



for birds
for people
for ever



Water is life

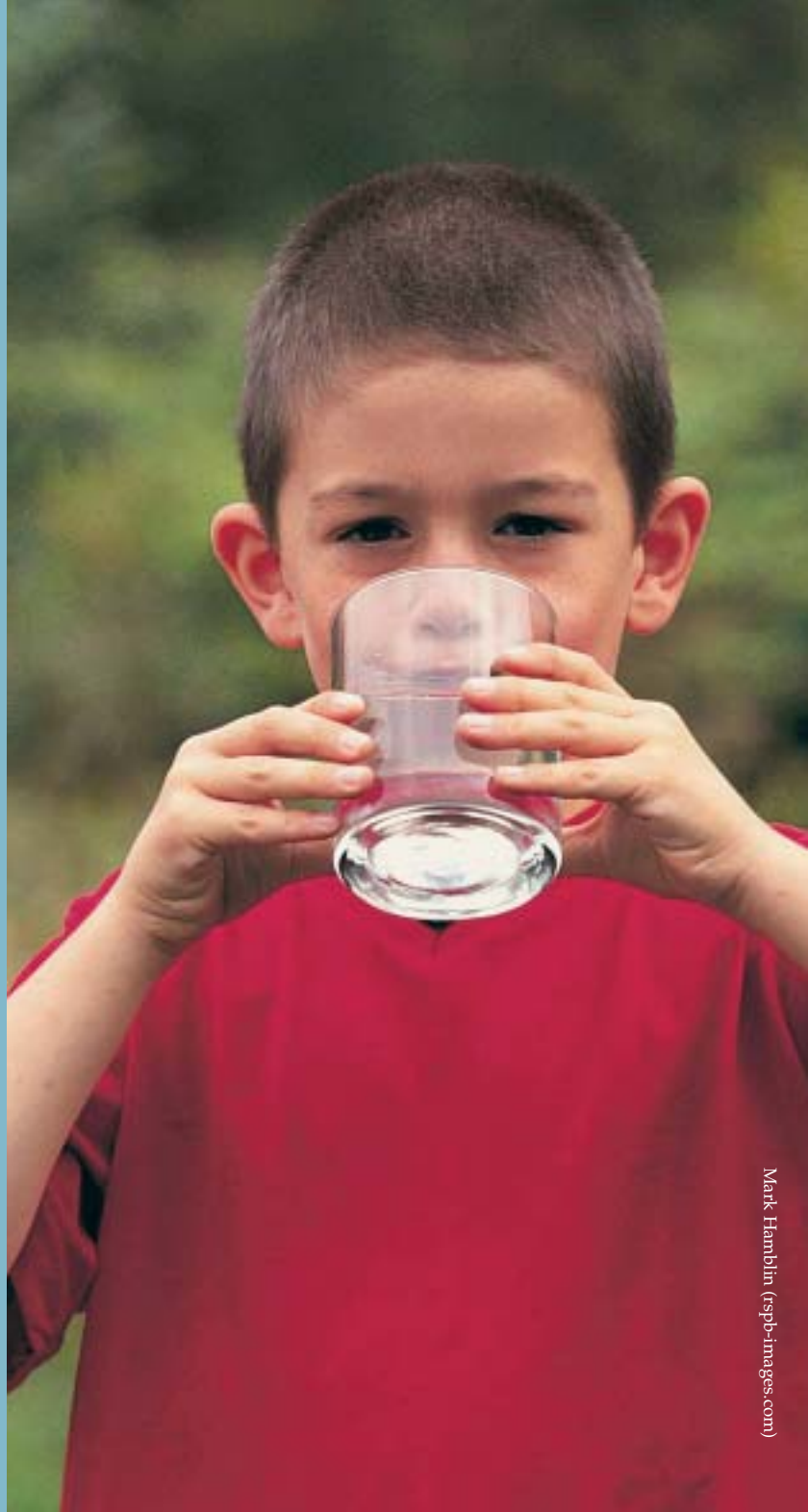
Managing our land for water, people and wildlife

Water is life... life is water

All living things are partly made of water. We need water to drink, to wash, to grow our food and to play in. Everyone has the right to water. In the past, many different communities, cultures and people have recognised that water is special and that sharing it fairly and protecting it for future generations is fundamental to life.

In 2000, the Member States of the European Union came together to sign a new law governing the way we manage water on our continent. The Water Framework Directive recognises that people and nature depend on each other, and that local communities have a crucial role to play in looking after water resources. It is now time for the Government to decide how it is going to make this new law work for us. The RSPB believes that we should use it to change the way we manage water, from the mountains to the seas, to get better value for money and a better deal for wetland wildlife. The Water Framework Directive should be the basis for a new partnership between businesses, the Government and the environment which promises to work towards:

- ◆ safe, secure and affordable water supplies for us and future generations
- ◆ enough water, of the right quality, to allow wetland wildlife to thrive alongside people
- ◆ protection from floods that works with, rather than against, natural processes
- ◆ access to watery places for us all, where we can learn, play and rest.



Making it happen

The Water Framework Directive offers us a unique opportunity, but it will take a while to turn this into reality. There are many things we can do to help look after water, and to persuade others to look after it too.

