



Office for
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Ms Katrina Godfrey
Permanent Secretary
Department for Agriculture, Environment and
Rural Affairs
Office of the Permanent Secretary
First Floor
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Belfast BT3 9ED

15 February 2024

By email only

Dear Katrina,

Environmental Improvement Plan for Northern Ireland

I am writing further to your letter of 4 January 2024, in which you informed us of the outcome of your review as to the publication of the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) for NI, and our ongoing engagement in relation to this matter.

Much has happened since your last letter, and we welcome the appointment of Andrew Muir as Minister for Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs alongside the return of an Executive and wider Assembly. You will be aware that we have written to the Minister requesting a meeting, and we have noted our interest in the EIP.

In your earlier correspondence and during our recent meeting, you provided assurance that officials and across government you have been working hard to ensure an ambitious, evidence-informed environment strategy would be ready for the consideration of an incoming minister and Executive. This has also been confirmed during meetings between our respective officials.

I do, of course, appreciate that there will be much for new ministers and their departments to do. However, the EIP is an essential cornerstone of environmental governance in Northern Ireland, and the ongoing delay to publication remains a breach of the Environment Act 2021. Publication and implementation must be prioritised for the benefit of the environment.

Our Board will be meeting on the 28 February and the EIP will be one of the subjects for discussion. It would, therefore, be helpful if before then, you could provide as much information as you are able in terms of your plan for the publication and laying of the EIP, associated timescales and any foreseeable risks.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Prosser', is centered on the page.

Natalie Prosser
Chief Executive Officer of the Office for Environmental Protection



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