**Statement of consultation steps for the Solway Tweed river basin district**

4. Have we made the steps and consultation opportunities associated with the preparation of the updated river basin management plan clear and do you agree with the proposed steps?

**YES**

5. If not, what additional information would you like?

Not answered

6. What other feedback would you like to provide to SEPA or the Environment Agency on plans for consultation?

Please provide details of any other feedback relating to consultation on the Solway Tweed river basin plan that you would like here.

We notice that no specific mention is made to some of the national and regional processes which inform river basin planning in the rest of Scotland – National Advisory Group, Area Advisory Groups, Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group or Fish and Fisheries Advisory Group. We have found these fora very useful in the past, and we note that, with the exception of the Fish and Fisheries Advisory Group, none of these groups have met for some years.

We have been in discussion with SEPA about the possibility of establishing a sector approach for engaging with the fisheries management sector in Scotland. This approach recognises that fisheries managers and SEPA share common purpose across a range of issues of importance to the health of Scotland’s freshwater environment, but sometimes the degree of consultation and partnership working is not what it should be to benefit both SEPA and local fisheries managers. We would like to progress this approach in the new year, and this will provide further opportunities to engage with the fisheries management sector as the third round of river basin management planning is developed.

We are currently working with the Scottish Government to develop a consistent process of fisheries management planning across Scotland. SEPA have been engaged in this process for some time and this process has the potential to generate important information and data for the river basin management plan and it is important to ensure that the plan compliments fisheries management objectives. It is vital that appropriate linkages are made between the river basin management plan and these fisheries management plans.