



## Waterwise response to Defra consultation on the Adaptation Reporting Power

August 2009

*Waterwise is an independent, not for profit, non-governmental organisation focused on decreasing water consumption in the UK and building the evidence base for large scale water efficiency. We are the leading authority on water efficiency in the UK. We sat on the UK Environment Minister's Water Saving Group alongside the water industry and regulators, for which we produced, in October 2008, the Evidence Base for Large-scale Water Efficiency in Homes.*

*Our aim is to reverse the upward trend in how much water we all use at home and at work.*

1. Water efficiency must be a central part of every sector and organisation's adaptation plans. We know that in coming years there will be less water and more people, and (household) consumption is currently rising, exacerbated by an increase in single-person households. In the past, Waterwise has observed – across the economy - costly solutions being considered and taken forward before simple measures to waste less water have been exhausted.
2. Organisations could save 40% of their water use through simple measures such as fixing leaks (after identifying these through meters) and switching to technologies such as urinals, toilets, taps and showers which use vastly smaller amounts of water. Water audits carried out as part of a wider water-use strategy should be one of the first steps an organisation should take in its adaptation plans. We would like to see this specified in the directions, for inclusion in the Reports. It is not unheard of for a disconnected pipe or forgotten dripping (or fully on) shower to be wasting huge amounts of water. Making the processes (industrial and manufacturing, and "domestic", such as cooking, cleaning and toilet facilities in workplaces) of an organisation more water efficient would also save money on water bills.
3. Waterwise agrees that the water industry and Ofwat represent a priority sector in the delivery of the critical national infrastructure, and that they should be included in the directions. Both Ofwat and the companies have made considerable strides towards large-scale water efficiency in recent years, and the draft determinations for PR09 published in July 2009 included funding for 6 enhanced water efficiency programmes, which Waterwise welcomes. Five years ago a handful of water

companies were carrying out water efficiency retrofit projects of more than 500 homes: now many of them have plans to retrofit ten thousand homes in each of the next five years. However, the investment in these programmes is still a drop in the ocean compared to that in large-scale supply-side projects such as reservoirs and desalination plants, which in themselves are vulnerable to climate change. Water companies are also beginning to undertake water efficiency projects with partners, such as energy companies, and social housing providers, in part brokered by, and in partnership with, Waterwise. This also represents innovation. Water efficiency on a large-scale, including through partnerships, should be better incentivised in the regulatory system.

4. Several of the major energy sources in the UK's future low-carbon energy mix rely greatly on water availability – namely, nuclear, and carbon capture and storage. This needs to be factored into the Reports from those sectors.
5. Waterwise agrees that food, schools and housing should all be invited to report. The food sector is extremely reliant on water availability, and water efficient practices are not yet embedded in the supply chain – although the food industry does now have a collective water efficiency target. Schools and housing are two sectors in which wasting less water, through easy fixes, in partnership with water companies and others, could ensure adaptation was carried out in the most efficient way.
6. Waterwise would be happy to work with Defra on a programme to help sectors prepare their Reports.

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