

7 ACTION PLAN

7.1 Introduction

This section summarises the high-level and strategic actions that are required between now and the next review of the SMP in around 10 years time within an SMP2 Action Plan.

This SMP2 Action Plan is intended to:

- Establish processes for finalisation, dissemination and review of the SMP2;
- Enable linkages with relevant related flood and erosion risk management initiatives;
- Enable delivery of a prioritised programme of Strategy Plan development or reviews, studies and investigations;
- Enable delivery of prioritised programme of possible future schemes that are likely to be required given the preferred policies that have been identified;
- Identify actions that will be required to resolve uncertainties;
- Identify actions that are necessary to deal with the consequences of the SMP policies;
- Establish processes for informing stakeholders of progress with ongoing actions.

7.2 SMP2 Action Plan

7.2.1 Shoreline Management Plan

Following completion of this SMP2, the relevant local authorities will adopt the policies and recommendations. As the five authorities in Northumberland are to be amalgamated within the new unitary Northumberland Council with effect from 1st April 2009, it has been decided that each existing local authority will write a letter of recommendation for adoption of the SMP2 to the new Council, and it will then be the new Council that formally adopts it. This is intended to put coastal issues at the forefront of the new Council by achieving endorsement of the SMP2 from its outset. North Tyneside Council will remain unaffected by the local government restructuring and will also adopt the SMP2.

Following adoption, and subsequent to 'sign-off' by the National SMP2 Quality Review Group, the Environment Agency's Regional Director will be required to formally approve the document.

Once these activities have been undertaken, the final SMP2 should be disseminated. This can be achieved through the provision of copies in Council offices or town libraries and availability of the document on the website 'www.northumberland-smp2.org.uk'. A key part of the dissemination process will involve each authority linking the findings of the SMP process through to land use planning, including Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and the Local Development Framework (LDF). This is essential so that future land use plans can take due account of risks from erosion and sea flooding along the SMP frontage.

In the time period between reviews of the SMP, there will be emerging information that will need to be reviewed with respect to its consequences on SMP content, including policies. Such information foreseen over future years includes:

- United Kingdom Climate Projections 2009 (UKCP09) from the United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)
- National Coastal Erosion Risk Mapping from the Environment Agency;
- Flood Risk Mapping from the Environment Agency;
- Updated Project Appraisal Guidance and SMP guidance from the Environment Agency.

Review of such emerging information should be undertaken as a 'lite-touch' review in order to understand the consequences and implications on existing policies.

The SMP2 will need a detailed review in around 10 years time (i.e. around 2019). Suitably in advance of this date, the local authorities should start planning their requirements and procurement approaches in light of the guidance current at that time.

Action	Measure	Responsibility
Sign-off by National Quality Review Group	Sign-off achieved in May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland County Council¹ (as lead authority)
Letter of recommendation from each of the five existing Councils in Northumberland to the new unitary Authority.	Letter written and sent before the end of March 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council • Alnwick District Council • Castle Morpeth Borough Council • Wansbeck District Council • Blyth Valley Borough Council
Adoption of the SMP2	Adoption by Councils before end of May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland County Council • North Tyneside Council
Approval of SMP2	Approval from Environment Agency Regional Director before end of June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland County Council (as lead authority)
Dissemination of SMP2	Placement of SMP2 on website and copies available for inspection in Council offices or libraries. Letters sent to consultees before end of June 2009 informing them of SMP2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland County Council (as lead authority)
Links with Land Use Planning	All authorities to engage in discussions with planning departments about the findings and recommendations of the SMP upon its completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland County Council • North Tyneside Council
'Lite-touch' review of emerging information	Maintain awareness of emerging national/strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland Council

¹ The unitary Northumberland County Council came into effect on 1st April 2009.

Action	Measure	Responsibility
	information through regular attendance at North East Coastal Group. Review implications of information and report back to next Coastal Group meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Tyneside Council
Review of SMP2	Start planning in advance for review of SMP2 in around 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council

7.2.2 Related Flood and Erosion Risk Management Initiatives

The management of risks from flooding and erosion falls within a hierarchical approach that ranges from discouraging inappropriate development in 'at risk' areas through to providing sustainable defence measures. Within this hierarchy, it is also necessary to provide adequate and cost-effective warning systems and, in the event of a flooding or erosion incident, having appropriate contingency plans in place. Publication of the SMP2 presents an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of flood and erosion risk amongst the public and within the relevant departments of key organisations with operational responsibilities. In particular, the output from coastal monitoring (see **Section 7.3**) can provide invaluable data for the operation and verification of the North East Tidal Flood Forecasting and Warning System operated by the Environment Agency. Furthermore, information from the SMP2 relating to flood and erosion risk should be used to inform future updates of Contingency Plans so that relevant organisations are suitably prepared and trained to appropriately respond to such events.

