



Environment
Agency
Asiantaeth yr
Amgylchedd

Water for life and livelihoods



River basin management:

Working Together Consultation

Response Document for England and Wales

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment and make it **a better place** for people and wildlife.

We operate at the place where environmental change has its greatest impact on people's lives. We reduce the risks to people and properties from flooding; make sure there is enough water for people and wildlife; protect and improve air, land and water quality and apply the environmental standards within which industry can operate.

Acting to reduce climate change and helping people and wildlife adapt to its consequences are at the heart of all that we do.

We cannot do this alone. We work closely with a wide range of partners including government, business, local authorities, other agencies, civil society groups and the communities we serve.

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Foreword

Protecting and improving the water environment is vital for people's health, for wildlife and for the economy. It is also a huge challenge. Action is needed from all parts of society and there are some difficult choices to be made. We, the Environment Agency, want to make sure that everyone can contribute to a debate on how water is managed.

In December 2009, we published 10 statutory river basin management plans, covering all of England and Wales. These outlined actions that many organisations would take to protect and improve the water environment – the rivers, lakes, estuaries, coasts, wetlands and underground water reserves which are so important to the health of our environment.

We are now reviewing and revising these plans before publishing updated versions in December 2015. We asked for your views on how we can work together to prepare the updated plans co-operatively and with a wide range of organisations. By working effectively with others, we agree better solutions and protect the things that matter most to people. This document provides a summary of what you said we could do to make this happen.

I'd like to thank everyone who has taken part in the Working Together consultation. Your views will continue to improve the way we work. The progress we have made in emphasising a more local, catchment-based approach to river basin management illustrates our willingness to learn and change for the better. We look forward to making further improvements, working together to provide water for life and livelihoods.



David Baxter
Head of Catchment Management
Environment Agency

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1. Introduction

In December 2009, we published 10 river basin management plans (RBMPs), covering the whole of England and Wales. We are now reviewing and updating these and will publish the revised plans in December 2015. See Appendix 6.1 for a map of the 10 river basin districts.

The Working Together consultation was the first of three formal consultations to be held as part of the process of producing the revised plans. In it we sought your views on how we can work more effectively and efficiently with others to improve the environment.

The Working Together consultation invited comments from across the board, whether contributors were interested in an individual river basin district (RBD) or all 10. This document summarises the number and type of responses received, outlines the key points raised, and how we will take account of them as the river basin plans are developed.

We sought your views on:

- how interested groups or individuals can work better together so that everyone has the chance to contribute to the river basin management plans (RBMPs) and be involved in managing the water environment;
- working at a catchment scale;
- how you think the Environment Agency can co-ordinate consultation over the RBMPs and flood risk management plans.

The consultation ran for six months between 22 June 2012 and 22 December 2012.

The Working Together consultation documents were published on our website and hard copies were available in our principal offices. A number of events and workshops were held within river basin districts, examples of which are shown in section 4.0.

Views were sought from each of the river basin district liaison panels, the National Liaison Panel and the Welsh Government Stakeholder Forum, prior to the public consultation and again when it went live.

We also contacted national organisations who we already work with to deliver and develop river basin improvements. Each river basin district planning team notified local interest groups of the consultation.

1.1 Objectives for this response document

- To present summary information on:
 - the number of responses submitted
 - the types of organisation that responded
 - how people responded
- To present summaries of points made in the responses we received
- To outline how we are going to use this information in the next cycle of river basin planning
- To summarise consultation methods within each river basin district

The responses made to the consultation will help us shape how we engage and work with others as we develop the next river basin plans.

2. Consultation on Working Together

We received 272 responses to the consultation. Responses came from the water industry, local authorities, industry and trade associations, navigation authorities, community groups, local river and wildlife groups, research organisations and universities, individuals and private companies.

All the consultation responses that we have been able to publish are available at:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/ho/wfd/working/together2012>

We are not able to publish comments that include personal details, names of individuals or offensive language.

The comments cover a wide range of issues, some of which were relevant to all the river basin districts and others that were specific to a certain geographical area or action within an individual river basin district.

We would like to thank all respondents for taking the time to contribute to our consultation. We are grateful for the comments we received, which are helping us shape the river basin management plans.

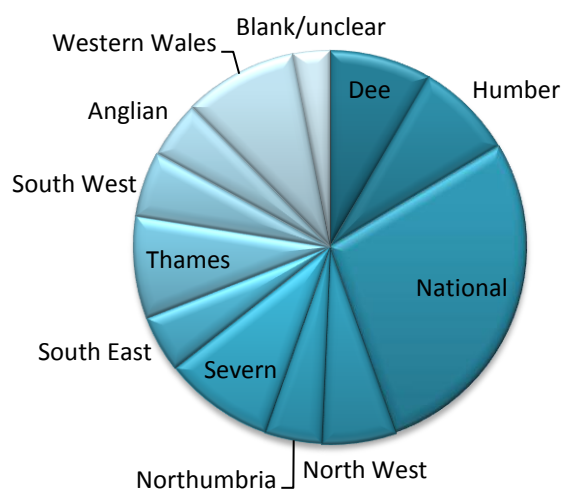
2.1 Summary of responses

Break down of responses nationally and by river basin district (RBD)

The majority of the responses were submitted to the national consultation; however examples often referred to a specific geographical area. There were nine responses that did not specify the RBD they applied to. See figure 1 below.

River Basin District	Number of Responses
National	84
Dee	25
Western Wales	28
Severn	27
North West	24
Northumbria	14
Humber	24
Anglian	14
South East	14
Thames	25
South West	16
Blank/Unclear	9

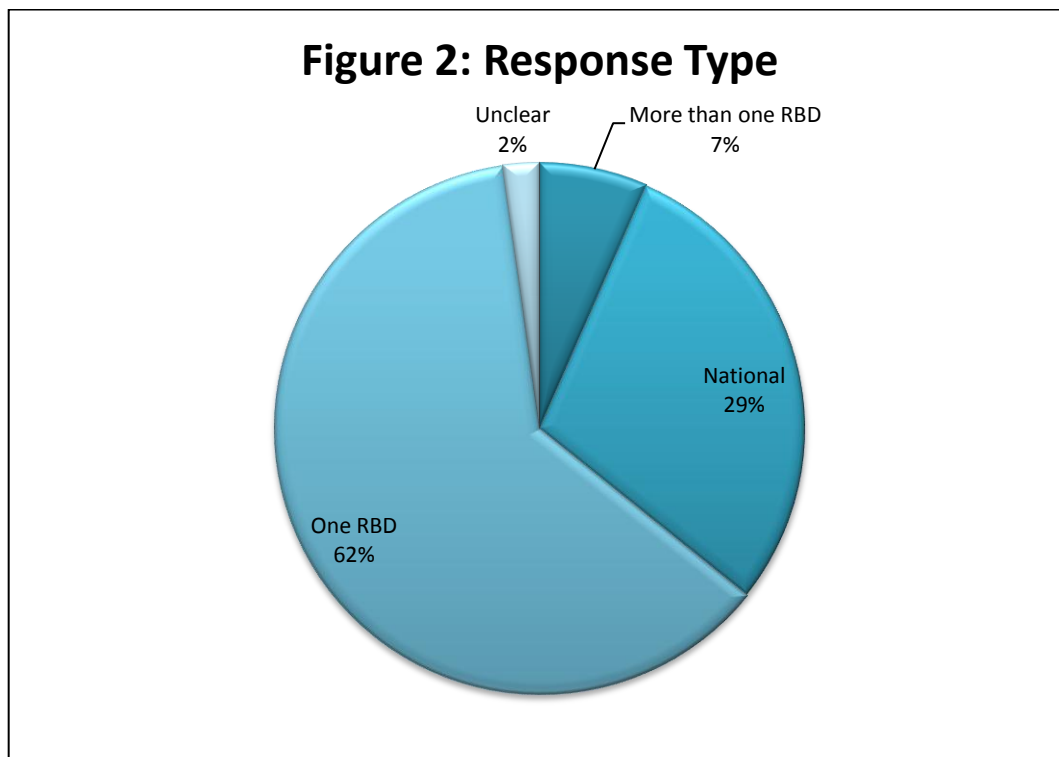
Figure 1: Response Split by Consultation



Response Type

The majority of responses, (62 per cent), related to one specific RBD. Twenty nine per cent of responses related to the national consultation and 18 per cent of responses related to more than one RBD. The remaining two per cent of responses did not specify a preference. See figure 2 below.

