



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL ENVIRONMENT
Directorate E - Implementation & Support to Member States
ENV.E.3 - Environmental Enforcement
Head of Unit

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ENV.E.3/SG/ad/ CHAP (2018) 00832

Mr Stephen Marsh-Smith
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Subject: CHAP (2018) 00832 agricultural pollution in Wales

Dear Mr Marsh-Smith

Your complaint has been registered under the above-mentioned reference number and passed to my unit for assessment. Please could I ask you to refer to this reference number in any future correspondence concerning this file. My apologies for the delay in responding.

In your complaint, you raise concerns about pollution from agricultural runoff in Wales, which is causing environmental damage in water bodies through-out Wales. We share some of your concerns about water pollution in Wales from agricultural sources and as a result, we have raised these through two EU pilot files which were already launched in 2015 and 2016 respectively. These concern compliance with Directive 2000/60/EC – the Water Framework Directive and Directive 91/676/EEC – the Nitrates Directive.

We have been informed that there has been wide public consultation in Wales as to further action that should be taken to better control diffuse pollution from agriculture and that an announcement on such future measures is imminent. We understand that consideration is being given to extend the existing minimal network of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) either to the whole territory of Wales or at least to expand it to cover some of the key areas concerned under the Nitrates Directive. We are also now looking at the second River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) communicated by the United Kingdom given that we raised concerns that the first round of plans were insufficiently ambitious with regard to action on controlling diffuse pollution from agriculture in England and Wales. In England, this complaint has at least in part been answered by the adoption of the Reduction and Prevention of Agriculture Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018, which came into force in April 2018.

Given that we are already in dialogue with the UK authorities in relation to agricultural water pollution in Wales, we will not be in a position to take your file forward separately. However, it would be of assistance if you could provide us with comments on the new RBMPs and whether there are issues of concern in these in some more detail to feed into our assessment. We will need to take a decision as to whether enough has been done to answer the concerns about diffuse pollution from agriculture raised in our EU pilot, which focused on the first RBMPs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Speight". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paul Speight