



**Cyfoeth  
Naturiol**  
Cymru  
**Natural  
Resources**  
Wales

# Summary of responses to the Challenges and Choices Consultation

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## 1. About River Basin Management Planning

Natural Resources Wales is the Competent Authority for implementation of the Water Framework Directive in Wales. We have responsibility for drawing up the River Basin Management Plans which includes working in partnership with a wide range of public, private and voluntary organisations. Wales has three River Basin Districts; Western Wales is entirely within Wales, the Severn and Dee are cross-border. A map showing the three River Basin Districts can be found in Appendix 6.1.

In December 2009, the Environment Agency Wales (now Natural Resources Wales), working jointly with the Environment Agency, published the first River Basin Management Plans. These plans outlined what would be done to protect and improve the water environment up to 2015.

The Directive and UK Legislation requires that the River Basin Management Plans are periodically reviewed and updated every six years. Subsequently the updated plans will be published in December 2015. The Environment Minister in Wales and the Secretary of State in England are responsible for approving the River Basin Management Plans. Natural Resources Wales will lead on the development of the Dee and Western Wales plans, whilst the Environment Agency will lead on the Severn plan. Natural Resources Wales and the Environment Agency continue to work together on the two cross border plans (Dee and Severn) to ensure a joined up approach to cross border issues and solutions.

### 1.1 About the consultation

There are three statutory steps which include formal consultations to take us to December 2015. These steps are set out in Appendix 6.2. The first public consultation, 'Working Together', closed in December 2012. This asked for views on how we can all work better together to protect and improve the water environment. The response document for England and Wales, published in March 2013, is available on the Environment Agency's website. It includes a number of actions to be taken in Wales to improve how we work with partners and other organisations or individuals to deliver and protect the water environment.

The 'Challenges and Choices' consultation in June 2013 was the second public consultation and we asked for views on:

- What you consider to be the biggest challenges facing Wales's waters.
- The best way to tackle these issues and what should be done first.
- Who we should work with to achieve the environmental outcomes.

We supported the consultation with the 'Living Waters for Wales' document. This set out a summary of the most common issues impacting on the water environment across Wales.

It also identifies solutions that need to be implemented at a local and strategic level to resolve them. The consultation also included specific questions relating to the scoping of the Strategic Environment Assessment. We asked for views on:

- Do you agree that we are focussed on the key environmental effects?
- Is there any other information that we should be taking into account as part of the assessment?

The Challenges and Choices consultation began on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2013 and closed on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2013.

## 1.2 Overview of this document

This document includes;

- The approach used for engagement during the consultation.
- Summary information about:
  - the number of responses received.
  - the types of organisation that responded.
  - responses at the River Basin District scale.
- A summary of the responses to the consultation questions.
- Next steps and how we are going to use this information in the review of River Basin Management Planning.
- The role of Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The information provided during the consultation will inform the review of the River Basin Management Plans. The consultation on these updated plans will be available from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2014: This will be the third public consultation during this second cycle of river basin planning. A summary of the timeline for the work across the three River Basin Districts can be found in Appendix 6.2.

## 2. Overview of Responses

The Challenges and Choices consultation documents for the Dee and Western Wales were published on our website and the Severn on the Environment Agency's website; hard copies were also available on request.

The consultation was promoted at meetings and workshops including the Water Health Partnership annual conference, the Royal Welsh Show, Abstraction Reform Workshop and local events such as the Pembrokeshire Agricultural Show and the Big Dee Day.

Following your feedback from the Working Together consultation 15 catchment workshops were held across Wales. These have been key to our on-going engagement and have helped provide essential local knowledge. The information gathered will be used in the catchment summaries and included in the update River Basin Management Plans.

We also highlighted the consultation across 522 organisations and individuals using email and through social media tweeting to over 4,000 twitter followers. Local papers with a combined coverage of over 50,000 people were also used. This included the Western Mail and Liverpool Daily Post. Internally we promoted the consultation to approximately 2,000 Natural Resources Wales staff through Yr Wythnos, our internal weekly newsletter.

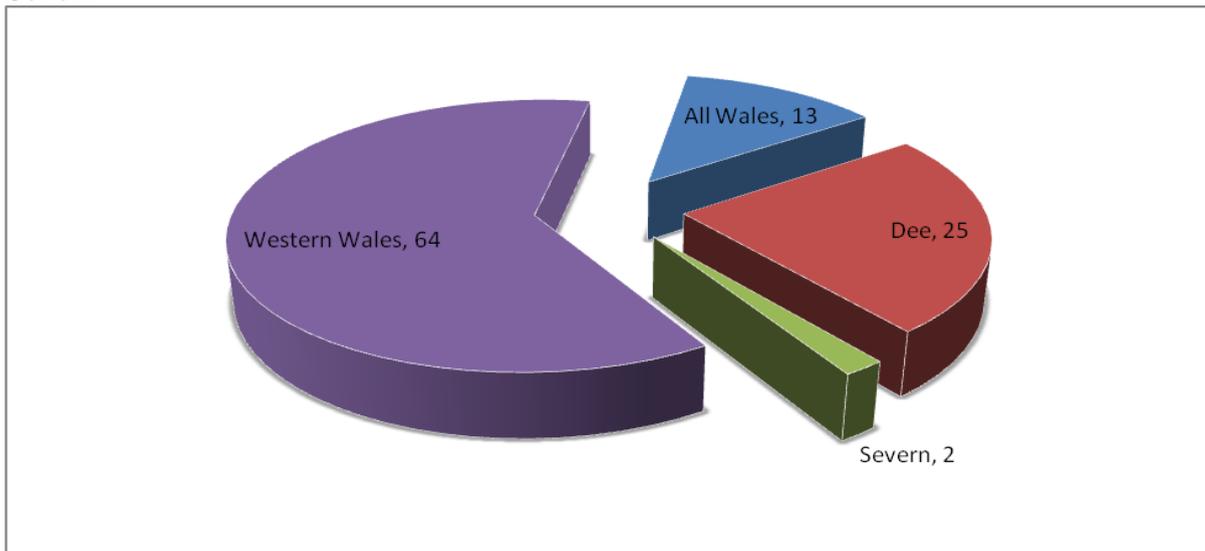
We were supported by our liaison panels. They contributed to the development of the consultation document at River Basin District panel meetings and promoted the consultation through their networks. For example, the National Farming Union Cymru included a news article in Farming Wales which is received by 8,000 farmers and landowners across Wales.

