

	<p><b>Meeting Notes</b></p> <p>Can we afford not to monitor priority pollutants: The Royal Society of Edinburgh Edinburgh, United Kingdom</p> <p>24 – 25 November 2015</p>	<p>Date: 1/12/2015 Reference: PS2-1 Revision: Version 0 Page: 1 of 4</p>
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## 24 - 25 November 2015 Edinburgh

This was a conference organised jointly by WSF, EHSC and supported by the SCI. The event was sponsored by Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The poster prize was sponsored by Environmental Science, Water Research and Technology journal. The support and assistance of the sponsors is greatly appreciated, without which this event would not have taken place.

The poster prize was won by Karin Helwig from Glasgow Caledonian University for her work on “Spatially differentiated environmental risk assessment for selected pharmaceuticals”.

The aim of the conference was to bring together leading experts in the field of priority substances listed in Annex X of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) to discuss the potential issues associated with the implementation of the Directive 2013/39/EC relating to priority substances in the field of water policy.

There were about 50 attendees from a variety of organisations ranging from water utilities, regulators, government departments, academics and SMEs. Feedback from the delegates was good. The drinks reception was particularly well regarded as it gave delegates the opportunity to network and speak with the presenters in a more informal manner.

The consensus views of the delegates were broadly in line with those expressed at the WSF event held in London November 2014 on the same subject.

It was also suggested that there were follow up meetings:

1. Can we afford not to monitor priority pollutants: Where best to control them (Edinburgh)
2. Comparison of WFD and Food standards (Alcontrol, Chester?)

The following represents some of the issues expressed at the event:

- Failure to comply with any individual substance EQS will result in a compliance failure for the complete water body under consideration.
- Every time a new substance is added to the priority list there is a strong possibility that multiple exceedances will occur for the newly nominated substance.
- There is concern that substantial areas of European waterways will therefore always be “out of compliance” despite vast sums of money being spent and significant improvement occurring.
- There is an increasing recognition that there is little evidence to connect failing compliance with precautionary EQS values for priority substances has any

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significant link to the ecological quality of the water body, which is meant to be the prime target of the Directive.

- There is a conflict between the WFD and other EU Regulation relating to Agrochemicals, Biocides and Pharmaceuticals and substances receiving Authorisation under REACH.
- In all these cases one group of regulators is evaluating the environmental risks and benefits of the substance and authorising societal use, whilst the regulators implementing the WFD are sometimes countermanning those decisions by insisting on 100% compliance with the EQS. Cases have now arisen where a biota standard has been set by the WFD whilst EFSA have indicated that there is no risk for human consumption of the same substance at much higher concentrations.
- Identification and prioritisation of substances that pose a widespread threat to European waterways remains a challenging issue. There is concern that resources will be focussed on chasing trivial issues whilst real problems are overlooked.
- Monitoring requirements demanded from regulators are becoming very onerous: LOD and LOQ values for some new substances are 3-6 orders of magnitude below what can be achieved in research laboratories and the amount of monitoring required to meet the standards currently set for existing and proposed substances require extremely high financial and laboratory resources at a time when resources are being severely constrained by the economic climate.
- Although proportionality and economic cost benefit are key requirements of the Directive, the economics seems to have now been forgotten during implementation

## Programme

### Tuesday 24th November 2015

12:30 Lunch, Exhibition and Poster Presentations

- Session Chair: David Taylor Chairman - RSC EHSC Policy Group

14:00 Keynote Lecture: Introduced by David Taylor

An overview of the current and potential future challenges in implementing the priority pollutant provisions of the WFD  
Caroline Whalley, European Environment Agency

14:30 Session 1: Policy Issues: Introduced by David Taylor

14:35 Strategy for the selection and prioritisation of Priority Pollutants.  
Bess Horner, Scottish Water

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15:00 Coffee and Tea Break Exhibition and Poster Viewing

15:20 The role of socio-economic analysis.

Bill Watts, Formerly Environmental Economist at the Environment Agency

15:45 Challenges in implementing biota EQSs for priority substances.

Peter Lepom, Federal Environment Agency (UBA) Germany

16:10 Closing Remarks and discussion, David Taylor

- 19:00 Drinks Reception

### **Wednesday 25th November 2015**

09:00 Arrival & Coffee – Exhibition & Poster viewing

- Session Chair: Charmian Abbott, United Utilities

09:30 Session 2: Sampling and Analysis Issues: Introduced by Charmian Abbott

09:40 New standardised analytical methods meeting the requirements of the WFD - results of a mandated project of the European Commission (M424).

Ulrich Borchers, IWW Mülheim

10:05 UKWIR Chemical Investigation Program – Emerging outputs and implications.

Ian Ridgway SEPA

10:30 Coffee and Tea Break Exhibition and Poster Viewing

10:50 Laboratory challenges in meeting the required priority substances EQS levels

K. Clive Thompson and Paul Gribble, ALcontrol Laboratories

11:15 Sampling aspects and how to ensure fit for purpose sampling scheme.

Peter Jones Scottish Water

11:35 Scottish emerging innovation and research in the area of priority substance management, including projects recently awarded development grants through the SBRI call.

Diane Duncan Highlands and Islands Enterprise

12:00 Three Case Studies

12:30 Discussion, Closing Remarks, Award of Poster Presentation Prize, Chairman Abbott

12:45 Close

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The presentations are available from the Royal Society of Chemistry Water Science Forum past events page

<http://www.rsc.org/Membership/Networking/InterestGroups/WaterScience/past-events.asp>