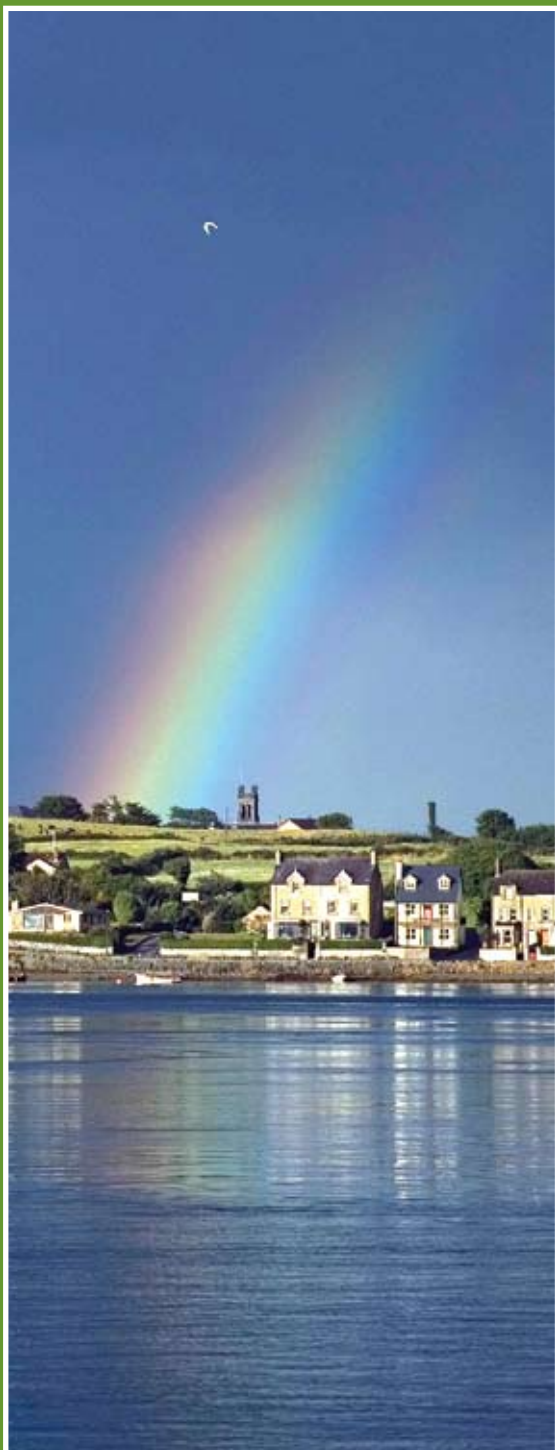


CORPORATE & BUSINESS PLAN 2009/12



Corporate & Business Plan 2009/12

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Chief Executive's Foreword

I am very pleased to present the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's (NIEA) Corporate and Business Plan for 2009/12.

The past year has brought considerable change to the Agency, following its reorganisation and launch in July 2008 with a more focused approach to environmental regulation. Despite ongoing changes affecting the Agency as a result of its reorganisation, NIEA continues to implement its overarching aim of protecting, conserving and promoting the natural environment and built heritage. This Corporate and Business Plan sets out the important issues we intend to address.

Given our critical role in environmental regulation we will continue to build on the Better Regulation work initiated in 2008; rolling out our action programme to simplify NIEA's approach to regulation. In the current economic climate, we will focus on helping businesses to comply with legislation by providing clear guidance, streamlining permitting and payment methods and targeting our resources on those activities and sites that pose the greatest environmental threats.

However, while we seek to develop and strengthen our relationships with businesses, we will also pursue those who flagrantly break the laws protecting our natural and built environment and heritage. Our newly established central Environmental Crime Unit will focus on the most serious and persistent offenders, but each Directorate will also carry out more routine enforcement activities.

Recognising our importance as a consultee on planning matters, we have revised our procedures to improve our effectiveness and performance in responding to development plans. We have set challenging targets to ensure provision of sound, clear and timely advice to the Planning Service while maintaining the quality of the advice provided.

As a 'Champion for the Environment' we will continue to raise awareness of our environment and heritage. We have reviewed and re-launched our internet site making it more user-friendly. Our recently launched 'Wonderful' campaign highlights various aspects of our work, our properties and the events we run or support which demonstrate how wonderful the environment is.

NIEA has used the Balanced Scorecard business planning tool to prepare the Corporate and Business Plan for 2009/12. This has enabled the Agency to consider the impact of all of its activities and strategies in formulating operational objectives and performance targets. From this the Minister has agreed 17 challenging targets that include our obligations under the Programme for Government 2008/11. The Agency will continue to work towards the requirements of the Government Reform process and will contribute to the efficiency savings required under Budget 2008/11.

