Reference Number: DAERA/26-810
Request Details:
Information concerning agricultural nutrient compliance in the Lough Neagh catchment

Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Water Regulation and Enforcement Division

Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe
Depairtment o'
Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

[redacted]

Water Catchment Unit
Northern Ireland Environment Agency
17 Antrim Road Lisburn
Lisburn
BT238 3AL

E-mail: wmu.foi@daera-ni.gov.uk

06 November 2026

Dear [redacted],

Environmental Information Regulation 2004

With regard to your request for information received by the Department on 17 October 2026 which sought the following information:

Agricultural nutrient compliance in the Lough Neagh catchment.

I can advise that the Department has completed its search and can confirm that it holds the information you requested which is detailed below.

For 1 January 2024 to 30 September 2026, please provide existing recorded information covering the Lough Neagh catchment:

1. **Annual numbers of farm holdings identified as potentially exceeding livestock-manure nitrogen limits, distinguishing holdings with valid derogations.**

   This evaluation can only be made when a full calendar year of data is available, therefore 2026 is not yet available. Numbers for 2024 and 2025 are detailed below.

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Year	No of farms in L Neagh Catchment with N Loading* > 170 kg N/ha/yr	No of farms with valid derogation with the L Neagh Catchment
2024	1004	163
2025	1007	150

*N loading calculation used includes imports and exports

2. **Annual numbers of these holdings inspected, confirmed non-compliant, and subject to enforcement action, broken down by action type where held.**

Year	No. Inspected	No. non-compliant
2024	76	34
2025	102	25

3. **The current inspection and enforcement policy used to address these exceedances.**

   The current DAERA Enforcement Policy is available to view on the website: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/daera-enforcement-policy

   Penalty matrices for cross compliance and farm sustainability standards can be viewed on the DAERA website:
   https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/cross-compliance-penalties
   https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/farm-sustainability-standards-fss#toc-7

4. **The latest existing assessment of progress in resolving the compliance gap identified in the OEP's April 2026 Nutrient Action Programme review.**

   The compliance gap identified by the OEP is currently under consideration by the Department in line with the current Nutrient Action Programme review which is still ongoing.

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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,

[redacted]

NIEA - Water Catchment Unit - Agricultural Regulation Branch

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