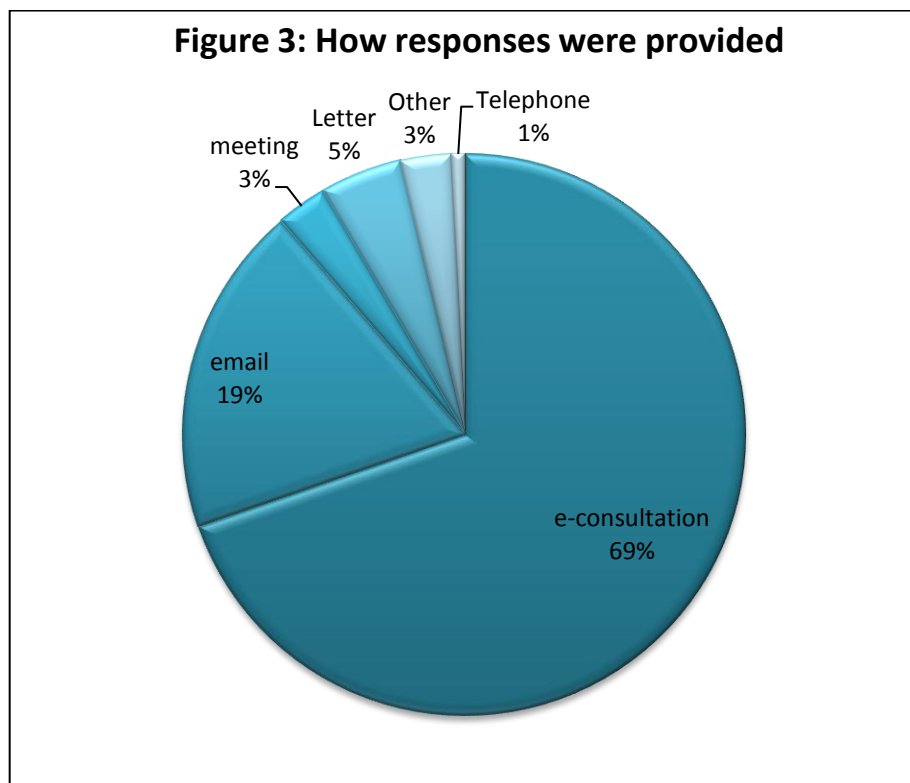
Response Type	Number of Responses
More than one RBD	18
National	80
One RBD	170
Unclear	6



How responses were submitted

We received most responses (60 per cent) on-line. Email submissions arrived towards the end of the consultation and made up 19 per cent of the responses. We also received responses by letter, by telephone and at meetings. These responses were recorded by our staff and uploaded onto the online E-Consultation system. See figure 3 below.

Format of Response	Number of Responses
E-Consultation	191
Email	52
Meeting	8
Letter	13
Other	8
Telephone	2



Who submitted responses to the Working Together consultation?

The majority of responses were submitted by charities and non-government organisations (NGOs). They included wildlife trusts, RSPB, Canal and River Trust, Ground Works, NFU, sporting governing bodies, National Trust and biodiversity partnerships.

Local authority responses made up 19 per cent of total submissions, representing a good geographical spread across the river basin districts.

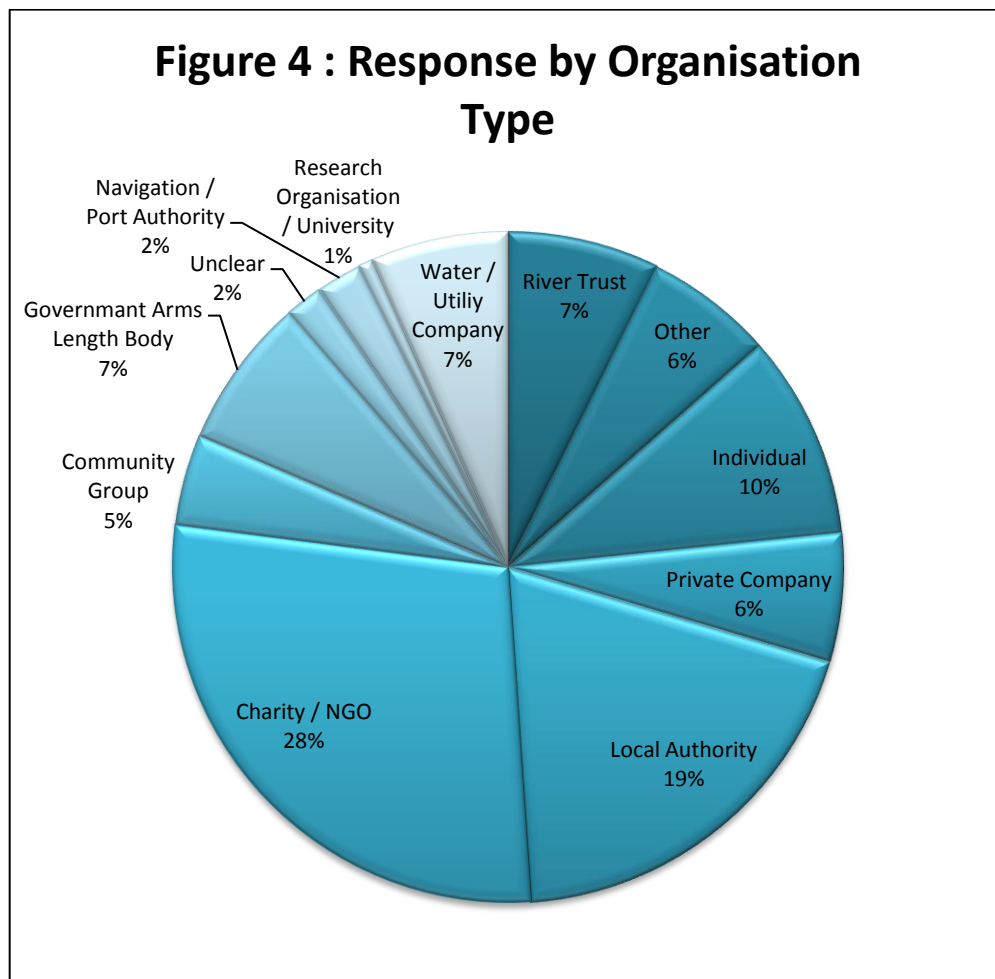
Community groups, river trusts and individuals submitted responses, highlighting specific geographical issues and examples of where projects can be successfully

delivered in partnership. They also told us how important it is that we use the right language in our communications.

Water and utility company responses included comments on specific RBDs and strategic issues, such as delivery and approach.

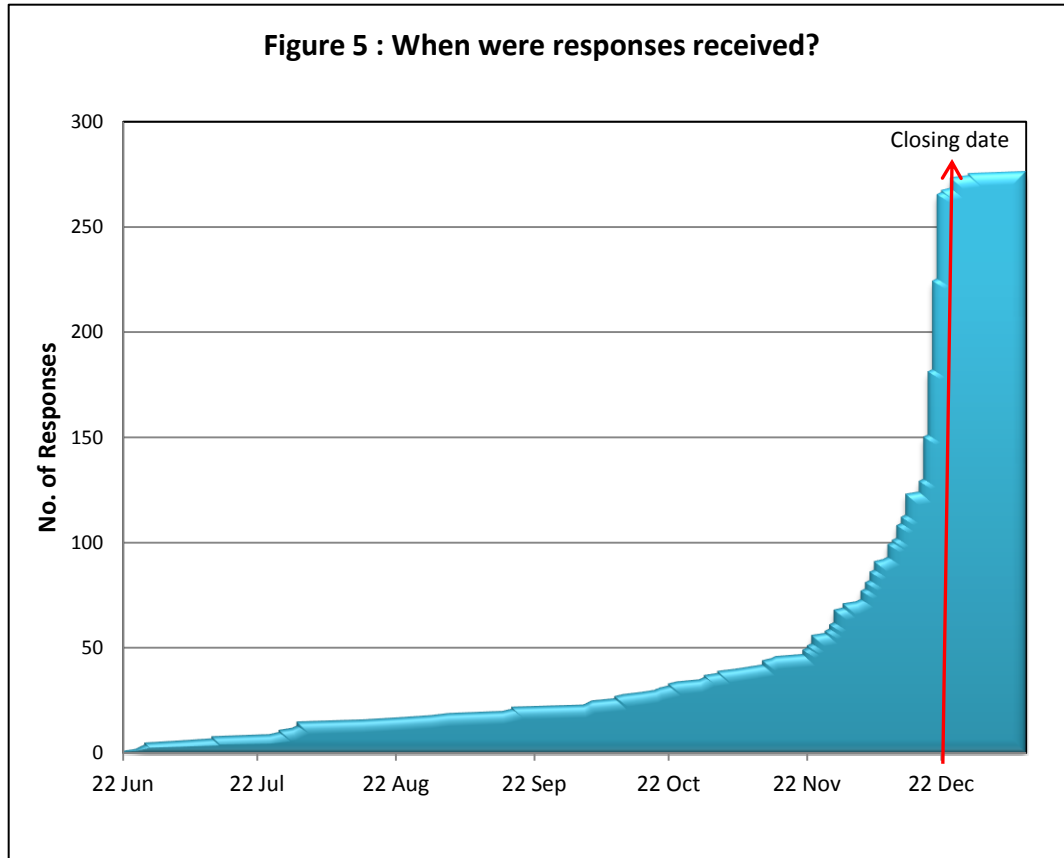
See figure 4 below.

