

## Summary of discussion from a roundtable with Environmental NGOs on River Water Quality

### Overview

We gave an overview of the river water quality (phosphorus) performance commitment definition, the process that we had taken to produce it and outlined a proposed presentation change in the definition from that we had published in December 2022. In December 2022 we had proposed that the phosphorus reduction would be divided by population to result in the reduction in phosphorus per person. We are now proposing that we divide by the total phosphorus discharge in 2020 to result in a percentage reduction.

We asked for comments on our proposal and how we could work with stakeholders to encourage partnership working including catchment and nature based solutions We also asked stakeholders for views of how they could be involved in future development of the performance commitment for PR29.

### Summary of discussion

Those attending did not raise any objections to the proposed change to the PC and some welcomed the change as the previous definition would mean that if population grew phosphorus could increase without any change in the reported performance level. This would be avoided by the proposed change to a percentage reduction against a 2020 fixed baseline.

Stakeholders wanted to be involved as early as possible in the development of the performance commitment for PR29. They considered that round table events were likely to be the most appropriate way for them to contribute. Attendees thought that local authorities could also be involved.

Stakeholders raised chemicals and micro plastics as areas that ought to be considered for PR29. They also considered that a more holistic measurement of water quality would be preferable. And that advances in how pollutants can be measured should be considered. Stakeholders suggested they could help to improve option appraisal and how to account for multiple benefits.

Some stakeholders find it difficult to know how to engage with the price review process and found it opaque at times.