These are exciting times for NIEA as society's awareness of the environment continues to grow. To achieve our vision of ensuring Northern Ireland has a healthy and well protected environment and heritage which contributes to the social and economic well being of the whole community, we will continue to work with our partners in central and local government, in the private and voluntary sectors and the general public. I am confident that with the support of the skilled and enthusiastic staff in NIEA we can progress both the vision and objectives set out in this document.



Dr Roy Ramsay
Chief Executive

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Organisation

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency is an Executive Agency within the Department of the Environment. The Agency is headed by a Chief Executive and a Board of Directors which spans four Directorates - Natural Heritage, Built Heritage, Environmental Protection and Corporate Services. Following the former Environment Minister's Statement on the Review of Environmental Governance in May 2008, the Agency is currently engaged in the process of appointing two additional independent members to the Board.

We presently operate through three headquarters buildings, two in Belfast and one in Lisburn, with a number of regional centres throughout Northern Ireland. Detailed information about these locations is available on our website www.ni-environment.gov.uk

Aim

Our aim is to protect, conserve and promote the natural environment and built heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.

Vision

Our vision is that we will have a healthy and well-protected environment and heritage in Northern Ireland which contributes to the social and economic well-being of the whole community.

Outcomes

To achieve our aim and vision, NIEA is working towards four long term environmental outcomes:

- Sustainable use and protection of our natural resources;
- Improved conservation and management of our natural heritage;
- Improved conservation and protection of our built heritage; and
- Better public awareness and understanding of the environment.

In seeking to achieve these outcomes, NIEA will act as a Regulator, Influential Advisor and Champion for the Environment.

As a **Regulator**, we will seek to protect the environment through our Better Regulation and enforcement policies, through the designation and management of sites and through research and monitoring to reinforce the basis on which we make decisions.

As an **Influential Advisor** we will contribute to environmental policy development and delivery across other departments and agencies, supporting the delivery of the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland.



As “**Champion for the Environment**” NIEA will raise awareness and understanding of society’s impact on the environment and heritage through the interpretation and exemplary management of our properties and through the dissemination of information on our environment and built heritage.

We aim to be recognised as the leading body responsible for protecting the environment and heritage in Northern Ireland and a significant player in the promotion and delivery of sustainable development.

Values

We will seek to ensure high standards in all areas of our work through adherence to the following values:

- Fostering an open and participative working environment in order to maintain and enhance high levels of motivation, skills and performance in our staff;
- Maintaining and seeking to build on high professional standards in our Service, and striving for quality improvement in our working practices and the delivery of services to our customers;
- Complying with government policy on fairness, equality, human rights and targeting social need;
- Complying with our customer and environmental standards;
- Securing best value from our operations; and
- Providing and maintaining appropriate financial and management information systems.

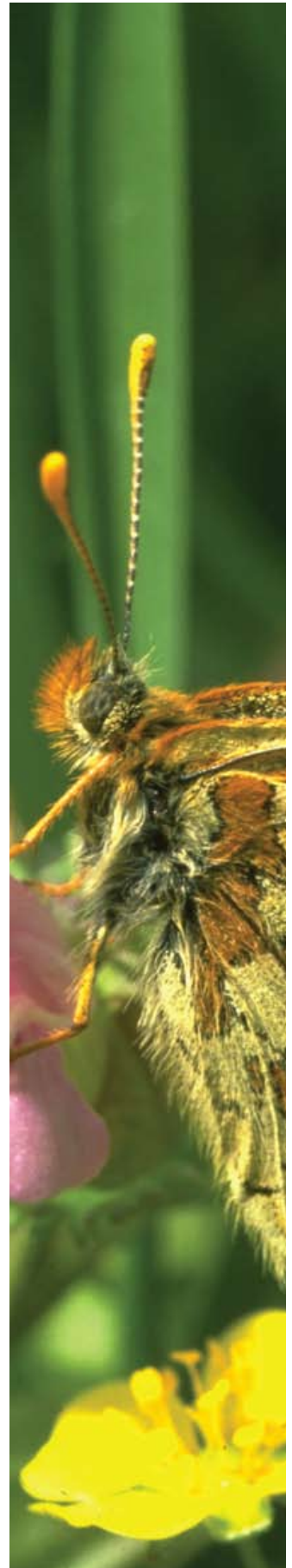


Operational Context & Challenges

Ministerial Initiatives

Following a Review of Environmental Governance, in May 2008 the former Environment Minister announced a number of initiatives to provide a more focused approach to environmental regulation. These were set out in the Agency's 2008/09 Business Plan and in the past year NIEA has made substantial progress in implementing those that are wholly within our control. In relation to the remaining initiatives, the Agency continues to liaise with others to ensure their timely delivery. A brief summary of progress against these Ministerial initiatives is provided below:

