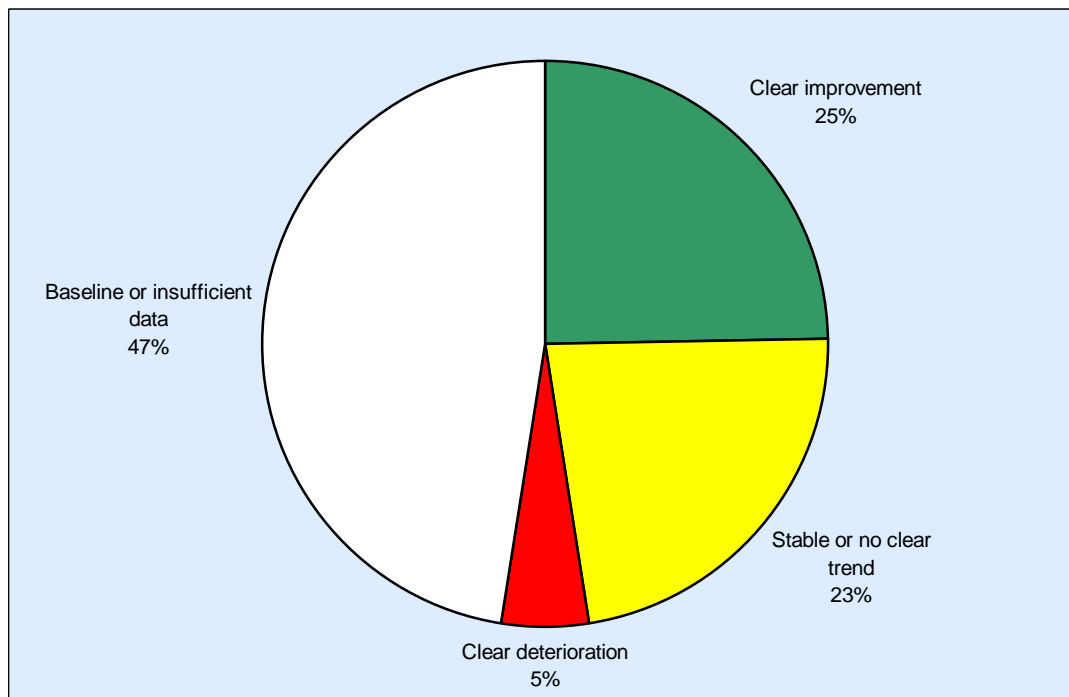


State of the Environment, July 2009

This bulletin summarises the latest information on the indicators monitoring progress against the Environment Strategy. The results for individual indicators are presented in a series of electronic reports on StatsWales.

Chart 1: Summary of progress across the State of the Environment indicators



- Of the indicators that have been defined and where information exists, nearly half show an improvement.
- 23 of the 101 indicators are stable or show no clear trend at recent levels;
- 5 of the 101 indicators show a decline.
- 32 indicators have yet to be developed and 16 indicators have no data beyond the baseline.

The remainder of this bulletin presents the progress for individual indicators organised by the six main themes of the Environment Strategy.

Contact: Tel: 029 2082 6399. E-mail: stats.environment@wales.gsi.gov.uk. **Next Update:** Dec 2009 (provisional)

Background

This publication

This bulletin presents an overview of progress against the Welsh Assembly Government's Environment Strategy. The full set of data, analysis, and notes on all of the indicators are available through our [StatsWales](#) website. On StatsWales, the indicators are presented in a series of online reports linked to tables of information which the user can manipulate or download.

The statistics come from a range of sources in Wales and across the UK, which are updated at different times and intervals. The StatsWales reports will be updated twice a year in July and December, and these updates will be highlighted through a pre-announced headline statistics published on our website. This bulletin will be updated annually to provide a snapshot of progress across all the indicators.

The contribution of data and information by organisations which monitor the environment is gratefully acknowledged. Although most indicators are currently measured, some further work is planned to develop the other indicators and in some cases to identify more appropriate indicators, as indicated in the StatsWales reports.

