

Flood Risk Management Plans – August 2013

An Overview for Risk Management Authorities in England and Wales

The importance of Flood Risk Management Planning

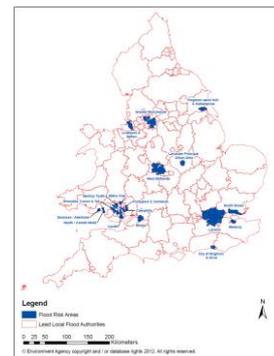
Flood risk management planning is important. It sets out where and how to manage flooding so that communities and the environment benefit the most. Flood risk management planning is integral to the way risk management authorities (RMAs) work: it allows authorities to develop a shared understanding of risk from all sources of flooding and agree priorities with communities to manage that risk.

The legal drivers for Flood Risk Management Planning

The European Floods Directive has formalised flood risk management planning. The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 implement the Directive and require Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs), the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales to prepare and publish Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) on a six year cycle.

The first cycle of Flood Risk Management Planning

LLFAs are only required to prepare FRMPs in Flood Risk Areas (see adjacent figure), where the risk of flooding from local sources is significant (see [Government guidance](#)). The Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales are required to prepare FRMPs for all of England and Wales covering flooding from main rivers, the sea and reservoirs. The Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales will co-ordinate the publishing of FRMPs for each river basin district (the areas of England and Wales used for reporting to the European Commission).



Consultation on the approach to Flood Risk Management Planning

We consulted over a three month period, from August to October 2012, about approaches for developing the FRMPs for the first planning cycle (2015-2021) and also future planning cycles. We published the proposed way forward in June 2013, taking account of the feedback from the consultation (see [Environment Agency website](#)).

The preferred approach to FRMPs in the first planning cycle is for the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales to prepare consolidated FRMPs in partnership with others by bringing together relevant information about all sources of flood risk from existing plans. We also want to better align flood risk management planning with river basin management planning under the Water Framework Directive and we will use this planning round to make the first steps, particularly around engagement and consultation.

The approach to Flood Risk Management Planning

The Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales will develop consolidated plans at a catchment scale by using information from existing plans. We recommend that LLFAs provide information from their work on Local Flood Risk Management Strategies (and Surface Water Management Plans where available) so that, as a minimum, the areas identified as Flood Risk Areas in the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) are covered. This information on local flood risk management will sit within the broader catchment plan. We welcome any LLFAs also sharing local flood risk information for areas that are outside of the Flood Risk Areas should they wish to. We also welcome inclusion of coastal erosion risk management information, alongside information from Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs). We want to develop FRMPs in a way that aligns with River Basin Management Plans, so that through effective engagement the environment and flooding can be considered in a way that supports better, more joined up outcomes.

Together we will use the existing planning activities and partnerships to draw together into one place the following information:

- conclusions about all sources of flood risk and coastal erosion risk,
- the objectives for managing the risks, and
- the measures proposed to achieve the risk management objectives.

In this way, the FRMP provides a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flood and coastal erosion risk, and allows a longer-term pipeline of proposals to be shared by all risk management authorities. Advantages of this approach include:

- RMAs can share information about the longer-term priorities for managing all sources of flood and coastal erosion risk, so interactions can be effectively co-ordinated;
- RMAs can share information in a more consistent way, and monitor and report on progress to the public and other relevant bodies;
- The public will be able to see how flood risk from all sources will be managed in their area.

The FRMP database to collate plan information

The consolidated FRMP will be developed by RMAs pooling relevant plan information into a database. The database is designed to store risk conclusions, objectives and measures for any place where risk management actions are proposed. These places can be large (e.g. cover the entire catchments, or the whole LLFA area) or small (e.g. cover a single village) for very specific, local measures. This allows flexibility for RMAs to identify different objectives and measures that cover different geographical scales.

Information about different sources of flooding can usefully be presented according to different boundaries, so that RMAs can easily view information and prepare reports about a particular area (e.g. a LLFA boundary, catchment boundary or a Regional Flood and Coastal Committee boundary). The information will be shared across RMA partners with each authority retaining responsibility for their own information, maintaining and updating it as necessary. The database allows actions to be tracked so that monitoring and reporting progress is straight forward, and LLFAs could find this useful to monitor progress in delivering their Local FRM Strategies. The database sits alongside the Environment Agency's system for tracking project delivery so that actions in the FRMP can be part of a more visible, longer-term programme, and transition easily to the investment planning system. We encourage all RMAs to use the database to share their plan information, even if they are not in a Flood Risk Area.

The FRMP Guidance: A 'Living Draft' for RMAs

We have set out in more detail how we see this approach to Flood Risk Management Plans working, and the timescales for alignment with RBMPs. Guidance, in the form of a 'Living Draft', is available on the [Environment Agency website](#). We ask all RMAs to consider this guidance and feedback to us by the end of September 2013.

Your invitation to be part of developing FRMP

In October 2013, the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales will invite all LLFAs across England and Wales to contribute to the consolidated FRMP for all sources of flood and coastal erosion risk. We want all RMAs to be part of developing this longer-term, 'all-sources' programme, and we ask other RMAs to highlight over the coming months your interest in also being part of the FRMP.

FRMP Guidance and database: Live Meetings Launch

The Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales will invite LLFAs to Live Meetings in September to outline the approach to FRMPs and share the FRMP database. At these meetings we also welcome questions and feedback on the initial guidance to help improve the way we can all deliver better flood risk management for our communities.

Feedback

Our 'Living Draft' guidance asks for your feedback. Please e-mail us at the FRMPConsultation@environment-agency.gov.uk mailbox.

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