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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations further implement in Scotland the requirements of Council Directive 91/676/EEC concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources (“the Directive”).

Under Article 3(1) of the Directive, Member States are required to identify waters affected by pollution and waters which could be affected by pollution in accordance with the criteria set out in Annex 1 to the Directive. They are then to designate as vulnerable zones all known areas of land in their territories which drain into these waters and which contribute to pollution (Article 3(2)). The designation of vulnerable zones is to be reviewed at least every 4 years, and if necessary revised or added to as appropriate (Article 3(4)).

Regulation 2 of these Regulations designates the revised vulnerable zones in accordance with Article 3(4) of the Directive. There are four such zones, located in the following areas: Lower Nithsdale; Lothian and Borders; Strathmore and Fife; and Moray, Aberdeenshire, Banff and Buchan.

Regulation 3 requires that copies of the maps which identify the vulnerable zones are available for public inspection at the offices of the Scottish Government, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ. The maps may also be viewed on the Scottish Government website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/Environment/NVZintro>.

Consequential amendments to other legislation are made by regulation 4, and regulations designating earlier vulnerable zones are revoked or amended by regulation 5.

No business and regulatory impact assessment has been prepared for these Regulations as no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies is foreseen.