Across Wales 50 individuals and 54 different types of organisations responded to the Challenges and Choices consultation. Of these 13 responses were at an all Wales level with the remainder at the River Basin District scale. A list of respondents is provided in Appendix 6.3.

A copy of the responses are included in the 'Supporting Evidence – Responses to the Challenges and Choices Consultation' document. This is available on our website or for a printed copy please contact Ceri Jones at [ceri.jones@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk](mailto:ceri.jones@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk) or in writing from our Cardiff address.

## 2.1 Summary of responses

Figure 1 - Graph showing total number of responses (including those for the Strategic Environmental Assessment) for the whole of the Dee, Western Wales and the Welsh part of the Severn

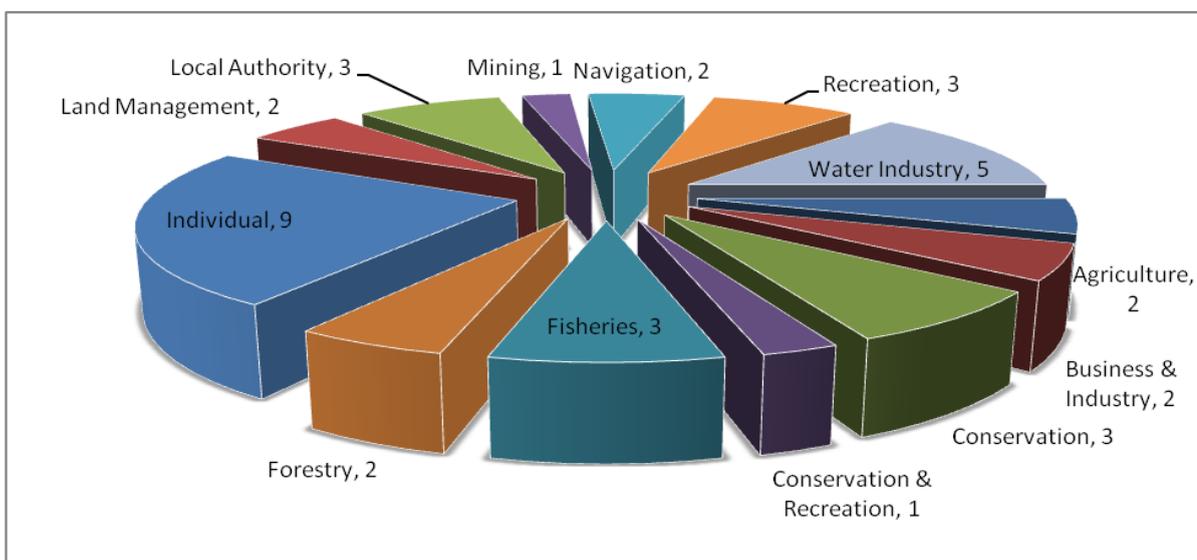


Note: for information on responses to the Severn River Basin District as a whole, please see the Environment Agency website.

## 2.2 Summary of River Basin District responses

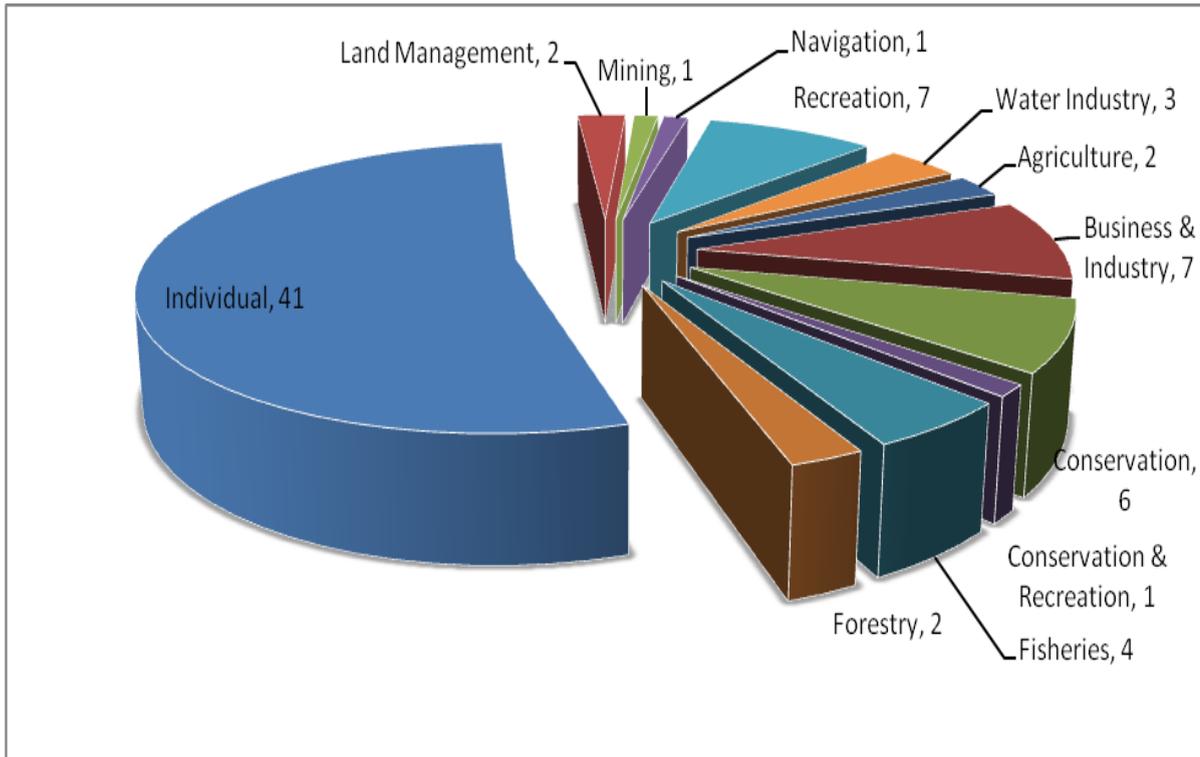
### Dee River Basin District Responses

Figure 2 – Graph showing the breakdown and number of groups and organisations who responded for the Dee River Basin District consultation (38 responses)



**Western Wales River Basin District Responses**

*Figure 3 – Graph showing the breakdown and number of groups and organisations who responded to the Western Wales River Basin District consultation (77 responses)*



### 3. Issues and solutions to the significant water issues in the Dee, Western Wales and Welsh parts of the Severn River Basin District

This section summarises the responses received. Natural Resources Wales will use this information to ensure the updated River Basin Management Plans include the relevant significant issues.

The following significant issues were set out in our Challenges and Choices consultation documents:

**Dee** – Physical modifications; pollution from sewage and waste water; pollution from rural areas; pollution from mines and invasive non-native species.

**Western Wales** - Physical modifications; pollution from sewage and waste water; pollution from towns, cities and transport; pollution from rural areas; pollution from mines and invasive non-native species.

**Severn** - Physical modifications; pollution from sewage and waste water; pollution from towns, cities and transport; changes to natural level and flow of water; invasive non-native species and pollution from rural areas.

We asked you to comment on the following questions;

**Question 1** What do you consider to be the biggest challenges facing waters in your River Basin District?

**Question 2** Do you agree with our description of how the significant issues are affecting the water environment and the local community? Please specify which issue(s) your response refers to and provide relevant information to help explain your answer.

**Question 3** How do you think these issues should be tackled, and what would you choose to do first? Please specify which issue(s) your response refers to. Please consider any resource limitations.

**Question 4** Who should we work with to achieve the environmental outcome?

**Question 5** How are the significant issues in a catchment affecting the water environment and the local community? Please specify which catchment(s) your response refers to and provide relevant information to help explain your answer.

**Question 6** How do you think the challenges affecting each catchment should be tackled and what would you choose to do first? Please specify which catchment(s) your response refers to. Please consider any resource limitations.

### 3.1 Summary of Responses to the consultation questions 1 and 2. – The biggest challenges?

Overall, the majority of respondents agreed that we had identified the main issues in each River Basin District. This included how we described the significant issues affecting both the water environment and the local community.

Five respondents did consider that the flow regulation in the Dee River Basin District should also have been included as a significant issue because of the potential for negative impacts on the ecology.

Other general comments raised included:

- For the few cases where we were unable to pinpoint the issues and what needs to be done respondents found it difficult to comment.
- Data and information could have been presented better to show impact, scale and sector affected.
- There was not enough mention made of the impact of pesticides in water and the effects associated with some recreational activities and bird predation.
- There is a need to separate industrial forestry practice from the positive effects gained from targeted tree planting such as the work on shelterbelts on agricultural land.
- There was not enough emphasis given to the role of using environmental approaches such as sustainable drainage techniques in supporting water management.
- Fencing of water courses can also have a negative effect through creating stretches that are no longer grazed. This results in the overgrowth of vegetation and the spread of Himalayan Balsam. This impact needs to be recognised.

#### 3.1.1 Summary of the issues raised

To avoid repetition we have grouped your responses into topic areas, set out by frequency of response received.

