Restoring Europe's Rivers

RESTORE Events: Reporting

THEME

Exploring the synergy between EU Directives to achieve best practice river restoration and management

DATE

9th – 10th of April 2013

LOCATION

Dublin City Council, Wood Quay Venue, Dublin, Ireland

AUDIENCE

Policy Makers and River managers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

LIFE 09INF/UK/000032

The RESTORE project is made possible with the contribution of the LIFE+ financial instrument of the European Community

and works in partnership with

1. Background

There are a number of European directives such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Birds, Habitats, Floods and Fish Directives which, together with other guidelines, such as the EU Eel regulations are driving river management. However, whilst many of these guidance documents are instrumental in achieving a focus on environmental benefit of rivers, they do not all work entirely in synergy. The aim was to bring together policy makers and river basin managers to explore how a better synergy between the various directives and legislation can help to drive best practice river restoration and management for the benefit of people, species and the wider environment in the context of catchment planning.

2. Key issues identified

1. **Working with natural processes** within flood risk management.
2. **Stop working in isolation** and try to link between different parts of the same organisation as well as between organisations.
3. **Better stakeholder engagement** and education at 'welly boot' level.
4. Ensuring that all parts of the river system – **from source to sea and estuarine areas** – are included in a catchment based approach.
5. **Multi-benefit schemes** have the possibility to tick boxes for several directives
6. **The Ecosystem Services** concept needs to be translated into a useful tool through integration in national legislation.
7. **Existing data**, which can be used to understand processes and pressures in the catchment, needs to more readily available.
8. **Large gap between science, policy and implementation**.

3. Findings

3.1 Working with natural processes within flood risk management

Working with natural processes e.g. wetland restoration and re-meandering can be used as a means of synergising requirements for several different directives, such as the WFD, Floods and Habitats Directives. Currently there is a lack of synergy between high level governmental planning policy and local decision and implementation. River restoration at a catchment scale does not, in general, account for the importance of linking water and land management together to manage flood risk within the frame of several EU directives.

Follow-up action/useful links:

The RESTORE/ECRR conference in Vienna (Sept. 11-13, 2013) has a session (7) dedicated to river restoration techniques which will focus especially on working with natural processes. We will collate information from this themed session and publish on the RRC and RESTORE websites to enable easy access to the most relevant outcomes.

The following are a few links to relevant websites, guides and papers:

DG ENV (European Commission): Green infrastructure strategy
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm

Room for the River – the Dutch government design plan intended to address flood protection, master landscaping and the improvement of rivers in the Netherlands

http://www.ruimtevoorderivier.nl/meta-navigatie/english.aspx

Bart Fokkens: THE DUTCH STRATEGY FOR SAFETY AND RIVER FLOOD PREVENTION
http://www.springerlink.com/index/g01437j642141148.pdf

Defra: Making space for water strategy
http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/flooding/policy/strategy/

3.2 Stop working in isolation

To improve the synergy between EU directives it was made clear that increased collaboration is the key solution. In Northern Ireland, inter-agency river restoration and continuity groups are being set up to deal with synergy issues in river restoration. The aim is to try and look at opportunities to "enlarge" restoration plans that come through to statutory bodies for consent, to see if added benefit for biodiversity and other EU directives can be obtained, and to ensure that any proposals coming through are suitable for the river in which they are being proposed. During the workshop discussions it was identified that an expansion of such groups to include multiple organisations would help co-ordinate relevant bodies to work towards a common agreed restoration strategy.

Follow-up action/useful links:

The NI example: the restoration and continuity group is composed of statutory river based groups (Rivers Agency, NIEA, fisheries bodies and agri-environment organisations). The group co-ordinate and co-operate on rivers restoration work and river continuity assessments; share and disseminate knowledge and engage with relevant stakeholders; address river restoration issues to meet the requirements of all statutes and commitments including the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation and Eel Management Plans; and identifies each agencies' roles and responsibilities for river restoration and continuity.

