

MANAGING WATER SUSTAINABLY

An overview of the key
governance issues relating
to human society's most
vital natural resource

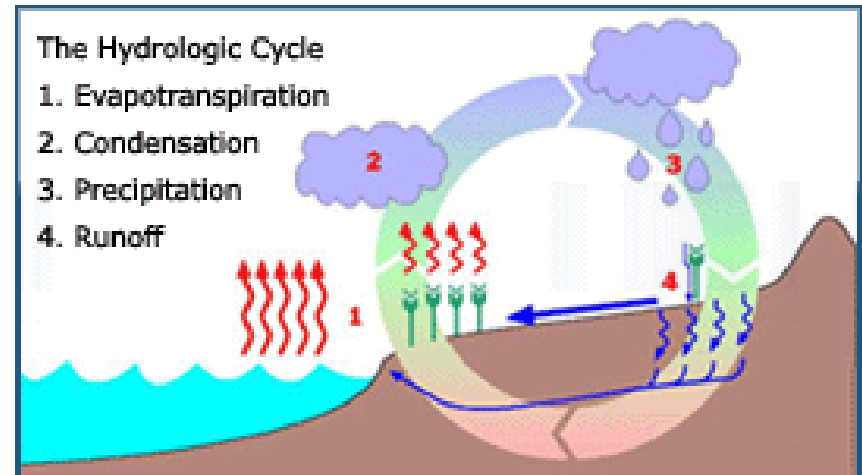
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Brundtland Commission describes S.D. as 'development which fulfils the needs of the present generation without jeopardising the possibilities of future generations to fulfil their needs.' The UK Countryside Commission has four SD objectives:

- **social progress which recognises the needs of everyone**
- **effective protection of the environment**
- **prudent use of natural resources**
- **maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment**

THE HYDROLOGICAL CYCLE

- Nature's water cycle exists in a state of **dynamic equilibrium**, where inputs and outputs are balanced.
- Human use of water can alter the **flows** and **stores** of the cycle in ways that jeopardise use of water by **future generations**.



KEY PLAYERS FOR COOPERATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT

- **Government** (supranational, national, regional and local scales).
- **Civil society** (individuals and NGOs with an environmental or social remit).
- **Businesses** (industry and agriculture).



EUROPEAN WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

- The European Water Framework Directive (WFD) makes it a **requirement** for drainage basins in the UK and elsewhere within the European Union to be managed in a **unified and coherent** way.
- As part of this process, a total of **11 river basin districts** have been designated as covering England and Wales.

EUROPEAN WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Find out more about the WFD – perhaps the most significant water management strategy to date for the UK and EU:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html

MERSEY BASIN CAMPAIGN

- Mersey Basin Campaign (MBC) was set up as an organisation with the task of bringing environmental improvements to tributaries of the River Mersey, the Manchester Ship Canal and several neighbouring rivers.
- Since 1985, the MBC has worked to improve water quality, restore river ecosystems and encourage waterfront regeneration throughout northwest England.



MERSEY BASIN CAMPAIGN

- Mersey Basin Campaign has succeeded in getting local **key players** to work together to manage water resources in the northwest of England.
- This includes the Environment Agency, United Utilities (the local water company), local councils and the water-bird charity RSPB.



MERSEY BASIN CAMPAIGN

- Water quality has now markedly improved along the Mersey, its estuaries and parts of the Manchester Ship Canal, restoring fresh water and bringing back aquatic life.
- The knock-on effect for sustainable urban regeneration has been considerable - new waterside developments have replaced riverside dereliction in Liverpool and Manchester.
- Rivers have subsequently become foci for a model of economic renewal which re-brands Liverpool and Manchester as cities of art, culture and leisure.



KEY POINT SUMMARY

- Different land and water user groups (such as farmers or house-builders) modify water flows in ways that can sometimes adversely impact upon other users in a basin.
- Any single action by one user group is likely to have consequences both up and downstream and on other functional uses. ‘Joined-up thinking’ by land and water users is needed – otherwise known as integrated water resource management (IWRM).
- The European Water Framework Directive and the Mersey Basin Campaign are good examples to research further in a European context.

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