

## "Troubled Waters: South Downs Sounds the Alarm on River Health"

A new report from the South Downs National Park Authority has revealed a sobering truth: the park's rivers and lakes are in ecological decline. The "Water in the Park" findings show that 90% of water bodies within the park fail to meet good ecological standards, with conditions worsening between 2014 and 2022.

Spanning six catchment partnerships across three counties, the park's waterways are vital to biodiversity, climate resilience, and community wellbeing. Yet, despite the involvement of 83 organisations—including regulators, water companies, and environmental NGOs—the report highlights systemic challenges in collaboration, funding, and long-term planning.

The catchment-based approach promoted in the report encourages coordinated action at the river basin level. While 89% of partners believe their partnerships are working effectively, all host organisations agree that more can be done to meet the needs of the catchments and unlock their full potential.

The findings serve as a wake-up call for policymakers and the public alike. With water underpinning nature recovery and climate adaptation, the South Downs National Park is urging renewed commitment to restoring its aquatic ecosystems—before the damage becomes irreversible.

 Read the full report on [South Downs National Park's website](#).

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First para used info from Hampshire Chronicle and the Argus, then the following ones referred to the summary report itself.