text" value="Unknown"/> | <input type="text" value="Under active development"/> |
| E | <input type="text" value="Some progress (behind schedule)"/> | <input type="text" value="161"/> | <input type="text" value="0"/> | <input type="text" value="Unknown"/> | <input type="text" value="Under active development"/> |
| NI | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| S | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| W | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

T2: Restore all rivers notified as SSSI to favourable condition.

Target start date:

Target end date: 2010

Target units:

| | Progress | Target | Current | Accuracy | Monitoring |
|----|--|----------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| UK | Some progress (behind schedule) <input type="text"/> | 10 | 0 | Partial or sample survey <input type="text"/> | Under active development <input type="text"/> |
| E | Some progress (behind schedule) <input type="text"/> | 10 | 0 | Partial or sample survey <input type="text"/> | Under active development <input type="text"/> |
| NI | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| S | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| W | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

T3: Restore important non-SSSI rivers to favourable condition.

Target start date: 1995

Target end date: Ongoing

Target units:

| | Progress | Target | Current | Accuracy | Monitoring |
|----|-----------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------------------------|
| UK | Some progress (behind schedule) ▼ | 151 | 0 | Unknown ▼ | Under active development ▼ |
| E | Some progress (behind schedule) ▼ | 151 | 0 | Unknown ▼ | Under active development ▼ |
| NI | ▼ | | | ▼ | ▼ |
| S | ▼ | | | ▼ | ▼ |
| W | ▼ | | | ▼ | ▼ |

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5. Current factors affecting the habitat

When your plan was published the factors (threats) that were thought to be causing loss or decline were listed (in section 2). Re-assessing the current situation may help prioritise actions for your species or habitat. In addition, this enables identification of the main threats to biodiversity across all plans. It is useful to assess whether the importance of different factors is changing and whether there are new issues emerging.

The threat section from the original plan is duplicated below, and a first attempt at categorising the threats has been made. Please confirm that you agree with the categorisation of the original threats identified in the plan (by deleting any wrongly categorised threats and adding the correct category). Please also add to the list any significant threats that have emerged recently, being mindful of environmental issues that have increased in profile or been recognised since plan publication (e.g. climate change). Once you are happy that the list contains all the threats identified in the published plan together with any new ones, please rank them in order of severity (1= highest threat). If the situation has changed and one of the published threats is no longer significant, please leave this in the list but give this rank = 0.

Current factors affecting the habitat from the original publication:

- 2.1 Abstraction: Excessive abstraction mainly for public water supply from the chalk aquifer has contributed to low flows on a number of chalk rivers. This has led not only to drying out of upper sections and riparian zones, but also to accumulation of silt and changes in the aquatic vegetation structure. Artificial measures to counter these effects, such as sealing of the bed with concrete and narrowing of the channel, can themselves have negative ecological consequences.
- 2.2 Physical modification: Like most lowland rivers, many chalk rivers have had their beds dredged and lowered and have been confined to specific channels for flood defence, drainage, navigation, and other purposes. As 'low energy' systems, chalk rivers have been less able than other river types to reassert their channel structure. Some have side channels, created during much higher flows after the last ice age. These have sometimes been modified to create lakes for ornamental or fishery purposes. The management of water meadows from a mill head was also a familiar practice in recent centuries. The full extent of these modifications on the animal and plant communities of chalk rivers is not known.
- 2.3 Pollution: In common with most lowland rivers, chalk rivers are significantly affected by sewage discharges and in times of low flow, de-oxygenation may occur. This has caused the upper reaches of at least one SSSI river to be classified in the lowest water quality category. High levels of nitrates (leaching from ploughed land into groundwater) and phosphate (from sewage effluent) are found in many chalk rivers. Because of this enrichment, excessive growths of blanket-weed have been observed on what were previously crystal-clear waters. Changes in plant communities have occurred, including loss of water crowfoot beds from some river stretches. Effluent from fish farms, water-cress beds and light industry can have similar effects.
- 2.4 Fisheries management: On many chalk rivers this is intensive, with regular 'weed' cuts in the channel; fencing off and mowing of strips along the bank; infilling and stabilisation of banks; removal of unwanted fish species (e.g. pike, grayling); and stocking with farm-reared trout. Some fisheries management practices are evidently beneficial to conservation, such as cleaning gravels, while others are neutral providing they do not either impact on characteristic plant and animal communities or are carried out in previously unmanaged areas.

