



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Consultation: The government's strategic priorities for Ofwat

How to respond

Date: July 2021

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We're responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy, sustaining thriving rural communities and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.



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Purpose of the consultation

1. We are seeking your views on a new strategic policy statement (SPS) for Ofwat, which sets out the government's strategic priorities for Ofwat's regulation of the water sector in England.
2. In accordance with Section 2A of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended), the Secretary of State can set out strategic priorities and objectives for Ofwat. Ofwat must carry out its functions in accordance with this statement. The new SPS has been drafted to have regard to Ofwat's statutory duties, social and environmental matters and other matters that are a priority for government. Once published, it will replace the previous SPS that was issued to Ofwat in 2017.
3. The draft SPS for consultation can be found at: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/water-services/government-new-sps-consultation>

Responding to this consultation

4. The consultation period will commence on **22 July 2021** and will end at midnight on **27 September 2021**.
5. We welcome your views on the draft SPS, including your responses to the key consultation questions set out below.
6. You can respond to this consultation and view the relevant documents, including the draft SPS at the following link: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/water-services/government-new-sps-consultation>
7. Alternatively, you can respond by email at: waterservices@defra.gov.uk or by post to: Strategic policy statement for Ofwat consultation, Consultation Coordinator, Defra, 2nd Floor, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1-2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX.
8. When responding, please include the following information:
 - Your name
 - Whether you are responding as an individual or organisation
 - If responding on behalf of an organisation, please include the name of your organisation
 - If you would like your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why
9. Defra's Privacy Notice can be found at the following link: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/water-services/government-new-sps-consultation>

Consultation questions

10. We would welcome your responses to the following consultation questions:

- Has the government identified the most relevant strategic priorities for Ofwat? If not, please provide details of the priorities that should be included.
- Does the strategic policy statement effectively set out government's expectations of Ofwat in supporting delivery of our priorities? If not, please identify where these expectations could be made clearer.
- Do you consider that this statement to Ofwat is clear and easy to understand? If not, please identify any areas that could be clarified.

After the consultation

11. After the consultation, a summary of the responses will be published on the government website at www.gov.uk/defra.

12. The summary may include a list of names of the organisations that responded but not personal names, addresses or other contact details. However, information provided in response to this consultation document, including personal information, may be published or released to other parties in accordance with the access to information regimes e.g. Environmental Information Regulations 2004, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

13. If you want your response, including personal data, to be treated as confidential, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please explain why you need to keep the information confidential. We will take this into account if someone asks for this information. However, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep the information confidential. Please note that if your IT system automatically generates a confidentiality disclaimer, this will not be regarded as a confidentiality request.

14. This consultation is in line with the "Consultation Principles" as set out in the Better Regulation Executive guidance which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>.

15. If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please email consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk or write to: Consultation Coordinator, Defra 2nd Floor, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1-2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX.