

**From the Office of the
Minister of Agriculture,
Environment and Rural Affairs**



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

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department of

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Natalie Prosser CEO
Office for Environmental Protection
Wildwood
Wildwood Drive
Worcester
WR5 2QT
privateoffice@theoep.org.uk

DAERA Private Office
First Floor, Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast, BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9052 4140
Email: private.office@daera-ni.gov.uk

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Dear Natalie,

**ADOPTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND CONSULTATION ON
THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES POLICY STATEMENT**

Thank you for your letter of 3 October, offering your congratulations on the publication of the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) and the consultation on the draft Environmental Principles Policy Statement (EPPS).

While publication of the EIP has taken rather longer than any of us would have wished, securing the support of my Executive colleagues was absolutely essential, and having the EIP embedded in the draft Programme for Government puts us on a much firmer footing for successful delivery. I look forward to further positive engagement with the OEP as we seek to achieve significant and sustained improvement in Northern Ireland's environment in the months and years ahead.

With regard to the EPPS, I am grateful for the OEP's advice, which has made the current draft a significantly more robust document that will undoubtedly strengthen environmental governance in Northern Ireland when it is fully operational. Further refinement will, of course, be required once consultation responses have been analysed and we will continue to work closely with the OEP as we endeavour to make the final EPPS the powerful tool you describe.

Yours sincerely

**ANDREW MUIR MLA
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs**

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