

**Environment Marine & Fisheries
Group**
Marine & Fisheries Division



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'
**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Our reference: **DAERA/26-282**

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Marine & Fisheries Division

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19 May 2026

Dear [Redacted],

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

I refer to your request for information received by the Department on 22 April 2026 relating to a Lough Neagh Partnership proposal concerning a potential “*Lough Neagh fishing diversification economic resilience grant 2026/27*”, including the source of that information and any input from LNFCS.

I can advise that the Department has completed its search and can confirm that it holds information within the scope of your request.

The Department holds a draft proposal relating to a potential “Lough Neagh fishing diversification economic resilience grant 2026/27”. This proposal was submitted by the Lough Neagh Partnership and provided to officials for consideration. It outlines a range of potential measures to support diversification and economic resilience within the Lough Neagh fishing sector, including capital grant support, training opportunities, and environmental and tourism-related activities.

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The proposal remains under consideration by the Department and does not represent approved policy or a confirmed funding scheme.

In relation to your query regarding the Lough Neagh Fishermen's Co-operative Society (LNFCS), the Department holds no evidence that LNFCS formally contributed to the preparation of this proposal. The document was submitted by the Lough Neagh Partnership, which is the source of the information referenced.

The Department has considered whether the draft proposal document itself can be released. However, this information is being withheld under Regulation 12(4)(e) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, as it forms part of internal communications relating to the ongoing consideration and development of policy.

An associated Public Interest Test has been conducted and is attached for your information at Annex A, and the Department considers that the public interest in maintaining this exception outweighs the public interest in disclosure, as release at this stage could prejudice the effective conduct of policy development and the safe space required for officials to consider proposals.

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

Yours sincerely,

Inland Fisheries Commercial Policy Team
DAERA Inland Fisheries

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