Previous and related publications

Together, the bulletin and StatsWales reports follow on from the [Report on Progress September 2007](#) published by the Welsh Assembly Government.

This bulletin has replaced the [Key Environment Statistics](#) publication of previous years, and contains much of the same information. Some of the statistics correspond to or are similar to some of the Assembly Government's sustainable development indicators. Data for these indicators were presented in the bulletin [Sustainable Development Indicators for Wales 2008](#), which will be updated in August 2009.

The Environment Strategy

The [Environment Strategy](#) was launched in May 2006, and sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for the environment over the next 20 years. The Strategy was launched with an accompanying Action Plan to take forward action on its 39 outcomes. A Sub-Group of the Environment Strategy Reference Group, which represents both internal and external stakeholders, has agreed an initial set of indicators for each outcome.

In many respects it is too early to be able to detect environmental change as a result of the Strategy. This is for several reasons:

- Actions to deliver environmental improvement are in the course of implementation, and in many cases there will be some delay before the resulting environmental change can be detected.
- Monitoring of some indicators is not done continuously but on a campaign basis at set intervals which may be several years apart.
- Some data sets are not available for 1-2 years after the period of monitoring.
- This bulletin and the StatsWales reports set out baseline information, comparators with other areas and some initial trends.

Indicator Progress

The following tables list all indicators within the six environmental themes, and indicate whether the statistics available to date show that progress has improved, is stable or shows no clear trend, or has deteriorated.

I Enabling Change

Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
1: The Assembly Government provides clear leadership on environmental issues through its policies, programmes and the way that it conducts its business	1a: Trends in Policy Gateway assessments for contribution of policies to environmental priorities (to be developed)		July 2008
	1b: Achievement and maintenance of Green Dragon level five by the Assembly Government		July 2009
2: Wales demonstrates the contribution a small, developed nation can make to global sustainable development and environmental improvement	2a: Ecological footprint		July 2008
	2b: Achievement of Environment Strategy outcomes demonstrated in regular State of the Environment reporting	N/A	July 2009
3: Environmental considerations are integrated in all policies, programmes and service delivery and that high quality and consistent environmental evidence is available to inform the decision making processes	3: Trends in policy gateway assessments for contribution of policies to environmental priorities (to be developed)		July 2008
4: The roles and responsibilities of organisations are understood leading to better integration for the delivery of environmental protection and enhancement	4: Indicator to be developed		July 2008
5: Appropriate education about our environmental impacts is in place and good quality information is available at the point where people make decisions	5: Percentage of people taking action to improve the environment (broken down by reason for taking action), from the Living in Wales survey		July 2008
6: Individuals understand and are enabled to take responsibility for their environmental impact, changes in behaviour are apparent that help reduce negative environmental impacts	6a: Percentage of people taking various actions to improve the environment, from the Living in Wales Survey		July 2008
	6b: Percentage of municipal waste recycled or composted		December 2008
	6c: Additional indicators, including trends in number of people participating in environmental volunteering and greenhouse gas emissions from road transport, to be investigated (to be developed)		July 2008






Note:

N/A = Not applicable. Indicator 2b is a summary of the status of the other indicators, therefore it has not been assigned a traffic light status.










Information for Indicator 2a is repeated in Indicator 7b and can be found under the theme Enabling Change.


















Information for Indicator 6b is repeated in Indicator 10a and can be found under the theme Sustainable Use of Resources.