Discussion document - EU Policies on Biodiversity, Nature, Water and Marine environment: *"How to create synergies and implement them together in the most efficient way?"*
https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/d/ff20978c-2c90-41b9-bdf3-b5a6d55d55ff/4%20-%20discussion%20paper%20-%20biodiv-water-marine%20-%20FINAL.pdf

3.3 Better stakeholder engagement and education at 'welly boot' level

There is a lack of structure when it comes to stakeholder engagement. Different directives and projects might require the same stakeholders to be involved on several different levels or in several different projects. The full potential of stakeholder engagement needs to be more widely acknowledged. We need to realise and put into place policies that relate directly to community needs and understanding (e.g. access to nature for health benefits, the importance of water resources to reduce river pollution). Development of tools that show how catchments work and the importance of understanding the linkages between different facets should benefit the whole community. Farmers (and other private landowners) also play a major role in managing the catchment, and their approach has a great impact on the river status. Greater efforts need to be taken to engage farmers in sustainable land management.

Follow-up action/useful links:

The RRC had developed a 'Practical River Restoration Appraisal Guidance for Monitoring Options' (PRAGMO) focussing physical and biological aspects. A similar guide for socio-economic appraisal has been proposed and will hopefully go ahead in the next few years.

The RESTORE Rivers by Design guide provides practical advice and information to maximise the ecological, social and economic benefits of development by integrating water management into the planning and design at all scales. Step-by-step guidance on planning projects ensures the goals of sustainable development are achieved thus meeting the needs of local people and the environment.
http://www.restorerivers.eu/Publications/tabid/2624/mod/11083/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/3468/Rivers-by-Design.aspx

Natural England's catchment sensitive farming approach:
www.naturalengland.org.uk/csf

The Pontbren project in Wales is a good example of farmer led approach to catchment restoration:
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

The Catchment Change Management Hub aims to provide a repository and guide to knowledge for planning catchment restoration and mitigation measures to achieve good ecological status in rivers and other water bodies for the benefit of local catchment managers, advisors and interested stakeholders – including local community groups and the general public.
http://ccmhub.net/

3.4 Source to sea

Several presenters emphasised the need to think about how our restoration measures affect the system from source to sea. It is paramount to understand the whole catchment to achieve benefits for all, and think about the impacts on upstream on downstream areas and habitats.

Planning at a catchment scale with embedded specific opportunities and will result in more cost effective and environmentally robust schemes that also take account of local issues.

Follow-up action/useful links:

RESTORE is developing a wiki-database knowledge management tool for projects across Europe. This database allows interrogation of schemes that have included monitoring and evidence of success.
http://riverwiki.restorerivers.eu/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page

Identification of the key challenges for water resources management and the identification and assessment of a set of policy options for action at EU level:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm

Guidance on the implementation of the Nature Directives in ports and estuaries and on sustainable inland waterway development and management:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/Estuaries-EN.pdf

3.5 Multi-benefit schemes

Through this workshop, RESTORE has recognised that river restoration needs to be looked at and promoted, as multi-benefit measures which help achieve several directives' targets. Examples were given how restoration of some areas, such as raised bogs or estuaries, can be used to "tick boxes" for meeting the requirements of multiple directives such as the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats, Floods, Fish and Birds Directives. However, without evidence there is a concern that member states will find it increasingly difficult to demonstrate the real value of multi-benefit river and floodplain schemes that take account of environmental/WFD requirements.

Follow-up action/useful links:

RESTORE will provide information on the wider social benefits of river restoration on our website and collate case studies demonstrating multiple benefits.

Links between the Water Framework Directive and Nature Directives (Birds and Habitats Directives):
https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/d/d1df7f46-f072-46f4-9d54-8cfa8d881db4/FAQ-WFD-BHD_20Dec2011_LR.pdf

Defra's "A natural choice":
www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf

3.6 Ecosystem services

If we are to achieve sustainable patterns of economic and social development a different approach to policy development and implementation for environmental goods and services needs to be adopted. A method of increasing confidence in terms of the benefits of river restoration is through the adoption/implementation of an ecosystem approach. A mechanism or guide to identify benefits for different directives and create a hierarchy of justification would be useful. Adoption and implementation of an ecosystem services approach by government policy makers and decision-makers such as local planning authorities will ultimately benefit both humans and nature.

Follow-up action/useful links:

RESTORE will collate any economic/ecosystem guidance that is relevant to assessing river restoration schemes around Europe. This will also identify gaps in knowledge to support research initiatives, the need for new guidance, or where existing guidance is transferable as necessary in this context.