Action	Measure	Responsibility
Establish links between the SMP2 coastal monitoring (Section 7) and the North East Tidal Flood Forecasting System	Dialogue between managers of each programme and delivery of data to cost-effectively benefit both programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland County Council Environment Agency
Use launch of SMP2 to raise awareness of flood and erosion risk and its management	Launch event with feedback questionnaire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland County Council
Feed SMP2 information into future reviews of Contingency Plans	Contingency Plans make reference to SMP2 when assessing risks from flooding and erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland County Council North Tyneside Council

7.2.3 Strategy Plans, Studies and Investigations

At a location-specific level of detail, the need for any further Strategy Plans, studies or investigations has been identified within the Action Plans for each individual Management Area. The high-level Action Plan presented in this Section requires the local authorities to co-ordinate Medium Term Planning with respect to the proposed timescales for implementation of these further studies.

Action	Measure	Responsibility
Ensure that proposed Strategies, studies and investigations for each Management Area are included as appropriate within Medium Term Planning (MTP)	Annual MTP returns made to the Environment Agency in timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council

7.2.4 Schemes

Similar to above, at a location-specific level of detail, the need for any further capital schemes has been identified within the Action Plans for each individual Management Area. The high-level Action Plan presented in this Section requires the local authorities to co-ordinate Medium Term Planning, and Project Appraisal Reporting (business case development) and associated funding applications with respect to the proposed timescales for implementation of these further schemes.

In addition, within each Management Area there is a recommendation for ongoing maintenance of existing defences through revenue budgets. This maintenance needs to be undertaken annually, based on results from ongoing monitoring and inspections (see Sections 7.2.4 and 7.3).

Action	Measure	Responsibility
Ensure that proposed schemes for each Management Area are included as appropriate within Medium Term Planning (MTP)	Annual MTP returns made to the Environment Agency in timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council
Ensure that business cases and funding applications for proposed schemes for each Management Area are undertaken in line with sanctioned MTPs.	Project Appraisal Reports submitted to Environment Agency in line with agreements in annually sanctioned MTPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council
Ensure that maintenance of existing defences is regularly undertaken	Annual maintenance undertaken from revenue budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council

7.2.5 Resolving Uncertainties

The principal uncertainties relating to the SMP2 concern: (i) projected rates and mechanisms of coastal change; and (ii) rates and mechanisms of deterioration in the condition of structures. This is because coastlines and structures will be subject to both specific events, such as storms, and to longer-term trends, such as rise in mean sea level. Consequently, it is necessary to continue monitoring of coastal change and of structural condition through the strategic coastal monitoring programme that has been in place along the SMP frontage since 2002.

Action	Measure	Responsibility
Continue beach surveys to understand rates and mechanisms of coastal change	Surveys in spring and autumn of each year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council
Continue structural condition inspections to understand rates and mechanisms of deterioration	Walk-over surveys once every 2 years (next due summer 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council

7.2.6 Resolving Consequences of Policies

The Appropriate Assessment that accompanies the SMP2 has identified that there will be net loss of rocky foreshore habitat as a result of the policies of the SMP. Having examined this issue, including convening and hosting a SMP2 Biodiversity Workshop aimed at identifying habitat re-creation opportunities, it is concluded that it will not be possible to fully mitigate this loss within the SMP frontage. Consequently, there is a need for liaison with Natural England and the Environment Agency through involvement in the Environment Agency's wider-scale Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Regional Habitat Creation Plan (RHCP; currently in preparation by the Environment Agency, and due for completion early in 2010) to identify, at a broad scale, any such opportunities across the wider north east of England. Timing of the production of the RHCP with respect to completion of the SMP2 is slightly later than ideal, but it does give the opportunity for the full consequences of the SMP2 to be known during development of the RHCP.

Other areas of the England and Wales coastline where hard rock geology is prominent (e.g. Cornwall, Wales) will also experience such issues when SMPs are developed for these frontages. There is, therefore, the need for a UK government approach to this issue that should be championed by local authorities via the North East Coastal Group.

