

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE WATER ENVIRONMENT (WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE)
REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2017

2017 No. 81

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural affairs (The Department) to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 1.2. The Statutory Rule is made under Section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972 and is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The Statutory Rule replaces and revokes The Water Environment (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 and its primary purpose is to transpose the Water Framework Directive. The Regulations will continue to provide for the monitoring, assessment and improvement of the condition of water bodies in order to meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Water Framework Directive was originally transposed in Northern Ireland through the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003. The new Regulations improve transposition of the Water Framework Directive by incorporating more of the wording from the Directive and providing more transparency around the requirements emanating from the Directive.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. Not applicable. The Regulations do not introduce any additional responsibilities or requirements for government or the public and a public consultation was not considered necessary.

5. Equality Impact

- 5.1. The Department completed a preliminary screening exercise which has shown no evidence of any impact on equality issues. Therefore, the Department did not consider it necessary to complete a full Equality Impact Assessment.

6. Regulatory Impact

- 6.1. Not applicable. The Regulations do not impose any additional financial burden on any Department or the public.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. The Regulations do not impose any additional financial burden on any Department or the public.

8. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

- 8.1. The Rule does not discriminate on grounds of religious belief or political opinion nor does it modify the European Communities Act 1972, the Human Rights Act 1998 or other statutory provisions listed in section 7 of the 1998 Act.

9. EU Implications

- 9.1. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 transposed the Water Framework Directive. These new Regulations improve transposition of the Directive by incorporating more of the key wording from the Directive around responsibilities and therefore contribute to the Department meeting its requirements under the Directive.

10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

- 10.1. The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs made similar Regulations, covering England and Wales, in March 2017. Equivalent legislation is in operation in Scotland.

11. Additional Information

- 11.1. Not applicable.