##### **Diffuse Pollution - rural and urban**

(Comments received from business, environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO's), agriculture, forestry, Individuals, fisheries, water industry, navigation and local authorities)

Most agreed that diffuse pollution is a big issue across Wales, particularly microbial pollutants affecting bathing waters and shellfisheries. It was generally felt that this came from sources such as agriculture (sedimentation through poaching and bankside erosion, and eutrophication from nutrients), forestry (acidification, pesticide use, management policy) and urban areas (misconnections, road run-off, disposal of spoil, gritting and construction). Pollution from septic tanks and cesspits was also highlighted as an issue. It was felt more needs to be done to secure compliance and enforce regulations. Greater

consideration also needs to be given to how the water management aspects of Glastir can be integrated into the River Basin Management Plans. This could be achieved, for example, through promoting targeted tree planting in riparian zones and on vulnerable steep slopes through cross compliance, agricultural environment support and forestry grant schemes.

It was also highlighted that the predicted extreme rainfall events arising from our changing climate will affect what can be reasonably achieved; with increased run-off causing more leaching from soil and erosion. The impact from population growth and climate change could see food security become a higher priority with consequential impacts for land use. Tree planting to deliver water retention and flood alleviation schemes in our uplands will only happen if there are changes in current policies on land use. Others mentioned that there needs to be better enforcement and tighter regulation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the support payments made to land managers.

Private Water Supplies need continuing protection to maintain public health in rural areas. Some respondents also expressed concern over the lack of clarity on who is responsible for private water supply compliance. The need to tackle a range of potential pollutants at source rather than at the point of treatment was also raised. Here metaldehyde from slug pellets was raised as an example.

### **Pollution from sewage and waste water**

(Comments received from business, agriculture, environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO's), forestry, individuals, water industry and fisheries)

Several organisations agreed that pollution from waste water was a significant issue across Wales. In particular, where phosphate from sewage discharges and combined sewage overflow are released to a Heavily Modified Water Body the effect of nutrient enrichment is more pronounced.

The point was also made of the need to tackle inputs at source and not rely on sewage treatment to deal with issues such as phosphate from detergent. Some respondents were concerned that suitable treatment to remove priority substances, particularly cadmium and mercury, from waste water discharges is unlikely to be available by 2020 target date.

### **Physical Modification**

(Comments received from agriculture, environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO's), forestry navigation, fisheries, business, local authorities, recreation and individuals).

Many commented that they saw hydroelectric power schemes, especially on major rivers and in protected areas, as a significant issue. These could be a barrier to fish migration and impact on water flow, flora and fauna downstream. Smaller schemes were seen to be

inefficient and wasteful. Comments suggested a conflict between Government targets for green energy, the welfare of fish and impact on fisheries.

Flooding was regarded by many as a major problem. One respondent felt that 90% of flooding could be avoided through better catchment management. Better flood risk management could reduce other associated costs; for example increases in insurance charges following major events. It is perceived that there had been a lack of control for flood drainage consents since this function had been transferred to local authorities. There was concern that removal of structures, creating meanders, and lack of maintenance will all create further risk of future flooding.

Some welcomed the claim that Natural Resources Wales aims to develop “a holistic, ecosystem approach to flood risk management and wants to reduce flood risk using interventions that benefit habitat”. It was felt however, based on recent experience, that to achieve this aim will require a major change in the way Natural Resources Wales deals with flood risk rather than a review of its approach. The very scale of past river channel modification mean it will be difficult to fundamentally change our approach whilst at the same time maintaining the level of protection provided by the original scheme. An example was provided where water levels needed to be maintained for navigation but this was at odds with flood risk. This section raises the unrealistic expectation that all modifications will/can/should be overcome and all fish will have free passage everywhere.

Concern was also expressed over the lack of dredging in rivers and this was having a negative effect on farmland and wildlife. One response suggested this was responsible for the increased cost of dealing with flooding and that a radical review is needed for long term maintenance.

### **Invasive Non-Native Species and Protected Areas**

(Comments received from environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO's), water industry, local authorities, agriculture, forestry, individuals, fisheries, recreation and navigation).

Many respondents agreed that invasive non-native species (INNS) are a big problem across the River Basin Districts in Wales. This was particularly the case with species like Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed. These out-compete native species and increase the risk of bank-side erosion. There was a general feeling that protected area targets were disappointing and that there should be more protection for wildlife.

### **Fisheries and Recreation**

(Comments received from environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO's), individuals, fisheries, navigation and recreation).

A number of respondents felt the coverage of fisheries issues was minimal in the document, particularly given that low fish numbers is the most common cause of failure to

achieve Good Ecological Status. In addition the status of migratory fish stocks in Wales continues to decline. They reported that 50% of salmon rivers are in the “At Risk” category and quoted evidence of a 60% decline in sea trout in recent years. Clearly addressing the various issues outlined in the document will help to restore stocks but there are fishery management tools that can also be used to assist recovery. It was also felt that proven low cost, local scale, habitat improvements such as gravel introduction, could greatly improve fish carrying capacity and deliver additional broader ecosystem benefits.

The level of exploitation was reported as a particular issue in some catchments. Some felt that the fish stocking policy was inadequate and that Natural Resources Wales should review its policy. It was also commented that there has been a dramatic loss of parr and smolt as a result of avian predation.