- **Creation of a Better Regulation Board for Northern Ireland**
A Better Regulation Board for Northern Ireland was launched on 29 May 2008 with the aim of inspiring action in respect of environmental concerns and improving compliance while minimising costs. The Board comprises leaders from the agriculture, construction, water and business sectors. In tandem, a programme of action entitled 'Better Regulation for a Better Environment' was launched by the Agency to modernise and simplify NIEA's approach to regulation.
- **Development of an Agency-wide Environmental Crime Unit**
An Agency wide Environmental Crime Unit was established at the end of December 2008 following recommendations made in The Criminal Justice Inspection Report (October 2007). The Unit brings a new level of expertise in the gathering and presentation of evidence to the built and natural heritage, as well as incorporating the full remit of the Environmental Protection Directorate. The central focus of the Unit will be on serious offences and persistent offenders. However, as well as applying investigation and prosecution experience to new fields it will also provide training and support for general enforcement practice within each directorate. This will develop competency and capability across the Agency and provide a general deterrent to complement our work on informing and supporting business.
- **Clarification of the roles of NIEA and the Planning and Environmental Policy Group (PEPG) within the Department of the Environment.**
Planning and Environmental Policy Group are taking the lead in relation to the clarification of roles and initial meetings have been held.



- **Appointment of two independent members to the Board of NIEA.**

Following the completion of an appointment process, it is anticipated that independent members will be appointed in September 2009.

- **Open Board Meetings**

Monthly open meetings of the Board commenced in September 2008.

- **Planning Consultations**

NIEA will, as part of the Review of Public Administration and Planning Reform programme, have a responsibility in the planning process conferred on it by the Department of the Environment, which will itself become a statutory consultee, and with this there will be a requirement to comment on planning applications within a specified time period.

- **Statutory Advisory Councils to be retained as independent sources of advice**

The Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC), the Historic Buildings Council (HBC) and the Historic Monuments Council (HMC) have all been retained as independent sources of advice.

- **White Paper on the Environment.**

To be commissioned and published during the lifetime of this Assembly. The Department will be taking forward preparations for commissioning this White Paper in due course.

- **Independent Review in 2011**

To ensure effective regulation is being delivered, in 2011 there will be an independent review of both the policy and legislative development within the DOE and the effectiveness of NIEA as a protector, regulator and advocate.



Other Issues

The Agency's day-to-day activities are governed by primary legislation and regulations. The legislative framework in which we work continues to be amended by the Department to meet international obligations, especially those deriving from European Commission Directives and International Conventions to which the UK is a signatory.

NIEA will make an important contribution to the Department's achievement of its objectives as set out in the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government 2008-2011, Public Service Agreements and the Department's Corporate Plan 2008-2011.

We are committed to the principles of sustainable development and the Agency has a number of specific obligations under Northern Ireland's first Sustainable Development Strategy – "First Steps Towards Sustainability" which was published in 2006. The Objectives and Ministerial Targets set out in this Corporate Plan accord with those obligations.

The State of the Environment report, published in April 2008, provides the evidence base to inform the proposed White Paper on the Environment. It also sets out the key challenges that NIEA will address in the future.

We have expanded and updated the indicator set included in the State of the Environment Report in collaboration with the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), as part of the associated Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics report, which will be published annually. The first Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics report can be viewed at www.ni-environment.gov.uk/northern_ireland_environmental_statistics_report_-_january2009.pdf

These indicators measure many of the environmental outcomes, or results, that we will strive to achieve through this Corporate Plan. We will not only use the indicator set to focus NIEA activities, but we will use it to influence a range of Government Plans and Strategies by highlighting where positive environmental outcomes are key to the delivery of Sustainable Development in Northern Ireland. We will also work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Republic of Ireland to develop a set of comparable key indicators for the island.





Operational Framework

We will work within a framework which:

- 1) controls adverse human impacts upon the environment;
- 2) develops partnerships to protect the environment and promote its enjoyment;
- 3) advises on environmental issues; and
- 4) promotes both public awareness of environmental issues and the action needed to deal with these.

1) Controlling Impacts upon the Environment

NIEA controls impacts upon the environment by regulation and through licences and authorisation, compliance testing, enforcement and by monitoring and survey.

We promote Better Regulation initiatives to modernise and simplify regulation to enable businesses to achieve better standards for the environment.

We will apply our regulatory duties in a robust, fair and consistent manner. Where standards are breached, we will investigate and pursue offenders. The expansion of the Environmental Crime Unit to cover all parts of the Agency illustrates the rigour with which NIEA will tackle all aspects of environmental crime.

Where sister agencies, such as the Planning Service, are responsible for regulatory duties in respect of environmental assets we will work closely with them to achieve the same aims.

We will continue to advance our level of knowledge and understanding of the environment and built heritage through planned research and development. We are actively involved in identifying and supporting research at a national level through engagement with bodies such as the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and the Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research. We also belong to the Environmental Research Funders' Forum, a UK body set up to improve collaboration between government departments, agencies and research councils.

In December 2008 NIEA published, for a six month consultation, three draft River Basin Management Plans as required under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The Plans cover:

- a) North Eastern River Basin District;
- b) North Western International River Basin District; and
- c) Neagh Bann International River Basin District.