Organisation Type	Number of Responses
River Trust	20
Individual	27
Private Company	17
Charity / NGO	77
Other	17
Local Authority	53
Community Group	12
DEFRA Arms Length Body	20
Navigation / Port Authority	6
Research Organisation /	2
Water / Utility Company	18
Unclear	5



When were responses received?

Most responses, (81 per cent), were submitted within the last month of the consultation. Less than 12 per cent were submitted within the first half of the six-month consultation. See figure 5 below to see how the responses accumulated over the consultation period.



3. Summary of key findings and actions - England and Wales

We have collated and reviewed all the comments received. This section sets out the key findings relevant to England and Wales, and information that we would like to clarify in response to these findings.

In all, 272 people and organisations responded to the England and Wales Working Together consultation.

We informed over two thousand organisations and individuals about the Working Together consultation via email or in person at meetings and events.

The consultation was an agenda item at relevant national meetings. For example the National Liaison Panel for England, the Welsh Government Stakeholder Forum and the Biodiversity Partnership Conference.

There were five core questions which were asked in all the river basin district consultations. We included supplementary questions in some river basin districts.

This section summarises the responses we received for each question. You will be able to see which river basin districts these responses are relevant to and what actions we will take as a result. Where appropriate, we have presented the responses in a table.

<i>River Basin District</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>
Anglian	Ang
Dee	Dee
Humber	Hum
North West	NW
Northumbria	N'Hum
Severn	Sev

<i>River Basin District</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>
South East	SE
South West	SW
Thames	Tha
Western Wales	WW
England and Wales	E&W

3.1 Opportunity to contribute to the river basin management plans

Q1 How do you think the Environment Agency can create an approach that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the river basin management plans?												
Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
1.1 By engaging with the key stakeholders on local issues at a meaningful 'catchment' scale, and ensuring ownership of local plans by involving these stakeholders in decision making. The RBD scale provides a strategic overview.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>We will improve local focus by ensuring that the next consultation, called 'Challenges and Choices' provides information at a local catchment, as well as river basin district, scale.</p> <p>Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) is promoting a catchment based approach for managing land and water in a co-ordinated way. This approach has been piloted in the majority of the 83 catchments in England over the last 12-18 months. Learning from the pilots and similar initiatives, and your comments, will be fed into the Defra policy framework available later this year. Our approach will be refined and updated using this framework, the pilot evaluation reports, and by implementing good practice identified in the catchment planning handbook. The link is at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/water/legislation/catchment-approach/.</p> <p>In Wales, Welsh Government supports a similar approach; working with others to focus effort within catchments. This approach will target the significant issues impacting Wales' water environment and ensure improvements are delivered effectively and consistently across Wales. Our evidence base 'Living Waters for Wales' communicates our approach on the 'Top Ten' issues as a starting point for engaging with others.</p> <p>We have local events planned, such as a city-centre open day, and</p>

Q1 How do you think the Environment Agency can create an approach that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the river basin management plans?												
Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
												workshops with local stakeholders.
1.2 By taking a more targeted approach to ensure the involvement of decision makers from those organisations and groups most relevant to the local issues. Could involve formation of new groups. It is not possible to involve everyone but the Environment Agency shouldn't limit itself to those it has worked with in the past.	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>We will make a real effort to make river basin planning accessible to all through the 'Challenges and Choices' consultation. Each Environment Agency region is developing engagement plans which will include stakeholder analysis, work with liaison panels and a focus on identifying others who should be involved. Information from other sources, such as the catchment pilot programme is also being used to identify additional groups.</p> <p>Many of our regions are now employing catchment co-ordinators who will work at a local level.</p> <p>In Wales, we will be exploring opportunities to get more people involved in the decision making process at a local level via liaison panels.</p>
1.3 By providing information about the issues and possible solutions in an inviting, more digestible, engaging form, using language people can relate to and via a range of formats and media. Processes should be open and transparent.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>We are carrying out a project to identify better ways of involving people on environmental issues in the future.</p> <p>Through the catchment pilots we are testing different ways of providing information, particularly in mapped or other visual forms. http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/131506.aspx</p> <p>We are also developing a new method for storing and processing data. This will make it easier to share data; perhaps through a web interface.</p>

Q1 How do you think the Environment Agency can create an approach that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the river basin management plans?												
Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
												<p>We will be working with Sciencewise, a national centre which provides specialist advice on public involvement and consultations. The aim is to host a series of workshops with the general public on the different issues affecting our water environment. The link is at: http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/</p> <p>To support the workshops, we are producing a two-page briefing and a technical summary for each of the five main pressures/issues: low flow, eutrophication, urban diffuse, agricultural diffuse, and habitat modifications.</p>
1.4 By harnessing what matters to people about water, and using imaginative ways of engaging people, such as riverbank events, river awards, focus groups or community forums	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	<p>We will outline local events and different ways of reaching people in the engagement plans mentioned above.</p> <p>However, a large programme of local events can be very resource intensive. Organisations who would like to be involved in, or could provide ideas, support or partnership for these events should contact their local Environment Agency office.</p>
1.5 By driving further integration across different kinds of plans for the water environment and work that others are doing, for instance catchment pilots or work on flooding.	•	•		•	•			•		•	•	<p>We will continue to embed participation across work streams wherever we can. This will include identifying what initiatives are already underway in each catchment, and making appropriate links between them where necessary.</p>

Q1 How do you think the Environment Agency can create an approach that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the river basin management plans?

Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
1.6 By continuing with current engagement processes, but improving it where needed for instance by using established groups better, or engaging earlier	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	<p>We will identify at an early stage the people and groups who could help us achieve better results by working together.</p> <p>We have brought forward the next consultation, 'Challenges and Choices' to allow more time to use the feedback to shape future decisions.</p> <p>We will be contacting anyone who has expressed an interest in, or wants to be involved in this consultation. See more details in the response column in question 4 of this document.</p>
1.7 By ensuring the establishment of the Single Environment Body for Wales does not distract effort from river basin planning										•	•	<p>We will continue to work effectively on cross-boundary issues.</p> <p>We are working with partners in Wales to ensure that there are arrangements in place for planning and managing cross-border catchments following the creation of Natural Resources Wales on 1 April 2013. The development of Western Wales and Dee River Basin Management Plans will be coordinated by Natural Resources Wales, and the Severn by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>The new organisation, Natural Resources Wales, will become operational on 1 April 2013 and will bring together the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales and the Forestry Commission Wales. The Environment Agency will not operate in Wales from 1 April 2013. For more information see http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus/organisation/35675.aspx</p>

Q1 How do you think the Environment Agency can create an approach that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the river basin management plans?												
Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
1.8 By investing in front line communication and engagement staff to enable collaboration and co-design, and to enable others to contribute ideas and issues to feed into the development of plans	•				•			•	•			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are training our staff to give them the skills they need. For instance, to develop better partnerships; to use social media to help engage with more people; to use collaborative and partnership working more effectively; and to provide better advice on accessing funding. <p>Many of our regions are now employing catchment co-ordinators who will work at the local level.</p> <p>There may be more pressure on resources in future so we need to use existing resources effectively.</p>
1.9 By ensuring that the consultation process is as accessible as possible; for example questionnaires provided in variety of formats, and easy-to- use web-based consultation			•	•	•				•			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We received constructive comments about our on-line consultation system and will make changes in time for the next consultation. We will also ensure that we provide a broader range of ways to contribute to the consultation such as via email, events and workshops.