Action	Measure	Responsibility
Active participation in the development of the Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management North East Regional Habitat Creation Plan.	Liaison with Environment Agency and Natural England regarding losses of rocky shore habitat creation and opportunities for gain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland Council North Tyneside Council
Escalate the issue of loss of	Discussion of the issue at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland

rocky foreshore habitat to UK government via Natural England and Environment Agency	North East Coastal Group Meetings and implementation of arising actions.	Council • North Tyneside Council
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7.2.7 Communication

The SMP has highlighted some areas where planning now for a longer-term change is required. These relate to areas of coast where a policy of Managed Realignment or No Active Intervention is selected in the longer term and assets that may become at risk, such as sections of road, caravan parks, golf courses, amenity areas, etc., will need to be relocated. Communication of the longer-term consequences to those individuals or organisations affected is essential to enable early planning for future change.

There are also areas of coast where opportunities for environmental enhancement exist, but where implementation of the approach will affect a number of different stakeholders. Again, this required early communication of the longer-term consequences to those individuals or organisations affected so that the opportunities can be optimised.

There is a requirement on local authorities under the Local Government Performance Framework, established by the Communities and Local Government (CLG) in 2007, to record progress in delivering agreed actions to implement long term flood and coastal erosion risk management plans, such as this Shoreline Management Plan. Measurement will be made by recording the percentage of agreed actions in this high-level SMP2 Action Plan that are being undertaken satisfactorily. The Environment Agency will record progress against all agreed actions and a report produced on an annual basis identifying the proportion of actions attributed to a particular local authority that are being undertaken satisfactorily.

Action	Measure	Responsibility
Communicate SMP outputs to those affected by policy changes	Communication Plan developed by June 2009 and implemented in accordance with its actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland Council • North Tyneside Council
NI189 reporting on implementation of the SMP2 Action Plan.	Percentage of actions implemented in accordance with the measurable targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland Council • North Tyneside Council

7.3 Coastal Monitoring

As described in Section 7.2.4, a recommendation is made within each Management Area for ongoing defence inspection and coastal monitoring.

The development of the present SMP2 has significantly benefited from the data and information that has been available from the coastal monitoring programme since its inception in April 2002. The past 7 years of data relating to beach and cliff behaviour and coastal defence condition has been used to inform key elements of this Plan. Continued data collection will enable the SMP3 to be even better informed about these fundamental issues that could significantly affect decisions on sustainable policies.

The monitoring that is undertaken across the SMP2 area will become incorporated within the wider Cell 1 Regional Monitoring Programme from 2009 onwards. As part of this, the following monitoring will continue:

- Full measures beach profile surveys in September/October each year;
- Partial measures beach profile surveys in March/April each year;
- Topographic surveys of Holy Island causeway in September/October each year;
- Topographic surveys of Alnmouth Beach in September/October and March/April each year;
- Cliff top surveys at Newbiggin Bay Caravan Park and Sandy Bay Caravan Park in September/October and March/April each year;
- Walk-over inspections of the coastal defences and natural features (dunes, slopes, cliffs) every 2 years, with information being updated into the MS Access database and fed across to the Environment Agency for inclusion in its own National Flood and Coastal Defence Database.

Incorporation within the new Cell 1 Regional Monitoring Programme will add value through the inclusion of:

- One wave recording buoy off the Northumberland coast;
- Aerial photography of the coastline at low water once every 6 years;
- Development of a cell-wide website for data storage.

Future coastal monitoring should enable the operating authorities to more precisely establish the nature and magnitude of impacts on designated nature conservation sites, with particular regard to the potential loss of intertidal rocky reef habitat within the Northumbria Coast SPA. A range of UKCIP sea level rise scenarios should be considered in order to assess possible impacts, future habitat loss and associated timescales. Any such study should, as far as possible, link in with the Environment Agency's ongoing LIDAR programme, north east tidal gauges, and also with the Cell 1 Regional Monitoring Programme. As such a study would be investigating the loss of habitat due to submergence of a landform feature due to rising sea level rather than erosion, careful consideration should be given to appropriate approaches and any confidence limits put on such analyses.

In addition to the above, it is imperative that data management (quality control, processing and archiving) and data analysis and interpretation of the key changes are undertaken on an ongoing basis so that latest information is used to inform management decisions along the Northumberland and North Tyneside coastlines.

This will be achieved by regular reporting of the key findings from the coastal monitoring to each of the local authorities.

All of the authorities and organisations involved in the preparation of this SMP2 are entirely supportive of the coastal monitoring and are committed to its continuation.