



14/07/2023

Ann Walshe

[ann@annwalshe.co.uk](mailto:ann@annwalshe.co.uk)

**Re: AIE request 23 352**

Dear Ms Walshe,

I refer to the request you made under the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 to 2018 (S.I. No. 133 of 2007, S.I. No. 662 of 2011, S.I. 615 of 2014 and S.I. No. 309 of 2018) (hereafter referred to as the AIE Regulations) for access to information held by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine relating to

*1. What area of land in hectares was actually converted during the period 2015 to 2020 from commercial forest to native conservation woodland in order to protect sensitive water systems.*

*2. The location and size in hectares of each commercial forest converted during the period 2015 to 2020 to native conservation woodland in order to protect sensitive water systems*

**Summary of Decision**

I made a decision on your request on 14/07/2023. Following identification of 1 record which relates to your request, I have decided that you should be granted access to all of the records.

I have also enclosed a schedule with this letter, it shows the documents that I consider relevant to your request.

Please note that the figure of 1000 hectares was a statement of ambition or intent. As the scheme was demand driven it would be impossible to say exactly how many hectares would enter the NWS conservation scheme.

Also, whether an NWS scheme is entered into specifically to protect sensitive water systems is not recorded, and it could be argued that any funded NWS file facilitated water protection. For that reason, I have included all funded NWS schemes on record between 2015 and 2020.

Finally, NWS files are not processed and paid through the Department's iFORIS system. In order to make a payment on an NWS scheme contract, an Officer will manually complete a paper payment form and then record this payment on a spreadsheet. It is from these spreadsheets that I have drawn this information. To the best of my knowledge these records are complete, however we are relying on information that has been entered manually.

Yours sincerely,

Justin Kinneen

Forestry Division,

Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine,

Johnstown Castle Estate,

Co. Wexford