



Animal &  
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Agency

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Our Ref: ATIC2601

[REDACTED]  
{By Email}

22 December 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

## PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information about the general licence review for conservation purposes which APHA received on 24 November 2021. Your request has been handled under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR's) 2004.

The information you requested and the response is detailed below:

"I would like to request the following information regarding General Licence review published in March 2021 and revisited between March 2021 and May 2021.

- After publication of the review in March 2021, Defra passed additional papers on to APHA who re-visited their review of the evidence base for inclusion of avian species on General Licences GL34, GL35 and GL36 in England to ascertain whether inclusion of these documents had any effect on the conclusions pertaining to jackdaw and rook and the general licence for conservation purposes (now general licence GL40).
- APHA's conclusion of the review was that in the case of rook and the conservation of red-listed wild birds, the overall strength of evidence changed from medium to high-medium.
  - 1) Could you please provide me with the results of APHA's review of additional evidence that led to the upgrade of the strength of evidence for rook from medium to high-medium in relation to red-listed wild birds.
  - 2) Could you please confirm that in relations to red-listed wild birds only, the evidence strength for both carrion crow and rook are now considered to be high-medium."

A copy of APHA's review sent to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) can be found at Appendix 1. This report evaluates the additional documents provided by DEFRA in respect to rook and jackdaw to ascertain whether these documents influenced the strength of evidence for these species pertaining to the general licence for conservation.

For your further information, subsequent to the above review of additional documents, there was a full update of the scientific review and evaluation of the strength of evidence for species-general license purposes. This update sourced and added any new scientific papers to the original review and strength of evidence evaluations that had been published since the original species-purpose review. This will have included the document Appendix 1. APHA understand that DEFRA intend to publish this updated review in early 2022.

The strength of evidence for both carrion crow and rook is now evaluated as 'high-medium' for red-listed birds. It should be noted, however, that there is a high degree of uncertainty in respect to the strength of evidence score for rook as detailed in the APHA report and also in a full updated review of evidence to be later published by Defra.

The subsequent decision-making on the inclusion of species on each general licence was conducted by DEFRA.

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, 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.

An Annex is attached which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below or postal address at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM**

Email: [enquiries@apha.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@apha.gov.uk)

## Annex

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### 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 the Access to Information Manager at the address at the top of this letter or email [enquiries@apha.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@apha.gov.uk) and the team will arrange for an internal review of your case.

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 APHA's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

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

### Coronavirus

If you need to contact the ICO during the Coronavirus pandemic, it's best to do so online. Please click [here](#) for contact details. You can also call them on 0303 123 1113.