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## Press Release

For immediate release

### Ofwat decision on water investment encouraging for the environment and wildlife

The Blueprint for Water Coalition welcomes today’s announcement from Ofwat on water pricing and believes that it provides a step in the right direction for the environment and for customers.

Ofwat has recognised the importance of our rivers and wetlands and has allowed companies the resources to fund hundreds of projects to tackle damage from pollution and abstraction. This includes action on some of our most iconic rivers, lakes and national parks like the Itchen, Windermere and Dartmoor. However, there are some elements that are missing from these proposals.

**RSPB director of conservation Mark Avery said:** “This programme of environmental investment is a great boost to our beleaguered water environment.

“Not only will the wildlife which relies on our waterways and wetlands benefit from these environment schemes, but this decision will help towards ensuring our water infrastructure can cope with the impacts of climate change.”

**Jacob Tompkins, Managing Director of Waterwise said:** “A number of water companies put forward plans to Ofwat to retrofit tens of thousands of homes a year for water efficiency, and it is testament to the commitment of both the water companies and of Ofwat to addressing the challenges of climate change. Ofwat has also recognised the importance of wasting less water in the face of climate change by supporting six enhanced water efficiency programmes to help customers save water in their homes while also reducing energy bills and their carbon footprint.

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**Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive of the Angling Trust said:** “We welcome the new approach in this review, which will see investment in correcting the upstream causes of problems in our watercourses, rather than managing the impacts downstream. This will mean that the customer will see more environmental improvements for less cost. Anglers will be hoping that this new direction will be continued to protect and restore rivers and fish stocks.”

Action proposed in the plans will also see pollution tackled through ‘catchment management’ projects which protect sources of drinking water while boosting wildlife, and enhancing landscapes.

Ofwat has also recognised the importance of wasting less water in the face of climate change by supporting six enhanced water efficiency programmes to help customers save water in their homes while also reducing energy bills and their carbon footprint.

However the Blueprint for Water Coalition is concerned that the cuts in metering and investment to tackle leakage could strike a blow at our ability to adapt to the more frequent droughts and lower water availability that climate change will bring to many parts of England and Wales. If the necessary investment is not made now, future customers’ affordability in a changing climate may also be compromised. We believe that keeping leakage down is essential for long term sustainability and that meters are the best way to ensure fair water pricing whilst encouraging careful use of water.

The Blueprint Coalition will work with water companies and the water regulator in the coming months to try and ensure that the final determination can deliver both good value for customers and the essential long-term investment that is vital for a sustainable water sector.

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## Notes to Editors

[1] – Blueprint for Water is a campaign of Wildlife and Countryside Link and is supported by the following 12 organisations:

Angling Trust  
Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust  
Fish Legal  
Froglife  
Institute of Fisheries Management  
Pond Conservation  
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
Waterwise  
Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust  
The Wildlife Trusts  
WWF- UK  
Zoological Society London

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