Support Policy Development for Integration of Ecosystem Services Approach with WFD and FD Implementation
http://www.watereco.info/

Defra's Water for life
www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm82/8230/8230.pdf

3.7 Data needs to more readily available

A mechanism is needed to collate and disseminate information relevant to river restoration. Each country should try to make readily available databases which help disseminate this information. Government agencies, and NGOs, which collate and hold this valuable data need as a minimum to have a simple list of all the meta-data they hold. It would be useful if, e.g. the Environment Agency website listed which data they record, how they record it and what data

is readily available (such as water quality, flow and biological sampling). Currently the data tend to be skewed to where there are river restoration projects with a focus on monitoring.

Follow-up action/useful links:

Through the use of databases, RESTORE and the RRC are making collating and disseminating information on river restoration, including monitoring results.
http://www.restorerivers.eu/
http://riverwiki.restorerivers.eu/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page
http://www.therrc.co.uk/rrc_case_studies.php

3.8 Large gap between science, policy and implementation

RESTORE is trying to bridge the gaps between science, policy and implementation, and in particular to bring policy and decision makers together. The RESTORE website and the River WIKI are aimed at collating and disseminating information on river restoration, and sharing knowledge between European countries. Other EU LIFE projects such as REFORM are looking to disseminate the science underpinning river restoration, and making this accessible to practitioners.

http://www.restorerivers.eu/
http://www.reformrivers.eu/

4. Further detail on outcomes

Table 1 below provides an overview of the key obstacles, drivers and initiatives that were identified during the workshop. It is a summary of the discussion that evolved throughout the day. Some of the obstacle and drivers/initiatives were identified as country specific, other were more generic and are stated as such.

Table 1: Workshop discussion outcomes

Workshop	Question	Three top statements/answers
1	**Can you identify barriers/threats to achieving Good Ecological Status, Good Ecological Potential or Favourable Condition and suggest what policies are needed to remove or reduce these barriers?**	• Catchment based delivery in a co-ordinated approach e.g. have a Catchment Authority • Co-ordinated approach at a political level so all Directives are considered and implemented (including sharing data and having a single place where its deposited • Resources to do the work , to do monitoring, to identify invasive species etc.
2	**What do you think are the main policies/mechanisms through which better synergy could be achieved between directives?**	• Consolidating legislation linking all water regulation and management • Catchment management for management units to co-ordinate all directives. Break into smaller units of management, but which have power behind them, and engagement of local governance • Balancing enforcement and stakeholder engagement within available resources
3	**What are the policies/mechanisms for achieving mutually-beneficial (win-win) solutions for flood risk and the environment?**	• Co-ordination of relevant responsible/competent bodies working to an overall agreed position/strategy. In particular a need for lead agencies to acknowledge the essential supporting roles of other agencies, and to note these in some form of policy statement or charter. • Communication of common messages to stakeholders and shared engagement to reach consensus (so that stakeholders 'affected' by FD, WFD, HD measures won't be overloaded by different commitments and organisations). Also the need for respective agencies to act as a conduit for sharing their stakeholder views with other agencies. • Consistent application of policies and regulations across regions, especially with a view to application of policies and guidance through the planning system. This was of particular note in NI

		where planning will shortly be devolved to local authorities/councils. The absence of planners at events such as RESTORE was noted.
4	**How can integrated catchment management better capture ecosystem processes that take account of social, economic, political and multiple stakeholder interests with a view to achieving better directive delivery?**	• Shift from silos, co-ordination through cross representation • Top-down/ bottom-up connection mechanisms must be driven from the top • 3) Need Local 'champions' to lead/drive and technical competence to deliver integrated solutions on ground at right scale.
5	**What can we do to improve heavily modified rivers and what policies/mechanisms/approaches are needed to encourage local community groups to take an active role in this process?**	• Identify the shakers and movers in the local community and use them to create ripple effect within the community. • Need better linkages with the current users of the river to work with the potential uses of the river. This way we can 'big up the river' and people will see it as something of benefit and to respect. This approach will also require sign up and input from local authorities. • Us e and expand the role of the current education officers and the IFI something fishy project to promote the importance of rivers in our day to day lives.
All	**If RESTORE could deliver one message to key policy makers that you believe would help to achieve the delivery of environmental directives what would it be?**	• Promote the idea that by spending money on integrated approaches to river restoration to achieve multiple directive objectives it should be possible to improve societal health and wealth • Stop making legislation and focus on consolidating information, co-ordinating best practice and developing a coherent strategy • Get on and implement it and abide by the directives

