

Appendix 2 - Template for Information to be Compiled

Information to be compiled by Public Authorities under Section 3(1)(a) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

(To be completed and included in public authorities' own annual reports and submitted to DAERA for inclusion in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report).

Name of Public Authority:

Reporting Period: April 20 to March 20

The following information should be compiled in respect of each policy, strategy and plan which has been developed, adopted, implemented or revised and each public service which has been designed or delivered by the public authority during the reporting period.

<i>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016¹.</i>	<i>The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to².</i>	<i>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service³.</i>
Sustainable Agriculture Programme (Farming with Nature Package) – Introduction of the Farming with Nature Higher Scheme. Farming with Nature (FwN) Higher aims to provide an interim scheme in the time period before launch of a new scheme for designated sites and priority habitats, through provision of the Remedial Management Options (RMOs) to Environmental	Agri Environment, impacting upon rural businesses, jobs or employment in rural areas, education or training in rural areas.	The RNIA (Section 3D and 4A) found that those from a rural population are more likely to be employed, but earn less than their urban counterparts. Poverty levels were found to be higher in areas greater than an hour's commute from Belfast, compared to rural areas in closer proximity. In 2024, agricultural income increased, but the total agricultural labour force decreased. Greenhouse Gas emission contributions from agriculture were also

Farming Scheme (EFS) Higher agreement holders previously in Tranches 4-8, on a phased basis. It is not anticipated that all years of the scheme will be required.		found to have increased since 1990. The majority of the NI population reported feeling concerned about environmental issues. Female farmers, younger farmers, and those from a Catholic religion and Irish identity were more likely to farm in 'Less Favoured Areas' and 'Severely Disadvantaged Areas', which link closely with designated sites. A significant proportion of marine and terrestrial protected sites across NI were found to be in 'Unfavourable' condition. FwN Higher (Section 5B) aims to contribute towards addressing the issues described through providing an income source for farms who manage their land with environmental consideration. The scheme places value upon the impact of environmental conservation work, and helps to promote the protection of high nature value land and designated sites. Through this, the scheme may contribute towards providing significant environmental benefits such as climate change resilience, biodiversity, water quality and carbon sequestration.
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1. This information should normally be contained in section 1B of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
2. This information should normally be contained in section 2D of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
3. The information contained in sections 3D, 4A & 5B of the RNIA Template should be considered when completing this section.