II Addressing Climate Change














Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
7: Wales' greenhouse gas emissions are minimised, consistent with Wales contributing fully to meeting UK wide targets and in line with more specific Wales targets that are in development	7a: Annual emissions of basket of greenhouse gases (by sector)		December 2008
	7b: Ecological footprint		July 2008
	7c: Change in soil organic carbon		July 2008
8: Wales has improved resilience to the impacts of climate change. A clear flexible programme of measures is in place to enable Wales to respond and adapt to climate change	8a: Adaptation plan prepared, published and updated regularly (to be developed)		July 2008
	8b: Further indicators to be identified following the conclusion of Defra's work on adaptation targets (to be developed)		July 2008

III Sustainable Use of Resources
















Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
9: The amount of waste that is generated in Wales is minimised	9a: Quantity of municipal waste per person per annum		December 2008
	9b: Quantity of industrial & commercial waste produced per annum		July 2009
	9c: Public sector waste arisings (to be developed)		July 2008
10: Reduce, re-use and re-cycle is universally accepted in government, business, industry and home life	10a: Proportion of municipal waste recycled or composted		December 2008
	10b: Proportion of industrial and commercial waste recycled		July 2009
	10c: Proportion of public sector waste that is recycled or reused (to be developed)		December 2008
11: Appropriate waste management facilities are in place to minimise the amount of waste going to landfill	11a: Proportion of municipal waste sent to landfill		December 2008
	11b: Proportion of industrial and commercial waste sent to landfill		July 2009
	11c: Proportion of public sector waste sent to landfill (to be developed)		July 2008









Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
12: Businesses produce well designed products that require less resources in their production, use and end of life, that create minimal waste and are easily reused or recycled	12a: Proportion of end of life vehicles waste reused and recycled in the UK		July 2009
	12b: Proportion of packaging waste recovered in the UK		July 2009
	12c: Proportion of construction and demolition waste reused and recycled		July 2008
	12d: Explore developing an indicator of uptake of lifecycle analysis in business (to be developed)		July 2008
13: Water resources are managed sustainably meeting the needs of society without causing damage to the environment	13a: Level of leakage		December 2008
	13b: The percentage of resource zones meeting target headroom requirements		December 2008
	13c: Possible indicator of changes in river flows and of water availability to be explored (to be developed)		July 2008
14: Water is used more efficiently across all sectors	14a: Per capita consumption of water		December 2008
	14b: Volume of water abstracted from the environment		December 2008
	14c: Revised indicators will be selected following completion of work by the Environment Agency (to be developed)		July 2008
15: The high quality of our drinking water is maintained	15a: Compliance with standards for public drinking water		December 2008
	15b: Compliance with standards for private water supplies tested annually (to be developed)		July 2008
16: Soil is managed to safeguard its ability to support plants and animals, store carbon and provide other important ecosystem services	16a: Change in soil carbon		July 2008
	16b: Further indicators to be selected when the UK Soil Indicator Consortium reports (to be developed)		July 2008
17: The extraction of minerals and aggregates minimises the impact on the environment and local communities	17: Number of sites complying with standards as set out in Minerals Planning Policy and the associated Technical Advice Note for the protection of the environment and local communities (to be applied in 2007) (to be developed)		July 2008
18: The use of alternative materials, secondary and recycled aggregates is maximised where possible in the construction industry	18a: Proportion of construction and demolition waste that is reused and recycled		July 2008
	18b: Proportion of aggregates used from secondary and recycled sources (from 2009) (to be developed)		July 2008

