



Our ref: FOI2019/09918
6 June 2019

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Marine Budgets

Thank you for your request for information of 8th May about marine budgets. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs)

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We enclose a copy of the information you requested:

Table 1 provides the Defra Marine and Fisheries Directorate marine biodiversity monitoring spend and budget dating back to financial year 2015 – 2016 (FY2015/16). It is noted that the Defra Marine and Fisheries Directorate has not, in this period, funded marine biodiversity monitoring for fish or seals. Monitoring of commercial fisheries is funded separately to marine biodiversity monitoring, and seals monitoring is largely fund by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) under the Conservation of Seals Act 1970 and the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

Table 1: Defra Marine and Fisheries Directorate marine biodiversity monitoring spend for FY2014/15– FY2018/19.

Biodiversity component	Financial year					Monitoring programmes contributed to
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	
Cetaceans	£0	£200,000	£200,000	£200,000	£0	Small Cetaceans in European Atlantic waters and the North Sea (2016): SCANS-II
Seabirds	£0	£12,500	£12,500	£12,500	£119,656	Northern fulmars as an ecological monitor of marine litter Breeding seabird census 2015 – 2019
Benthic habitats	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	Marine Protected

						Areas Group
Plankton	£170,000	£304,000	£320,000	£335,000	£335,000	Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR) Survey

Notes:

- The information provided reflects the marine biodiversity monitoring budget for the Defra Marine and Fisheries Directorate. This does not include funding from other Defra Group bodies (e.g. the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, and Natural England) , and it is noted that a number of bodies provide funding (including co-financing of Defra activities) to marine biodiversity monitoring.
- The Defra Marine and Fisheries Directorate supports a number of research and development projects related to marine biodiversity monitoring activities, the costs of which have not been included here.
- It is not possible to separate marine biodiversity monitoring budgets for inshore waters and UK offshore waters (where Defra has responsibility) for the biodiversity components listed. This is because the Defra Marine and Fisheries Directorate provides a contribution to a number of marine biodiversity monitoring programmes, and this contribution is not specified as being for English inshore waters or UK offshore waters. Therefore this specific information is not held and is exempt under regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIRs, which relates to information which is not held at the time when an applicant's request is received. Regulation 12(4)(a) is a qualified exception, which usually means that a public authority is required to conduct a public interest test to determine whether or not information should be disclosed or withheld. However, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), who is the independent regulator for requests made under the EIRs, takes the view that a public interest test in cases where the information is not held would serve no useful purpose. Therefore, in line with the ICO's view, Defra has not conducted a public interest test in this case.

Information disclosed in response to this EIR request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIR and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Information Rights Team
InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Nick Teall, Head of Information Rights, Area 1E, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF