

<http://www.bluegreenuk.com/freewater/tbge.html>

Response to the EFRA Consultation on the Government's Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Policy Statement and the EA's National Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England

Introduction

The Blue Green Economy (TBGE) is a broad alliance including academics, civil engineers, economists, environmentalists, health practitioners, journalists, lawyers, politicians and scientists, all who are working together, to achieve the most cost effective and sustainable solutions for the UK's water-related environmental problems.

Guided by the principles in the Rio Declaration 1992, the Aarhus Convention, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Water Framework Directive, TBGE as a priority, seeks the implementation of integrated water resource management (IWRM) for the UK.

IWRM is the only cost effective and sustainable solution for London and the UK river basins that would enable the UK to adapt and to be made resilient in the face of an expanding population and climate change.

IWRM with blue green technologies, as shown elsewhere, would result in enormous benefits for the whole environment, human physical and mental health, and would create thousands of local jobs. IWRM would also help the transformation to the Green Economy, an essential part of sustainable development and achieve compliance with the SDGs and the Water Framework Directive.

EFRA Terms of reference

1. How effectively do the new Government policy statement and Environment Agency strategy meet the challenge posed by a changing climate?

Not effective enough. The Climate and Environmental Emergencies declared by the UK Parliament in 2019, demands that consideration of water in all its forms, is made pivotal to decision making. Water is arguably the most important element to life, which if not adequately addressed, would lead to a climate and environmental collapse.

The recent Public Accounts Committee report 'Water supply and demand management', HC 378, highlights the UK's failure to reduce the massive amount of water lost to leakage every day over the last 20 years and the daily unsustainable amount of water use by UK residents, compared with other residents in Europe.

The Government needs to consolidate all water policies into **One Policy for Water** in order to integrate all aspects of water including surface or coastal flooding, water supply & demand, water quality, halting biodiversity loss and carbon reduction.

The NPS for Waste Water is an example of the lack of integrated thinking re water management and the choice of out-dated grey infrastructure solutions over IWRM and blue green technologies.

The **One Policy for Water** must ensure that Integrated Water Resource Management with blue green technology solutions, becomes England's approach to water management.

4. How can communities most effectively be involved, and supported, in the policies and decisions that affect them.

Early and effective participation public participation is essential. This is a UK requirement under the Aarhus Convention. Better decisions are made when people are able to bring their local knowledge to the fore. Issues of need for or alternatives to a policy or proposal must not be removed from consideration by the decision maker as what occurred in the examination of the Thames Tideway Tunnel under the NPS for Waste Water regime.

Communities are best supported by openness and transparency throughout the decision making process. This requires early and effective participation and the ability to challenge a decision. Therefore, the body making a decision or policy must be a statutory and open to challenge unlike the Local Enterprise Partnerships in England.

5. With increasing focus on natural flood management measures, how should future agricultural and environmental policies be focussed and integrated with the Government's wider approach to flood risk? &

6. How can housing and other development be made more resilient to flooding, and what role can be played by measures such as insurance, sustainable drainage and planning policy?

As stated above, **One Policy for Water** is required prioritising IWRM with blue green technologies.

Emily Shirley- TBGE Director- 27 August 2020