IV Distinctive Biodiversity, Landscapes & Seascapes











Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
19: The loss of biodiversity has been halted and we can see a definite recovery in the number, range and genetic diversity of wildlife, including those species that need very specific conditions to survive	19a: Trends in Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats		July 2008
	19b: Trends in wild birds population index		July 2009
	19c: Indicators to illustrate range and genetic diversity (to be developed)		July 2008
20: The wider environment is more favourable to biodiversity through appropriate management, reduced habitat fragmentation and increased extent and interconnectivity of habitats	20a: Proportion of land under agri-environment agreement (by scheme), or which is organic or which is in conversion to organic		December 2008
	20b: Proportion of woodland that is certified		July 2009
	20c: Additional indicators to be identified following completion of research into biodiversity indicators (to be developed)		July 2008
21: Sites of international, Welsh and local importance are in favourable condition to support the species and habitats for which they have been identified	21: Percentage of features on Natura 2000 sites in favourable or recovering condition		July 2008
22: Our seas will be clean and support healthy ecosystems that are biologically diverse and productive and managed sustainably	22a: Indicators, including coastal zone indicators, to be reviewed in the context of progress of the Marine Bill (to be developed)		July 2008
	22b: Number of Marine stewardship council certified sustainable fisheries in Welsh waters (to be developed)		July 2008
	22c: Number of fisheries assessed by ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea) and Sea Fisheries Committees to be in safe biological condition - based on stock assessments, fish catches and catch per unit effort (to be developed)		July 2008
	22d: Input of hazardous substances to the marine environment		July 2009
	22e: Additional indicators to be identified following completion of UK and CCW research on marine ecosystems and work to investigate possibility of developing a seabird indicator (to be developed)		July 2008
23: The quality and diversity of the natural and historic character of our landscape and seascape is maintained and enhanced	23: Indicators, measuring quality and diversity, to be selected on completion of CCW landscape characterisation work (to be developed)		July 2008
















V Our Local Environment

Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
24: The built environment is high quality and vibrant, reflecting local distinctiveness and supporting strong communities, which are actively engaged in the management of their local environment	24a: Percentage of unfit dwellings		July 2008
	24b: Percentage of people who feel safe in the local area - from Living in Wales Survey		July 2008
	24c: Percentage of people volunteering formally or informally at least once over the last 3 years.		July 2008
25: New buildings in Wales meet high environmental quality standards and the environmental quality standards of existing building stock is improving	25a: Percentage of properties owned by local authority and registered social landlords that meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS)		July 2008
	25b: Develop an indicator of energy savings from public sector buildings – local authority, NHS and Welsh Assembly Government (to be developed)		July 2008
26: The historic building stock and character is maintained to a high standard	26: The number of historic assets deemed to be at risk		July 2009
27: There is easy, equitable access to ample, high quality green space	27a: Percentage of people stating that they could access a park or open space easily in the Living in Wales Survey		July 2008
	27b: Additional indicator to be developed from rollout of CCW's green space toolkit (to be developed)		July 2008
28: Environmental nuisances such as litter, flytipping, graffiti, dog fouling, fly-posting, noise pollution and light pollution are minimised.	28a: Percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness, from NAWPIs		December 2008
	28b: Trends in level of flytipping		December 2008
	28c: Indicators will be reviewed following consultation on National Assembly for Wales Performance Indicators (NAWPIs), and proposal to adopt LEAMS (Local Environment Audit and Management Scheme) measures(to be developed)		July 2008
29: There is sustainable, widespread and equitable access to the countryside and coast, which recognises the need for a balance between tranquil areas and areas supporting larger numbers of people and a range of activities. Damaging access will be discouraged	29a: Percentage of total length of footpaths and other rights of way which were easy to use by the public, from NAWPIs		December 2008
	29b: An indicator of damaging impacts of access will be developed (to be developed)		July 2008
	29c: Change in number and extent of tranquil areas as defined in CCW mapping work		July 2009
	29d: Additional indicator to be considered following the development of the new Outdoor Recreation Survey (to be developed)		July 2008

Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
30: The number of people choosing to walk or cycle as a means of transport is increasing	30a: Percentage of people whose main mode of travel to work is a) walking b) cycling		July 2009
	30b: Percentage of pupils whose main mode of travel to school is walking		July 2008
31: Appropriate measures are in place to manage the risk of flooding from rivers and the sea and help adapt to climate change impacts	31a: Annual cost of damage due to flooding		July 2009
	31b: Probability of flooding of assets at risk		July 2008
	31c: Indicator of percentage of new development permitted in the floodplain (to be developed)		July 2008
32: Everyone who lives in a flood risk area understands the flood risk they are subject to, the consequences of that risk and how to live with that risk	32a: Level of use of Floodline		July 2009
	32b: Households registered for flood warnings as a percentage of total number of households at risk of flooding		July 2009
	32c: Indicators of trends in awareness of flood risk to be developed based on a new survey		July 2009