- ◆ **Everyone** can make a difference by turning off taps, using a bucket rather than a hosepipe to wash the car and taking care over what we put down the sink.
- ◆ **Water companies** can help develop new technologies, promote more responsible water use and invest in protecting our rivers, lakes, wetlands and seas.
- ◆ **Planners** can help make the built environment water-friendly, by avoiding building on floodplains, promoting sustainable drainage systems and respecting environmental limits. New buildings fitted with water recycling facilities and efficient appliances can use 50% less water than more traditional homes.
- ◆ **Flood managers** can develop better ways to retain water on the land, protecting people and helping to enhance the environment.
- ◆ **Farmers** are the natural guardians of our waters. They can protect rivers and lakes from pollution by reducing the amount of chemicals they add to the land, managing soils wisely and looking after farm wetlands. They can also help manage floods, by storing more water on the land and restoring rivers and their floodplains.

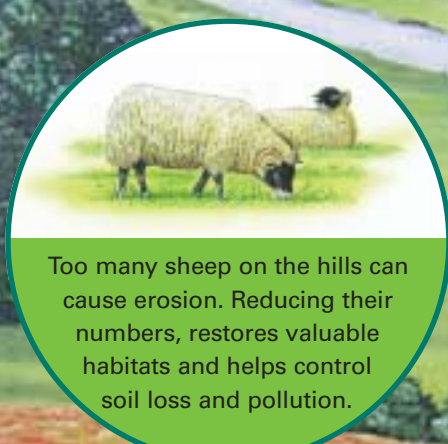
- ◆ **The Government** can help, by using the Water Framework Directive to put in place the kinds of solutions illustrated overleaf. In particular, it can:
 - ◆ promote the use of wetlands to manage floods and sea-level rise, protect rivers and lakes from pollution and provide precious habitats for wildlife
 - ◆ provide ways for local communities and businesses to become involved in looking after water
 - ◆ make sure policies and laws affecting new houses respect water and help to implement the Water Framework Directive
 - ◆ encourage farmers to be more water-friendly, by introducing incentives to manage pollution and rewarding farms that look after wetlands
 - ◆ work with water companies to ensure that projects benefiting people and wildlife receive funding.

The RSPB can help too. We will carry out research, acquire and manage wetland nature reserves, advise land managers on wetland issues and talk to the Government and decision-makers about sustainable water management. If you would like to help us, or to learn more about the Water Framework Directive and what it will mean in the UK, please phone Melanie Edmunds on 01767 680551 or e-mail water.team@rspb.org.uk

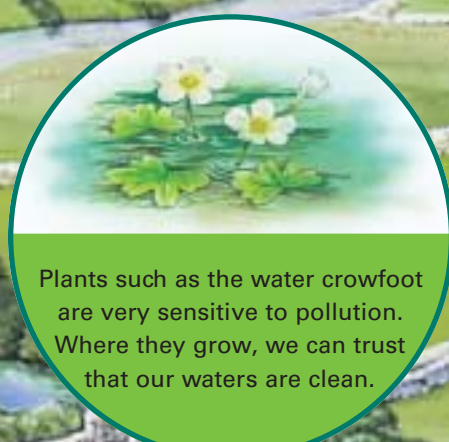


Working together from the hills to the sea

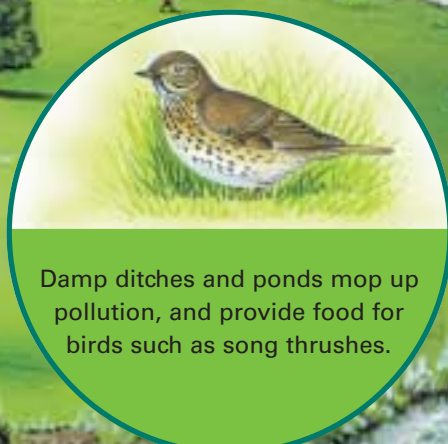
Rain falls on the uplands and gathers in lakes and streams...



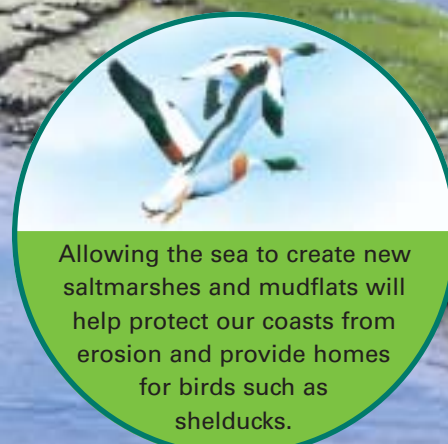
...it drains into rivers, creating wetlands rich in wildlife. However, we face many challenges to keep our water clean and plentiful...



...More people means greater demand for water, more waste and more properties at risk from flooding...



...We need to test and develop solutions that work with nature rather than against it, from the valleys to the seas.





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The RSPB is the UK charity working to secure a healthy environment for birds and wildlife, helping to create a better world for us all. We belong to BirdLife International, the global partnership of bird conservation organisations.