The final Plans, which will be published in December 2009, will take an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. The Plans report on the status of the water environment, set objectives to improve status and prevent deterioration and specify the measures that must be taken to address a range of impacts.



2) Developing Partnerships

NIEA has developed a range of partnerships involving NGOs, district councils and formal agreements with other departments to assist us in the application of our statutory duties across a diverse range of environmental matters.

We greatly benefit from support we get from individuals who share our interest and concern for the environment. For example, we need individuals to report incidents that may cause harm to the environment. We also need the owners of listed or historic properties to accept the responsibility of statutory protection and to 'do the right thing'. We need householders to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle by reducing the amount of waste produced and to encourage biodiversity through environmentally friendly gardening practices and supporting local biodiversity initiatives.

At an operational level, formal agreements are made with landowners to protect Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) and field monuments. We provide grant aid to individuals and a wide range of bodies to encourage best practice. We have developed successful partnerships to promote and run major campaigns such as 'World' days and successful European Heritage Open Days.

At an organisational level, NIEA has a number of strategic partnerships. For example, these include the Built Heritage Stakeholders Forum set up following a Ministerial initiative in 2008; partnerships with district councils to monitor waste management; with DARD to protect biodiversity through targeted agri-environment schemes; with Building Preservation Trusts to tackle the issue of buildings and scheduled monuments at risk; and with the EPA in the Republic of Ireland for the implementation of cross-border requirements on a range of water related issues driven by EC Directives for nitrates control and water quality and to ensure cost effective delivery. In the area of enforcement we work with a range of other law enforcement agencies to ensure our response to serious environmental crime is as effective as possible.

NIEA has a layered approach to consultation and public involvement on river basin planning, based on a Northern Ireland Water Framework Directive (WFD) Stakeholder Forum, which is linked to a network of nine Catchment Stakeholder Groups. The Groups include representatives from agriculture, businesses, planning authorities, environmental organisations and other water users. They provide a forum for anyone interested in local water issues to raise their concerns with, and have them addressed by, both statutory agencies and non-governmental organisations at a local level.

NIEA supports management partnerships to protect important landscapes. Existing arrangements include those with the Mourne Heritage Trust and the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust to protect important landscapes including their built heritage. Conservation of biodiversity and enjoyment of the countryside have benefited from NIEA's support to local councils and a number of environmental NGOs.

We will continue to build on the success of these and other partnerships.





3) Advising on Environmental Issues

Members of this Agency's staff are widely recognised for their knowledge and expertise. We will seek to provide scientific, professional and technical advice to assist our colleagues in the Department and other parts of Government to develop environmental policy and legislation.

The Agency is consulted on a range of regulatory issues such as planning applications, shellfishery licenses, water and wastewater schemes. In this role we will uphold our core principles through provision of sound, clear and timely advice. Where we believe that environmental standards, habitats, species or our built heritage are under threat, we will make the strongest representations. The policies on which we will base our advice will be clearly documented and publicly available.

The Agency maintains comprehensive monitoring networks to assess and record the state of the water environment. The monitoring data and classification results are made available to a wide range of stakeholders ranging from environmental consultants, public sector agencies, members of the public and academic institutions. We also receive a large number of information requests mostly through the Waterinfo@doeni.gov.uk website, and annually respond to over 700 of such requests.

We are an important consultee on planning matters and have the opportunity to comment on planning policy, development plans, area plans, Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) and the determination of planning applications. This is one of our most important roles. It requires considerable staff resources and expertise and our advice must be based on good scientific and professional knowledge. Although we are committed to becoming more efficient in processing our input to these, we must not compromise the quality of our advice.

The Agency is responsible for monitoring and enforcing Northern Ireland Water's (NIW) compliance with its discharge consents. In addition we have been involved, through the price control process, in establishing environmental investment priorities for NIW for the period 2010/13.

4) Promoting Awareness and Action

We will focus on delivering key messages about the state of the environment, the pressures on it and the steps that must be taken to deal with them. We will increase contact with industry and landowners by pro-active visits and giving advice. Our campaigns will highlight specific environmental issues and we will seek to promote good environmental practice. We will strive to make best use of our properties for interpreting and promoting the environment and heritage.

Our staff will, through their expertise and commitment, be advocates for environmental protection and conservation. We will lead by example in our guardianship of protected sites and in our use of Environmental Management Systems (EMS) to manage our buildings and other resources.

NIEA has a permanent presence at Country Parks and many major



Monuments in Care. At these locations, the public has a direct opportunity to engage with our staff and avail of services. We will continue to promote appropriate equality of opportunity for access to our sites and properties.

With the development of our library, publication and information management systems, including our web site, we plan to make our information more widely accessible. We have completed a major review of our internet site to ensure that it is more 'user friendly' and conforms to accessibility requirements. For example, we provide straightforward, tailored guidance for businesses on environmental regulations and best practice through our NetRegs website (www.NetRegs.gov.uk), in partnership with the Environment Agency (England and Wales) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). We will provide direct (online) access to environmental data and will provide links to other information sources by agreement with our partners.