Q1b (Humber only) Do you feel the current arrangements for the liaison panel in a river basin district the size of the Humber allow for effective participation?		
Summary of response	Hum	Our action / response
1b.1 A number of consultees commented that the Humber River Basin is too large a unit to engage at. Only organisations covering the whole or substantial parts of this area are likely to participate. Therefore it needs to be broken down into smaller geographical areas to allow the creation of more effective partnerships and delivery mechanisms.	•	We have taken the decision to replace the Humber Liaison Panel with two separate Yorkshire and Trent/Ancholme Liaison Panels. These new panel areas recognise people's sense of place but remain large enough to maintain a strategic overview. We will develop an effective way of addressing issues which affect the whole river basin, and will make sure the next River Basin Plan is cohesive and reflects the Humber as a whole.
1b.2 The Humber basin is large and difficult for a single panel of professionals to cover both in terms of knowledge and distance to attend meetings. It would be more effective if there was a Yorkshire panel and a Trent panel although more resource would be needed to support this	•	See answer above
1b.3 Liaison Panel expectations and aspirations can sometimes be different to the operational reality. The Liaison Panel can sometimes feel it is still developing partly due to the frequency of meeting, facilitation and communication between some LP sector members is limited and LP members own organisational governance/set up across the full RBD presents difficulties for their effective representation.	•	Replacing the Humber Liaison Panel with Yorkshire and Trent liaison panels will give us the opportunity to review membership and to reinvigorate these forums, improving participation, communication and delivery.
1b.4 The 1st River Basin Plans followed a narrow national protocol and template and therefore the opportunity to affect the nature and content of the plan by the Liaison Panel was limited. In terms of Liaison Panel members being able to comment on the plan, then this is possible but is constrained by participation at a fairly superficial level, but still requires them to be able to find the time to work through large and complex packs of materials.	•	A single template format is used to help with consistency across all the river basins. The changes we are making to the liaison panels, together with the catchment- based approach, should allow panel members greater opportunity to become involved in influencing the next River Basin Management Plan.

Q1b (Humber only) Do you feel the current arrangements for the liaison panel in a river basin district the size of the Humber allow for effective participation?		
Summary of response	Hum	Our action / response
1b.5 During the first cycle, all significant discussions with stakeholders occurred outside of Liaison Panel meetings resulting in no meaningful discussion of the principles, options or details of the classification or plan at the river basin level.	•	<p>Not all the discussions can take place in the panel meetings, as timetables and deadlines for River Basin Planning do not always coincide with those for other programmes.</p> <p>We will be looking for opportunities to get more people involved in the decision making process by working with partners on the liaison panels.</p>

Q1c(Humber only) If not, can you suggest how the Humber Liaison Panel could be organised to increase awareness, understanding and involvement in the delivery and development of the Humber Basin District Management Plan?		
Summary of response	Hum	Our action / response
<p>1c.1 Greater clarity is needed over the purpose of the Liaison Panel in order for it to function effectively.</p> <p>By disseminating spatial information and questions prior to RBLP meetings to allow more meaningful discussion of data, questions and choices during the meetings.</p>	•	<p>We will be revising the terms of reference for the liaison panels to provide greater clarity to members.</p> <p>We will review the organisation of liaison panel meetings and the way material for those meeting is distributed.</p>

Q1c(Humber only) If not, can you suggest how the Humber Liaison Panel could be organised to increase awareness, understanding and involvement in the delivery and development of the Humber Basin District Management Plan?		
Summary of response	Hum	Our action / response
<p>1c.2 By developing a better understanding of why people and organisations want to engage more deeply and why the EA want them to be more involved – this will help target future engagement.</p> <p>Workshops and seminars with a practical focus help understanding and show that action is taking place and that WFD is a force for positive change and worth spending time to engage and get involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>We will work closely with Liaison Panel members and stakeholders to understand their needs, and to help us shape future engagement work as we develop the next River Basin Plan.</p> <p>We will be looking at a variety of opportunities to engage with people in order to highlight issues affecting the water environment.</p>
<p>1c.3 A number of consultees commented on the need for consultations to be carried out on a local basis regarding the issues surrounding local catchments then brought together to form a collective view of the catchment as a whole. There was a suggestion that this could be organised by organisations such as On Trent, perhaps at flood risk level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>The Environment Agency will be taking forward Defra’s catchment based approach to help develop local delivery and engagement.</p>
<p>1c.4 A number of consultees suggested there is a need for a separate strategic group to be formed, equivalent to the current River Basin Liaison Panel that is entirely dedicated to the catchment area of the River Trent. It could be a separate group to the Humber LP or a sub-group. This would allow greater representation which could be assisted by the East Midlands Environmental Link group who provide a good network to discuss issues from the environment sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>We have taken the decision to replace the Humber Liaison Panel with two separate Trent/Ancholme and Yorkshire Liaison Panels. These will help improve communication and local delivery. We will still produce a single Humber River Basin Plan.</p>
<p>1c.5 Formation of an independently chaired Trent strategic co-ordination group represented on a Trent Liaison Panel and formed from organisations with delivery responsibilities in the Trent catchment resulting in improved liaison/learning/knowledge allowing for effective and efficient delivery of actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>We will be developing a Trent/Ancholme Liaison Panel. We will work with partners to explore how this will fit with other existing and future groups.</p>

3.2 Role of liaison panels

Q2. In your experience, how can the river basin district liaison panels, National Liaison Panel for England and Wales Water Framework Directive Stakeholder Forum be made to be more effective and efficient as part of this approach?												
Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
2.1. Better communication and feedback is required to create a feeling of partnership and co-operation and ensure relevant groups/individuals are aware of the LPs.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	We will identify at an early stage the people and groups who could help us achieve better results by working together.
2.2 A better data sharing method for the Liaison Panel and others who might be interested, such as a web portal, that contains important papers, agendas etc would help disseminate outputs and facilitate participation and help with engagement. A better system of capturing feedback at different levels within organisations would be more useful.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>We are carrying out a project to identify better ways of engaging with people on environmental issues in the future.</p> <p>We are developing a new system for storing and processing data. This will make data sharing easier; perhaps via a web interface.</p> <p>River Watch Wales is a data-sharing application which was developed with local partners. We will review how we can improve this.</p>

Q2. In your experience, how can the river basin district liaison panels, National Liaison Panel for England and Wales Water Framework Directive Stakeholder Forum be made to be more effective and efficient as part of this approach?

Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
<p>2.3 Clarity on the role of the Liaison Panel and a restructuring of the meetings may aid in increased effectiveness. For example focusing on particular aims; defining meetings into sections that require decisions or consultation, reporting and AOB. Setting tasks for all members, for example each member to engage a previously un-consulted stakeholder.</p> <p>There needs to be strong linkages between Liaison Panels in Wales and the WFD Stakeholder Forum. The reviewed ToR should reflect the need to strengthen the linkages between Liaison Panels in Wales and the Wales WFD Stakeholder Forum</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	<p>Liaison Panels were established in 2006. The terms of reference were updated in January 2010 and 2011 to provide more emphasis on partnership working, joint decision making, and working at a catchment scale.</p> <p>The liaison panels are now being reviewed. The comments from this Working Together consultation are being used to update their terms of reference.</p>
<p>2.4 Make sure the real stakeholders are involved as much as possible and given due weight, through wider and more targeted representation on the liaison panels.</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>The comments from the Working Together consultation are being used in the liaison panel review, and to update their terms of reference.</p>

Q2. In your experience, how can the river basin district liaison panels, National Liaison Panel for England and Wales Water Framework Directive Stakeholder Forum be made to be more effective and efficient as part of this approach?

Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
<p>2.5 The majority of river basin districts are so huge that one Liaison Panel cannot do justice to the diverse range of water issues. We suggest splitting them into smaller areas to ensure the Liaison Panel works at a catchment scale.</p>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>The role of the liaison panel is to provide an overall strategic view. In some regions sub-groups are used to provide a local catchment view. This should be further explored at a river basin district scale as part of the liaison panel review.</p> <p>In the Humber river basin district we have taken the decision to replace the Humber Liaison Panel with two separate Trent/Ancholme and Yorkshire Liaison Panels. These panels will help improve communication and local delivery.</p> <p>The South East and Thames River Basin District Liaison Panels identify gaps in catchment working and help resolve these by putting the right people and techniques together. These panels have regular catchment updates on challenges and best practice. This is how the Panel operates at a river basin and local scale, covering a wide range of diverse issues, and also enables information flow to and from national level.</p>

Q2. In your experience, how can the river basin district liaison panels, National Liaison Panel for England and Wales Water Framework Directive Stakeholder Forum be made to be more effective and efficient as part of this approach?

Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
2.6 Regular, brief newsletters, sent to organisations in the affected area. Parish councils, civic societies and other community organisations should receive updates on findings and decisions that are being made as work progresses.	•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	The comments from the Working Together consultation are being used in the liaison panel review to update the terms of reference, including how information is provided to interested groups and individuals. General information on local rivers and the main Environment Agency contacts for river basin management planning can be found at: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33112.aspx
2.7 I propose that you pay people to take part in the panel. You pay those on the regional flood and coastal committee.		•	•								•	• We will consider this request carefully during the review of liaison panels

Q2. In your experience, how can the river basin district liaison panels, National Liaison Panel for England and Wales Water Framework Directive Stakeholder Forum be made to be more effective and efficient as part of this approach?

Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
<p>2.8 At a strategic level the panels are made up of very diverse membership and for general discussion this is a good set-up, but perhaps for tackling more specific issues smaller specialist groups may be more effective.</p>		•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	<p>The role of the liaison panel is to provide an overall strategic view.</p> <p>In some regions, sub-groups are used to provide a local catchment view. This should be further explored at a river basin district scale as part of the liaison panel review.</p> <p>In the Humber river basin district we have taken the decision to replace the Humber Liaison Panel with two separate Trent/Ancholme and Yorkshire Liaison Panels. These panels will help improve communication and local delivery.</p>
<p>2.9 Put the panel in charge of the process and have leadership, instead of being observers of an EA process. Then the EA can be technical advisors to the process instead of the controllers</p> <p>The Liaison panels in Wales would support the WFD Wales Stakeholder Forum in taking more of a leadership role at a strategic level and taking strategic decisions to support delivery of the RBMPS.</p>	•		•		•	•		•		•	<p>We are the competent authority with responsibility for producing the river basin management plans, but how we do this is different in different regions. We may chair the panels or co-host meetings.</p> <p>In Wales, we will work with Welsh Government to support the review of the WFD Wales Stakeholder Forum during the review of the liaison panels.</p>	

Q2. In your experience, how can the river basin district liaison panels, National Liaison Panel for England and Wales Water Framework Directive Stakeholder Forum be made to be more effective and efficient as part of this approach?

Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
2.10 By ensuring the establishment of the Single Environment Body for Wales does not distract effort from river basin planning											•	See 1.7 above.
2.11 Clarity on role of Liaison Panel, and how it links with other groups such as the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees. Improve links to other groups, plans and committees.	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	The review of liaison panels will put more emphasis on joint decision making and catchment working, including linking with other existing groups and plans. We are currently reviewing and improving the links between flood risk management plans and river basin management planning.

Q2b (South West Only) Do you play any role in the wellbeing of any water environment and its surrounding catchment? What could you do to contribute to integrated catchment management to help improve our water bodies by 2021 and beyond?		
Summary of response	SW	Our action / response
2b.1. We have suggested a local group or organisation who could help you to influence land owners and land use for the benefit of the wider water environment. This includes ideas for habitat creation, reducing flood risk and managing water resources.	●	We will continue to work with our existing external partners and make contact with the new groups and organisations suggested.
2b.2. We would like to work with you to encourage greener growth by engaging with the tourism sector, encouraging investment in green infrastructure and influencing local planning decisions.	●	We are keen to improve our understanding and use of evidence on the economic value of water in the South West, to bring about behaviour changes which will protect and improve the water environment. We will do this by making better use of the evidence we already have; contacting these respondents; initiating contact with more small and medium sized businesses and chambers of commerce; and exploring how we can work together more cooperatively in this important area.
2b.3. We want to build on existing relationships and projects that we are already working on together. We can achieve more together if we align the way we plan our work and join up our thinking on how best to facilitate integrated catchment based delivery. This includes the use of an ecosystem services approach.	●	We will build on the partnership working which has been established during the first river basin cycle and will explore opportunities for more joint working with these, and other partners, to help improve the water environment. This will include honest discussions about who is best placed to achieve which outcome.
2b.4 . We could do more to help you improve the water environment if you put more resources into frontline engagement and improved the way you share your evidence with us.	●	Our objective is to deliver more for the environment from every pound we spend by focusing on frontline delivery. One of the ways we are doing this is by promoting more partnership working. Sharing our evidence is key to working successfully in partnership. We will make contact with these respondents individually to find out how we can provide the right information to facilitate this.

3.3 Working at a catchment scale

Q3. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses about working at a catchment scale?

We had many responses to this question. A general comment was that the scale of the catchment needs to be flexible so that it is relevant and suitable for its intended use.

Working at a small catchment level was seen as having many benefits, such as:

- people and organisations can identify with it; this enhances partnerships and understanding at local level;
- usually there is good knowledge of the catchment at a local scale;
- prioritising issues is easier within a small catchment: it enables all information and issues to be integrated;
- it can reduce duplication of effort and prevent wastage of valuable resources, and promote innovation.

Some disadvantages of working at a small catchment level were also mentioned:

- there is a risk of excluding expertise and professional advice which would be available over a wider area;
- potential partners might be operating at a much wider scale;
- extra resources are needed for a catchment approach, otherwise catchments and rivers will compete for limited resources, and issues and locations may not be given the correct priority;
- there is a risk of losing the big picture when working at a small catchment scale and less opportunity to achieve economies of scale ;
- local authorities and some other organisations may find it difficult to work on all catchments within their wider area;
- there can be a lack of data and relevant information in small catchments.

Catchment- scale working is being promoted across England and Wales as the best approach to managing land and water in a co-ordinated way. In England, a catchment- based approach has been piloted in the majority of the 83 catchments over the last 12-18 months. The results reflect many of the benefits and disadvantages highlighted in this consultation. Defra's evaluation report on the pilot projects, and a handbook on the catchment based approach, is due to be published later this year. The link is at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/water/legislation/catchment-approach/>. The responses we received from you are being used to update our catchment approach and feed into Government policy.

To find out more about catchment management in your local area visit: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33112.aspx>

We will improve the local focus by ensuring that the next consultation, called 'Challenges and Choices' provides information at a local catchment scale

Q3 b (Western Wales and Dee Only) What can the Environment Agency do to better support others in improving the water environment?			
Summary of response	Dee	WW	Our action / response
<p>3b.1 Data & Evidence Arrangements for sharing data and evidence should be transparent. The data should be in a format that is can be easily understood by our partners and those we engage with.</p>	•	•	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensure that data and information can be accessed via Natural Resources Wales (NRW) website ○ make effective use of existing tools to improve how we share and communicate data/information, for example via River Watch Wales ○ explore options to host data through our partners' websites, for example eNGOs or include links to NRW website so that local initiatives have access to information ○ review and update 'Living Waters for Wales' to identify the top ten issues and make available to our partners
<p>3b.2 Communications Maximise communication links with groups and individuals who have expressed a willingness to work with us. The issues impacting the water environment should be communicated as widely as possible.</p>	•	•	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ make better use of our existing network of partners/groups when we engage on local issues ○ continue to review our list of stakeholders to ensure we are inclusive and work with a broad audience ○ continue to review the Wales WFD Communications Plan ○ prioritise our engagement and focus on the 'Top Ten' failing issues for Wales ○ work with Liaison Panels to review Terms of Reference ensuring they work effectively, taking into account ecosystem services and their wider benefits

Q3 b (Western Wales and Dee Only) What can the Environment Agency do to better support others in improving the water environment?			
Summary of response	Dee	WW	Our action / response
3b.3 Catchment Delivery The catchment approach was supported as it offers greater potential for co-ordination across initiatives to maximise environmental benefits.	•	•	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use catchment plans to support delivery of the wider ecosystem management aspirations ○ review how we will deliver the second cycle at a catchment scale
3b.4 . Funding/Resources More funding and resources are needed to deliver environmental improvements.	•	•	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ continue to support third sector organisations to source funding opportunities ○ continue to work with Welsh Government to identify funding sources ○ continue to explore opportunities to link into other projects and raise awareness through community partnerships ○ develop economic evidence to support our decision-making
3b.5 Cross Border Management of River Basin Management plans Cross border River Basin Management Plans have particular challenges	•		See 1.7 above. Also, the review of the Terms of Reference for the Liaison Panel will include cross-border working.

Q3 b (Severn Only) The implementation of WFD is largely happening at a catchment level. We feel that delivery partner representatives from catchments are currently underrepresented within a largely sector- based membership. How do you think we can improve this situation, whilst maintaining the right balance between being inclusive and maintaining a manageable sized panel?

