Sent: Saturday, September 13, 2003 12:44 PM Subject: UK GOVERNMENT ADMISSION OF SERIOUS WATER PROBLEMS

Dear Members of Aquathin Europe;

Below you will read a quite astonishing governmental report admitting serious water problems throughout the UK. I have made bold another quite astonishing yet predictable statement in the last paragraph pitting "sterling against environment". I respectfully urge you to reprint this article and include in your presentations. I love my Aquathin !!

Warmest regards to all...as well, your comments are always welcome and very much appreciated.

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"Alfie" Alfred J. Lipshultz, President

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Agencies urge more water company investment for environment protection

With 60% of the UK's freshwater and wetlands 'sites of special scientific interest' (SSSI) in unfavourable conditions, environment agencies in England and Wales have, this week, called on water companies to invest in 4000 assets across the countries'.

The Environment Agency (EA), English Nature and the Countryside Council for Wales have produced *A Good Deal for Water*, setting out their priorities for water industry investment as part of the review for prices for 2005-2010 (see <u>related story</u>). It calls for investment from the sector in an effort to protect river and wetland wildlife sites from pollution and damaging overuse of water.

One in nineteen rivers in England and Wales are of 'poor' or 'bad' quality, growing to one in eight in urban areas, despite the improvements made through industry investment since the 1990s, says the Environment

Agency.

The organisations have also called on companies to stop pollution from storm sewerage overflows, to tackle the nutrient phosphorus, which can disrupt the ecological balance of freshwater sources, and to take action on excessive water leakage.

EA Chief Executive Barbara Young Barbara Young said: "Our environment programme asks water companies to invest in improvements to around 4000 assets across England and Wales. This will safeguard some 6,500 km of rivers and over 2,000 sq km of lakes, ponds, wetlands and coastal waters. The healthier and more attractive the environment, the more we will see knock-on benefits for leisure, recreation, tourism and the wider economy, the value of which we estimate to be of the range from £5 billion to £8 billion."

Lake Windermere, Coniston Water and the River Tees at Thornaby, Middlesbrough have been identified for attention.

Over-abstraction of water from vulnerable wetland sites needs urgent attention, says the EA, who project that their programme will ensure that more than 800km of river and 28 wetlands shall have enough water to support wildlife habitats. The report also calls on the water sector to take climate change into consideration, saying they should have the ability to supply all customers with water regardless of weather conditions.

Water UK, the trade association for water companies, was cautious about endorsing the report. A spokesperson told *edie*: "We will be talking to the agencies about their plans and how they have costed them. We have to look at the value for money of these proposals. Water companies have made significant environmental improvements in the last 10 to 12 years and a particular emphasis needs to be put on maintaining these improvements – not just creating new ones."