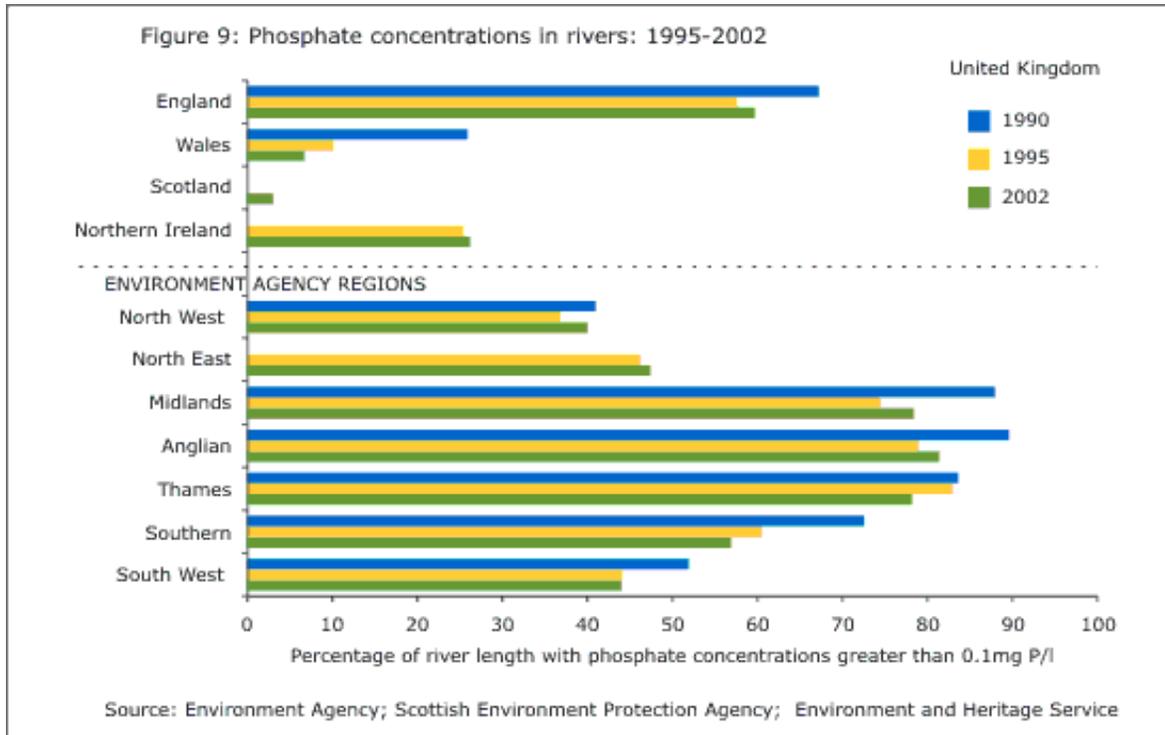


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## Key Facts about: Inland Water Quality and Use

### Phosphate concentrations in rivers: 1990-2003

#### United Kingdom



Percentage of river lengths with concentrations greater than 0.1 mgP/l

	1990	1995	2003
<b>England</b>	67	58	59
<b>Wales</b>	26	10	8
<b>Scotland</b>	..	..	4
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	..	25	21

Phosphorus and nitrogen are naturally found in water, and plants require these nutrients to grow. Elevated levels of phosphorus in water, from inputs from sewage works, for example, can lead to eutrophication (excessive algal growth) in freshwater.

Rivers with the highest concentrations are mainly in central and eastern England, reflecting the geology and higher population. In 2003, around 80 per cent of river lengths in Thames, Anglian and Midlands regions had average phosphate concentrations greater than the guideline value of 0.1 mgP/l. Between 1995 and 2003 the percentage river length greater than this guideline value decreased in Southern and Thames regions and remained unchanged in the North East, but increased in all other regions in England.

## In Detail:

### [Nutrients](#)

[River Water Quality Database](#) providing data on chemical and biological river water quality and nutrient concentrations for each Government Office Region and Local Authority in England and Wales

## Further Information:

### Source:

Environment Agency, SEPA, Environment and Heritage Service

### Press Release:

[River Water Quality Headline Indicator for Sustainable Development: 2003](#), 5 October 2004 (386/04)

### Key Facts:

[Chemical river water quality](#)

[Biological river water quality](#)

[Phosphate concentrations in rivers](#)

[Water pollution incidents](#)

### Data Tables:

[Download Chart Data: Microsoft Excel](#)

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