Working Together – Statement of consultation steps for the Solway Tweed river basin district



Summary of responses

April 2019

Introduction

SEPA and the Environment Agency ran a consultation, 22 June 2018 to 22 December 2018, about the timetable and arrangements for how we will work with you to review and update the Solway Tweed river basin management plan, RBMP[1]. This digest summarises the responses received.

The consultation set out:

- the timescales associated with the formal consultations for the preparation of the third river basin plan;
- proposals to continue to work with partner organisations; and
- proposals for cross border working for the Solway Tweed district.

Similar consultations ran for all river basin districts across the UK. The summary of responses has been published by the Environment Agency[2].

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the consultation.

Summary of responses

Seventeen responses were received from a variety of local and national stakeholders and responsible authorities. A full list of respondents can be found in Appendix 1.

Respondents were supportive of the proposals and timescales set out. The respondents were well informed about the RBMP process and clear that partnerships are key to the development and delivery of RBMPs objectives and wider associated benefits.

The responses can be summarised into the following three themes:

1. Engagement and partnership working;
2. Cross border working; and
3. Effective integration of plans and strategies.

1. Engagement and partnership working

Respondents were supportive of the timetable and proposed consultation steps set out in the consultation. They were clear that we should build on our engagement and communication achievements to date so engagement is undertaken to provide clarity to everyone affected by the plan. The successes of existing partnerships was praised and the expansion of this style of work encouraged to help achieve more ambitious targets and wider benefits, including the cross border waterbodies.

[1] Statement of consultation steps for the Solway Tweed river basin district
https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/publications/

[2] River basin planning 2021: working together consultation response report for England
https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/river-basin-planning-working-together

2. Cross border working

A number of respondents raised the importance of collaborative working across the Scottish English border. Joint working between agencies and partner organisations was identified as a key part of managing catchments and water bodies that are either on, cross or are close to the national boundary. Delivery groups requested additional support to allow them to work collaboratively with the multiple agencies, for example with respect to funding opportunities.

3. Effective integration of plans and strategies

Respondents were very keen to integrate RBMP objectives with other plans and strategies. It is clear that across Solway Tweed this needs to be taken down to an appropriate geographic scale, be it catchment or more local, dependent on the circumstances.

It was recognised that with limited resources it's important that we work efficiently and effectively with partners through integrating plans. It was highlighted that, as well as existing, future plans and policies are taken into account to strengthen links and ensure potential multiple-benefits are maximised.

Next steps

Given the largely supportive responses we intend to progress with the proposals outlined in the consultation to develop the third river basin management plans.

In addition to our national approaches, SEPA and the Environment Agency will jointly develop a communication and engagement strategy for catchments close to the national border.

Appendix 1. Respondents to the statement of steps Solway Tweed consultation.

Scottish Water	Scottish Power Generation Ltd
National Farmers Union Scotland	Energy UK
Lake District National Park Authority	Crown Estate Scotland
Scottish Natural Heritage	Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
Law Society of Scotland	Fisheries Management Scotland
National Farmers Union (North East and North West)	River Tweed Commission and Tweed Foundation
River Eden District Fishery Association	West Cumbria Rivers Trust
Eden Rivers Trust	Tweed Forum
Marine Management Organisation	