

## 9. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter presents some of the guiding principles and methods by which the policy recommendations identified throughout this document can be practically implemented. While the onus for ensuring implementation of the policies rests with the Local Authorities (L.A.s) and statutory bodies, the responsibility for complying with the policies lies with all sectors of the community.

Implementation of these policies will not be possible without a commitment from all sectors that this is the way forward, not because legislation is taking us there but because there is a firm belief that it is the only way towards sustainable development and the only way to provide an environment in which we can take pride and which will enhance all aspects of our lives into the future. Lack of resources cannot be accepted anymore as an excuse to delay implementation of these policies. A commitment to these policies must be backed up by the provision of adequate resources, both in manpower and monetary terms, at central and local government level to ensure effective implementation of the policies.

An important first step is the adoption of the policy recommendations on a regional basis to facilitate a uniform approach to environmental management. Once adopted policies should be implemented as soon as is practically possible, potentially in pilot areas where the effectiveness of the implementation strategy can be monitored, audited, reviewed and changed if necessary. Implementation of the policies will enable benefits to be realised, legislative compliance to be achieved and valuable experience to be gained. Regular auditing of the implementation strategy and policies must be an essential part of the environmental management strategy in order to evaluate its effectiveness and to refocus where necessary.

This document proposes as its principal tenet that environmental policies for sustainable drainage must be managed within an overall framework of integrated water cycle management on a river catchment or regional scale. Under the current structures the responsibility for the physical implementation of sustainable drainage policy in Greater Dublin will still fall substantially on Local Authorities, because of the responsibilities and powers retained by them to govern and police the existing acts and regulations. There is therefore an urgent need to put in place a properly resourced regional management structure with the authority to adopt and prioritise policies and to guide and oversee their implementation.

### 9.2 Proposed Management Structure for Policy Implementation

#### 9.2.1 Overview

A schematic of the proposed management structure is shown in **Figure 56**. It is comprised of a Steering Committee, an Implementation Group and a Specialist Support Team. The Steering Committee would have responsibility for adopting the policies, prioritising them for implementation, ensuring adequate funding and resources are made available and auditing the effectiveness of their implementation. The Implementation Group would be tasked with the implementation of the policies in individual Local Authorities. The Specialist Support Group should comprise members of the Drainage / Planning / Parks and Environment Sections of individual Local Authorities. Additional support would be provided by the panel of experts, whose function is to monitor, audit and review the effectiveness of the implementation strategy and to recommend refocusing the strategy if required.

#### 9.2.2 Pilot Areas

Much work has already been undertaken in the Camac catchment, under the Three Rivers project, to pilot the development of catchment based water quality monitoring and management systems. This study provides a useful baseline which could be built upon by piloting this area for the development of integrated water cycle management.

Similarly, the River Tolka Flooding study is currently being carried out involving the development of hydraulic and hydrological models. In 1995 a Draft Water Quality Management Plan was also produced for the Tolka River which includes baseline water quality, water quality objectives and the measures required to achieve those objectives. Thus, the River Tolka would be ideal as a pilot area for the development and implementation of catchment management strategies as a large percentage of the baseline data is currently available for the development and implementation of a catchment management plan.

### 9.2.3 Key Players and Responsibilities

As indicated on **Figure 56**, there are a number of key players with responsibilities for the implementation of this policy.

The DoEHLG has a key role to play as it is responsible for the implementation of all primary legislation and for the adoption through regulation of EU Directives affecting the various aspects of water cycle management and the environment. The Department also administers and manages State funds for water services and environmental projects which aim to achieve the implementation of related legislation, such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the EU Drinking Water Directive and the Urban Waste Water Directive amongst others.

At a local level, Local Authorities are responsible for ensuring the implementation of legislation and policy relating to the water cycle management and the environment. Thus the various Local Authority departments (Planning, Parks, Environment, Housing, Roads etc) have a key role to play in the implementation of this policy. They are responsible for planning, provision and maintenance of drainage infrastructure, provision and management of parks and open spaces, pollution control, environmental awareness & education campaigns, waste management, water supply etc. Communication, co-operation and co-ordination is required between all these departments such that this environmental management policy can be integrated into all aspects of the relevant services which Local Authorities deliver.

As the OPW is responsible for flood management of river catchments and including a programme for relief of urban flooding associated with rivers, they have a vested interest in ensuring that sustainable drainage systems are implemented on a regional scale.

The EPA have a role to play in that they are responsible for protecting Irelands natural environment and for the control of environmental pollution. The effective implementation of integrated water cycle management and sustainable drainage policies will enable them to achieve their goals. Their involvement in the implementation of the adopted policy is essential in that they oversee the work of local government, they have a role to play in providing advice on the promotion of best management practices, promoting environmental research and monitoring and reporting on environmental quality. Other stakeholders include the Geological Survey of Ireland who are responsible for providing advice and information on aquifers and their protection and the Department of the Marine who are responsible for coastal zone management.

### 9.2.4 The Role of GIS

GIS has an important role to play in that it provides a powerful tool to assist in the implementation of catchment based and regional strategies. A dedicated GIS based computer system is required for the collation, storage, analysis and presentation of the various types of spatially interrelated catchment data such as topographic data, land use, planning, water quality, flows, flood risk, soils type, geology, aquifer types and vulnerability, habitats, species, licensed discharges etc. Ongoing development of the system will be required to fully meet the needs of policy implementation. The GIS database should be used to monitor, audit and track the implementation of sustainable drainage systems and integrated water cycle management as a whole.

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### 9.2.5 Public Awareness

The WFD states that a key aspect of implementing catchment management planning is stakeholder responsibility. To be ultimately successful, implementation of catchment management initiatives entails participation at all levels of society, from the individual, to the community group, to local government, national organisations, statutory bodies and NGO's, through to National Government. Maintaining stakeholder interest and participation on such initiatives is difficult, as they tend to run over periods of years. Public awareness campaigns, therefore, play an important role in generating and maintaining stakeholder interest and responsibility by promoting an awareness of the initiative, the issues of concern and the role the stakeholder must play in order to solve or at least minimize these problems.

In recognition of the diverse nature and interests of the various stakeholders, public awareness campaigns have to be multi faceted, adequately funded and every avenue of communication must be explored and utilised to deliver a strong message and to keep it to the forefront of public consciousness over the lifetime of the Project.



**INSERT FIGURE 56 ORGANISATION CHART WITHOUT 'DIRECTOR OF SERVICE'**

**Figure 56: Proposed Management Structure – Catchment/Regional Scale**