

**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/26-299**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [@live.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@live.co.uk)

Marine & Fisheries Division

Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast BT3 9ED

Tel: 0300 200 7860

Email: anglingcorrespondence@daera-ni.gov.uk

21 May 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

I refer to your request for information received by the Department on 30 April 2026, made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which sought information regarding salmon and dollaghan trout monitoring, enforcement activity on Lough Neagh, and related fisheries matters.

Although you referenced the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the information you have requested is environmental information and has therefore been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

I can advise that the Department has completed its searches and can confirm that it holds some of the information you requested, which can be found in the table below.

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| 1 | How many smolt/salmon streamer tag or other similar monitoring programs have been | The Department does not hold a comprehensive or centrally recorded dataset of all smolt/salmon tagging or similar monitoring programmes undertaken on the |
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| | carried out on the river Main and its tributary rivers since 2010 with Dcal and Darea? | River Maine and its tributaries covering the period specified. While such work has been undertaken in some instances, it is typically carried out by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI). |
| 2 | What were the findings of the monitoring that's been done with salmon and Doolaghan. | <p>Scientific monitoring and assessment of salmon and trout stocks are undertaken by AFBI, with outputs informing fisheries management and conservation advice.</p> <p>Relevant information is available at the following links:</p> <p>Standing Scientific Committee - Advice on DAERA Area Salmon Stocks Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</p> <p>DAERA area Trout Report 2024.PDF</p> <p>Lough Neagh Area Brown Trout Angling Interests Event 18th February 2025 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</p> <p>This information addresses the findings of monitoring activities. The Department considers this information to be reasonably accessible to the applicant and therefore Regulation 6(1)(b) applies.</p> |
| 3 | How many Darea bailiffs are on Lough Neagh patrols and how often during the months of May-October do they be on the lough? | Inland Fisheries Enforcement Officers undertake regular proactive and reactive patrols on Lough Neagh throughout the year, including during the period May to October, to ensure compliance with fisheries legislation. The number and nature of patrols can vary depending on a range of factors such as for eg fishing activity, levels or reports of illegal activity, the need to carry out enforcement in other parts of the DAERA area etc |

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| | | <p>The Department does not hold information in the specific format requested regarding patrol frequency or staffing levels as a centrally recorded dataset. However, the Department does hold more detailed operational information relating to enforcement deployment.</p> <p>This information is being withheld under Regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIR, as its disclosure would be likely to enable identification of enforcement patterns, and therefore prejudice the effectiveness of enforcement activity and compliance with fisheries legislation.</p> <p>General information on fisheries enforcement activity is available at:</p> <p>Inland Fisheries Annual Reports Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</p> |
| 4 | How many patrol boats do Darea currently have on lough neagh and what parts are mostly patrolled? | <p>The Department operates three fisheries patrol vessels on Lough Neagh. This is considered high-level information that does not pose a risk to enforcement effectiveness and is therefore disclosed. Patrols are conducted across the Lough as required.</p> <p>Specific operational patrol locations are withheld under Regulation 12(5)(a), as their disclosure would be likely to adversely affect enforcement effectiveness.</p> |
| 5 | Is anything being done to control the increasing numbers off cormorant on waters controlled by Darea? | <p>Cormorants are a protected species. Control measures are regulated through licensing arrangements administered by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). Further information is available at:</p> |

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| | | <p>Information for those applying to shoot cormorants Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</p> <p>The Department considers this information to be reasonably accessible, and Regulation 6(1)(b) applies.</p> |
| 6 | <p>What are Dareas plans going forward to protect and enhance migratory fish stocks in northern ireland?</p> | <p>The Department’s approach to protecting and enhancing migratory fish stocks is informed by scientific assessment and evidence, including NASCO reporting which identifies and evaluates the key stressors affecting salmon stocks to guide management actions. This is supported by ongoing monitoring and research (e.g. River Bush Salmon Station), conservation measures and regulatory controls, and the implementation of fisheries management plans for key systems such as Lough Neagh and Lough Erne.</p> <p>Further information is available at:</p> <p>https://nasco.int/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/CNL2531_Atlantic-Salmon-Stressors-Analysis-UK-Northern-Ireland.pdf</p> <p>https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/river-bush-salmon-station</p> <p>https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/conservation#toc-0</p> <p>https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/lough-neagh-and-lough-erne-management-plans</p> |

The Department has decided not to disclose some of the information you requested as it considers Regulation 12(5)(a) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 to be engaged. In these instances, the Department is legislatively required to

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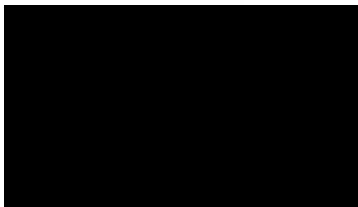
consider the public interest in disclosure. An associated Public Interest Test has been conducted and is attached for your information at Annex A.

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,



DAERA Inland Fisheries

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