

Blueprint for Water is a unique coalition of environmental, water efficiency, fisheries and recreational organisations, part of the wider environmental NGO coalition, Wildlife and Countryside Link. Blueprint members come together to form a powerful joint voice across a range of water-based issues.

This request is supported by the following organisations:

- Angling Trust
- Amphibian & Reptile Conservation
- Institute of Fisheries Management
- Salmon & Trout Conservation
- RSPB
- The Rivers Trust
- The Wildlife Trusts
- Wildfowl & Wetland Trust

Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) request(s)

The Environment Agency (EA) periodically monitors a range of features to assess the ecological and chemical status of water bodies across England. The data are made available through the Catchment Data Explorer website, providing detailed information for each water body which is summarised in tables for each River Basin District. Currently there is no data available through Catchment Data Explorer on the status of our water bodies after 2016.

The EA has recently launched a consultation on 'Challenges and Choices', concerned with the 'significant water management issues' for the third cycle of River Basin Management Plans. Blueprint for Water is concerned that more recent information on the status of water bodies, which we are aware does exist, is not currently readily available in the public domain.

Information provided in the consultation documents includes some pressure data drawn from EA's Catchment Planning System in 2019, but does not provide the overall status of water bodies for years beyond 2016.

The public must have access to this information in order to make informed responses to the Challenges & Choices consultation. Whilst we recognise that a future consultation will focus in on the picture at a local level, the 'strategic scale' issues considered in the current consultation are simply an aggregate of local data. Stakeholders will find it difficult to meaningfully engage without an understanding of the current issues, described at a more local scale. We therefore formally request, under Freedom of Environmental Information legislation, that the following data is made available within with 20 working days of receiving this request:

- The number of water bodies in each status class for each River Basin District, based on the most recently obtained data, including any initial assessments made for the forthcoming reports
- The percentage of water bodies in each status class overall (i.e. England-level or all-RBD figures), based on the most recently obtained data, and the most up to date comparable data Defra holds on the WFD status of water bodies in other EU nations
- The number of water bodies failing to achieve Good Status (split into reasons for deterioration, RFD, and reasons for not achieving Good status, RNAG) due to each pressure (the 9 'challenges' discussed in the consultation document), for each River Basin District, based on the most recently obtained data. (We accept that there will be little or no information on plastics which do not form part of the WFD status classification)

Blueprint would be happy to receive these data in any suitable electronic format, either directly or by being alerted to their availability through the EA's Catchment Data Explorer website.