

Water Targets Expert Advisory Group: Water Demand and Wastewater Cost-Benefit Analysis Summary

Meeting notes, Tuesday 22 September 2021, 10:05-12:00 on MS Teams

Defra and Environment Agency (EA) attendees

Expert Attendees: Penny Johnes (Chair); Paul Withers; Joseph Holden; Kevin Hiscock; Nicci Russell; Rob Lawson; David Johnstone (guest expert); Karen Hudson-Edwards (guest expert); Charlotte Braungardt (guest expert)

1) Defra Presentation

Defra presented on the cost-benefit analysis for the proposed water demand, wastewater and storm overflows targets.

2) Discussion

Discussion between Defra and members of the Water Expert Advisory Group included the following topics:

- The use of National Water Environment Benefits Survey (NWEBS) methodology and other sources to calculate the costs and benefits of the proposed water demand, wastewater and options for storm overflows targets.
- Establishing the counterfactual (projected changes based on established policies and plans for reducing leakage and household consumption) for the water demand target.
- The scope of the benefits included in the cost-benefit analysis.
- Experts' recommendations of additional sources for cost-benefit calculations.
- The scope of the wastewater target, the focus on phosphorus only, the different treatment options available for both nitrogen and phosphorus, and the possibility for phosphorus recovery.

A summary of the advice and discussion from the Water Expert Advisory Group has been incorporated into the Detailed Evidence Report which accompanies our Environment Act 2021: environmental targets.