



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

Nobel House  
Area 1E  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

T: 03459 33 55 77  
helpline@defra.gov.uk  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

Mr Jonathan Sheppard

By email: [request-634564-9ab92d90@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-634564-9ab92d90@whatdotheyknow.com)

Our ref: FOI2020/00730  
7 February 2020

Dear Mr Sheppard,

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Peat Usage in Horticultural Products**

Thank you for your request for information of 14 January 2020 about peat usage in horticultural products. 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).

Your request for information and our response are set out below:

*Following the passing of the 2019 deadline for industry to make moves to cut peat in horticultural steps, with no discernible movement in this area, what steps is the Government taking, if any, to ensure all horticultural products no longer contain peat, and what timescale, if any is being worked to in order for peat based products to be removed from sale?*

The Government is committed to phasing out the use of peat in horticulture in England by 2030. In 2011 we set a voluntary target to phase out the use of horticultural peat in the amateur sector by 2020, and the professional sector by 2030. While some progress has been made, we stated in the 25 Year Environment Plan that we would consider implementing further measures if there is insufficient movement to peat alternatives by 2020. We will set out plans to speed up progress on ending the use of horticultural peat in the England Peat Strategy, which we will publish this year.

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](http://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 the address below.

Yours sincerely

**Mark Shotton**  
**Information Rights Team**  
[InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk](mailto: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 Andrew Mobsby, Head of Information Rights, Area 5B, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: [InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk](mailto: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