

## Classification 2009: Explanatory illustration

What pressures are currently impacting on the biology of our rivers and lakes?

Classification is a way of reporting the health of a river or lake. It can indicate where the quality of the environment is good and where it may need improvement. This illustration shows one of the challenges facing our water environment, and can help give an idea of how to protect it.

Biology affected by river conditions



fish



macro-invertebrates (small insects)

### Pollution

Pollution such as oil spills or the accidental release of raw sewage can harm the environment. Sewage is often the main pollutant to affect water quality, mainly as a result of sewers overflowing, pipe failures, or where control measures haven't worked. These events can kill fish and other aquatic life especially macro-invertebrates. Even if fish are not killed, pollution can still have an impact. As fish become more stressed, they become more susceptible to infectious diseases and parasites.

### Pressure

Pollution



### Effect

Fish and macro-invertebrates will reduce in numbers. Eventually they can disappear from the river.



### Cause

Oil spills or releases of raw sewage can harm the environment