By improving access to our services, we aim to heighten the awareness and appreciation of the natural environment and built heritage and our role in protecting them.

Examples of progress in these areas in recent years include:

- 280 natural habitats and earth science features have been protected through their designation as Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs);
- Action plans have been published for 37 priority wildlife habitats; while 271 priority species have plans or statements in place detailing agreed work programmes to deliver biodiversity action;
- In 2008/09 over 500 site improvement plans in or adjacent to ASSIs were agreed with DARD to facilitate payments under its Countryside Management Scheme;
- The delivery of "Shared Horizons", our policy for protected landscapes, progressed with the completion of the review and designation of Sperrin Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and publication of a management plan for Antrim Coast and Glens AONB in 2008/09;
- Approximately 8,500 buildings are listed. In 2008 a new grant scheme was introduced which doubled the number of buildings eligible for assistance and in most cases increased the percentage of grant offered from 20% to 35%. Approximately 150 listed buildings have received our grant aid over the last year;
- The Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) register provides an indicator of changes in the number of building judged to be at risk. In 2007/08, there were 417 buildings and structures on the BHARNI database. In total, 32 listed buildings were removed from the database during 2007/08 because they have been saved and are no longer at risk;





- In 2007/08, the amount of household waste recycled or composted had increased to around 32% and the amount of municipal waste recycled or composted had risen to 29% (306,021 tonnes) compared with only 18% in 2004/05;
- In 2005/07, 75% of river length monitored was classified as 'good' or 'very good';
- Since 2001, there has been a steady decline in the percentage of monitored river length with an annual mean of Phosphorus greater than 0.1mg/l, decreasing from 27% in 2001 to 16% in 2007;
- 23 beaches were monitored in 2007 for bathing water quality. Out of these 23 monitored only 2 failed to meet the mandatory standards and 11 achieved the higher guideline standard;
- More than 1,700 historic monuments and sites are afforded protection by scheduling with at least 7 new management agreements entered into annually;
- Over 180 sites are in state care and each year 12 of them are subject to programmes of conservation works undertaken by our specialist in-house workforce;
- In 2008/09, NIEA provided advice and guidance to Planning Service in relation to over 8,500 development control related consultation requests and to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) in relation to over 350 consultations on the management of historic monuments on farmland;
- In 2008 the Agency undertook the most comprehensive assessment to date of the status of Northern Ireland's water bodies as part of the development of draft River Basin Plans. This involved the assessment of some 552 rivers, 22 lakes, 67 groundwaters and 27 transitional and coastal waters;
- The downward trend in confirmed water pollution incidents has continued with 1,571 incidents in 2001 and 1,111 during 2008. The number of confirmed incidents now is less than half of what it was in 1996 (2380); and
- The Water Pollution Hotline operates on a 24/7 basis to receive reports of pollution from members of the public and from the emergency services. In 2008 the total number of calls relating to water pollution received via the hotline were 928 of which 258 were received outside office hours.



BUSINESS PLANNING

Business planning is taken forward on a number of different levels in the Agency.

a) NIEA Obligations under Programme for Government 2008/11

The DOE Public Service Agreement (PSA) 22 'Protecting our Environment and Reducing our Carbon Footprint' sets out what the Department will deliver in this area in the period covered by the Programme for Government 2008/11.

NIEA has direct responsibility for a number of the identified actions and targets in PSA 22, and our Corporate & Business Plan for 2009/12 is aligned with and cascades from these obligations. Table 1 sets out our direct obligations under PSA 22 and shows the relationship to our Corporate & Business Plan by referencing these to the later Objectives and Ministerial Targets shown in Table 2.

b) NIEA Corporate Scorecard

The Agency has produced an overarching Corporate Scorecard that specifies at a high level objectives, measures and targets for NIEA for the next three years. It is informed by the Agency's obligations under PSA 22 and the Department's key business objectives for 2008/11. Figure 1 sets out the 17 objectives included in the Corporate Scorecard across the four perspectives in which NIEA must excel if it is to continue to meet the expectations of its customers and stakeholders. While NIEA will measure its performance against all of the objectives identified in the Corporate Scorecard, to ensure that we remain focused on the key aspects of our business the Minister has set 17 key performance targets for the Agency in 2009/10. Table 2 shows those Ministerial targets which are also included in the schedule of measures and targets that support the Corporate Scorecard objectives.

c) Directorate Business Plans

Each of the Agency's four Directorates have started to use the Balanced Scorecard approach to business planning. These set out the key objectives and targets for each Directorate for 2009/10 and cascade from the Corporate Scorecard. Directorate business plans provide operational detail and along with their subsidiary Business Unit operational plans enable staff to link into the work of their Business Unit and the Agency within their Personal Performance Agreements (PPAs).



Table 1: NIEA Obligations under PSA 22.

