

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

Our reference: **DAERA/26-638**



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

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department of

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

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Marine & Fisheries Division

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08 September 2026

Dear 

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

Thank you for your request for information, received by the Department on 19 August 2026, regarding actions considered or undertaken to protect fish stocks in the Quoile River following correspondence dated 31 January 2012.

Although originally submitted as Ministerial correspondence, the Department determined that your correspondence was seeking access to recorded environmental information rather than a policy response. The request has therefore been handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) and considered in accordance with the requirements of those Regulations.

The Department has completed searches of the records it currently holds and has identified the information enclosed at **Annex A**. The records have been arranged chronologically and reflect the information located through those searches. Given the passage of time since the earliest records were created, and in accordance with the

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Department's records management and retention arrangements, the Department cannot confirm that the records identified represent every record that may once have existed in relation to this matter. The information provided comprises the records currently held and identified as falling within the scope of your request following searches of relevant Departmental record systems.

Certain limited information has been redacted from the enclosed records under Regulation 13(1) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The information withheld comprises personal contact details, including postal addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses. The Department considers that disclosure of this information would contravene the data protection principles set out in UK data protection legislation. A copy of the Department's Lawfulness, Fairness and Transparency Test is enclosed at **Annex B**. Regulation 13 is an absolute exception and is not subject to the public interest test.

For ease of reference, the information held shows:

Measures considered or implemented to prevent or reduce seals entering the Quoile	The records show that the Department's predecessor body raised concerns regarding seals entering the Quoile River with Rivers Agency and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), requested surveys and any necessary remedial works to the barrier, undertook inspections of fencing at Hare Island and maintained liaison with the relevant authorities. The records also note that modifications were subsequently made to a flood gate at the Quoile Barrier.
Assessments undertaken of the impact of seals on fish stocks	The records contain concerns and observations regarding the impact of seals on fish stocks and show that those concerns were considered when requests for restocking were examined. Searches did not identify a formal Departmental assessment quantifying the impact of seal predation on fish stocks in the Quoile River.
Meetings, correspondence, reports, recommendations and internal discussions	The records include correspondence, Assembly Written Question material, briefing papers, discussions with Rivers Agency and NIEA, records of meetings attended by officials and consideration of various options relating to the issue.
Decisions to proceed with, alter or discontinue proposed measures	The records show that surveys and remedial works were requested, that barrier modifications were subsequently reported, that an earlier proposal relating to seal removal did not proceed, and that requests to restock the Quoile were considered but not progressed at the time for fisheries management, environmental and resource reasons.

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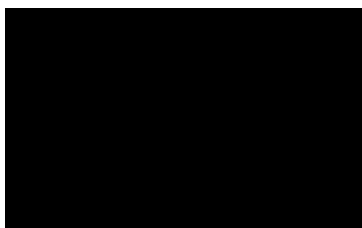
Monitoring undertaken to determine whether interventions were effective	The records indicate that a monitoring period followed the reported flood gate modifications and that DAERA staff monitored the situation. Searches did not identify a separate formal monitoring report or effectiveness assessment.
Dates on which actions or decisions occurred	The principal recorded actions and decisions identified by the Department occurred during 2012, 2013 and 2016. More recent records from 2026 set out the Department's current recorded position regarding deterrent measures, predator monitoring and fish migration assessments in the Quoile area.

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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