Others commented that the approach adopted for eels protection has proved more effective than that used for fish. The Sustainable Eel Group work on mapping the best opportunities was cited as very helpful in focussing efforts. Some respondents felt that the standards for fish passes were generally excessive and believed a better approach would be to focus on a larger number of cheaper alternatives.

Although some promoted wider recreational access to water, others wanted restrictions based on the disruption that access can have on fish spawning. Some consultees also felt that the preservation of peace and isolation should be given more consideration. Currently this is at risk through the push for an increase in water-based recreation. It was recognised that there does appear to be a lack of tolerance between user groups.

### **Changes in natural level and flow of water**

(Comments received from fisheries, environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO's), recreation, individuals, agriculture and navigation).

Water regulation and management of abstraction was seen as a key issue by some responders. It was felt that the construction of reservoirs in catchment headwaters has probably stopped any natural flow in downstream rivers. This combined with water abstraction, the continual demand for increased water supply and drier summers have had a detrimental impact on river flows.

Some responders felt that existing abstraction licences were over-generous and if used in full could damage the environment at time of low river flows. It was also felt that current regulation of abstraction is ineffective in delivering the improvements that are required. More should be done by Natural Resources Wales within the existing regulations to deliver sustainable abstraction. This would require the claw-back of unused licensed amounts and tackling the “in-combination” effects of multiple small abstractions.

It was felt that more could be done to reduce the demand for water across all sectors. This would require improved efficiency / reducing losses and improving recycling. The

installation of water efficient systems could be incentivised by the government to encourage uptake. Similarly more focus should be given to improving supplies by storing water when it is plentiful. This could be achieved through new reservoirs, bank side storage, farm storage and rainwater harvesting in urban areas).

### **Dee Flow Regime**

(Comments received from environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO's), fisheries, forestry and water industry).

We received five responses where it was felt that the regulated flow regime on the River Dee should be considered as a significant issue as it has the potential to impact on the ecology within the Dee River Basin District.

### **Other Issues Raised**

A number mentioned that evidence and improvements in coastal and estuarine waters were lagging behind freshwaters. In particular there needs to be more clarity on shellfish standards. Financial constraints on Natural Resources Wales' budget would have an impact on their ability to tackle issues, especially once no deterioration and protected area objectives have been addressed. Some also mentioned that the disposal of litter was a significant issue. Climate Change resulting in increased water temperature and heavier rainfall was seen to be an issue for some respondents. This was felt to pose negative impacts on water bodies through an increase in, and impact of, pollutants.

## **3.2 Question 3. How should the issues be tackled?**

Many of the respondents recognised a need for a multi agency approach. All mechanisms should be delivered in an integrated way; so there is a need to look collectively at, for example, the Water Framework Directive, Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and Flood Risk Plans. It was also recognised that we need to implement measures at a catchment scale. This would ensure local buy-in, partnership working and improve funding opportunities, the evidence base and outcomes. On the whole some felt that a cultural change was needed and measures should be aimed at changing our long term behaviour.

There was mention of a need for more awareness raising on the impact of rural pollution. This could be achieved through a rural land management communications plan and education in schools and to businesses/communities. Others, however, wanted more emphasis on incentivising better solutions through permitting regulations or greater control through extending Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.

Many commented that there is a need to improve flood defences and remove blockages caused by trees. The non-dredging policy should be reviewed and a 5 year maintenance program put in place. It was also mentioned that rivers should be put back under control of local drainage boards.

Some consultees felt that more needs to be done about flow and abstraction. In particular the evidence on the impact of flow regulation should be reviewed and any gaps in our knowledge filled. The effectiveness of current legislation to deliver improvements was questioned. It was felt that in many cases it needs to be simpler, more flexible and cost effective to administer.

Half of the responses related to Hydroelectric Power schemes. It was thought that subsidies should be removed and abstraction licences refused on those schemes affecting main rivers, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks. This approach was needed to ensure existing uses were not compromised and that everyone had shared access and use of waterways.

Respondents considered that the following were important:

- More advice and guidance should be given to agriculture and forestry sectors.
- Climate change, flow and physical modifications should move up the agenda.
- Need to include private waste water plants, septic tanks and industry to ensure they take their share in tackling the issues.
- Remove all non-functioning weirs e.g. Erbistock.
- Clean rivers and ditches to reduce costs and flooding.
- Have a team of people dedicated to each catchment who can advise and work with landowners.

### **Additional Comments**

Where the consultation questions were not answered specifically, some respondents made general comments for inclusion.

- Polluter pays principle should be effected so that all sectors take responsibility for the impact they cause.
- Robust evidence was needed to properly inform policy.
- Challenges and Choices should have included lessons learnt from the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle. It should contain what measures were implemented, and how effective they have been?
- Views should have been sought on the level of ambition to achieve Good Ecological Status in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle. The economic climate will influence the options and what is achievable and affordable by 2021 – there needs to be wider public debate on this and the use of alternative objectives.

### **3.3 Question 4 who should we work with to achieve the environmental outcome?**

The vast majority of respondents suggested we continue to work with Welsh Government, local authorities, the water industry voluntary organisations, Keep Wales Tidy, farmers, the forestry sector, rivers trusts and the Coal Authority.

Other suggestions included community councils, anglers, Dyfi biosphere partnership, local residents, ramblers, landowners, business sector, schools, flood prevention society, manufacturers, DIY stores and recreational users.