VI Environmental Hazards

Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
33: Trends in number of days when air pollution is moderate or higher in rural zones and urban agglomerations	33a: Trends in number of days when air pollution is moderate or higher in rural zones and urban agglomerations		July 2008
	33b: Air concentrations of Heavy Metals		July 2009
	33c: Number of Air Quality Management Areas within Wales		July 2009
	33d: Level of emissions from Wales of sulphur dioxide		December 2008
	33e: Level of emissions from Wales of ammonia		December 2008
	33f: Level of emissions from Wales of nitrogen oxides		December 2008
	33g: Level of emissions from Wales of fine particulates		December 2008
	33h: Level of emissions from Wales of Non Methane Volatile Organic Compounds (NMVOC)		December 2008
	33i: Level of emissions from Wales of carbon monoxide		December 2008
33j: Area of natural and semi-natural habitat where deposition of (a) acid and (b) nitrogen compounds exceeds critical loads		July 2009	

Outcome	Indicator	Status	Last Update
34: The extent of contaminated land is better understood and actions are being taken to remediate contaminated land for beneficial use where appropriate	34: Further work to be done to identify a suitable indicator for contaminated land (to be developed)		July 2008
35: The quality of our groundwater, rivers, lakes and coastal waters is maintained and enhanced	35a: River water quality - biological and chemical		December 2008
	35b: Bathing water quality		December 2008
	35c: Compliance with 'good status' under the Water Framework Directive		July 2009
36: Diffuse pollution is better understood and action is being taken to reduce and manage diffuse pollution	36a: River water quality - biological and chemical		December 2008
	36b: Bathing water quality		December 2008
	36c: Compliance with 'good status' under the Water Framework Directive		July 2009
	36d: Area of Wales designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones		July 2008
37: The risks posed by exposure to chemicals is minimised with emphasis on protecting vulnerable members of society	37a: Emissions of toxic air pollutants, and concentrations in the air (compared with standards) (to be developed)		July 2008
	37b: Intake of persistent organic chemicals and metals via food intake in relation to WHO guidelines		July 2009
	37c: Following implementation of REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) (to be developed)		July 2008
38: Those at risk from radon will be aware of the risk that they face and what they can do to minimise the risk	38a: Number of houses with radon levels above the Action Level		December 2008
	38b: Number of houses where radon remediation has been completed		December 2008
39: Radioactive discharges in Wales and doses to the public will be minimised. Discharges to the marine environment will be minimised to the extent that additional concentrations in the marine environment above historic levels are close to zero	39a: Trends in radioactive discharges from major sources in Wales		July 2009
	39b: Doses to most exposed members of the public		July 2009

Key Quality Information

1. The statistics come from a range of sources in Wales and across the UK, which are updated at different times and intervals. The full set of data, analysis, and notes on all of the indicators are available through our [StatsWales](#) website, which also shows comparisons between local authorities and with the UK or its constituent countries where possible. The StatsWales reports will be updated twice a year in July and December, and these updates will be highlighted through a pre-announced headline statistics published on our website. Please refer to the StatsWales reports for information about specific data issues.
2. It is useful to be able to summarise what the indicator measures tell us. In the previous bulletin (SB 40/2008), the following categories were used:

Improving
Stable
Declining
No clear trend
Baseline
No information

For this and subsequent bulletins, the categories have been replaced with the following set of 'traffic lights'. The main changes are that the stable and no clear trend categories and the baseline and no information categories have been combined. Therefore caution should be used when making comparisons to the previous bulletin.



Clear improvement



Stable or no clear trend



Clear deterioration



Baseline or insufficient data

The indicators have been assessed by looking at the long-term trends over all the available data for each indicator. No formal statistical tests have been used in the analysis.

3. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
4. StatsWales homepage: www.statswales.wales.gov.uk