



Department of the
Environment
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Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report

January 2009



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Introduction

Welcome to the first annual Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report.

This report is intended to be the first reference point for a range of environmental indicators and will provide annual updates on all of the indicators contained within it. It will be of both public and academic interest and will provide a valuable resource across government in providing links to government strategies.

This report follows on from 'Our Environment, Our Heritage, Our Future: State of the Environment Report for Northern Ireland' which was published by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), formally the Environment & Heritage Service (EHS), in April 2008. The State of the Environment report (SOE) should be referenced for additional context.

The indicators that have been chosen for inclusion in this report, in most instances, complement those that were reported on in the State of the Environment report. Additional indicators have been added, particularly with regard to demographics, environmental pressures and public opinion. Some of the indicators reported in the State of the Environment report have not been continued in this report. This is either because there is no further up-to-date data available, or because the indicator is not suitable for annual updates.

An informal consultation with potential data providers and other interested parties was also used to determine what indicators should and should not be included in the report. This consultation period lasted for approximately 12 weeks from May – August 2008.

In this first report, there are 50 separate data sets, which cover 8 main topics; Demographics & Public Opinion, Air & Climate, Water, Marine, Land, Biodiversity, Built Heritage and Waste. Each of these data sets reports the most recently available data for each indicator, and most provide data on

trends over time and, where applicable, performance against quantified targets.

This report provides some commentary on each of the data sets and describes any trends that they illustrate. There are also links to be found in the appendix of this report which will provide further detail on any of the indicators included in the report.

This report will be updated on an annual basis. Each year the indicators will be reviewed for their usefulness and relevance, and additional indicators will also be considered for future years. Any comments on the indicators currently published or suggestions for future reports will be gladly received and should be forwarded to:

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As this is an environmental publication, no hard copies have been published. However, hard copies and alternative formats are available on request. Such requests should be directed as above.

Statistical Note

This report has been prepared by Central Statistics and Research Branch, Department for Regional Development, along with NIEA.

The name of the department or organisation responsible for providing each series of statistics is shown under the appropriate table. There may be slight discrepancies between totals and the sum of their constituent items due to rounding. The data used are what was available up until November 2008. Any updates after that date will be included in the next report.

The following symbols are used throughout the report:

n/a = not available

0 = nil

Also, where a vertical-dashed line appears in a chart or a horizontal-dashed line appears in a table, this is to indicate a change in methodology.

Acknowledgements

Central Statistics and Research Branch would like to acknowledge the assistance of all those data providers and consultees who participated in the preparation of this report. From colleagues in government departments and agencies, to those in non-departmental public bodies and external organisations, we would like to thank them all for their valued contributions.

1. Demographics & Public Opinion

People and households use up significant levels of resources, such as water, energy, and food, and can exert pressure on the environment. Our lifestyle choices also impact upon the state of the environment. This chapter will look at Northern Ireland's changing population and environmental pressures, as well as our changing attitudes towards the environment.

Northern Ireland's population has been steadily increasing since the early 1970s. In 2001, the population was 5% greater than it had been 10 years previous and almost 10% greater than it was in 1971. The projected population indicates that this trend is estimated to continue over the next 20 - 25 years.

As the population increases, the number of households has also increased. The number of households has increased at a faster rate than the population, as a result the number of people per household is declining.

Environmental pressures such as the way we travel and how often we travel are becoming increasingly important. Air travel has almost doubled in Northern Ireland in the last 10 years with the advent of low-fare airlines a major factor in this. Car travel continues to dominate the way we do most of our day-to-day travelling, with 70% of our journeys being made by car.

The level of public concern for our environment has increased in the last five

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