### **3.4 Question 5 & 6; How are the significant issues in a catchment affecting the environment and the local community? How do you think the challenges affecting each catchment should be tackled and in what order?**

#### **Issues of importance in the Dee were;**

- Flow regulation on the River Dee.
- Pollution at West Kirby affecting recreational use.
- Flooding and a lack of dredging at Balderton Brook, River Alyn, and the canalised section of the River Dee.
- Pollution in the River Dee and Llangollen canal which is affecting recreation.
- Metaldehyde in the river Dee.
- Regular flooding and tree blockages in the Holt/Farndon area.

#### **Issues of importance in Western Wales were;**

- Physical modifications in the Rivers Tawe, Afan, Neath, Ogmore and Westfield Pill affecting fish movement.
- Lack of fence maintenance in East Cleddau; particularly new fencing.
- Algal blooms at Llys y Fran reservoir adversely affecting fish, drinking water and tourism.
- Diffuse agricultural pollution in the West and East Cleddau catchment causing blue green algae.
- The Hydroelectric Power scheme in the Conwy catchment.
- Pollution from urban areas, waste water and industrial sources in the Taff and Tawe Catchments.
- Pressure on water supplies in Pembrokeshire due to warmer summers.

#### **Issues of importance in the Welsh parts of the Severn were;**

- Pollution from urban areas, waste water and industry in the Lower Severn Catchment.
- Excessive phosphate in the Wye Catchment from poultry farmers.

## 4. Strategic Environmental Assessment

This section summarises the responses relating to the scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. We asked you to comment on the following questions;

**Question 7** Do you agree that we are focused on the key environmental effects?

**Question 8** Is there any other information that we should be taking into account as part of the assessment?

### 4.1 Question 7. Do you agree that we are focused on the key environmental effects?

In general most respondents felt that we were focusing on the key environmental issues in the scoping document. Certain issues raised were considerations relevant to the plan itself, rather than the Strategic Environmental Assessment. These have been referred to above and will be taken into account in the plan production. A number of aspects were identified which we will take into consideration in the Strategic Environmental Assessment:

- The Strategic Environmental Assessment needs to have appropriate depth and proportionate analysis of issues.
- The impact on health and recreation, and in particular how the plan could affect opportunities for people to access and enjoy rivers, lakes, coastal and transitional waters.
- The benefits of sustainable land management practices, tree planting, sustainable drainage systems and other green infrastructure on biodiversity, recreation, landscape and tourism should be recognised.
- The positive and negative effects of flood risk management.
- The impact of flow regulation and abstraction within river basins and between river basins in the context of adapting to climate change.
- The impact on coastal and transitional waters and their use by people (e.g. shellfish industry).
- The impact on climate change through greenhouse gas emissions arising from River Basin Management Plan actions, such as additional wastewater treatment or carbon sequestration through land management changes.
- The impacts of land use management.
- Recognising the historic value of some structures associated with water bodies.

It is a requirement of the Strategic Environmental Assessment that we take account of the issues raised. Those raised during this consultation were:

- **Some consultees wanted us to consider the environmental impacts against the needs of society, economy and growth.** We consider that this is implicit in the

approach to Strategic Environmental Assessment. This includes human health and population as environmental 'receptors' and these incorporate economic factors. The Strategic Environmental Assessment does not prioritise or weight environmental receptors, but states them to inform decision makers and the plan itself.

- **There were comments that more attention needs to be paid to fisheries.** We consider that this will not be necessary as measures to improve the ecological status of water bodies will be considered in the plan itself.
- **Consideration of the impacts of hydroelectric power on the water environment was requested.** The Strategic Environmental Assessment addresses only the measures proposed under the River Basin Management Plan. Any hydroelectric power installation would be considered on a project to project basis. All such installations are governed by strict licence requirements.

**One respondent disagreed with the scoping out of air quality from the assessment.** We consider that, whilst there are likely to be some air quality benefits as a result of habitat creation, it is difficult to quantify and determine significance; we therefore stand by our decision to scope out air quality.

- **One respondent queried the study area of the plans as they cut across some Natura 2000 sites.** The plan boundaries were consulted on in 2003 and they are statutory boundaries set by Welsh Government and the Department for the Environment Fisheries and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). As such, to change them would be a significant undertaking and not one that is currently being proposed.

#### **4.2 Question 8. Is there any other information that we should be taking into account as part of the assessment?**

Some additional plans and policies were highlighted for us to take into consideration in the Strategic Environmental Assessment process. These included establishing a link between Environmental Permitting Regulations and Water Framework Directive and Flood Risk Management documents. We will pursue this work where it adds value to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

## 5. Natural Resource Wales' Next Steps

### 5.1 Challenges and Choices and updated River Basin Management Plans

It is reassuring to know that the feedback received largely supports our current evidence base (Reasons for Failure information). This was used to identify the significant issues in the consultation. This evidence base, together with the issues and solutions put forward by this consultation, will be key to updating the River Basin Management Plans.

Our next step is to review this in detail with our colleagues and partners between April 2014 and July 2014. We will do this in conjunction with the outputs of the 15 catchment workshops which were held across Wales between December 2013 and March 2014. These combined outputs will feed into the updated River Basin Management Plan. This will include setting out clearly in the Plans what we believe are the required solutions. Where specific local issues have been raised these have been passed on to local Natural Resources Wales officers for consideration and action where appropriate.

