

SOLENT EUROPEAN MARINE SITES

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

JULY 2007

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The SEMS Management Scheme states that 'As part of the monitoring process, where they have relevant information to report, each relevant authority will be expected to report back to the Management Group on their implementation of the scheme.' To do this, relevant authorities (RAs) have completed proformas in April 2005, February 2006 and February 2007 detailing progress (where appropriate) with the SEMS Management Scheme. This report summarises this information.

It details: progress in implementation as and when appropriate; progress on the management considerations; changes in management affecting the key risk area activities; new activities which are taking place and any additional issues such as changes in the intensity or geographical extent of current activities.

This report is expected to help the Management Group respond to the results of Natural England's (NE) condition monitoring and to determine whether Topic Groups are required to consider issues in more detail.

2.0 CHANGES TO THE CONDITION OF THE FEATURES OF INTEREST IN THE SITE

As at April 2005:

The relevant authorities in the Solent completed the proformas and none with the exception of Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners, English Nature and the Environment Agency noted any changes in the condition of the site features.

Norton Spit - Within Yarmouth Harbour the condition of Norton Spit has changed from 'unfavourable declining' to 'unfavourable improving'. This is due to the introduction of management measures to raise awareness of the site's unique features and to allow regeneration of Marram Grass in areas prone to damage by trampling.

Ryde Sands (Pump scoop fishing) - English Nature assessed 10 SSSI units (Sub-units of SSSIs) within the SEMS during the 2004 calendar year, the condition of one of these units (Ryde Sands sea front) had changed since the last assessment, from favourable to unfavourable recovering. Pump scoop fishing for cockles was found to be damaging the supporting habitats (intertidal mudflats and sandflats, specifically *Zostera* beds) of Solent and Southampton Water SPA at Ryde Sands in August. This fishery ceased within the site in October following the introduction of a ministerial stop order. Although there was some deterioration in condition in August further damage has been prevented and the condition assessment for this unit is now considered to be unfavourable recovering.

It was also reported by members of the Strategic Stakeholder Group that following the cockle dredging of Ryde Sands the lugworm beds collapsed in September 2004. Pollution is suspected but the beds have subsequently recovered.

Mud and Sand flats in the harbours (Nutrients) - A large amount of information with the ability to inform EN's assessment of feature condition became available during 2004 as a result of investigations carried out during the Environment Agency's Review of Consents Process. English Nature reviewed this information in order to feed into the reporting on the condition of SAC / SPA features to Europe via JNCC in 2005/6. Of particular note was information regarding the extent and distribution of green algal mats especially within the harbours, as well as site specific information regarding the density of green algae which may

impact upon benthic invertebrates. It was thought that current assessment of the condition of some areas of intertidal mudflats and sandflats may change once this review was complete.

SPA bird population numbers (BTO Alerts Reports) - The Environment Agency found that evidence within long-term data sets such as the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) reports are invaluable and will need to be given thorough consideration into the future management of the SEMS. The Agency is particularly concerned about areas that are used by the designated bird species but are outside of the designated site. The Agency is concerned that the loss of these habitats will only continue to add pressure to the ecological functioning of the site as a whole.

Example detailing extract from the BTO Alerts Report:

'Trends have been assessed over the short-, medium-, and long-terms (5, 10 and up to 25 years respectively). Where data has been collected for less than 25 years the maximum number of years of data available are used for calculating long-term Alerts.

Chichester and Langstone Harbour

High Alert: Shelduck, Ringed Plover, Knot, Black-tailed Godwit

Medium Alert: Cormorant, Shelduck, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit

Alerts summary

Alerts were triggered for three of the six species for which the Chichester & Langstone Harbours SPA is internationally important. The declines of Ringed Plover and, to a lesser extent, Dunlin have tended to mirror regional and national trends. The long-term decline of Black-tailed Godwit at the site has occurred despite rapidly increasing regional and national populations.

Alerts were also triggered for six other species for which the site is important.

Solent and Southampton Water

High Alert: Ringed Plover

Medium Alert: Shelduck, Grey Plover, Dunlin, Redshank.

Alerts summary

Alerts were triggered for just one of the four species for which the Solent & Southampton Water SPA is internationally important – Ringed Plover. Numbers of this species have fallen sharply in the last decade, triggering High Alerts for each of the three time periods.

Medium Alerts were also triggered for various time periods for four other species, for which the site is important.'

Saltmarsh (Coastal Squeeze) - The Environment Agency was also aware (although not the exact quantity) that there are a number of areas that are being affected by coastal squeeze, in particular with the loss of saltmarsh habitat. Exact losses over one year could be calculated from a number of sources. This is one issue that the SEMS Management Group will need to consider in the future.

General Condition - The Agency completed Appropriate Assessments for all existing consents (permissions and licences) under the Reg. 50 'Review of Consents' of the Habitats Regulations 1994. The method of research dissemination was to be agreed within the Agency and the EA would inform the SEMS Management Group when the information was collated in an appropriate format. Such information will help assess the current condition of the SEMS designation. As stated previously by English Nature 'whilst it is true to say that the SEMS qualified for designation against the background of current use it is also the case that sites were selected on the basis of the special interests that they support, they were not selected on the condition of those interests, or the ability of the sites to continue to support these features in a favourable condition. Indeed at the time of designation the condition of the site was not well understood either by ourselves or other relevant authorities.'

February 2006:

All the relevant authorities in the Solent completed the proformas and none with the exception of English Nature, Lymington Harbour Commissioners and Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners noted any changes in the condition of the site features.

Norton Spit - Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners noted the condition of Norton Spit is continuing to improve. Areas of marram grass have recolonised on trampled paths and eroded holes have also been filled.

Saltmarsh Portsmouth Harbour, SSSI at Fleetlands (Coastal Squeeze) - English Nature noted there has been re-unitisation of part of Unit 9 of Portsmouth Harbour SSSI at Fleetlands. Part of the unit is now considered to be in unfavourable condition due to coastal squeeze, previously only unfavourable for bait digging. The great part of unit 9 is not considered to be unfavourable for either reason and is now considered to be favourable.

Portsmouth Harbour SSSI unit 13 (ammonia leachate) - Portsmouth Harbour SSSI unit 13 has been reassessed from favourable to unfavourable condition due to ammonia leachate from Paulsgrove Landfill site. This is due to an increased understanding of the probable pathways for the leachate as a result of information becoming available through the EA Review of the Consents Process, as opposed to any increase in the amount of leachate reaching the site. This unit is also considered to be unfavourable condition due to nutrient inputs and green algal mat growth.

Intertidal sandflats and mudflats (Nutrients) - English Nature has now collated the information it holds relevant to the condition of the SEMS features so far obtained during the first reporting cycle and is reviewing the information. Relevant information included that flowing from the EA Review of Consents Process. Of particular note is information regarding the extent and distribution of green algal mats especially within the harbours, as well as site specific information regarding the density of green algae which may impact upon benthic invertebrates. This task will continue at least during the first half of the next financial year 2006/07. This work will feed into the reporting on the condition of SAC / SPA features to Europe via JNCC. English Nature will update the Management Group when they have information to report. It is likely that the current assessment of the condition of some areas of intertidal mudflats and sandflats will change once this review is complete.

Maritime SAC intertidal sediment - English Nature is currently awaiting the final report for the Solent Maritime SAC intertidal sediment survey undertaken in 2005. Although the report has yet to be finalised the preliminary interpretation of the data generally indicates that the essential character of the sediment communities remains similar to those described in previous studies. However there is some data which may tentatively suggest a possible decline in the condition of the mudflats within Langstone Harbour, English Nature is currently considering whether to investigate this further before changing the current view of unit / feature condition. Once finalised the report will be made available to interested parties.

Saltmarsh erosion Lymington - Lymington Harbour Commissioners noted that saltmarsh erosion is progressing. This is an ongoing issue currently being looked at by New Forest District Council Coastal Group who will provide details.

February 2007

All the relevant authorities in the Solent have completed the proformas and none with the exception of Lymington Harbour Commissioners, Natural England, Fareham Borough Council and Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners have noted any change in the condition of the site. One of the general changes which was noted at the Management Group meeting was that

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the Environment Agency's sea level predications have been amended and now predict a larger annual change. This is an important development and needs to be considered in the context of the management scheme (For further information see: Flood and Coastal Defence Appraisal Guidance FCDPAG3 Economic Appraisal. Supplementary Note to Operating Authorities – Climate Change Impacts October 2006).

Norton Spit - Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners - have noted a gradual improvement of the condition of Norton Spit.

Natural England have changed their view regarding the condition of some features of the SEMS. This does not relate to any major change in the actual condition of the site during the last 12 months.

Mudflats in the harbours (Nutrients)

Natural England has progressed the work carried out by English Nature and the Environment Agency in relation to green algal mats. The assessment of the information, provided by the Environment Agency, is that substantial areas of mudflats in the following areas should be regarded as being in unfavourable condition due to the presence of green algal mats resulting from the discharge of nutrients in to the Solent and surrounding coastal waters. The areas in question include:

- Chichester Harbour
- Hamble Estuary
- Parts of Portsmouth Harbour
- Part of Langstone Harbour
- Part of Southampton Water
- Part of Newtown Harbour

The rationale for this is that green algal cover of over 2kg/m² has been shown in the Solent to reduce the richness and diversity of the community present in the underlying mud. These levels of green algal biomass are typically found where macro algal cover exceeds 75% of the intertidal area. NE have therefore considered the parts of the sites where substantial areas of mud (more than 10% of the mud in any individual SSSI unit, or 5% across an estuary) are affected by high levels of algal cover (75-100%) to be in unfavourable condition.

SPA bird population numbers

Natural England has also progressed its assessment of SPA bird feature condition using common standards methodology. As a result the following species are identified as being in unfavourable condition for each SPA/Ramsar:

Solent and Southampton Water:

Ringed Plover	(Ryde Sands SSSI, Hythe to Calshott Marshes SSSI, North Solent SSSI)
Grey Plover	(Hythe to Calshott Marshes SSSI, North Solent SSSI)
Dunlin	(Lee-on-Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI, North Solent SSSI)
Redshank	(Lee-on-Solent to Itchen Estuary SSSI)

Portsmouth Harbour

Brent Geese

Chichester & Langstone Harbours:

Over wintering wildfowl assemblage

Brent Geese	(Chichester Harbour SSSI, Langstone Harbour SSSI)
Shelduck	(Chichester Harbour SSSI, Langstone Harbour SSSI)
Sanderling	(Chichester Harbour SSSI)

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Dunlin	(Chichester Harbour SSSI, Langstone Harbour SSSI)
Ringed Plover	(Chichester Harbour SSSI,
Black Tailed Godwit	(Langstone Harbour SSSI)
Bar Tailed Godwit	(Langstone Harbour SSSI)
Sandwich Tern	(Chichester Harbour SSSI)

N.B. Population declines were assessed firstly at SPA level and then at individual SSSIs where they are notified features **only** if a decline was detected across the SPA. Baseline period taken as the 5 years prior to SPA classification in each case.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing, work to update our Ensis database (linked to our website) in order to make the above information on condition widely accessible and link it to the NE 'remedies programme' has yet to be progressed due to staffing and other issues related to their recent reorganisation.

Subtidal Sediments within the SAC - Early in 2006 English Nature commissioned Emu Ltd to undertake a survey of the subtidal sediments with the SAC, including the subtidal sandbank SAC feature. This survey was completed in late summer, It used a mixture of sidescan sonar, drop-down video, and grab and naturalist dredge sampling. It maps the extent of sediment 'biotopes' within the SAC. This survey will act as the 'baseline' for future assessments of these features. The report highlights the pervasiveness of the American slipper limpet *Crepidula fornicata* in the Solent ecosystem and highlights this as a concern with respect to feature condition. Copies of the final report will be available at the SEMS MG meeting in May and to the SSG via the Solent Forum website.

Saltmarsh erosion Lymington - Erosion of the saltmarsh edges facing the Solent progresses due to sea level rise and high energy wave/current action. Winter storms (October 06 to Feb 07) have been frequent and severe in nature. Up to 10 feet of salt marsh has been recorded as lost during a single storm. New Forest District Council Coastal Group's latest projections for the salt marsh habitat surrounding the Lymington Estuary are that it will have disappeared within the next 15 to 20 years.

The erosion of the saltmarsh is exposing the harbour to the open waters of the Solent more and more each year. To combat this Lymington Harbour Commissioners is working up a scheme to introduce rock breakwaters on the outer harbour as the salt marsh recedes. As well as protecting the harbour this will also provide a protected sheltered low energy environment behind the breakwater. This will protect the remaining saltmarsh habitat that will otherwise be lost. The sheltered saltmarsh in the lee of Hurst Shingle Bank is a good example of how salt marsh protected from the worst of the wave/tide action has not suffered the same erosion rates as exposed marsh. LHC is in the process of undertaking an EIA into its proposals and has been consulting NE, EA and NFDC.

Mudflats Fareham Creek (bait digging) - Fareham Borough Council have noted damage by bait digging and large scale disturbance of mud at Fareham Creek.

Other matters:

Work to update NE's understanding of feature condition with respect to other threats to site condition, in particular coastal squeeze and discharges affecting water quality (other than nutrient status) has been on hold over the past year as has the rolling programme of SSSI condition assessments based on site visits.

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3.0 NEW ACTIVITIES (NOT COVERED IN THE MANAGEMENT SCHEME) NOW OCCURRING

Yr	Applicable Sector	New Activity	Relevant Management Consideration	Responsibility
2005	Dredging	Water injection dredging - this is being used more frequently within the site including in the Medina, off Fawley, Portsmouth Harbour and Langstone. At present this has no specific consenting mechanism in place.	Wait for further guidance before determining whether any further assessment is required in relation to dredging issues.	All RA with responsibility for activity.
2005	Fishing	Cockle pump scoop dredging - due to the market demand for cockles in 2004, areas within SEMS have been exploited. These areas have been identified as Hill Head and Ryde Sands. The method used to remove the cockles (A pump scoop dredge) was thought to be causing damage to the eelgrass (<i>Zostera; species</i>) off Ryde Sands. As a result DEFRA introduced the Solent European Marine Site (Prohibition of Method of Dredging) Order 2004 (SI 2696/2004) which came into force on 21 October 2004 to prevent the use of pump scoop dredgers removing shellfish within SPA's of the SEMS. The fishery continues off Hillhead outside of the SEMS.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of fishing in key risk area RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with responsibility for activity
2005	Land-based recreation	Land yachting - land yachting has been reported on flat land at Port Solent, Portsmouth City Council are planning to erect signs to discourage the activity.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of land-based recreation in key risk area RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with responsibility for activity
2005	Land-based recreation	Private Hovercraft Use - English Nature is aware that some limited use of a private hovercraft occurred on Ryde Sands in 2004. It has also been noted over and close to intertidal mudflats at Weston Shore, Southampton, during the winter period.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of land-based recreation in key risk area RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with responsibility for activity

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Yr	Applicable Sector	New Activity	Relevant Management Consideration	Responsibility
2005	Plan or project	Managed realignment (strictly a plan or project) - has occurred at a small site on the Isle of Wight near Gurnard and in Chichester Harbour.	Plan or project management measures	All RAs and CAs with responsibility for activity
2005	Water-based recreation: boat repair and maintenance	Mobile boat scrubbers - the use of these is becoming more prevalent within the Solent.	<p>Keep a watching brief on the impacts of other water sports in key risk area</p> <p>EA setting up research projects in order to monitor the effects of wash down facilities in order to determine the percentage contribution to the background levels of copper and irgarol within the Solent – not implemented</p>	<p>All RA with responsibility for activity</p> <p>EA</p>
2005	Water-based recreation: other water sports	Jet boards - these are now being used within the site, especially within the estuary of the River Itchen.	<p>Keep a watching brief on the impacts of other water sports in key risk area</p> <p>RA to continue to enforce current management measures</p>	All RA with responsibility for activity

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Yr	Applicable Sector	New Activity	Relevant Management Consideration	Responsibility
2006	Access: Educational/ scientific study and research	Education - English Nature is aware of a proposal to undertake educational marine safaris within the SEMS from Cowes using drop down video technology.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of educational and scientific study in key risk areas	All RA with responsibility for activity
2006	Access: Land-based recreation	Model Aircraft - English Nature perceives that there may have been an increase in the flying of model aircraft on the east side of Hayling Island near Gutner.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of land-based recreation in key risk area RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with responsibility for activity
2006	Bait collection	Peat digging – Hampshire County Council is aware of an occasional issue with the digging of ‘Sea Peat’ from the offshore areas between Keyhaven and Pennington. It is thought that it is used as a medium for keeping bait alive. It seems to be a bit of a grey area with regards its legality. The digging does cause some disturbance but probably no more than other activities (baitdigging, wildfowling etc).	Voluntary code of conduct leaflet produced and circulated Keep a watching brief on the impacts of bait collection in key risk areas	All RA with a responsibility for activity.
2006	Fishing: shellfisheries	Mussels – There is a possible proposal to lay mussels on the western side of Langstone Harbour close to Salterns Quay. The exact consenting mechanism has yet to be finally determined however English Nature anticipate that this will be a Plan or Project either through an application for a Several Order or because English Nature consent will be required.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of shellfisheries in key risk areas RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with a responsibility for activity

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Yr	Applicable Sector	New Activity	Relevant Management Consideration	Responsibility
2006	Land-based recreation	Private Hover Craft - English Nature is aware that private hover craft have been used within Newtown Creek, Isle of Wight during the sensitive over wintering period.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of land-based recreation in key risk area RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with responsibility for activity
2006	Water based recreation: Other water sports	Kite surfing – Increase in all activities such as kite surfing, boarding etc at Hill Head.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of land-based recreation in key risk area RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with responsibility for activity
2006	Water based recreation: Recreational boating (racing)	Competitive Sports - There have been several proposals for competitive sports events within the Beaulieu River – including swimming events for Triathlons, canoe / kayak events and dingy sailing which may be regarded as ‘new’ on the scale and location proposed. English Nature is working with Beaulieu Estate and other parties regarding these matters. Again it is likely that English Nature consent will be required for these organised events with the potential to damage or disturb sensitive areas / species, therefore they would be plan or projects rather than ‘activities’ to be considered through the Management Scheme.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of recreational sailing in key risk areas RA to continue to enforce current management measure such as existing speed limits.	All RA with responsibility for activity
2007	Fishing: shellfisheries	LHB - Seed mussels were laid in the intertidal zone between Milton Lake and Salterns Lake on the west side of the harbour during summer 2006. It is anticipated that the shellfishery will reach maturity in 2008.	Keep a watching brief on the impacts of shellfisheries in key risk areas RA to continue to enforce current management measures	All RA with a responsibility for activity

4.0 PROGRESS WITH MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS (February 2007)

4.1 KEY RISK ACTIVITIES

The Management Scheme, through the assessment of the activity inventories, identified activities which were seen as 'key risk'. The progress with management of these activities by the relevant authorities is detailed below. Information is given on new and additional management or monitoring effort and assumes that current management and monitoring measures as detailed in the Management Scheme are ongoing. Further details on key areas at risk from the activities detailed below are available in appendix 2 of the Management Scheme document.

4.1.1 Access

(a) Land and water access

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of access in key risk areas;*
 - *Relevant authorities to continue to enforce current management measures.*
- Eastleigh Borough Council – Informal monitoring by Countryside Service on Council owned land.
 - NE - Natural England has provided advice to government regarding coastal access, see: www.naturalengland.org.uk/press/releases2007/210207.htm
 - Southampton City Council - Not aware of any significant impacts. Anecdotal accounts show that wader numbers are down this season at Weston Shore which may be linked to access disturbance but too early to detect cause/effect if this is a true trend. Current access policies are implemented within legal frameworks. Where legal controls are not possible attempts have been made to manage visitor pressure in longer term – e.g. at Weston Shore providing interest for visitors away from shore.

(b) Airborne sports

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of airborne sports in key risk areas.*

(c) Angling

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of angling in key risk areas.*
- Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee - Activities monitored and inspected if possible. Enforcement of Bass Nursery Regulations for Chichester Harbour.

(d) Educational/scientific study and research

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of educational and scientific study in key risk areas.*
- Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee - Recording fishing activity and transfer to GIS as part of ongoing assessment work.
 - Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners - Norton Spit bird survey underway (Sept – April 07) and further monitoring planned. Saltmarsh monitoring continuing. Educational work with local school and programme of walks and talks (Wetlands week).

(e) Land-based recreation

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of land based recreation in key risk areas;*
 - *Relevant authorities to continue to enforce current management measures.*
- Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners - Management measures on Norton Spit continuing. Restoration work carried out with further work planned summer 07. Visitor use survey carried out over summer 2006 and initial analysis completed. Bird survey underway (Sept – April 07) and further monitoring planned. Beach litter survey carried out 4 times over the year and project planned for 2007.

Summary

April 05: Most of the activities are being managed by current management measures with a number of new plans being drafted and policies being implemented. With regard to the new activity of land yachting Portsmouth City Council are aware of this and are acting to discourage the activity by erecting signs. Kite-surfing has been increasing along Hayling Island and on the Isle of Wight. Havant Borough Council are monitoring for impact on the site and a code of conduct is being discussed for the Isle of Wight. Some RAs are also carrying out informal monitoring on the impacts of activities on the site.

February 06: Current management measures enforced where necessary and monitoring is carried out as part of everyday management regulations through academic research and ongoing assessment. No significant impacts were noted from access pressures or increases in activities. However, observations were recorded at Weston Shore of a decrease in wader numbers which may possibly be linked to access disturbance but it is too early to establish the cause/effect.

February 07: As in previous years current management measures are being enforced and monitoring is being carried out as part of everyday management activities by the RAs. Where necessary, like Norton Spit, additional management and monitoring measures are being used to improve the condition of features of the site. Again SCC have commented on the decrease on wader numbers at Weston Shore but further work is needed to assess the cause of the decline.

4.1.2 Bait Collection

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Voluntary code of conduct leaflet produced and circulated;*
 - *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of bait collection in key risk areas;*
 - *Monitor success of the code of conduct and review if necessary.*
- ABP - No deterioration observed.
- Fareham Borough Council - Further degradation has been reported in Fareham Creek and the code is not adhered to.
- Natural England - NE is aware that in recent months there has again been a relatively high level of bait digging activity occurring within Fareham Creek. The Police have been involved in seeking to enforce the Nature Conservation Order which applies at this site. Natural England is aware of research into the impacts of this activity on mudflat communities, within the Solent and elsewhere on the south coast, being conducted at University of Portsmouth. This work is due to be published soon. Work has also been carried out by the Solent Harbour Authorities identifying the location of bait collecting in these areas.
- QHM - There seems to be an increase in bait collection at the top end of Fareham Creek but there is no hard evidence to suggest that it is being collected by commercial bait dealers.
- River Hamble Harbour Authority - Bait collection activity continues to increase on sites within the River. The number of collectors and the frequency of visits to the sites has

increased, as has the intensity of the digging. It is believed that all of this activity is commercial. The code is a useful document when educating those collecting bait for private use, but the HA have found it of little use with commercial bait collectors.

- Southampton City Council - Bait collecting continues within designated sites, particularly at Chessel Bay and Weston Shore.

Summary

April 05: The Bait Digging Code was produced by the bait digging topic group and has been distributed to tackle shops, visitor centres etc and circulated by numerous organisations. The Solent Forum are currently coordinating projects, on behalf of the management group, which are looking at the success of the code, these are due to report in June 2005.

February 06: In certain areas the Bait Digging Code has successfully educated those seeking to collect for private use. However, bait digging activity has increased in areas such as Fareham Creek and River Hamble and problems have occurred due to increasing number of commercial collectors. Due to limited powers of enforcement by the local authority the police have been involved at Fareham Creek.

February 07: As with the previous year bait digging activity continues to increase in the Fareham Creek and River Hamble areas. These areas are now seeing degradation. It is suspected that some of this collection is commercial and the code is of little use with these bait diggers. Work has been done by the Solent harbour authorities to identify the sites where bait digging is occurring. This information will be collated for discussion at the SSG and MG meetings.

4.1.3 Commercial Shipping

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Harbour Authorities to continue to enforce current management and safety measures;*
 - *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of commercial shipping in key risk areas.*
- ABP – There is an increasing number and size of vessels now using Southampton. On-going traffic management essential to ensure safety of navigation and inter-tidal mud conservation.
 - EN - Natural England, Wightlink and QHM have been discussing the approach to managing the risk of impacts from Wightlink ferries operating into Wootton Creek, Isle of Wight. Wightlink have set out the approach in a Statement of Practise. Last September 2006 Natural England advised Wightlink and QHM that the Statement of Practise did not go far enough in addressing those risks. A detailed analysis of the level of risk was presented, together with the actions that Natural England believe are required to offset that risk. Currently there is disagreement between relevant authorities regarding the assessment of risk and the required action. Natural England is considering how to proceed.

Summary

April 05: Current management measures are being enforced and where necessary changes have been adopted according to the precautionary principle.

February 06: Management measures and monitoring continues to ensure appropriate environmental considerations are taken into account.

February 07: In general management measures and monitoring continues to ensure appropriate environmental considerations are taken into account. Where risk has been identified the appropriate RAs have been working together to look at ways of reduce this risk.

4.1.4 Dredging

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Wait for further guidance before determining whether any further assessment is required in relation to dredging issues.*
- ABP - Maintenance dredging continues to be on-going. Plans are currently being formulated for Capital Dredge deepening of main navigable channel, in strategic locations between Nab Tower approaches and Southampton Container Port.
- Chichester Harbour Conservancy - Beneficial disposal ongoing in the Harbour.
- Cowes Harbour Commissioners - Still working towards a sustainable dredging plan in the Medina. Awaiting further guidance on dredging techniques and for the maintenance dredging protocol.
- Isle of Wight Council - Opportunity to pilot beneficial use of dredgings at Island Harbour not proceeded with due to concerns from EA.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Dredging licence obtained in accordance with DEFRA licences. Maintenance dredging quantities have been consistent for last five years.
- Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners - Working with Natural England and IW Estuaries Project to develop more sustainable dredging practices.
- Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee - Fed into consultation process regarding proposals for disposal of up to 12,000 cubic metres material/annum at Treloar Hole.
- Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee - Development of maintenance dredge disposal within Chichester Harbour. Consultation with MCEU, EN & CHC to minimise impact on sub-tidal features and marine systems.

Summary

April 05: The Maintenance Dredging Protocol has not been published. In the interim the Isle of Wight estuaries are developing a sustainable dredging strategy and Chichester Harbour and Langstone Harbour have looked at the possibility of using other more sustainable dredging methods. A new method of dredging called water injecting dredging has started to be used in areas within the SEMS. At present there is no consenting mechanism in place for this activity.

February 06: The Maintenance Dredging Protocol has still not been published. Research is ongoing into developing more sustainable dredging practices, particularly in the Isle of Wight where small scale experiments in foreshore recharge may take place in full.

February 07: The Harbours continue with their maintenance dredging regimes, looking at sustainable practices while awaiting the outcomes from the maintenance dredging protocol. In suitable locations beneficial disposal is being carried out. A capital dredge is being planned for strategic areas in Southampton Water.

4.1.5 Fishing

(a) Fishing

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of fishing in key risk areas;*
- *RA to continue to enforce current management measures.*
- Sussex SFC - Observing catch rates & trends, observable impacts remained relatively consistent. Enforcement activities for entire period. District enforcement records available in annual reports.
- Southern SFC - No impacts detected, SSFC carry out regular patrols and checks on fishing activity at sea and onshore throughout the year.

(b) Shellfisheries

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of shellfisheries in key risk areas;*
 - *RA to continue to enforce current management measures.*
-
- Environment Agency - The Agency has reviewed all their Pollution Prevention Plans in EU Shellfish Waters. Local Authorities have produced Management Plans and also agreed Action Plans to deal with specific events. The Shellfish Harvesting Groups have produced Local Action Plans for Shellfish Harvesting Waters.
 - Eastleigh Borough Council – EBC has received reports of large groups (c.20 individuals) handpicking shellfish around Hamble Point. Small fishing boats continue to work in this area at high tide. No enforcement action taken, although Countryside Officer tries to dissuade individuals without much luck.
 - Natural England – NE is aware that SSFC again carried out an Appropriate Assessment prior to lapsing the closure of the Solent oyster fishery in 2006. SSFC also arranged a working group to consider the future of the Fishery a meeting was held in February 2007. NE is continuing to work with the National Trust who are still investigating the feasibility of a Regulating Order to control clam fishing within Newtown Harbour.
 - Southern Sea Fisheries Committee - An Appropriate Assessment of the Solent Regulated Licenced Oyster Fishery was carried out prior to the fishery opening on 1 November 2006. Regular patrols and checks on fishing activity at sea and onshore throughout the year. One proven Court case of the SI 2696/2004: The SEMS (Prohibition of Method of Dredging) Order 2004.
 - Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee – An annual liaison meeting was established with shellfish fishermen operating within Chichester harbour. Discussions may flag up issues. Enforcement activities for entire period, district enforcement records available in annual reports. In 2005 new regulations were introduced restricting scallop fishing further. All observed fishing activity is recorded for GIS assessments.

Summary

April 05: The Sea Fisheries Committees continue to monitor fishing and shell fishing activity. The increase in the collection of cockles in the Solent EMS by the pump scoop dredging method lead to Defra introducing the Solent European Marine Site (Prohibition of Method of Dredging) Order 2004 to prevent the use of pump scoop dredgers removing shellfish within SPAs of the SEMS.

February 06: EBC noted handpicking of shellfish around Hamble Point and of small fishing boats working in the area. Although noted as low impact this also included occasional commercial collection of cockles. Elsewhere no observable impacts or changes in patterns and intensity of fishing. The Sea Fisheries Committees continue regular monitoring of fishing activity and in Sussex they have established an annual liaison meeting with shellfish fishermen which may flag up further issues.

February 07: Handpicking of shellfish around Hamble point continues with no enforcement measures in place. Management and Action plans have been produced for Shellfish Harvesting Waters detailing how to deal with pollution events. The Sea Fisheries Committee continue with regular monitoring of fishing activity.

4.1.6 Water Based Recreation

(a) Anchoring

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of anchoring in key risk areas;*
- *RA to continue to enforce current management measures.*

(b) Boat repair and maintenance

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of boat repair and maintenance in key risk areas;*
 - *The EA are in the process of considering setting up a research project in order to monitor the effects of wash down facilities in order to determine the percentage contribution to the background levels of both copper and also Irgarol within the Solent.*
- ABP - This activity is reducing as several working boatyards have closed in recent years.
 - Eastleigh Borough Council - Countryside Officer at Hamble continues to remove litter eg tins of paint etc washed onto EBC from boatyards.
 - The EA have not been able to carry out a project proposed last year to monitor the effect of wash down facilities in order to determine the percentage contribution to the background levels of both copper and Irgarol due to lack of funding.

(c) Moorings (new)

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of new moorings in key risk areas.*
- EA - There are a number of new facilities known as 'dry stack' for storing ribs on land in a multi-storey arrangement.
 - Isle of Wight Council - Reg 62 applications re new trott moorings and pontoon moorings in Bembridge Harbour. Additional bird survey work and consideration of mitigation by Isle of Wight Council and NE with EA.
 - Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Moorings being progressively removed from within SEMS as they become more exposed due to loss of salt marsh. Some additional moorings to compensate for loss are being provided outside the SEMS in an existing mooring area.
 - SCC - Proposals for new moorings as part of Woolston Riverside/Vospers site regeneration.

(d) Moorings (ongoing management)

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of ongoing moorings in key risk areas;*
- *Harbour Authorities to continue to enforce current management measures.*

(e) Navigation

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of navigation in key risk areas;*
- *Harbour Authorities to continue enforcement of existing speed limits for boats.*

(f) Other water sports

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of other water sports in key risk areas;*
- *RA to continue to enforce current management measures.*

(g) Recreational boating (power)

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of recreational power boating in key risk areas;*
- *RA to continue to enforce current management measures such as existing speed limits.*

Solent European Marine Sites

- River Hamble Harbour Authority - Radar speed gun and CCTV now available for monitoring speeding vessels.
- Southampton City Council - Water-skiing/power boating normally within main channel & within areas designated by Harbour Authority.

(h) Recreational boating (sail)

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of recreational sailing in key risk areas;*
 - *RA to continue to enforce current management measures such as existing speed limits.*
- River Hamble Harbour Authority - The Green Blue project continues

(i) Slipway cleaning and maintenance

The management considerations for this activity are:

- *Keep a watching brief on the impacts of slipway cleaning and maintenance in key risk areas.*
- ABP - General condition of public slipways in Port of Southampton Harbour area is acceptable, although increasing presence of water gypsies and other travellers has resulted in additional flotsam and jetsam.

Summary

April 05: Water based recreational activities continue to be monitored and managed by the RAs. The River Hamble Harbour Authority have produced Strategic Principles to guide mooring development in the river and WSCC are producing a management strategy for Pagham nature reserve which will cover all aspects of water based recreation. In some areas additional moorings have been developed. There has also been the installation of new Boat Scrubbers and washdown facilities in a number of the harbours in the Solent.

February 06: Moorings are gradually being removed in Lymington Harbour as they become more exposed within areas of SEMS, with additional moorings provided outside the area. New moorings are also proposed at Woolston Riverside in Southampton as part of regeneration project. Issues of navigation and restricted areas require management which takes account of environmental considerations and bylaws and this occurs continuously. EBC noted increasing amounts of litter washed up on shore originating from boatyards.

February 07: As with the previous year moorings continue to be removed in Lymington Harbour as they come more exposed and additional moorings being provided outside the SEMS. New moorings are being proposed at Woolston, Southampton and Bembridge Harbour on the Isle of Wight. In some areas of the site, Southampton boat maintenance activities are decreasing where as Eastleigh BC continue to see impacts (litter) from this activity in their area of the site. The Blue Green projects continues to be used to help encourage sustainable water recreation.

4.2 PLANS AND PROJECTS

Specific procedures are in place through the Habitats Regulations for considering the impact of new plans and projects on European Marine Sites. Plans and projects were included in the Management Scheme to show that all types of human use had been considered by the Management Group. For completeness of this report these activities, their management considerations and any progress or change in the activity or management of the activity is detailed below.

4.2.1 Aggregate Dredging

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for aggregate extraction are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts of both the dredging and associated shipping movements.*

February 07:

- Removal of sand and gravel from main navigable channel of Bembridge Harbour:- Isle of Wight Council three year temporary planning permission and regulation 62 consent subject to legal agreement, dredging protocol and monitoring. Detailed consultation with NE and EA.

February 06:

- EN continues to be actively engaged with BHIC and IOWC considering the future of the dredging operation at the entrance to Bembridge Harbour.

April 05:

- BHIC is having in-depth discussions with EN, EA and local authority over future aggregate dredging at the entrance to Bembridge Harbour.

4.2.2 Coastal Development

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any strategies, initiatives, project and plans are developed and implemented in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations;*
- *Ensure that the Habitats Regulations are taken fully into account in the preparation of development plans and the assessment of planning applications.*

February 2007

- ABP - Increasing concerns that excessive coastal development - in particular, waterside residential development – could increase levels of light pollution, surface water run-off and increasing demands for marina-type developments and consequent increase in recreational craft.
- Cowes Harbour Commissioners - working with IW Estuaries Project and Cowes Waterfront to complete the development of assessment tools and modelling of Medina Estuary to allow more informed assessments of cumulative impact of developments.
- Eastleigh Borough Council - provided advice on Habitats Regulations Assessment requirements to the consultants engaged to work on the River Itchen, Western Shore, Netley and river Hamble Coastal Defence Strategy Study. Development applications screened and commented upon by EBC's Biodiversity Officer as necessary.
- Fareham Borough Council - Better processes could be put in place for Habitats Directive Assessments or screening Environmental Impact Assessments when planning applications for coastal development are received.

Solent European Marine Sites

- The Gosport Borough Local Plan Review was adopted in May 2006 and forms part of the Development Plan for the area covering the period to 2016. Work has commenced on the Local Development Framework. An Issues and Options Report has been produced for the Core Strategy as well as a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.
- Isle of Wight Council - Eastern Yar Strategy – joint study underway by IWC and EA re coastal strategy and flood management and water Level Management Plans options for Bembridge/St Helen's frontages and Culver, Sandown. Contributors to Sustainable Ports study appraised of requirements of Habitats Regulations.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Plans for harbour protection project under discussion with NE, EA, DEFRA & NFDC.
- The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) will shortly be commissioning consultants to prepare a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Framework for Local Development Documents in South Hampshire. This will provide the basis for local planning authorities when undertaking a HRA for each Development Plan Document or Supplementary Planning Document in the light of the European Court of Justice ruling on 20 October 2005 on Appropriate Assessments. Appropriate Assessments are carried out for the relevant planning applications. Consultation with Natural England.
- Southampton City Council - Coastal Defence Strategy Study in progress – consultation with Natural England and EA. Local Plan adopted March 2006, protected sites policy reflects advice from Natural England.
- Winchester City Council - One planning permission has been granted since May 06 in the Upper Hamble (Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar). Natural England and the Environment Agency were consulted and conditions added to the permission to comply with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. Other relevant changes in policy and planning are arising through the PUSH strategy.

February 06:

- ABP are currently considering a Works Licence application to create a 250 approx berth Marina at the former Husbands Shipyard at Marchwood. ABP has expressed concern that this could lead to navigational safety issues in the deepwater channel approaches to the Western Docks. A suggestion has come forward for the creation of a designated small boat channel running parallel to the main, navigable channel
- Chichester District Council – consult with EN over planning applications affecting Chichester Harbour. New European Courts of Justice ruling now means that all Local Development Framework (LDF) document will be subject to Appropriate Assessment under the Habitat Regulations (guidance awaited from Government).
- Cowes Harbour Commissioners - Working with IoW Estuaries Project and Cowes Waterfront on modelling of Medina Estuary to allow more informed assessments of cumulative impact of developments.
- Eastleigh Borough Council - Development applications screened and commented upon as necessary. Policies within the Revised Local Plan second deposit draft remain in line with Habitat Regulations.
- EN suggests that there may be serious implications for the demand for activities within and adjacent to the European Marine Site as a consequence of the numbers of new houses proposed around the shores of the Solent and more widely.
- EA - The EA have objected to a number of proposals that are not in accordance with the Habitat Regulations.
- Gosport Borough Council - The European Court of Justice ruling on 20 October 2005 on Appropriate Assessments will have implications for all local planning authorities preparing their Local Development Frameworks. Gosport Borough Council will be adopting its Local Plan Review by July 2006 and is currently evidence gathering for its Local Development Framework. Appropriate Assessments are carried out for the relevant planning applications. Consultation with English Nature.
- Hampshire County Council - Ongoing statutory requirement to consider plans and projects within local plans etc.

Solent European Marine Sites

- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Plans for harbour protection project under discussion with DEFRA, English Nature, Crown Estate etc.
- Portsmouth City Council - It is presumed discussions are still being held with regard to a wharf extension at Kendall's Aggregate Wharf. EIA scoping report undertaken and EN involved in discussions. Sustainability Appraisal General Scoping Report produced and revised during 2005 which takes in account the coastal habitats around Portsmouth. This has formed the basis of the Specific Scoping reports which relate to the Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents being progressed.
- Southampton City Council - Local Plan adopted March 2006, protected sites policy reflects advice from English Nature.

April 05:

- Chichester District Council (CDC) – Consult with EN over planning applications affecting Chichester Harbour.
- CDC - Sustainability appraisal of the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) will ensure that the Habitats Regulations are taken fully into account.
- Eastleigh Borough Council – Development applications screened and commented upon as necessary. New local plan policies prepared in line with Habitats Regulations requirements.
- The Environment Agency Project to upgrade the Eastoke Defences on Hayling Island are nearly completed. Hayling Island sectoral strategy group are currently working defence options for the rest of Hayling Island. The final designs for the upgrading of the defences for the Selemore/ Megham frontage on Hayling Island are soon to be released by the EA.
- Gosport Borough Council (GBC) - Gosport Borough Local Plan Review (Revised Deposit) produced in June 2004 included a revised Policy R/OS9 relating to SPAs, cSAC and Ramsar Sites. The updated wording accords with English Nature's requirements and consequently their initial objection has been withdrawn.
- GBC - An 'Appropriate Assessment' is undertaken for planning proposals that have the potential to affect the Portsmouth Harbour SPA/Ramsar Sites.
- GBC – Planning permission has been granted for the principle of mixed use development on Priddy's Hard Heritage Area with detailed permission given to the residential element (198 dwellings). Conditions have been included (relating to the phasing of construction and clearance work and restricting access to the foreshore) which safeguard the adjacent Portsmouth SPA following detailed discussions with English Nature. This application underwent an Appropriate Assessment.
- Hampshire County Council (HCC) – There is an ongoing statutory requirement to consider plans and projects within local plans etc.
- HCC - Appropriate guidance regarding Habitats Regulations requirements is included in responses to consultations on planning applications where potential impacts upon internationally designated sites are present.
- Havant Borough Council – Local plan addresses issues which might arise from new development including locational matters; Habitats Regs are recognised as part of the overall process.
- Isle of Wight Council - Ongoing appraisal of planning applications in respect of Habitats Regulation requirements. Details of extent and features of European Site for part of baseline information informing the preparation of the Island Plan (LDF) core strategy
- Portsmouth City Council – Discussions are being held with regard to a wharf extension at Kendall's Aggregate Wharf. EIA scoping report has been undertaken and EN are involved in discussions.
- Southampton City Council – Integrated coastal plan to be developed with Eastleigh Borough Council in 2005/2006. This will give due regard to the Habitats Regulations.

4.2.3 Construction/alteration of slipways

Management Considerations:

Solent European Marine Sites

- *Ensure that any proposals for new slipways are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features of interest.*

February 06:

- EA - The applicant must show that there is no net loss of intertidal and that where possible, further mitigation has been sought. The EA will object to proposals that are not like for like replacement.
- Portsmouth City Council - Current application for the extension and alterations to existing Hovertravel landing pad at Southsea.

April 05:

- Portsmouth City Council – consideration is being given to enlarging the public slipway on the Langstone Channel adjacent to Southsea Sea Angling premises. This will improve control by Langstone Harbour Master over leisure activities.

4.2.4 Discharges (Industrial and Domestic)

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for new discharge consent are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities;*
- *Ensure that the EA review all current discharge consents with regard to the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.*

February 07:

- ABP - Recent PPC applications have highlighted activities and required mitigation. No deterioration observed.
- Southern Water - This is a routine and mandatory procedure for Southern Water. Relevant current discharge consents have been reviewed by the EA.

February 06:

- EN has been consulted by the EA regarding permissions within / affecting the SEMS sites. EA has consulted EN regarding the Appropriate Assessments for the SEMS sites.