Summary of response	Sev	Our action / response
3b.1 The Bath River Group has been convened to represent a wider view of the use of the river in the city of Bath, but this group's terms of reference specifically precluded them from considering flood management. It is hard to imagine how the value creation potential of the normal river can be maximised without taking account of the value destruction potential of the same river in spate.	•	We will continue to work with our existing external partners, and we will make contact with new groups and organisations to explore how we can work in partnership with the Bath River Group.
3b.2 Widen partnership to include representation from fishery groups under LFG's to engage on fishery matters to support the EA in addressing the micro issues facing the catchment.	•	We will continue to work with our existing external partners and will also be identifying new priority partners at the catchment level. This will include making contact with fisheries groups to explore how we can create working partnerships.
3b.3 Generally need more passionate stakeholders.	•	We are reviewing membership of the Severn Liaison Panel, but, to keep the size of the panel manageable, and given the cross border implication, it won't be possible to include every organisation. We will make sure that the representation is balanced.
3b.4 Need to include someone to represent the barriers to fish movement, i.e. angling associations to get fish moved to Bristol Avon catchment.	•	The Wye and Usk Foundation currently sit on the Liaison Panel. We will be reviewing the Liaison Panel membership but, to keep the size of the panel manageable, and given the cross border implication, it won't be possible to include every organisation. We will make sure that the representation is balanced.
3b.5 Farming practices on a local level needs representation.	•	National Farmers Union and the Country Land and Business Association currently sit on the Liaison Panel. We will be reviewing the Severn Liaison Panel membership but, to keep the size of the panel manageable, and given the cross border implication, it won't be possible to include every organisation. We will make sure that the representation is balanced.

Q3 b (Severn Only) The implementation of WFD is largely happening at a catchment level. We feel that delivery partner representatives from catchments are currently underrepresented within a largely sector- based membership. How do you think we can improve this situation, whilst maintaining the right balance between being inclusive and maintaining a manageable sized panel?

Summary of response	Sev	Our action / response
3b.6 Need to include stakeholders from the sporting and leisure groups, i.e. British Canoe Union, Canoe England, Canoe Wales. Inland Waterways boat owners association and Canal and Rivers Trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>The Canal and Rivers Trust are on the Liaison Panel. We will be reviewing the Liaison Panel membership but, to keep the size of the panel manageable, and given the cross border implication, it won't be possible to include every organisation. We will make sure that the representation is balanced.</p>
3b.7 Need to review stakeholder representation, i.e. liaise more with third sector or seek their views. Invitations to catchment groups excluded some organisations. The EA representatives on these matters need stronger voices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>We are reviewing the Liaison Panel representation following Defra's pilot catchment approach. We are looking to extend this approach more widely.</p>
3b.8 The Environment Agency should consider working more with public and third sector organisations such (Keep Wales Tidy) to raise awareness about the consequences of careless waste disposal. Could be supported with supplementary information on the causes of pollution and how individuals can help prevent it, using social marketing and social media tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>As part of the catchment approach we are reviewing the Liaison Panel representation. We will make sure we are talking to the right people at the right level.</p> <p>We currently work with local organisations such as 'Keep Britain Tidy' (KBT). We are working on an existing project with KBT called 'Riverside Care' which is concentrating on raising local awareness of Water Framework Directive (WFD) issues.</p>
3b.9 Environment Agency should also work in partnership with others to access funding to make changes necessary; take action to improve water quality and ensure public engagement and involvement in river improvement and management activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>We are looking for partnerships with organisations on projects that will achieve Water Framework Directive enhancements.</p>

Q3 b (Severn Only) The implementation of WFD is largely happening at a catchment level. We feel that delivery partner representatives from catchments are currently underrepresented within a largely sector- based membership. How do you think we can improve this situation, whilst maintaining the right balance between being inclusive and maintaining a manageable sized panel?

Summary of response	Sev	Our action / response
3b.10 Create sub-groups of the panel which are responsible for a catchment or number of catchments, and act as a conduit to the panel to allow local voices to be heard. Review the composition of the panel, and assess where the main contributions have come from to date and adjust accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	We will look at the Liaison Panel membership to see how we can get the best representation from organisations across the river basin area/catchment. We will be rolling out the catchment approach and seeking to involve more people as appropriate
3b.11 The EA must develop ways of working with delivery partner representatives on WFD issues at a more local level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	We will be identifying priority partners to work with at the catchment level.
3b.12 Continued government resourcing of the catchment pilots will be necessary to continue the work they have successfully started.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	We plan to take a catchment approach to continue the work through to implementation stage.
3b.13 Need a strong chair at meetings to manage large panel meetings to ensure they are productive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	We will review who is most appropriate to chair the Liaison Panel meetings.
3b.14 Provide EA Water Framework Directive data on web site to provide information to local authorities as well as catchment areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	We are improving how we currently share our data with existing partners. In addition to the current data sharing system www.Geostore.com/evirontagency , we are developing a new system called the 'Catchment Planning System' which will enable us to share Water Framework Directive information with stakeholders more easily.
3b.15 Use plain English and less EA jargon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	We promote the use of plain English in all our communications.

Q3 b (Severn Only) The implementation of WFD is largely happening at a catchment level. We feel that delivery partner representatives from catchments are currently underrepresented within a largely sector- based membership. How do you think we can improve this situation, whilst maintaining the right balance between being inclusive and maintaining a manageable sized panel?

Summary of response	Sev	Our action / response
3b.16 Environment Agency should review advertising to increase individual responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future engagement plans will be more catchment-based. Advertising is governed by Defra spending restrictions.
3b.17 Improve communications between liaison panels and delivery partners by cascading information and highlighting key points. Provide support in planning events to enable participants to diarise key dates in advance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are expecting new guidance soon on how we provide information We expect Liaison Panel representatives to feed information back to their sector. Communication should be a two-way process.
3b.18 Improve River Basin District Management Plan (RBDMP) consultation process by providing legible data to the liaison panels so that panel members do not become over-whelmed by the volume of information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are expecting new guidance soon on how we provide information. We expect Liaison Panel representatives to feed information back to their sector. Communication should be a two- way process.
3b.19 Ensure that as many areas of work are integrated as possible, particularly flood management, agricultural activities and wider ecosystem services provision, to avoid duplication of effort and reduce the potential for key links to be lost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will integrate WFD into other work areas.
3b.20 More clarity required on where the plan is expected to deliver a regulatory role and where there are opportunities for proactive engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will integrate WFD into other work areas.

3.4 Working with the Environment Agency in developing the river basin management plans

Q4. How do you want to work with the Environment Agency in developing the river basin management plans?

4.1 Interest was expressed in being involved at all levels of the planning process:

- co-production of river basin plans
- direct involvement in catchment planning
- attending relevant issue and catchment workshops
- consulted as issues arise
- help develop the evidence base and share technical knowledge
- observing / kept informed
- part of a specialist group to lead on specific issues
- help identifying relevant stakeholders
- provide a way of linking more effectively with local communities

Other contributions were offered:

- involved in awareness raising
- developing training and work experience programmes
- carrying out delivery projects in catchments
- hosting catchment staff
- a source of volunteers
- help in sourcing funding

Thank you for your many offers of involvement or support. All of those who responded will be contacted by the relevant region.

4.2 A range of methods and approaches were suggested:

- improved on-line methods / resources such as forums and websites
- improved use of existing groups
- alignment with existing plans and work areas
- use of new initiatives to reach wider variety of groups

- face- to-face meetings and workshops
- at the right scale to engage those working together: either local catchment or larger
- clear information such as information packs and newsletters, at appropriate times in the process

Through the catchment approach we are trying out different ways of providing information, particularly in mapped or other visual forms. We will use this to help identify useful ways to provide information in future. <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/131506.aspx>

We are looking at how best to align this process with other work areas such as consultation for Strategic Environmental Assessment and flood plans.

We received constructive comments about our on-line consultation tool and will make changes that will be visible in the next consultation. We will also ensure we provide a broader range of ways to contribute to the consultation such as email, events and workshops.

We are acting on feedback to improve how we work with others.

We are developing a new way of storing and processing data. This will make it easier to share data, perhaps using the internet.

4.3 There was wide support for the Environment Agency to act as a co-ordinator and single point of contact but also a request for more clarity on our role .

We are the competent authority with responsibility for developing the river basin management plans and carrying out consultations. We also have a regulatory role. We may also host meetings or partnerships, or co-host with others.

Our role in promoting a catchment- based approach is being developed by Government and will be clarified in due course.