5. Attendance

16 people attended almost entirely from the policy makers sector with the exception of the West Country Rivers Trust and the Fédération des Conservatoires d'espaces naturels (ENF). In these cases, however, participants had significant understanding of policy needs and linkages to on the ground delivery. Countries represented included: England, Scotland, Netherland, Belgium, France and the Republic of Ireland

List of attendees:

Surname	First name	Organisation	Country
Achilleos	Evdokia	DG Environment European Commission	Belgium
Adamson	Mark	Office of Public Works	Republic of Ireland
Bankhead	Judith	Rivers Agency	Northern Ireland
Boon	Phil	Scottish Natural Heritage	Scotland
Byron	Michael	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Casey	Sharon	Cork County Council	Republic of Ireland
Coghlan	Brian	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Colclough	Steve	Colclough & Coates Aquatic Consultants	England
Colleran	Laurence	South Dublin County Council	Republic of Ireland
Connor	Seamus	Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure	Northern Ireland
Crilly	Damian	Environment Agency	England
Crowe	Olivia	BirdWatch Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Cullagh	Alan	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Davidson	Bob	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Northern Ireland
Deighton	Emma	DEFRA	England
Delaney	Denise	Office of Public Works	Republic of Ireland
Delanty	Karen	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Devine	Damien	Dennett Anglers Association	Northern Ireland
Dwyer	Rosaleen	South Dublin County Council	Republic of Ireland
Earle	Ray	Dublin City Council	Republic of Ireland

Flynn	John	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Gibson	Jake	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Northern Ireland
Gilligan	Nathy	Office of Public Works	Republic of Ireland
Greer	Gareth	Rivers Agency	Northern Ireland
Guest	Bernadette	Waterford County Council	Republic of Ireland
Hammond	Di	The River Restoration Centre	England
Hannon	Michael	South Dublin County Council	Republic of Ireland
Harrington	Rory	Waterford County Council	Republic of Ireland
Harris	Maryann	Dublin City Council	Republic of Ireland
Healy	Éadaoin	Donegal County Council	Republic of Ireland
Joyce	Timothy	Office of Public Works	Republic of Ireland
Kerins	Catherine	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
King	Jimmy	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Kirrane	Michaela	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Magorrian	Bridgeen	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Northern Ireland
Mant	Jenny	The River Restoration Centre	England
Matson	Ronan	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
McGloin	Noel	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
McKee	Jonathan	Rivers Agency	Northern Ireland
McKinley	Wendy	Northern Ireland Environment Agency WMU	Northern Ireland
McNally	Tony	Donegal County Council	Republic of Ireland
Moore	Billy	BMC	Republic of Ireland
Murphy	Kirran	IRD Duhallow	Republic of Ireland
Murphy	Patrick	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Northern Ireland
Nelson	Gabriel	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Northern Ireland
Nicholson	Joe	Rivers Agency	Northern Ireland
Niven	Art	Loughs Agency (FCILC)	Northern Ireland
O'Callaghan	Richard	Wetland Surveys Ireland	Republic of Ireland
O'Connor	Áine	National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Republic of Ireland

O'Connor	Patricia	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
O'Gorman	John	Roscommon County Council	Republic of Ireland
O'Grady	Martin	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
O'Regan	Michelle	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Phelan	James	South Dublin County Council	Republic of Ireland
Rhatigan	Vincent	Office of Public Works	Republic of Ireland
Riordan	Nuala	IRD Duhallow	Republic of Ireland
Rogers	Nick	River, Coastal & Seaside Economics	
Toland	Mary	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Northern Ireland
Visser	Hans	Fingal County Council	Republic of Ireland
Åberg	Ulrika	The River Restoration Centre	England

6. List of presentations

Day 1

Jenny Mant: RESTORE
Di Hammond: River Restoration– examples in the context of EU Directives
Áine O'Connor: Understanding habitat requirements for designated species: the case of the endangered freshwater pearl mussel
Tony McNally: Implementing Directives to achieve FWPM protection in a Cross-Border Environment
Judith Bankhead: The river corridor - room for all: species afloat, on land and in the air
Karen Delanty: An Irish strategy for river restoration: how it works on the ground
Jake Gibson: Overcoming Barriers - River Continuity Classification and the WFD in Northern Ireland
Hans Visser and Maryann Harris: The Tolka catchment- fulfilling multiple roles: local government perspectives