April 05:

- ABP is reviewing its surface water drainage issues (SWD) on a corporate level, this includes an assessment of SWD discharges within ABP Southampton.
- BHIC is having discussions with EN and EA over discharges into harbour.
- The EA has completed Appropriate Assessment for all existing consents (permissions and licences) under the Reg. 50 'Review of Consents' of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

4.2.5 Freshwater Abstraction

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any new fresh water abstraction proposals are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities.*

February 07

- Scheme coming forward to re-establish water intake and out-takes at Marchwood Power Station site. Full consultation procedures in place to mitigate potential adverse effects.

April 05:

- The EA has completed Appropriate Assessment for all existing consents (permissions and licences) under the Reg. 50 'Review of Consents' of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

4.2.6 Holiday Camps

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for new holiday camps are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features of interest.*

February 07 :

- Havant Borough Council - proposals for extensions to the Holiday Camp at Sinah Warren have been submitted but are held pending clarification of flooding issues from the EA (impact of new PPS25 guidance).

4.2.7 Houseboats

Management Considerations:

- *Review any future applications for houseboats in view of the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.*

February 07:

- ABP - Whilst there have not been any new applications in Southampton, issues have been raised concerning suitability of replacement craft on existing sites.
- Isle of Wight Council - Application for additional houseboat moorings at Bembridge. Decision to be informed by additional bird survey information and proposed mitigation.
- Natural England - NE remains in discussions with BHIC, IOWC and EA regarding possible proposals to increase the number of houseboats within Bembridge Harbour and to provide sewage treatment for existing boats.

February 06:

- English Nature remains in discussions with BHIC, IOWC and EA regarding possible proposals to increase the number of houseboats within Bembridge Harbour and to provide sewage treatment for existing boats.

April 05:

- Eastleigh Borough Council – development applications screened and commented upon as necessary.
- English Nature – there have been preliminary discussions with BHIC, IOWC and EA regarding possible proposals to increase the number of houseboats within Bembridge Harbour and to provide sewage treatment for existing boats.
- Isle of Wight Council - discussions with owners and English Nature and Environment Agency re proposals for additional houseboats at Bembridge Harbour.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - have decided formally that moored boats should not be used as permanent accommodation (though not a problem).
- River Hamble Harbour Authority – this is an ongoing issue on the River with lack of clarity on the issue of houseboats, their replacement, planning permission etc.

4.2.8 Land reclamation

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for land reclamation are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features.*

February 06:

- EA – an objection has been made to an application that included substantial reclaim as it was without Appropriate Assessment and no forms of mitigation, compensation or enhancement were sought.

April 05:

- ABP is reviewing its surface water drainage issues (SWD) on a corporate level, this includes an assessment of SWD discharges within ABP Southampton.
- Southampton City Council – No planning applications including land reclamation have been received during monitoring period.

4.2.9 MOD and other Aircraft

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that the airspace needs of all users are met as equitably as possible and that there is no disturbance to the SEMS.*

4.2.10 Oil and Gas Exploration

Management Considerations:

- *In the absence of any particular issue at present, there is simply a need to keep a watching brief on future proposals.*

4.2.11 Pipeline Construction

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for pipeline construction are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features of interest.*

February 07

- SCC - Southern Water pipeline works underway, not thought to be significant for SEMS interest, Natural England party to works.
- ABP - Cross-Solent water pipeline replacement currently underway between Lepe and Gurnard. All permissions in place, following protracted consultation procedures.

February 06:

- Cowes Harbour Commissioners - No proposals at present.
- Southampton City Council - Southern Water pipeline works underway, not thought to be significant for SEMS interest, English Nature party to works.
- Southern Water is currently replacing two cross-Solent water mains, which were installed under the Solent from Lepe to Gurnard in 1980, with new pipes to ensure demand for water on the Island can continue to meet demand over the next 25 years. Construction will commence during 2006, with completion currently programmed for July 2007. Southern Water is working closely with English Nature, Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, New Forest District Council, Ports Authority and DEFRA to ensure that all possible issues are taken into consideration.

April 05:

- EN – there have been preliminary discussions with consultants acting on behalf of Southern Water regarding a new pipeline to supply potable water to the Isle of Wight.
- EA - have had preliminary discussions with consultants acting on behalf of Southern Water regarding a new pipeline to supply potable water to the Isle of Wight.
- Southampton City Council – proposal for Southern Water pipeline in Riverside Park northwards. Not thought to be significant in relation to SPA/SEMS site due to distance from site.

4.2.12 Seawater Abstraction

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any new sea water abstraction proposals are properly assessed by the competent authorities.*

April 05:

- EA - have completed Appropriate Assessments for all existing consents (permissions and licences) under the Reg. 50 'Review of Consents' of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

4.3 ACTIVITIES WITH SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO ENSURE THEY ARE MANAGED IN LINE WITH THE HABITATS REGULATIONS

Stage 4, the activity inventory, of the Management Scheme process identified activities which have 'systems in place to manage the activity in line with the habitats regulations'. These are listed below with the management considerations and any progress or changes as identified by the RAs. Again only new information is detailed, ongoing management as described in the Management Scheme is assumed to be continuing.

4.3.1 Agricultural run-off

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that EA and EN take account of the requirements of the Habitats Regulations when reviewing consents.*

February 07:

- EA – There is a Multi- Agency Project (DEFRA, Environment Agency and natural England) called England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative (Currently April 06 – April 08). It is targeting selected subcatchments within the Test and Itchen to reduce diffuse pollution from Agriculture. The Environment Agency and Island 2000 have developed a similar Project on the Isle of Wight - The Landcare project. Concentrating on both the Eastern Yar and Medina catchments. For More information visit their website, www.landcare.island2000.org.uk.

February 06:

- EN - From April 2006 a dedicated network of expert advisers will be on hand to help farmers tackle the causes of harmful water pollution. This partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England will help farmers to act. Catchments across England, including the Test and Itchen, identified as priority areas for action, will be targeted under a range of measures aimed at improving farm practices and reducing water pollution from agriculture. Advisers will work on a one to one basis with farmers, as well as leading a series of initiatives including workshops and farm demonstrations to encourage best practice.

April 05:

- BHIC – Agricultural run-off needs to be monitored in Yar valley particularly for soil run off into the harbour.
- EN - Water quality has been assessed as part of the EA's Appropriate Assessment for the Solent maritime cSAC and Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA. But this doesn't directly address agricultural run off which is normally diffuse pollution and doesn't have a specific discharge consent.
- EA - Appropriate Assessments have been completed for all existing consents (permissions and licences) under the Reg. 50 'Review of Consents' of the Habitats

Regulations 1994. Agricultural runoff is a form of diffuse pollution, there is no legislative driver to consent run-off .

4.3.2 Barrage/sluice operation

Management Considerations:

- *All RAs to ensure that they take into account the requirements of the Habitats Regulation in the operation of any barrage/sluices within their control.*

February 07:

- Havant Borough Council - the EA have taken over responsibility for sluices associated with Emsworth Mill Pond and are automating these in financial year 2007/8. The proposals include consideration of Habitats Regulations.

4.3.3 Beach cleaning

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that LAs carry out beach cleaning activities with due regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.*

February 07:

- Eastleigh Borough Council – Twice yearly rubbish collection on beach and beach clean events.

February 06:

- Chichester District Council – this activity only occurs outside SPA/SAC area at present. Watching brief in case any volunteer Beach Wardens in SPA/SAC area come forward through ‘Nature Coast’ project.
- Southampton City Council - Litter picks carried out without significant impact on SEMS site.

April 05:

- Beaulieu River Management – the Countryside Education Trust carried out a beach clean along Park Shore under a national scheme and hope to continue to do this on an annual basis.
- Chichester District Council – this activity only occurs outside SPA/SAC area at present. Watching brief in case any volunteer Beach Wardens in SPA/SAC area come forward through ‘Nature Coast’ project
- Eastleigh Borough Council – low frequency manual cleaning of man-made material only.
- RHHA – Warsash Residents Association have started a monthly (if possible) beach clean in Warsash area.
- Southampton City Council – any beach cleaning activities have taken account of the requirements or have not been significant in relation to the site.