There is a single point of contact in each region - the River Basin Programme Manager. Details are shown on our website at <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33112.aspx>

If you would like to see general information on your local rivers and the local Environment Agency contacts, see our website at : <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33112.aspx>

3.5 Co-ordinating river basin management plans and flood risk management plans

Q5. How do you think consultation on the river basin management plans and flood risk management plans can best be co-ordinated?												
Summary of response	Ang	Dee	Hum	NW	N'Hum	Sev	SE	SW	Tha	WW	E&W	Our action / response
<p>5.1 There were some responses favouring separate consultations and plans, but the majority supported integration or joint consultations or plans. Some of the reasons given were that this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensures that links between flood plans and river basin management plans are made where needed provides efficiencies from carrying out consultations over the same timescale ensures joint issues are more easily seen allows joint benefits from both to be more easily identified 	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>As a result of the responses we have received we will now set out our preferred approach to developing Flood Risk Management Plans to Defra and the Welsh Government.</p> <p>This approach will focus on how we can work in partnership so that consultation on Flood Risk Management Plans is co-ordinated alongside those for River Basin Management Plans.</p> <p>Further details on the approach can be seen at https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/ho/flood/plans/approach</p>
<p>5.2 Some responses related to the way consultation was carried out and there was support for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consultations to be carried out at local geographic scales and using existing local groups to ensure better local involvement effective communication systems so that all who want to be involved to be able to be consulted 	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	<p>We will improve local focus by ensuring that the next consultation, called 'Challenges and Choices' provides information at a local catchment as well as river basin district scale.</p> <p>Through the Challenges and Choices process and consultation we are making a real effort to make river basin management planning accessible to all. The regional engagement plans include stakeholder analysis, work with liaison panels and a focus on identifying others who should be involved.</p>

4. Summary of consultation details for each river basin district

4.1 North West

Twenty-four people and organisations responded to the North West River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

We informed 500 organisations and individuals about the consultation via email and at meetings and events.

The consultation was on the agenda of 14 meetings within the North West River Basin District. For example the River Basin Liaison Panel meeting on 11 June, the North West Environment Link meeting on 4 September and the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management 10th Wastewater Conference on 30 November 2012.

4.2 Northumbria

Fourteen people and organisations responded to the Northumbria River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

We informed over 90 organisations and individuals about the consultation via email and at meetings and events.

The consultation was on the agenda of many relevant meetings within the Northumbria River Basin District. For example, the Liaison Panel Group and the Peatscapes Advisory Group.

4.3 Humber

Twenty four people and organisations responded to the Humber River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

We informed over 290 organisations and individuals about the consultation via email and at meetings and events.

The consultation was on the agenda of many relevant meetings within the Humber River Basin district. For example, the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the Yorkshire Rural Resource Management Group.

4.4 Severn

Twenty seven people and organisations responded to the Severn River Basin District Working Together Consultation in 2012.

We informed a total of 355 individuals and organisations about the consultation using email and at meetings and events. We also worked with our Wales colleagues to support the cross border working.

The consultation was on the agenda of 10 meetings within the Severn River Basin district between June and December 2012 including:

- **Planners CPD event** - 70 Local Authority Planners - 28 June 2012
- **Severn and Wye Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCC) Meeting** Chair and members of RFCC - 3 July 2012
- **Local Authority Workshop** - 60 Local Authority staff - 11 July 2012
- **River Leam Pilot** – Environment Agency meeting with Leam Catchment Partnership to explain consultation process.
- **Environment Agency with partners on the River Leam**, two workshops with 30 people focussed on the issues of pesticides, but encompassed a large variety of issues to work on together using catchment approaches. Started during 2011 into 2012 and continuing in 2013.
- **Love Your River** - working with the Coventry and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to deliver improvements and community education initiatives. Funded projects linked to local groups, Coventry City Council and housing associations. Approx 15 people in the partnership but the wider community are involved - over 100 people at workshops and volunteer days. Started in 2012 and work continues into 2013 with more Local Authorities.
- **Business Sustains Workshops - Coventry City Council** Initiative with local businesses giving regulator and best practice advice. One hour presentation on hot topics such as misconnection, waste Issues and good environmental practice. 50 to 80 people attending each session =150 businesses in 2012.
- **Midlands Urban Rivers Community (MURCI) Waters Presentation** December 2012 - organisations attending included Wildlife Trusts, Love your River and Groundwork.

4.5 Anglian

Fourteen people and organisations responded to the Anglian River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

We informed over 100 organisations and individuals about the consultation via email and at meetings and events.

The consultation was on the agenda of more than 10 meetings within the Anglian River Basin district. For example, Anglian Liaison Panel, East of England RTP1 WFD workshop and the Broadland Catchment Forum.

4.6 Thames

Twenty five people and organisations responded to the Thames River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

Responses came from a range of sectors, which included wildlife trusts, voluntary bodies, local authorities, businesses, landowners and fisheries interests, amongst others.

To help ensure that as wide a number of organisations and individuals as possible had the chance to participate in the consultation, we actively promoted it in person at meetings and events, via our web site, emails and in correspondence.

Meetings attended included: the Thames Rivers Basin District Liaison Panel, catchment meetings, the Angling Trust Thames Regional Forum and the Loddon Fisheries and Conservation Consultative meeting.

4.7 South East

We received 14 responses to the South East River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

Responses came from a range of sectors, which included wildlife trusts, voluntary bodies, local authorities, businesses, landowners and fisheries interest groups amongst others.

To help ensure that as wide a number of organisations and individuals as possible had the chance to participate in the consultation, we actively promoted it in person at meetings and events, via our web site, emails and in correspondence.

Meetings attended included: the South East River Basin District Liaison Panel, catchment meetings and the Solent Water Quality Forum.

4.8 South West

Sixteen people and organisations responded to the South West River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

We directly informed 73 organisations and individuals about the consultation via email, in person, and through attendance at meetings and events. Many of these shared information about the consultation with their wider networks.

We issued a regional press release when the consultation opened and used our social media networks and internal staff briefings to inform as many people as possible.

The consultation was discussed at meetings with many of our partners including local authorities, wildlife trusts and rivers trusts. It was also discussed at meetings of the South West Agricultural Pollution Prevention Group, the Association of Drainage Authorities (South West, Severn and Wales), the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport and at a meeting of 'Environment Kernow'. This is a partnership for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly that provides a forum for the public, private and voluntary sectors to champion the importance of a quality environment.

4.9 Western Wales

A total of 28 organisations and individuals responded to the Western Wales River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

We informed 508 organisations and individuals about the consultation via email, using our existing networks, planned meetings, our biannual WFD Newsletter, workshops and through the use of social media.

We used social media to tweet the consultation launch and tweeted reminders during November 2012. Notices of the Working Together Consultation were published in the Western Mail for two weeks from 28 June 2012. We placed a message on LinkedIn (a professional networking site) and invited the following groups to participate in the consultation: Wales Small Business Form, Water Network, CIWEM, Connections and Friends of Wales, Local Authority Network and Friends of the Sea.

The consultation was on the agenda at a variety of meetings within the Western Wales River Basin District. We held a workshop with our Liaison Panel prior to the launch of the consultation to help shape the document. This was followed up with a further 'All-Wales' workshop in November 2012, where our Liaison Panel members for Western Wales, Dee and Severn, together with a selection of eNGOs, contributed to the consultation. We also recognised that we needed to involve other sectors such as Business and Industry and the recreation sector. Our Business and Industry Liaison Panel representative supported the consultation through attendance at the workshops and we have subsequently invited new partners to our Liaison Panel to represent the recreation sector for Western Wales.

4.10 Dee

A total of 25 organisations and individuals responded to the Dee River Basin District Working Together Consultation.

We informed 508 organisations and individuals about the consultation via email, using our existing networks, planned meetings, our biannual WFD newsletter and workshops. We used social media to tweet the consultation launch and tweeted reminders during November 2012. Notices of the Working Together consultation were published in the Daily Post for two weeks from 28 June 2012. We placed a message on LinkedIn (a professional network site) and invited the following groups to participate in the consultation: Wales Small Business Form, Water Network, CIWEM, Connections & Friends of Wales, Local Authority Network and Friends of the Sea. We also worked with our North West colleagues to support cross border working.

The consultation was on the agenda at a variety of meetings within the Dee River Basin District. We held a workshop with our Liaison Panel prior to the launch of the consultation to help shape the document. This was followed up with a further 'All-Wales' workshop in November 2012 where our Liaison Panel members for Western Wales, the Dee and the Severn, together with a selection of eNGOs, contributed to the consultation. We also recognised that we needed to involve other sectors such as business and industry and the recreation sector. Our Business and Industry Liaison Panel representative supported the consultation through attendance at the workshops and we have subsequently invited new partners to our Liaison Panel to represent the recreation sector for the Dee.

5 Next steps

We will use the responses to the Working Together consultation to review and update the RBMPs.

A new organisation, Natural Resources Wales, will become operational on 1 April 2013. It will bring together the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales, and the Forestry Commission Wales. The Environment Agency will not operate in Wales from 1 April 2013. Both the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales will continue to work together to deliver the actions set out in this document.