Objective		Actions / Target	NIEA Ministerial Target No.
22.3	Improve the quality and ecological status of the water environment.	Publish River Basin Management Plans containing programmes of measures (POMS) by Dec 2009, and make POMS operational by 2012.	1
22.5	Reduce the annual tonnage of controlled waste illegally disposed of.	Financially investigate a minimum of 10 cases under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, with a view to confiscation of financial benefit obtained from waste crime by March 2011.	5
22.6	Improve the condition of our monuments and listed buildings, including structures currently on the Built Heritage at Risk Register (BHARNI).	Save at least 45 buildings or scheduled monuments on the BHARNI by March 2011, contributing to the target of saving 200 structures in 10 years i.e. by 2016.	13
22.7	Conserve Northern Ireland's bio-diversity.	Declare 75 Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) by 2011. To reduce significantly the loss in biodiversity by 2010, and to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2016.	6,7

Figure 1: NIEA Corporate Scorecard 2009/12

RESULTS		CUSTOMERS	
R1	To control pressures on the environment by fulfilling statutory and international obligations.	C1	To advise and support the Minister.
R2	To provide timely and authoritative input to the Planning Process.	C2	To provide advice to DOE, other Government Departments and public bodies.
R3	To maintain and, where appropriate, enhance an environment which supports the development of the NI economy.	C3	To provide an efficient and effective service to all our customers.
R4	To increase understanding and appreciation of the environment and to be recognised as a 'Champion for the Environment'.	C4	To provide a positive and enjoyable experience for visitors to NIEA properties.
R5	To manage our resources efficiently and effectively.		
PROCESSES		ORGANISATION AND PEOPLE	
P1	To develop and communicate the Agency vision and strategy.	OP1	To develop a strategic, integrated approach to information management and research.
P2	To improve key business processes.	OP2	To have sufficient staff with appropriate skills available to meet business objectives.
P3	To implement required changes to planning consultation processes in the context of planning reform and RPA.	OP3	To ensure NIEA is fit for purpose in terms of structures.
P4	To develop agreed working relationships with key partners including new district councils.	OP4	To promote a best practice culture within a safe and healthy environment.

Table 2: NIEA Ministerial Key Targets 2009/10
(Target date is 31 March 2010 unless otherwise stated)

Corporate Scorecard Reference	Objective	Ministerial Target	
R1	To control pressures on the environment by fulfilling statutory and international obligations.	1	Publish and make operational the first cycle of River Basin Management Plans, and report to European Commission, achieving a milestone as set out in the Water Framework Directive.
		2	Achieve 88% compliance with numeric discharge consents to waterways issued under the Water (NI) Order 1999.
		3	Carry out 85% of targeted risk based site inspections/ producer visits to ensure compliance with domestic and European Commission waste legislation.
		4	Carry out enforcement action for 90% of high and medium severity water pollution incidents where the polluter can be identified.
		5	Commence investigation on 95% of illegal waste disposal reports within 2 working days for Priority one and 20 working days for Priority two cases.
		6	Declare 25 Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs).
		7	Propose the Red Bay marine Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for designation by the European Commission.
		8	Progress the Second Survey by completing the statutory processing of 415 buildings of special architectural or historic interest.
R2	To provide timely and authoritative input to the Planning Process.	9	Respond to 80% of routine planning application consultation requests within 25 working days of receipt, as set out in the Agency's SLA with Planning Service.
R3	To maintain and, where appropriate, enhance an environment which supports the development of the NI economy.	10	Complete consultation on the designation of Strangford Lough and Lecale Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and draft Designation Order.
		11	Complete 12 agreed phases of conservation programmes at State Care Monuments.
		12	Incur grant expenditure of £4 million to improve the condition of listed buildings in Northern Ireland.
		13	Save at least 15 scheduled monuments or listed structures at risk on the Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) register from collapse or dereliction.

Table 2: NIEA Ministerial Key Targets 2009/10 - Continued
(Target date is 31 March 2010 unless otherwise stated)

Corporate Scorecard Reference	Objective	Ministerial Target	
R4	To increase understanding and appreciation of the environment, and to be recognised as a 'Champion of the Environment'.	14	Complete development of Ness Country Park and run a high profile launch and promotion.
		15	Launch the Ulster Way long distance footpath.
C3	To provide an efficient and effective service to all our customers.	16	Review and publish revised Customer Care and Environmental Legislation and Service Standard Charters for the Agency.
P2	To improve key business processes.	17	Complete a comprehensive review of NIEA fees and charges schemes.

RESOURCES

Staff Complement and Funding

In March 2009, the Agency had 754 staff (full time equivalents), comprising 681 scientific, professional & technical and administrative staff, and 73 industrial staff spread across 4 Directorates (see Functions and Structure section below).