4.3.4 Coastal Protection

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for coastal protection and maintenance are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features of interest;*
- *Ensure that the next round of SMPs take full account of the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.*

February 2007

- Gosport Borough Council - Coastal Defence Strategy Study for Town Areas has been approved by DEFRA-awaiting decisions on funding of two schemes. No construction has taken place.
- Southampton City Council - Coastal Defence Strategy Study, Natural England and EA are parties to the study. North Solent SMP in progress, Natural England are being consulted as part of this process

February 06:

- EN continues to be consulted by the appropriate competent authorities around the Solent.
- EN - In June 2005 temporary planning permission was given to Chichester Harbour Conservancy to recycle material from the northern end of East Head to the 'neck' of the sand dune system. It expires in June 2007 and permits 2 recycling operations within this time. It is envisaged that the Selsey Peninsular Strategy will be published by June 2007 and therefore the long term management policy for this area will be known. English Nature continually provides advice to applicants and Competent Authorities / Section 28G bodies in relation to these matters.
- Gosport Borough Council - The Borough Council has submitted a Coastal Defence Strategy Study to DEFRA for the Town area adjacent Portsmouth Harbour for funding. Decision Awaited. Officers are aware of the next round of SMP requirements.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Plans for harbour protection project under discussion with DEFRA, English Nature, Crown Estates etc.
- New Forest District Council - The South East Regional Strategy and West Solent Coast Defence Strategy are in process.
- Portsmouth City Council - Portsea Island Coastal Strategy Study (Halcrow) now completed and with the Government Office for approval. The study produces options of coastal defence improvements for consultation with the appropriate bodies.
- Southampton City Council - Recent application for protection of railway line by Network Rail at St Denys. English Nature party to FEPA application. Present indication that works will not significantly affect SEMS site. A bid made to DEFRA for funding for North Solent SMP, decision awaited. English Nature are being consulted as part of this process.

April 05:

- BHIC - report being prepared for groyne repairs etc to Duver Beach.
- Chichester District Council – ongoing consultation with EN and CHC about East Head proposals.
- Chichester Harbour Conservancy – the issue of East Head is under consideration by all statutory authorities.
- EA - have consulted EN on their annual flood defence maintenance programme.
- EN - The Pagham to East Head Coastal Defence Strategy is currently being revised this includes the East Head frontage at the mouth of Chichester Harbour. EN is on the steering group.
- Fareham Borough Council – minor repairs undertaken to seawalls following consultation with EN.
- New Forest District Council – work is underway on the South East Regional Strategy and West Solent Coastal Defence Strategy.

- Portsmouth City Council – Portsea Island Coastal Defence study (Halcrow) to be completed shortly. The study produces options for coastal defence improvements for consultation with the appropriate bodies.
- Southampton City Council – integrated coastal plan to be developed with Eastleigh Borough Council in 2005/2006. This will give due regard to Habitats Regulations.
- WSCC - the Selsey Peninsula Review is currently being developed looking at coastal protection/flood defence options for the area. This replaces the previous Pagham to East Head Strategy.
- WSCC - options for the future management of East Head (spit within Chichester Harbour) are being looked at via a working group of all relevant authorities to ensure that they are sustainable.
- WSCC - the South Downs Shoreline Management Plan (Selsey Bill – Beachy Head) is being reviewed and goes out to public consultation in January 2005 setting out long term policy options for coastal defence. English Nature has been represented on the steering group throughout its development to ensure the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are addressed.

4.3.5 Egg Harvesting

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for new licenses are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features of interests.*

February 07

- Natural England – NE received the draft Final Report from the PhD student investigating the impacts of egg collecting on Black-headed Gulls and associated species on the 13 March 07. They are currently in the process of reviewing the findings of the research in conjunction with their senior ornithological specialist and will consider whether any changes to the management of the activity are required as a result. Unfortunately it will be too late to implement any changes required for the current year as licence applications have already been determined. The Final report should be available to interested parties by the end of March 07.

February 06:

- EN - Research into the impacts of Egg collecting on the breeding success of black headed gulls and associated species is being undertaken by Southampton University funded by EN. The research is ongoing with the final field season in 2006 and the report due later this year.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - No change.(Licensing by DEFRA with EN consent. LHC merely gives landowner's permission for access.)

4.3.6 Flood Defence

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any proposals for flood defence and maintenance are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features of interest;*
- *Ensure that the next round of SMPs take full account of the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.*

February 2007

- ABP – Flood Defence considered as part of Harbour Works consent applications.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Plans for harbour protection project under discussion with Coast Protection Authority.

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- Southampton City Council - N.Solent SMP in progress, Natural England are being consulted as part of this process.

February 06:

- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Plans for harbour protection project under discussion with Coast Protection Authority (NFDC).
- Portsmouth City Council - Portsea Island Coastal Strategy Study (Halcrow) now completed and waiting for approval from the Government Office for approval. The study produces options of coastal defence improvements for consultation with the appropriate bodies.
- Southampton City Council - A bid made to DEFRA for funding for North Solent SMP, decision awaited. English Nature are being consulted as part of this process.

April 05:

- Chichester District Council – involvement with the SMP round 2 process will ensure that the SMPs take full account of the Habitats Regulations.
- EN - were consulted by the EA on their annual flood defence maintenance program. Where there are private defences EN have in most cases been consulted through the development control process.
- Portsmouth City Council – Portsea Island Coastal Defence study (Halcrow) to be completed shortly. The study produces options for coastal defence improvements for consultation with the appropriate bodies.
- WSCC - the Selsey Peninsula Review is currently being developed looking at coastal protection/flood defence options for the area. This replaces the previous Pagham to East Head Strategy.
- WSCC - options for the future management of East Head (spit within Chichester Harbour) are being looked at via a working group of all relevant authorities to ensure that they are sustainable.
- WSCC - the South Downs Shoreline Management Plan (Selsey Bill – Beachy Head) is being reviewed and went out to public consultation in January 2005 setting out long term policy options for coastal defence. English Nature has been represented on the Steering Group throughout its development to ensure the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are addressed. The results of this pilot SMP plus the 2 other pilots will feed into the SMP round 2 guidance being prepared by Defra.

4.3.7 Grazing

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that EN's SSSI consenting procedure and Site Management Statements take into account the possible impacts of grazing.*

February 07:

- EA can only action this if they own the site or have direct management responsibilities.
- Natural England continues to consider impacts to the SSSIs when issuing consents and management agreements. Management agreements for grazing have largely been superseded by Higher Level Stewardship (HLS).

April 05:

- EN - Site Management Scheme for grazing of saltmarsh in Fishbourne channel was produced and the impacts on interest features were assessed during the development of the scheme.

4.3.8 Oil spill and oil spill clean up

Management Considerations:

- *EN to provide relevant information about site features to the Standing Environment Group (SEG) to ensure that the contingency plans take into account the Habitats Regulations;*
- *MCA project to update the Atlas of Nature Conservation Sites in Great Britain Sensitive to Coastal Pollution with information about EMS.*

February 07:

- Chichester Harbour Conservancy - Updated Oil Spill Response Plan.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - LHC have an Oil Spill Response Plan for the Harbour formulated in accordance with advice from DEFRA and approved by the MCA.

February 06:

- Chichester Harbour Conservancy – Updated oil spill response plan in place.
- ABP - On-going requirements as statutory Harbour Authority.

April 05:

- Chichester Harbour Conservancy – Oil spill response plan in place.
- The SEG produced an Environmental Plan in October 2004 following consultation with EN and other bodies.

4.3.9 Outfall maintenance and replacement

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that outfall maintenance and construction takes into account the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.*

February 06:

- Southern Water undertakes non-intrusive inspections of its marine outfalls. There are currently no plans for any intrusive surveys or work on any marine outfalls within the designated area. There is the possibility of some minor maintenance work on a small number of Isle of Wight foreshore outfalls during 2006-07. Southern Water has no responsibility for discharges from industrial premises direct to the environment.

April 05:

- EA - have consulted EN on their annual flood defence maintenance programme.

4.3.10 Wildfowling

Management Considerations:

- *Ensure that any future licences for wildfowling are properly assessed by the appropriate competent authorities, addressing the potential impacts on the features.*

February 06:

- Chichester Harbour Conservancy – new licences issued.
- EN has been consulted by Emsworth District Wildfowlers and Conservation Organisation in relation to their new Management Plan for which new consents are being sort for EN. EN is currently undertaking an appropriate assessment in relation to this.
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners - Present procedures subject to English Nature approval – no change. Generally activities are governed by local wildfowling associations.

April 05:

- EN - in 2004 EN agreed a site management statement regarding wildfowling in Langstone Harbour, with the Langstone and District Wildfowlers and Conservation Association.

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- Chichester Harbour Conservancy – new licence agreed and lease reviewed.
- West Sussex County Council – this activity is likely to be addressed in the new Pagham Harbour Nature Reserve Management Strategy.

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4.4 MONITORING

The following table gives information relating to monitoring being undertaken by the RAs, this may, in some cases be helpful to EN's condition monitoring programme. See table 8, in the SEMS Management Scheme for English Nature's condition monitoring programme.