Keyworded factors:

To add factors click the add button, to delete factors check the delete box and then click the delete button.

| Delete: | Rank: | Keyword: |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture Overgrazing |

- Habitat loss / degradation - extraction/drainage | Water abstraction (from water bodies)
- Habitat loss / degradation - freshwater | Dredging (freshwater)
- Habitat loss / degradation | Invasive alien species (directly impacting habitat)
- Human disturbance | Other recreation / tourism
- Pollution - freshwater | Sewage
- Pollution - land | Agricultural (other agro-chemicals)

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6. Constraints (optional)

Select the three most significant constraints to achieving the targets of the plan, and indicate the order of priority (1-3 with 1 being the most significant constraint). Only include constraints that are acting as a real blockage to delivering the plan targets or leading to a substantial delay in their delivery. For each constraint, please indicate whether you feel that it is within the ability of the lead partner or steering group to resolve the constraint.

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Constraint 1: | |
| Constraint keyword: | Country: |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> UK <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> NI <input type="checkbox"/> S |

W

Solution:

Solution type:

Able to resolve:

Constraint 2:

Constraint keyword:

Country:

UK E NI S
 W

Solution:

Solution type:

Able to resolve:

Constraint 3:

Constraint keyword:

Country:

UK E NI S

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> W |
| Solution: | Solution type: | |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | |
| Able to resolve: | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

7. Steering Group

Please list all organisations that are represented on the steering group for your species/habitat (include all organisations that have contributed either directly or by correspondence within the last 3 years). Where a steering group does not exist please leave this form blank.

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

| Delete: | Organisation: |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Atlantic Salmon Trust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | British Trout Association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Centre for Ecology and Hydrology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs |

- English Nature
- Environment Agency
- Game Conservancy Trust
- National Farmers Union
- National Trust
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Salmon and Trout Association
- Water UK
- Wildlife Trust

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8. Other Groups/Organisations

Please list any additional groups/organisations that are actively involved in implementing your action plan. (This is to try to assess which groups are involved where there is no steering group and any additional contributors). If you do not have any other organisations involved, [click here](#).

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

| Delete: | Organisation: |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chilterns Chalk Streams Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hampshire County Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hampshire Wildlife Trust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wiltshire Wildlife Trust |

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9. Linkages to LBAPs

a) Which of the following most accurately describes your interaction with LBAPs, up to now?



b) If you have been in contact with LBAPs how was it initiated?



c) Irrespective of current contact, how important do you consider LBAP co-ordinated action will be in achieving the targets of the plan? Select from category:

Important 

d) If you consider LBAP action to be anything other than unimportant, which of the following forms of engagement do you think would be appropriate? (Note, you may tick more than one category.)

- Indirect contact (e.g. posting information on UKBAP website, sharing work programmes, meeting schedules, articles in Biodiversity News, newsletter)
- Provision of generic information on habitat and/or species (e.g. advice and guidance on habitat/species ecology and management)
- Direct provision of advice (e.g. proactive approach to LBAP, response to consultations from LBAPs, advice on LBAP target setting)
- Reciprocal attendance at meetings
- Development of collaborative projects

Other (please specify):

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10. Successes (optional)

Have there been key successes in the implementation of your plan that should be drawn to the attention of government, the wider BAP partnership, or the public? Please give a brief description (i.e. 2-3 sentences) of up to three successes and allocate a topic area to each of them:

Success 1:

Description:

Production of chalk rivers handbook: "Chalk Rivers, Nature Conservation and Management", 1999 C.P. Mainstone, Water Research Centre. Copies available from English Nature's HQ at Peterborough.

Country:

UK E NI S W

Keyword:

Action plan process | Other

Success 2:

Description:

Network of national and international conservation designated chalk rivers established. Special Areas of Conservation: Avon, Itchen. Sites of Special Scientific Interest: Test, Itchen, Avon, Kennet, Wensum, Frome, Lambourn, Upper Nar, Hull headwaters and Upper Moors Stream.

Country:

UK E NI S W

Keyword:

Action plan process | Other

Success 3:

Description: "State of the Nation's Chalk Rivers Report" currently in draft form, to be published and launched in June 2003. Short well illustrated description of status, issues, actions and future agenda. Designed to raise awareness and influence.

Country:

UK E NI S W

Keyword:

Action plan process | Other

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Thankyou for answering the questions. You have not yet completed all of the questions. You can go back and answer the additional ones or edit the ones you have already answered whenever you want.

Sign-off:

When you have completed all of the questions that you are able to, you must sign off your reporting.

I agree that the steering group (if present) have agreed the information in this report and that the following contact point has also signed it off:

Contact point: Law rence **email:** law rence.talks

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Your name: | Lawrence |
| Date: | 19th Decembe |