We will continue to work with external partners and look to involve additional sectors/partners where appropriate.

The next formal consultation will be the draft updated River Basin Management Plan consultations (September 2014 to February 2015). These will seek your views on the draft Plans and consider how we will work together to improve the water environment to 2021 and beyond.

### 5.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

We recognise that implementing measures can result not only on the intended change but can also deliver unintended changes to other aspects of the environment. These changes can be positive or negative, short or longer term and can occur at different scales. The role of the Strategic Environmental Assessment will be to determine what the environmental effects of these changes are and what actions are necessary to address them. Whilst the change to the environment will be measured at a catchment level, the Strategic Environmental Assessment will determine the combined significance of these changes and conclude the significant effects at a River Basin District level.

Each plan will contain hundreds of measures. In undertaking the assessment, we will need to make some assumptions about how measures are implemented and how to aggregate significant effects together. Part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and plan-making process will consider alternative ways of implementing the plan. We will look at 'strategic' alternatives, including not implementing the plan. We will also examine alternative measures and their associated benefits and costs.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment will help to determine which aspects of the environment are most likely to change and detail what these changes may look like. Where significant effects are predicted, these will be clearly identified and actions proposed to mitigate these effects, including considering alternatives. This mitigation will be incorporated as actions in the draft plans.

We will focus on likely significant effects arising from the draft plans especially those which are longer term and impact on valued aspects of the environment. The Strategic Environmental Assessment will be documented in an Environmental Report for each River Basin District. These will be published alongside the draft plans in September 2014.

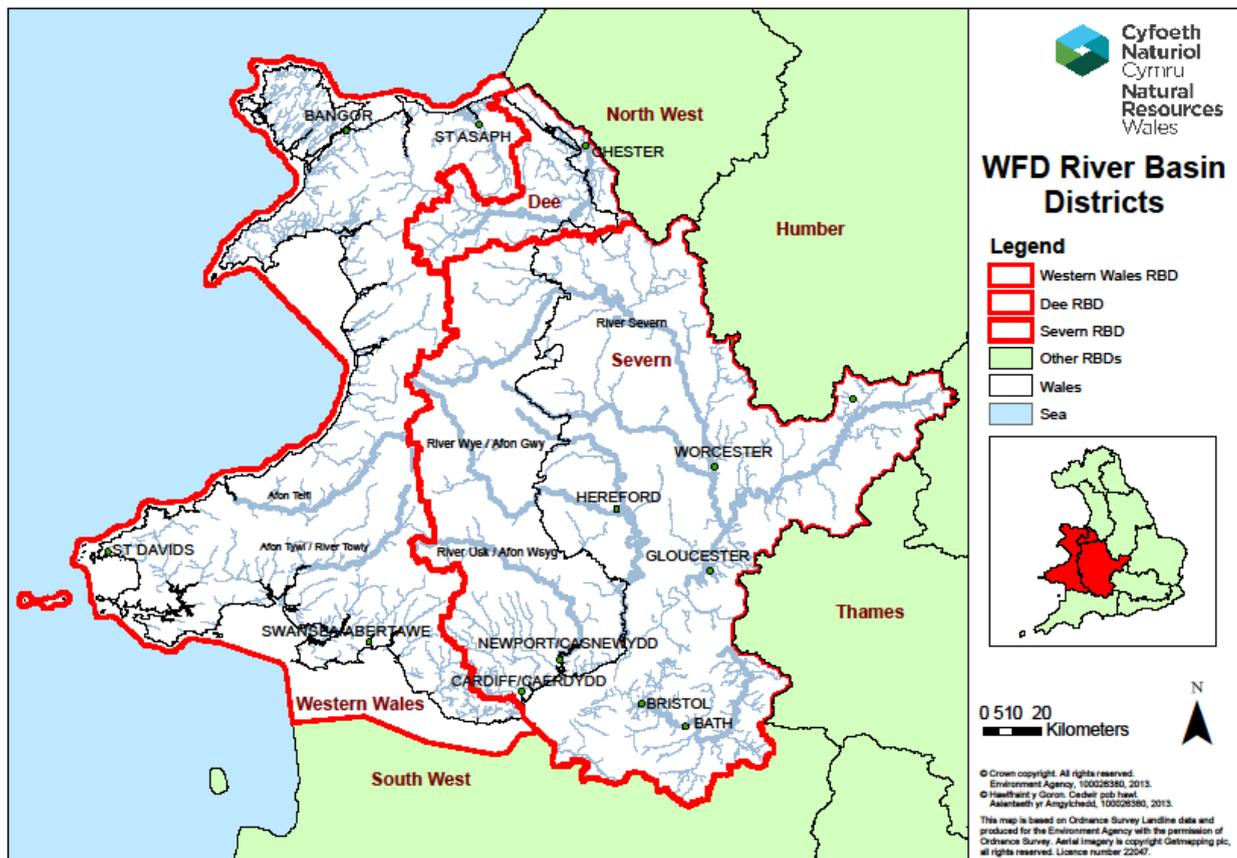
To find out how you can get involved, or get more information on the consultations, visit the Natural Resources website.

