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## 1. Navigating the consultation

This consultation is best viewed and responded to online. Responding online allows us to handle your response more quickly and efficiently.

It is separated into ‘challenge’ pages that describe the significant issues covered in this consultation (see section 2 below).

Each ‘challenge’ page has a short film, a brief summary of the challenge and links to further detailed information on the challenge and the pressures responsible for causing it.

You can navigate through this consultation via the contents page. Each time you click ‘continue’ you are returned to the contents page. The questions in this consultation appear at the bottom of each page.

You do not have to visit all the pages or respond to every question in the consultation. If you have a specific area of interest you can navigate straight to that page and just respond to those questions.

If you have a general response to this consultation, or one that does not fall under the challenges, you can respond to the question on The Water Story page.

Once you have answered all of the questions relevant to you, click on ‘Complete and submit consultation’ which takes you through the steps to finalise your response.

You can download a pdf of the consultation on the Overview page. However the films and links are not available offline.

Alternatively, submissions can be made via e-mail to:

[RBMPconsultation@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:RBMPconsultation@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Or in writing to:

Clive Phillips, Operations Catchment Services, Environment Agency, Kings Meadow House, Kings Meadow Road, Reading, RG1 8DQ.

To help you with any unfamiliar terms or phrases in the consultation, there is a link on each page to a [glossary of the terms](#). The link is located in the further information box above the questions.

If you require further help, contact us on:

National Customer Contact Centre: 03708 506 506

[RBMPConsultation@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:RBMPConsultation@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## 2. The challenges

The Challenges are the main issues that limit the uses and potential benefits of managing the water environment in a sustainable way. They have been identified based on the results of public consultation and assessments of the pressures caused by people now, in the past, and predicted in the future.

The guide below will help you understand which challenges are most relevant for you:

**Water for use at home:** changes to water levels and flow, water industry wastewater, chemicals in the water environment, climate and environment crisis

**Water for use in my business:** changes to water levels and flow, water industry wastewater, chemicals in the water environment, climate and environment crisis, pollution from agriculture and rural areas

**Water for nature** – invasive non-native species, physical modification, plastics pollution, climate and environment crisis

**Water for play and healthy lives** – changes to water levels and flow, pollution from towns, cities and transport, water industry wastewater, chemicals in the water environment, pollution from abandoned mines, climate and environment crisis, pollution from agriculture and rural areas

**Water for our future** – climate and environment crisis, changes to water levels and flow

Each challenge page in the consultation links to more detailed information as well as documents detailing the pressures related to that challenge. These links are available just above the questions boxes on the challenge pages. The table in Annex 1 shows which pressures relate to which challenges.

Many of these challenges arise from activities that also provide a wide range of benefits. It may therefore not be possible or desirable to fully resolve the issues.

Different challenges are relevant to particular sectors depending on whether the sector's activities contribute to the issue, the benefits the sector gets from the water environment are limited due to the issue or whether the sector can help with the solutions to the issue. This increases the benefits they and others can get from the water environment. The list below outlines which of the challenges are most relevant to some of the main sectors.

### **Agriculture and rural land management**

- Challenges: chemicals in the water environment, physical modification
- Pressures: FIO (Faecal contamination), fine sediment, nitrate, phosphorus

### **Government (including Defra, Environment Agency, Natural England)**

- Challenges: changes to water levels and flows, chemicals in the water environment, Invasive Non-native Species, physical modification
- Pressures: FIO (Faecal contamination), fine sediment, nitrate, phosphorus

### **Construction**

- Challenges: chemicals in the water environment, Invasive Non-native Species
- Pressures: faecal contamination, fine sediment

## **Energy production**

- Challenges: changes to water levels and flows, chemicals in the water environment
- Pressures: drinking water protected areas

## **Food and drink**

- Challenges: changes to water levels and flows, chemicals in the water environment
- Pressures: phosphorous

## **Forestry**

- Challenges: changes to water levels and flows
- Pressures: fine sediment, nitrate, phosphorus

## **Local authorities/Public Sector**

- Challenges: changes to water levels and flows, Invasive non-native Species, physical modification
- Pressures: faecal contamination, fine sediment