Both organisations will hold two further formal consultations in the river basin planning process. These consultations will help raise awareness of the challenges facing our water environment and the ways in which we and our partners will tackle them. See Appendix 6.3 for steps to updating the river basin management plans.

1. Challenges and Choices (Significant water management issues) consultation (June 2013 to December 2013)

The Challenges and Choices consultation will seek your views on what you think are the most significant issues for each river basin district in England and Wales.

2. Draft river basin management plans consultations (June 2014 to December 2014)

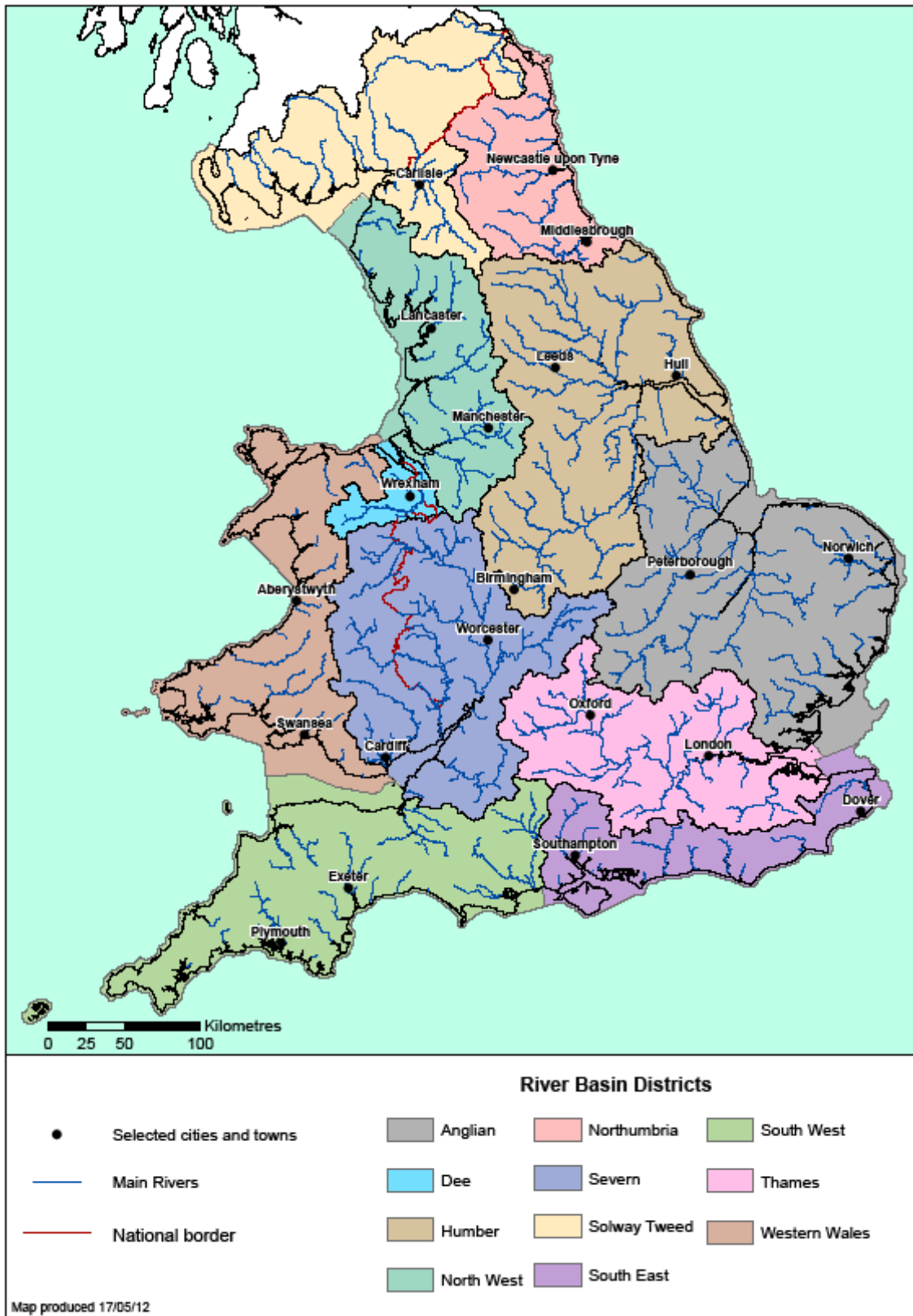
This consultation will seek your views on the draft river basin plans and how we will work together to improve the water environment to 2021 and beyond.

To find out how you can get involved or get more information on these consultations, visit our website <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33248.aspx>

We will update this web page as each consultation begins and when it is complete. We will produce a summary and response document shortly after the closing date of both consultations.

6 Appendices

6.1 River Basin District Map for England and Wales



6.2 Consultation questions

Core Questions

1. How do you think the Environment Agency can create an approach that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the XXX River Basin Management Plan?
2. In your experience, how can the XXX River Basin District Liaison Panel be made more effective and efficient as part of this approach?
3. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses about working at a catchment scale?
The Environment Agency will consider responses to this question alongside the formal evaluation of the Environment Agency hosted catchment pilots. If you have any experience of the catchment pilots (both those hosted by the Environment Agency and those hosted by others), or working in catchments generally, please tell us.
4. How do you want to work with the Environment Agency in developing the XXX river basin management plan? Please include what level of involvement (inform, consult or working together to solve problems) you want and specify what methods you would prefer.
5. How do you think consultation on the XXX River Basin Management Plan and the flood risk management plans can best be co-ordinated?

Supplemental Questions

- 1b. (Humber only) Do you feel the current arrangements for the liaison panel in a river basin district the size of the Humber allow for effective participation
- 1c. (Humber only) If not, can you suggest how the Humber Liaison Panel could be organised to increase awareness, understanding and involvement in the delivery and development of the Humber Basin District Management Plan?
- 2b. (South West Only) Do you play any role in the wellbeing of any water environment and its surrounding catchment? What could you do to contribute to integrated catchment management to help improve our water bodies by 2021 and beyond?
- 3b. (Western Wales and Dee Only) What can the Environment Agency do to better support others in improving the water environment?
- 3b. (Severn Only) The implementation of WFD is largely happening at a catchment level. We feel that delivery partner representatives from catchments are currently underrepresented within a largely sector- based membership. How do you think we can improve this situation, whilst maintaining the right balance between being inclusive and maintaining a manageable sized panel?

6.3 Steps to updating the river basin management plans

Stage	Date and duration	What's the purpose?
Working Together - consultation	June 2012 6 months	<p>“How should we all work together to update the river basin management plans?”</p> <p>Asking how you want to be involved.</p> <p>Explaining the key steps in the river basin management planning process for cycle 2.</p> <p>Establishing a network of contacts for cycle 2 planning.</p>
Significant water management issues - engagement	June 2012 to May 2013 Approx 12 months	<p>“What are the most significant water environment issues, what are the options for tackling them and which do you prefer?”</p> <p>Improving the evidence base that will be used to inform the review of the river basin management plans.</p> <p>Seeking broad agreement about the principles behind taking action.</p>
Significant Water Management Issues - consultation	June 2013 6 months	<p>“Have the significant issues been fairly summarised and what can be done about them?”</p> <p>Sharing the latest evidence including results of investigations and assessments of the risk of water bodies deteriorating or not achieving their objectives.</p> <p>Seeking views on how to prioritise action.</p> <p>Explaining catchment plans and how they relate to the river basin management plans.</p>
Follow up engagement	October 2013 to May 2014 Approx 8 months	Following the consultation, the Environment Agency will consider the responses and where necessary facilitate further engagement for groups of stakeholders where there are areas which need to be resolved or clarified.
Draft River Basin Management Plans - consultation	June 2014 6 months	<p>“Does this draft plan set the right level of ambition for the water environment and a strong commitment to deliver?”</p> <p>Estimating the likely state of the water environment in 2021 and 2027.</p> <p>Proposing water body objectives.</p> <p>Outlining who would be involved to achieve these outcomes in 2021 and 2027, how much it will cost and the benefits.</p>
Follow up engagement	October 2014 to August 2015 Approx 11 months	Following the consultation, the Environment Agency will consider the responses and where necessary further develop the content of the plans with delivery partners to ensure the updated plans are the best possible and fully supported.
Published River Basin Management Plans	September – December 2015	<p>“This is the plan to address the issues”</p> <p>Publishing proposed river basin management plans in September and submitting to Government for approval. The approved RBMPs will be published in December. These plans will be used as a framework to direct planning and action and to track progress in each river basin district.</p>

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