Background: The benefits of the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA), which was established by Defra policy in 2013, are summarised in Figure 1. For the past five years over 100 catchment partnerships, which cover the whole of England, have been delivering integrated catchment management. This delivery has been supported by a national support programme. The Catchment Data User Group (CDUG) is a cross-sectoral working group, which has planned and delivered key areas of this national work programme, to grow the technical capacity of the CaBA partnerships and ensure that catchment management work is underpinned by robust data and evidence.

The first Catchment Data & Evidence Forum, held on the 27th September 2018, was a natural extension of the work that CDUG has been doing and had three main aims:

1. Identify the barriers and opportunities for the wider CaBA data & evidence community to support the delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

2. Provide a totally inclusive national forum for the catchment data & evidence community to exchange knowledge and expertise, and increase the network of technical experts available to CaBA partnerships.

3. Incorporate the ideas and expertise of the wider community in the co-design of key evidence sharing infrastructure planned by government agencies to support the 25 Year Environment Plan.

Barriers and Opportunities: Figure 2 summarises the votes of the 55 attendees. It highlights the success of the OpenData revolution, and identifies the need for a continued focus on making data and evidence accessible and building the technical capacity of catchment partnerships to use this evidence. The need for greater consistency of approach highlights the need for national leadership and a planned approach to the development and use of data and modelling.

Figure 3 highlights the potential to use the interpretation and translation skills developed within the community and the collection of data by civil society to engage a much wider audience in the improvement of the environment. The availability of an inclusive nationally consistent convening space, CaBA, was also identified as a key opportunity for the 25 year environment plan to build on and use.
Knowledge Exchange: There were a series of 20 talks by experts from across the catchment management community; from government, academia, consultancies and eNGOs. The talks and the networking sessions provided an excellent opportunity for cross-sectoral exchange of ideas and expertise, see Annex 1 for list of organisations and topics covered. Feedback at the end of the forum identified this section of the day as the most valuable for the attendees and several ideas were put forward to improve the impact of this session next time. CDUG members will explore collaborative opportunities in the group’s regular web meetings.

Co-Design: The wider group fed back ideas and comments for three key areas of work within the Environment Agency; the strategic monitoring review; the catchment data explorer and public consultations (for river basin and flood risk plans etc). This session reflected the original role of CDUG as an end user community and highlighted the growing move by the Environment Agency to a more partnership based approach to it’s strategic thinking as well as local delivery of environmental improvement.

Feedback: A short feedback session highlighted the appetite from the community to host similar forums in the future, and CDUG will continue to hold regular web meetings throughout the year.

The Forum was organised by CDUG which is co-chaired by the Environment Agency and The Rivers Trust. It was supported by funding from Natural Course (EU LIFE), the Environment Agency and a modest charge to the attendees.

Annex 1: List of flash talks and organisations contributing to the FORUM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Talk title</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ribble catchment partnership</td>
<td>Using data and evidence to facilitate effective catchment management</td>
<td>Ellie Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devon and Cornwall catchment</td>
<td>Using data and evidence for a catchment based approach</td>
<td>Sarah Wigley / Simon Browning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durham Universities</td>
<td>A stakeholder-driven approach to manage diffuse microbial pollution risk: SCIMAP-FIO</td>
<td>David Oliver / Sim Reaney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earthwatch Institute</td>
<td>Catch X Catchment Hydrology Explorer For Water Stewards</td>
<td>Luis Velasquez / Wim Clymans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thames 21</td>
<td>Modular River Survey &amp; MoRPh citizen science</td>
<td>Lucy Shuker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartographer Studios</td>
<td>Cartographer Platform</td>
<td>Dave Gurnell</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADAS</td>
<td>ADAS Data and Models</td>
<td>Richard Gooday</td>
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<tr>
<td>WRC</td>
<td>AARDVARK - User friendly statistical software for environmental data analysis</td>
<td>Andrew Davey</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBA</td>
<td>Making catchment science accessible</td>
<td>Alex Scott</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evenlode catchment partnership</td>
<td>Evenlode Catchment Laboratory - Field data collection to monitor the effects of our schemes</td>
<td>Dave Gasca-Tucker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
<td>CSF evaluation and opportunities for sharing data</td>
<td>Chris Burgess</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Cumbria Rivers Trust</td>
<td>Cumbrian Flood Partnership Portal</td>
<td>Jayne Wilkinson</td>
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<td>The Coal Authority</td>
<td>Risk Modelling &amp; Opportunity Mapping</td>
<td>Peter Thorn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
<td>Interpreting multiple and complex data</td>
<td>Neil Preedy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stantec</td>
<td>Data overload - Examples of processing methods to assist catchment planning</td>
<td>Rosanna Griffiths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Random sampling - How useful is it?</td>
<td>Peter Lloyd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
<td>Improving how environmental information is shared as part of updating our River Basin Management Plans</td>
<td>Antonia Scarr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
<td>The Water Hub - Using data to drive effective engagement</td>
<td>George Gerring</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Rivers Trust</td>
<td>South East Rivers Trust Riverfly Monitoring Hub and CaBA Data Package v5</td>
<td>Anneka France</td>
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