



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
Water@Wales.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra
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Date: 17 December 2013

Dear Consultee

Making the Most of Every Drop – Consultation on Reforming the Water Abstraction Management System

1. We are writing to invite your views on a range of proposals for reforming the water abstraction management system in England and in Wales. Your response will help to inform policy decisions on the nature of potential reforms.

Background

2. Many individuals and businesses rely on access to untreated water abstracted directly from surface water, such as rivers, or from groundwater, in aquifers. Examples of abstractors include farmers who use water for irrigating crops, manufacturers and industry who use water for processing products and power generating companies who use water for cooling. Reliable access to water supports economic growth and investment in these areas.
3. Currently, most abstractors who abstract more than 20 cubic metres of water a day require a licence to do so. The current water abstraction management system was put in place in the 1960s. It is regulated by the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales.
4. We already face challenges in water availability, and managing our available water resources is likely to become even more difficult in the future as we face substantial challenges from a changing climate and population growth. The UK Government is committed to introducing a reformed water abstraction management system able to promote resilient economic growth while protecting the environment.
5. The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring the sustainable management of water resources in Wales. This includes considering the need for any changes to the water abstraction management system in Wales. The Welsh Government will set out its detailed policy in relation to future water management in Wales in its Water Strategy.



6. The consultation documents which set out our proposals for reforming the abstraction management system may be found online via: <https://www.gov.uk/defra>.
7. If you need a hard copy of this consultation document, please contact: abstraction_reform@defra.gsi.gov.uk or Abstraction Reform Team, Defra, Area 3B, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR.

Responses

8. To submit your consultation response, please complete the consultation questionnaire provided online with the consultation document.
9. Alternatively, if you are unable to respond online, you can respond:
 - via email to abstraction_reform@defra.gsi.gov.uk; or
 - in writing to: Abstraction Reform Team, Defra, Area 3B, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR
10. Consultees in Wales or national organisations covering England and Wales should **also** copy their replies to:
 - Water@Wales.gsi.gov.uk or
 - Integrated Water management Programme Manager, Water Branch, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ.
11. Please send us your response by **Friday 28 March 2014**.

Consultation Criteria

12. This consultation is in line with the Consultations Principles. This can be found at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance>
13. Any responses you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government and Defra staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government and Defra staff to help them plan future consultations.
14. When this consultation ends, we will summarise all responses and place this summary online available through our website at www.gov.uk/defra. This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details. If you require a hard copy of the summary, or have any other enquiries, please contact us by email at:

abstraction_reform@defra.gsi.gov.uk; or Abstraction Reform Team, Defra, Area 3B, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR.

15. We will store a copy of the responses received for at least six months from the date the consultation responses document has been published. This is so that the public can see them and copies of responses will be made available to the public on request. Also, members of the public may ask for a copy of responses under freedom of information legislation.
16. If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, that won't count as a confidentiality request.
17. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under freedom of information legislation. But, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.
18. If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to: Defra Consultation Co-ordinator, Room 629, 9 Millbank, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR; or email consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk.
19. Thank you in advance for taking the time to consider and respond to this consultation. We welcome your views and comments. If you have any queries please contact us as above.

Yours faithfully

**Department for Environment, Food and
Rural Affairs**

Welsh Government