Our primary source of income in terms of Departmental Resource and Capital Expenditure continues to come from Central Government. The table below sets out the Agency's budget allocation over the next year:-

	2009/10
	£m
Resource Costs	52.2
Capital Costs	1.4
Total Resource	53.6

Under appropriate legislation we also avail of the flexibility to use receipts to support activities funded from Resource Expenditure; these are used to implement statutory obligations under European and domestic legislation through the issue and monitoring of licences, consents and authorisations.

NIEA is required to contribute to the Department's efficiency savings required under Budget 2008/11. Savings in administration and other resource will continue to be delivered over the three year Budget period.

Functions and Structure

NIEA is divided into four Directorates, whose functions cover the wide diversity of our activities and statutory duties. The chart below illustrates our present structure and Table 3 describes the roles and activities of each of the Directorates.

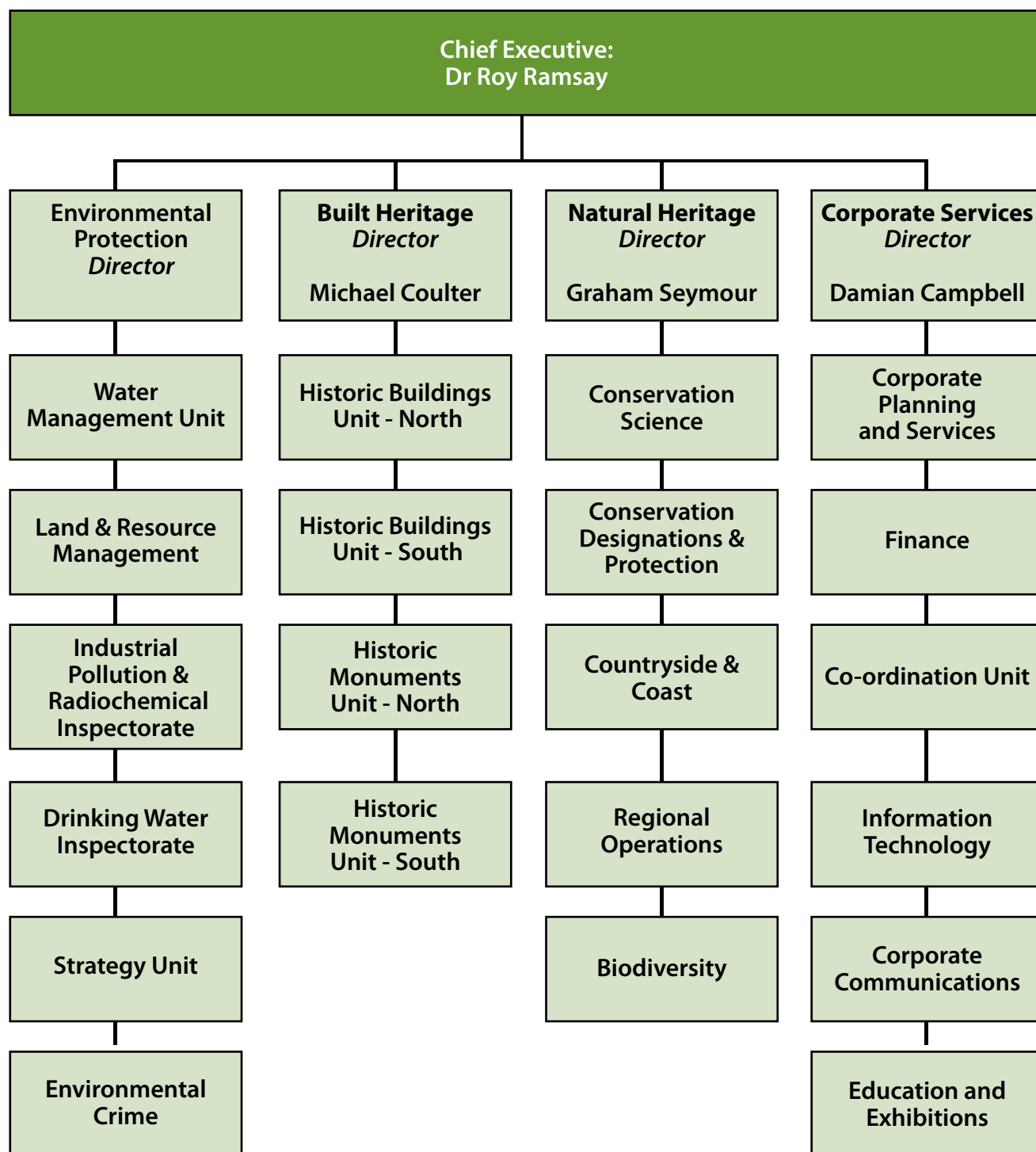


Table 3: NIEA Directorate Roles and Key Activities

Directorate	Roles and Key Activities
Environmental Protection (EP)	<p>The Environmental Protection Directorate seeks to safeguard the quality of the environment through effective regulation of activities that have the potential to impact on air, water and land.</p> <p>This involves engagement with businesses and the public to provide information and advice; monitoring, recording, reporting and setting standards for compliance; issuing consents, licences, permits and authorisations and enforcing legislation.</p> <p>The Directorate is responsible for a diverse range of activities and comprises 6 functional Units; Water Management Unit; Land & Resource Management Unit, Industrial Pollution & Radiochemical Inspectorate, Drinking Water Inspectorate; Strategy Unit and Environmental Crime.</p> <p>The Water Management Unit has responsibility for the protection of the aquatic environment. It achieves this through a number of activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring water quality; • Preparing water quality management plans; • Controlling effluent discharges; • Taking action to combat or minimise the effects of pollution; and • Supporting environmental research. <p>The Land and Resource Management Unit (LRM) is responsible for the implementation of waste management policy and the promotion of a more sustainable approach to dealing with waste in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate (IPRI) is responsible for controlling the keeping and use of radioactive material and the disposal of radioactive waste under the Radioactive Substances Act 1993.</p> <p>The Drinking Water Inspectorate is responsible for regulating the drinking water quality in Northern Ireland for public and private supplies.</p> <p>The Strategy Unit takes forward strategic issues for the Agency. It has a broad remit including horizon and future scanning for issues that may impact on the Agency and the environment in the future and provides support to the Board on policy matters. The Strategy Unit is also responsible for the co-ordination of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) responses.</p> <p>The Environmental Crime Unit was formed on the 31 December 2008 to act as a resource for all of NIEA to deal with all types of serious and persistent environmental crime.</p>
Natural Heritage (NH)	<p>Northern Ireland has a rich and varied biodiversity, a diversity of earth science features that is almost unparalleled and outstanding landscapes that play a major role in defining the region's tourism product.</p> <p>NIEA, through its Natural Heritage Directorate, is responsible for protecting, conserving and enhancing these assets which it does through a variety of statutory and non-statutory means. These include the protection and management of designated sites and areas, promoting biodiversity conservation and public access in the wider countryside and commissioning research to increase our knowledge and understanding of the natural environment.</p>

Directorate	Roles and Key Activities