We will update our webpage as each consultation begins and when it is complete. A further response document will be published in June 2015 following this autumn's consultation to steer the updated River Basin Management Plans.

If you feel we have missed anything in this response document we would like to hear from you. Please contact [Ceri.Jones@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:Ceri.Jones@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk) or in writing to our Cardiff address.

# 6. Appendices

## 6.1 Map of the River Basin Districts in Wales



## 6.2 Timeline for river basin management planning

Stage	Date and Duration	Purpose?
<b>Working Together</b> – Statutory consultation	<p>Consultation : June 2012 to December 2012</p> <p>6 Months Duration</p> <p>Response document published March 2013</p>	<p><b>‘How should we all work together to update the river basin management plans?’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking how you want to be involved.</li> <li>• Explaining the key steps in the river basin management planning process for cycle 2.</li> <li>• Establishing a network of contacts for cycle 2 planning.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges and Choices</b> – Statutory consultation  Significant Water Management Issues	<p>Consultation June 2013 to December 2013</p> <p>6 Months Duration</p> <p>Response document published May 2014</p>	<p><b>‘What are the significant water environment issues and what can be done about them?’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving and sharing evidence collected through the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle of river basin planning.</li> <li>• Seeking views on solutions.</li> <li>• Developing who we should be working with to achieve environmental outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Draft updated River Basin Management Plan</b> – Statutory consultation	<p>Consultation September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014 to March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015</p> <p>6 Months Duration</p> <p>Response document publish date June 2015</p>	<p><b>‘Does the draft plan set out the right level of ambition for the water environment and a commitment to deliver?’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predicting water body status in 2012 and 2027</li> <li>• Draft water body objectives</li> <li>• Measures to deliver including ownership of local and strategic actions</li> <li>• How we deliver at a local scale (catchments)</li> </ul>
<b>Published updated River basin Management Plans</b>	<p>Publish date December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015</p>	<p><b>‘The plan will address the issues’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved by Government as statutory plans</li> <li>• Measures prioritised based on realistic application of measures and affordability principles</li> <li>• Provide a framework for significant environmental improvement to 2021 and towards 2027</li> </ul>

### 6.3 List of respondents

NAME	SECTOR	River Basin District
Welsh Sports Association	Recreation	All Wales
Institute of Civil Engineers Cymru	Business & Industry	All Wales
Snowdonia National Park	Conservation & Recreation	All Wales
Farmers Union of Wales	Agriculture	All Wales
Energy UK	Business & Industry	All Wales
CEFAS	Fisheries	All Wales
Confor	Forestry	All Wales
Wales Environment Link	Conservation	All Wales
Canals and Rivers Trust	Navigation	All Wales
Coed Cadw	Forestry	All Wales
Water Health Partnership	Water Industry	All Wales
Flood Prevention Society	Land Management	All Wales
Wildlife Trust Wales	Conservation	All Wales
Grosvenor Caving Club	Recreation	Dee
Inland Waterways Association	Navigation	Dee
Rossett & Gresford Fly fishing club	Fisheries	Dee
Consumer Council for Water	Water Industry	Dee
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	Water Industry	Dee
Welsh Dee Trust	Conservation	Dee
Denbighshire CBC	Local Authority	Dee
Dee Valley Water	Water Industry	Dee
NFU Cymru	Agriculture	Dee
Saltney Town Council	Local Authority	Dee
Bretton Farming Ltd	Land Management	Dee
Canoe Camping Club	Recreation	Dee
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Local Authority	Dee
United Utilities	Water Industry	Dee
Coal Authority	Mining	Dee
Llangollen/Maelor Angling Assoc	Fisheries	Dee
9 Individual Responses	Wide Ranging	Dee
SE Wales Rivers Trust	Conservation	Severn
Wye and Usk Foundation	Conservation	Severn
Envisager	Business & Industry	Western Wales
Pembrokeshire Coast NP	Recreation	Western Wales
Teifi Rivers Trust	Conservation	Western Wales
Consumer Council for Water	Water Industry	Western Wales

<b>NAME</b>	<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>River Basin District</b>
Murco	Business & Industry	Western Wales
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	Water Industry	Western Wales
Afonydd Cymru	Conservation	Western Wales
NFU Cymru	Agriculture	Western Wales
National White Water Centre	Recreation	Western Wales
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust	Conservation	Western Wales
Keep Wales Tidy	Conservation	Western Wales
Pembrokeshire Angling Assoc	Fisheries	Western Wales
Coal Authority	Mining	Western Wales
Campaign for Protection of Welsh Fisheries	Fisheries	Western Wales
Afan Valley Angling Club	Fisheries	Western Wales
Ecodyfi	Land Management	Western Wales
Green Energy Partners	Business & Industry	Western Wales
Avon Outdoor Activities	Recreation	Western Wales
Aston University Canoe Club	Recreation	Western Wales
Harcombe Environmental Services	Business & Industry	Western Wales
Aberystwyth Canoe Club	Recreation	Western Wales
Blue Paddle	Recreation	Western Wales
Environmental Consultant	Business & Industry	Western Wales
41 Individual Responses -	Wide Ranging	Western Wales



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Published by:  
Natural Resources Wales  
Cambria House  
29 Newport Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 0TP

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