Features of Interest	Year	Monitoring
General	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA has completed Appropriate Assessment for all existing consents (permissions and licences) under the Reg. 50 'Review of Consents' of the Habitats Regulations 1994. Method of research dissemination still to be agreed. The EA will inform the SEMS Management Group when the information is collated in an appropriate format. • EA - The Agency commissioned two surveys (Autumn and Spring 2004) from the Natural History Museum, to look at the condition of a number of Saline Lagoons within the Solent area. These reports are available on request.
	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Nature - Solent SPA literature review completed, this is the basis for understanding future monitoring requirements. • English Nature is currently undertaking an initial review of the information it holds relevant to the condition of SEMS features so far obtained during the first reporting cycle. This will include both the information collected on contract to English Nature such as the CASI survey of the SEMS, information collected by the EA through their review of consents and information from other bodies such as the WEBS partners. Due to the large amount of relevant information this task is taking longer than originally envisaged, but EN hope to be in a position to report upon initial findings in 2006. • Environment Agency and Hampshire County Council have sponsored a survey to take place in the forthcoming year. Subtidal information will then be provided in conjunction the Hampshire Wildlife Trust and the Sea Search initiative over the following years.
	February 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EA will hopefully be disseminating the general scientific findings of our review of consents process by the end of 2007.

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Features of Interest	Year	Monitoring
Estuaries	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowes Harbour Commissioners completed the second annual waterbird survey and in partnership with Isle of Wight Estuary project have enhanced water side land for use as a high water wader roost site. • Much information from monitoring points provided to EN during EA review of consents process. • Havant Borough Council - water quality measured regularly along coastline and published by Environmental Health department. • Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners have a monitoring scheme underway to assess the extent of changes to the Western Yar saltmarsh and intertidal area over the next 5 years. • Isle of Wight Council have undertaken survey work including winter bird counts, and benthic sampling in the Medina Estuary as part of Cowes Waterfront Initiative baseline information. • Water quality data from National Marine Monitoring Programme – arrangements for data transfer required through management scheme.
	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowes Harbour Commissioners - Work is underway on a sustainable dredging plan which when developed will include elements of monitoring. Working with IoW Estuaries Project and Cowes Waterfront on modelling of Medina Estuary to allow more informed assessments of cumulative impact of developments. Large amount of survey work including bathymetry and bird use will provide valuable baseline data for future monitoring. • EN - Much information from monitoring points provided to EN during EA review of consents process. • Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners - Monitoring in second year of 5 year scheme to assess extent of change to Western Yar saltmarsh and intertidal area. Monitoring also taking place on Norton Spit at mouth of estuary. • Photogrammetrical analysis of aerial photographs of intertidal habitats in Chichester Harbour completed 2006.

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Features of Interest	Year	Monitoring
	February 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowes Harbour Commissioners - Work continuing on a sustainable dredging plan which when developed will include elements of monitoring. Working with IW Estuaries Project and Cowes Waterfront on Medina Estuary assessment tools to allow more informed assessments of cumulative impact of developments. Large amount of survey work including: fourth year of detailed winter high water and low water bird counts being appraised, and reviewed in context of ten years of other counts; Computer modelling of estuarine processes, potential development impact and sea level rise background nearing completion; Additional cross sectional surveys undertaken to understand changes since last surveys. • Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners - Monitoring in third year of 5 year scheme to assess extent of change to Western Yar saltmarsh and intertidal area. Visitor Use survey carried out over summer 2006 and initial analysis completed. Bird survey underway (Sept – April) and further monitoring planned. Beach litter survey carried out 4 times over the year and project planned for 2007.
Annual vegetation of drift lines	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EN Survey of Solent strandline vegetation – a report to Hampshire County Council Report completed in 2001 • Flood defence work in relation to shingle banks. Various investigations carried out by local operating authorities.

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Atlantic salt meadows	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASI/LIDAR report provided to EN late December 2004, report currently being reviewed internally before production of final report in February 2005. English Nature is discussing with National Centre for Environmental Data Surveillance (NCED) the possibility of examining changes in habitat / feature extent by comparing previous CASI data available for Southampton Water and the Beaulieu with the newly classified data set currently being finalised. • South East Strategic Regional Monitoring Scoping Study. EN are currently investigating possibilities of obtaining monitoring data from the SE strategic monitoring programme. The programme is driven by the shoreline management plan and is focussed towards physical variables. • HCC and the Agency commissioned a survey in selected areas around the Solent to map to NVC transitional communities, this will shortly be available electronically.
	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EN are continuing to discuss the possibility of obtaining monitoring data with the Channel Coast Observatory and other partners. • Photogrammetrical analysis of aerial photographs of intertidal habitats in Chichester Harbour.
	February 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England's involvement in the regional monitoring project has not yet started and is currently on hold.
<i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASI/LIDAR report provided to EN late December 2004, report currently being reviewed internally before production of final report In February 2005. English Nature is discussing with NCED the possibility of examining changes in habitat / feature extent by comparing previous CASI data available for Southampton Water and the Beaulieu with the newly classified data set currently being finalised.
	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EN - See progress on CASI survey outlined for Atlantic Salt Meadow.
Cordgrass swards	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASI/LIDAR report provided to EN late December 2004, report currently being reviewed internally before production of final report In February 2005. English Nature is discussing with NCED the possibility of examining changes in habitat / feature extent by comparing previous CASI data available for Southampton Water and the Beaulieu with the newly classified data set currently being finalised.
	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EN - See progress on CASI survey outlined for Atlantic Salt Meadow.

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Intertidal mudflats and sandflats	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CASI/LIDAR report provided to EN late December 2004, report currently being reviewed internally before production of final report In February 2005. English Nature is discussing with NCED the possibility of examining changes in habitat / feature extent by comparing previous CASI data available for Southampton Water and the Beaulieu with the newly classified data set currently being finalised. Solent EMS (SPA) prey availability study. Focused mainly at SPA monitoring, but will also aid intertidal biotope descriptions for SAC area. This study was postponed awaiting the outcome of trials of this approach elsewhere around the country. Surveys of benthic invertebrate communities of intertidal mudflats and sandflats took place in 2005.
	February 2006:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN - See progress on CASI survey outlined for Atlantic Salt Meadow. Photogrammetrical analysis of aerial photographs of intertidal habitats in Chichester Harbour completed 2006 by Chichester Harbour Conservancy.
	February 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NE - Information resulting from the questionnaire regarding the prevalence of bait digging and the scientific paper by Gordon Watson of Portsmouth University should be available in summer 2007.
Sandbanks which are slightly covered by seawater all the time	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN - There is a possibility of survey work by English Nature looking at this feature in Summer 2006. If this goes ahead it will tie in with survey work looking at Seagrass proposed by HWT and NOC. Photogrammetrical analysis of aerial photographs of intertidal habitats in Chichester Harbour completed 2006 by Chichester Harbour Conservancy.
	February 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey work undertaken in 2006 by Emu Ltd on contract to English Nature of the subtidal sediments of the marine SAC.
Intertidal reefs (Solent and S'ton Water Ramsar)	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bembridge ledges intertidal survey – a phase II biotope survey from Bembridge Point to Whitecliff Bay to provide a baseline of 'extent' for intertidal reef features. Field work for this survey completed in October 2004. Final report produced by March 2005.

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4.4.1. Additional Information

Year	Organisation	Comment
February 07	River Hamble Harbour Authority	Run-off from the M27 motorway bridge continues to cause concern. There are no interceptors on the bridge drains and a substantial quantity of polluted water finds its way into the River when it rains. However, far more environmental damage would occur if there was a major oil or chemical spill on the motorway. This has been brought to the attention of the Highways Agency, so far without a positive outcome.
	Natural England	<p>Review of Attributes and Baselines</p> <p>During the last year NE commissioned Jonathon Cox Associates Ltd to review the existing attributes, and targets identified in the Regulation 33 advice package in order to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review whether the attributes, measures and targets are still appropriate for each of the identified features and sub-features of the sites. 2. Review available information to further identify baselines against which to assess the condition of features and sub-features of the SEMS. 3. Identify any trends either towards or away from favourable condition for each of the features and sub-features of the European sites. <p>This report can be made available to relevant authorities. Chapter 5 of the review considers trends in feature condition, however it probably does not identify any 'new' trends that most authorities will not already be aware of. The new targets / baseline datasets identified in this report will not immediately replace the existing Regulation 33 Favourable condition table but will instead inform the development of new tables for the individual SSSIs within the SEMS that are currently being drafted.</p>
	ABP	Increasing instances of uncontrolled unauthorised appearances of water gypsies. Existing controls, powers, etc do not appear to be robust enough for rapid resolution of issues raised. Some form of cross-party response co-ordination might be beneficial.

5. NOTIFICATIONS OF NEXT UPDATE

This is the third in a series of monitoring and progress reports on the implementation of the SEMS Management Scheme. It was undertaken 30 months into the implementation phase of the Scheme. The information will be updated again in one year (February 2008). These

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reports will be collected annually and form the basis of the monitoring and review of the SEMS Management Scheme which will be in 2009.