Natural Heritage (NH) continued	<p>The Natural Heritage Directorate is comprised of five business units:</p> <p>Countryside and Coast; contributes to sustainable development through influencing the planning and management of development, conserves Northern Ireland's finest landscapes, supports others to protect and enhance natural heritage through grant aid, promotes and supports access to and enjoyment of the countryside.</p> <p>Conservation Designations and Protection; whose main functions are the designation of sites and areas for nature conservation purposes and providing for their protection and management to further the aims of designation.</p> <p>Conservation Science; which generates, gathers, evaluates, interprets and makes available the scientific information required to underpin the work of conserving the natural heritage.</p> <p>Biodiversity Unit; whose main function is the conservation of biodiversity through direct action and through advice and influence within departments/agencies.</p> <p>Regional Operations; whose primary functions are to ensure that NIEA properties are managed and maintained effectively to facilitate their enjoyment by the visiting public and to deliver local services to other NIEA units.</p>
Built Heritage (BH)	<p>The role of Built Heritage Directorate is to identify, protect, conserve and promote the built heritage. Divided into two functional units: the Historic Buildings Unit deals with archaeology and historic monuments and the Historic Buildings Unit deals with architecture and historic buildings. Together they deliver the Directorates key roles of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification through recording surveys; • Protection principally through state care, plus scheduling and listing; • Conservation through direct works, offering advice, planning responses, grant aid, management agreements and developing initiatives to tackle built heritage at risk; and • Promotion through events such as European Heritage Open Days, Archaeology Days, the Monuments and Buildings Record and through talks and publications.
Corporate Services (CS)	<p>Corporate Services provide a range of cross-cutting services within NIEA. The following activities occur across three functional units:</p> <p>Finance: to ensure that the agency's financial resources are managed in an effective manner, meeting high standards of probity and propriety in compliance with relevant DFP requirements. Key activities include:-</p>

Directorate	Roles and Key Activities
Corporate Services (CS) continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation of annual Agency Accounts; • providing a management reporting framework to assist budget holders in actively managing their expenditure against budgets; • co-ordination of contract procurement across the agency; • processing invoice payments/receipts; and • preparation for implementation of Account NI. <p>Corporate Planning and Services provide a range of corporate services to support all staff perform their roles effectively and with due regard for corporate governance. Key activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-ordination of all corporate level business planning; • application of corporate governance best practice and risk management; • collation and facilitation of learning and development for staff; • provision of health and safety advice; and • Klondyke premises management and building security. <p>Corporate Communications provides specialist communications, IT and administrative support services to all of NIEA. Its key activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing, advertising, delivery of events and external communications; • Internal communications, Design Studio, exhibitions and education services; • IT management and support; • Web services; • EU Programmes administration; and • Chief Executive's Office.

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Our aim is to protect, conserve and promote the natural environment and built heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.



An Agency within the Department of the
Environment
www.doeni.gov.uk



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