

Paper Reference:

Environment Agency and Water UK

Strategic Water Quality and Waste Planning Group (SWQWPG)

Meeting XX/XX/XXX / Paper by correspondence (Delete as appropriate)

Proposed AMP7 and AMP8 Nitrogen Trials Task and Finish (TaF).

Lucy Burton, Environment Agency Senior Advisor October 20, v3

Paper for Correspondence

SWQWPG is asked to:

- i) Establish a Task and Finish group to scope the details of the new AMP7 and AMP8 trials on nitrogen removal from effluent.
- ii) Water companies are asked to nominate members of the new Task and Finish Group.
- iii) SWQWPG is asked to provide feedback on the initial ToR.

Introduction:

Eutrophication in saline waters, where N is the key causal nutrient, is more geographically limited (to around 16 estuaries in England) than in freshwaters. The role of N in freshwater eutrophication, particularly lakes and reservoirs, has become increasingly recognised as being important in recent years and UKTAG has now developed N standards for standing fresh waters. It is anticipated that these will be applied in RBMP 3rd Cycle and are likely to drive N reduction in PR24 and beyond at STWs affecting failing eutrophic water bodies.

Both Defra and SSG have supported the use of trials of technologies to determine what more can be done to remove nitrogen from sewage treatment works. SSG asked for SWQWPG to establish a sub group to work with the Environment Agency on the details of the trials.

SSG have supported some optimisation trials as part of AMP7. Following the optimisation trials the Environment Agency will consider whether an interim technically achievable limit (TAL), tighter than 10 mg/l, could be set. The interim TAL would only be used for investment where there is evidence it will meet the legislative environmental quality standards or equivalent. The task and finish group would be responsible for developing the scope of the AMP7 optimisation trials, but also responsible for working with the Environment Agency to develop the scope of the PR24 N Trials. Further trials are likely to be needed to inform PR24.

The Environment Agency hope to be able to use consultants to assist with this work, as was the basis for the PR14 P trials.

Proposed initial terms of reference are provided below. These should be refined further at the first project meeting.

Aims

The aim of the proposed TaF group is to develop the scope of the AMP7 and AMP8 trials. The group would:

- Confirm the scale and timings of the optimisation trials for AMP7
- Consider the programme management, data collation and project outputs for the AMP 7 nitrogen trials.

Paper Reference:

Outputs

- Report confirming the scope of the AMP7 optimisation trials; likely to include site identification, monitoring requirements, data sharing agreements, and project management arrangements.
- Report confirming the scope of the AMP7 optimisation trials

The group can extend the contents of the reports at their discretion to ensure the needs of the project are met.

Group membership

It is proposed that the group has representatives from each of the water and sewerage companies. The Environment Agency membership would be limited to three representatives. The membership section of the ToR can be updated once the water company nominations are received.

Governance and reporting

- The group will be chaired on a rolling basis, with each water company representative being responsible in turn for chairing and taking notes.
- The group will report to SWQWPG.
- Papers circulated by the group will be treated as public domain and be written with that in mind;
- The group will use electronic means of communication wherever possible.

Task and Finish group lifespan

- Suggested start date – December 2020
- Initial suggested end date – January 2022

It is proposed that an update to be proposed to SWQWPG in December 2021 confirming the future of the task and finish group.

Frequency of Meetings

Webex meetings initially on a monthly basis to inform the AMP7 trials and then on a bi-monthly basis to develop the scope for the AMP8 trials.

Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and agreed by the nominated members of the Water UK/EA SWQWPG, where appropriate.

Conclusions

SWQWPG is asked to establish a task and finish group to develop the details of the trials along with the Environment Agency.

Water companies are asked to nominate members of the new Task and Finish Group.

SWQWPG is asked to provide feedback on the initial ToR.