## **Manufacturing and retail**

- Challenges: changes to water levels and flows, chemicals in the water environment

## **Mining**

- Challenges: chemicals in the water environment
- Pressures: fine sediment

## **Ports**

- Challenges: chemicals in the water environment physical modification
- Pressures: fine sediment

## **Water industry**

- Challenges: changes to water levels and flows, chemicals in the water environment, Invasive Non-native Species, physical modification
- Pressures: faecal contamination, nitrate, phosphorus

## 3. Other areas of interest

### Flood risk management plans

Flood risk management plans (FRMPs) set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to manage flood risk. A flood risk management plan exists for each river basin district in England and updated FRMPs will be published in December 2021.

River basin management plans and flood risk management plans provide a joint and integrated approach to catchment planning for water. Working together to achieve the objectives and measures in the plans will help achieve benefits to human health and wellbeing, economic prosperity and the natural environment.

You can find out more on the [flood risk management plans](#) pages.

### Catchment Data Explorer

The Environment Agency has developed the [Catchment Data Explorer](#) to help you explore and understand the water environment in England. You can find catchments and water bodies of interest using a map or searching by name. You can also view summary information about catchments, and follow links to other useful sites.

The Catchment Data Explorer contains an overview page for each river basin district (RBD) and a summary of the significant issues affecting the water environment in each RBD.

You do not need to refer to the detailed information in the Catchment Data Explorer in order to respond to this challenges and choices consultation.

Detailed information about water bodies in the Welsh parts of the Severn RBD can be found on [Water Watch Wales](#).

## 4. Challenges and Choices in England, Scotland and Wales

The Environment Agency also leads on the review and update of the plans for the Severn and Northumbria river basin districts (RBDs) which lie partly in Wales and Scotland respectively.

The river basin management plans for the Dee and Solway Tweed cross-border river basin districts, are led by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) respectively. However, for information on how significant water management issues are managed in the English part of the Dee and Solway Tweed river basin districts please refer to this Environment Agency consultation.

Further detail of the Severn, Solway Tweed and Dee RBDs are below.

### Severn RBD

You can respond with respect to how the significant water management issues are managed for the Severn RBD through this consultation.

However, an additional document for the Severn RBD on the management of significant water management issues across Wales is available [here](#). This document is available in Welsh [here](#) and to answer the questions for the Severn RBD in Welsh then please use the following form [here](#). Detailed information about water bodies in the Welsh parts of the Severn RBD can be found on [Water Watch Wales](#).

### Solway Tweed RBD

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) leads on the review and update of the river basin management plan for the Solway Tweed River Basin District.

SEPA are planning to launch their equivalent Challenge and Choices consultation later this year and you will be able to respond to that consultation with respect to the English part of the RBD. Once available you will be able to find SEPA's Challenges and Choices consultation for the Solway Tweed RBD [here](#).

You can find detailed information about English water bodies in the Solway Tweed RBD via the [Catchment Data Explorer](#).

## Dee RBD

The Challenges and Choices consultation for the Dee RBD runs from June 2019 to December 2019. You can respond to that consultation with respect to the English part of the RBD through the NRW consultation until the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2019.

You can find the Natural Resources Wales Challenges and Choices consultation for the Dee RBD [here](#).

You can find detailed information about English water bodies in the Dee RBD via the [Catchment Data Explorer](#).

## Annex 1: Table showing how the challenges relate to pressures

		Challenges in the consultation							
		Changes to water level and flows	Invasive non-native species	Physical modification	Pollution from abandoned mines	Pollution from agriculture and rural areas	Pollution from towns, cities and transport	Pollution from water industry wastewater	Chemicals in the water environment
<b>Pressures</b>	Chemicals (there are 5 different chemicals pressure documents)*				X	X	X	X	X
	Fine sediment		X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Nitrates		X			X	X	X	
	Phosphorus and freshwater eutrophication		X			X	X	X	
	FIO (Faecal contamination)					X	X	X	
	Drinking water protected areas				X	X	X	X	X
	Natura 2000	X	X	X		X		X	

\*The specific chemical pressure narratives are: Cypermethrin, Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and related substances, Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and Mercury.