Day 2

Evdokia Achilleos: Multifunctional measures for WFD and FD implementation, and links with other policies
Mark Adamson: Floods Directive and flooding policies - an outer envelope for considering river restoration
Joe Nicholson: Sustainable flood risk management with added benefit
Tim Joyce: Investigating integrated flood relief schemes – part 1
Tim Joyce: Investigating integrated flood relief schemes – part 2
Steve Colclough: Planning for the imminent future whilst taking account of WFD, Floods and Habitats Directive requirements
Damian Crilly: Local community involvement to achieve best practice river restoration and management in the context of the Water Framework Directive
Ray Earle: Linking the Directives and getting things done

7. Support for Restoration Practices

As identified, there needs to be better integration between land and water policy and EU directives to help deliver sustainable river restoration outcomes. Please visit the RESTORE website http://www.restorerivers.eu/ to find updated information on publications and the River WIKI.

8. Building on Network Capacity

This workshop also provided a unique possibility for water managers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to come together and, in a very positive and proactive approach, discuss management of cross-border restoration projects and common concerns on how to meet the requirements of river related EU directives.

9. Promoting Effective Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge transfer was encouraged by workshop discussions in small groups with a mixture of people from different countries and sectors. A key facilitator was assigned to each group and the key outcomes and future actions were synthesised to make up the core information of this report (Table 1). All debates and in particular, the actions associated with each item, will ensure that knowledge will now be transferred to a wider audience through RESTORE dissemination methods. Some of the key elements will also be picked up again in future RESTORE workshops across Europe.

The two site visits offered more opportunities for knowledge transfer, discussions and networking. The river restoration scheme through the urban park in the Tolka Valley has in several stages addressed pollution, land degradation, habitat and connectivity issues. A range of measures such as installing urban drainage systems, restoring wetlands, riparian planting, creating footpaths and removing weirs has led to a marked increase in biodiversity, amenity value and the re-colonisation of Atlantic Salmon. The River Dodder southeast of Dublin city centre is also undergoing some enhancement works at several stretches. Adjacent the new Aviva rugby stadium, measures have been taken to set back the flood walls to make space for footpaths along the river. Further upstream we saw a planned restoration site where a stone weir structure built on top of significant rock sill area hinders the migration of fish upstream.

10. Dissemination of Event Outcomes

Outputs were initially emailed to all attendees of the workshop. Comments were invited and a request made for other people that would be interested in receiving outputs made. If you have further questions please contact either the:

RESTORE project manager Antonia Scarr
antonia.scarr@environment-agency.gov.uk

The River Restoration Centre
rrc@therrc.co.uk

11. Feedback

Feedback identified that significant networking was carried out, with new contacts being made. This workshop provided an opportunity for all participants to learn from what is being done elsewhere and discuss EU level policies. Two key issues stood out as being particularly important to achieve better synergy between directives. Firstly, the need for more integrated communication and collaboration between relevant authorities, and secondly, more funding available for multi-benefit projects. Until the end of the project, RESTORE will ensure that new information is updated on the project's website, wiki-database and with the case study handbook for all to access.

Feedback and comments from attendees, general:

- New contacts useful for: sharing knowledge, following-up case studies, gaining access to useful information and exchanging advice in river restoration as well as useful information for policy development related to river restoration
- Good opportunity to discuss with new and previous contacts for current and potential collaborative projects

Working practices:

- Has provided more project references and documents and contacts to enable better management and practices for river restoration
- Will encourage development of inter-disciplinary groups and sustainable flood management options in capital works

New knowledge:

- Improved knowledge in European legislation as well as in government and management policies
- Better understanding of linkages between directives
- Appreciation of where key obstacles to achieve integrated water management
- Awareness of river restoration policy across regions
- Emerging EU documentation (i.e. EU guidance for collaboration available)

Policy changes that would help achieve objectives:

- Place ecosystem services at the centre of policy making
- A tying up of local legislation to address gaps in management
- Designation of a coordinating authority
- Better communication among various parties with perhaps on all encompassing body of legislation rather than many different directives
- Establishment of catchment based overall management groups
- Senior management/policy maker awareness if need for inter-departmental working
- Better integration of the various levels of management across all aspects of Directives
- The problem is resource based. We need the best way to use available resources and bid for more
- More funding for monitoring for assessment of projects before and after restoration
- Funding of integrated projects
- Joint funding opportunities and projects partnerships projects

12. Workshop photographs


Multi-functional use?
Fingal County Council