

## Update on Poole Harbour Nutrient Management Scheme

### Q&A

In the February update from the Poole Harbour Agriculture Group, we shared the responses to a number of questions raised by farmers from the NLT training sessions. That update can be found on the Resources page of our website [here](#). There were a few outstanding questions, which have now been answered by the Environment Agency, and whilst we appreciate that many of you have submitted your NLTs, I hope for some the following Q&A is useful. If something crops up from this bulletin that really affects your NLT that is submitted to PHAG, please get in touch and we can make amendments.

### NLT deadline fast approaching

Thank you to those of you who have submitted your NLT and ACT to us, they are certainly coming in thick and fast. For those that are outstanding, remember the deadline is the **31st March**. Please talk to us if you are having difficulties and we will do what we can to support you.

### Validation and verification

After the 31st March, we start the process of validating all the NLTs. Completing the NLT is a new process for the majority of you, so undoubtedly there will be some queries that unfold as we validate individual NLTs. Please don't be concerned about this as we will be in touch with you to resolve any queries. We are required to do a more detailed verification on 10% of NLTs submitted through the PHNMS, and we will find a suitable date and time to complete this process with those of you it involves.

### Membership of PHNMS

The final reminder about membership! Farmers can join PHAG to participate in PHNMS up to the 31st March. But in order to confirm your membership we do also need payment by the 31st March, so the terms of payment on your invoice will get shorter as we approach the end of the month. Farmers participating in PHNMS need to submit their NLT and ACT forms to PHAG via my email. Do NOT also send the NLT data to the EA. PHAG members' data will be anonymised and only shared with the EA at a catchment scale that protects the anonymity of each farm holding.

To join PHAG and participate in PHNMS, you need to fill out the farmer registration form on our website. It can be found at the bottom of the "Join here!" page, by clicking on the "Join here" button. This information is then sent to me for processing. I will then get in touch to complete your application and confirm payment.

The link to the page is here:

[Membership - Poole Harbour Nutrient Management Scheme](#)

I've kept this Bulletin brief in order to get the remainder of the NLT Q&A's out to you as quickly as possible.

Best wishes,  
Louise Stratton  
Development Manager



## **NLT Frequently Asked Questions - Environment Agency responses**

### **Land Use and Mitigation option questions:**

#### **Q. I rotate my grazing grass fields every few years and sow an arable crop before reversion to grazing land. How do I account for this in the tool?**

- A. Since the Grass land uses do not offer cover crops options, we suggest that you use the Arable: Italian Rye Grass option (as this has the lowest N coefficient), and then use the cover crop (if for example you sow stubble turnips) or a commercial crop (if you sow a winter crop).

#### **Q. How do I enter more than two crops in a year?**

- A. Essentially the tool allows you to identify the specific crop grown from spring through to summer (the crop you will harvest) or the land management for grassland systems. The tool then asks you to identify your post harvest/ autumn winter management. For this, rather than selecting the specific crop you identify if you are growing a "cover crop", "commercial crop" or by leaving the land management blank it is assumed for arable systems the land is left bare.

The tool currently does not have capacity to input two or more separate crops in a year. If this scenario applies to you, we request that you choose your highest yielding crop as your Land Use in the field data entry box. Once Land Use is selected, combine the total organic and/or manufactured N spread over ALL crops into the appropriate fertiliser boxes and also combined the yield produced from ALL your crops. This will therefore account for your whole N input and offtake over the 1 year period. Please ensure to make a note of the fields in which you did the above when submitting the tool.

#### **Q. How do I record catch crops?**

- A. Catch crops are not specifically included in the tool. They may however temporarily take up a small amount of nitrogen before a follow on crop is sown. The benefit in terms of N leaching depends on how well the crop is established, how and when it is destroyed and when the follow on crop is sown.

If the catch crop is grazed off, much of the N that was taken up by the crop will be deposited back to the soil and will be available to be taken up by the autumn crop that is sown or will be leached. In this case the "catch crop" can be ignored as the leaching risk will not change much.



### **Q. Why can't management practice options such as "early harvest" and "sow cover crop early" as well as "spring instead of autumn cultivation" and "reduced cultivation" be used together?**

- A. We are aware that there are several mitigation options that cannot be used together. This is because the tool is interpreting these mitigation options as double counting for similar activities. We will be looking into updating this, and recommend for the time being that land managers choose the mitigation method (of the two) which offers the greatest N reduction.

### **Technical Background Questions:**

#### **Q. Where does the rainfall data come from?**

- A. National rainfall data has been analysed to produce at the field scale, from the long term average Hydrologically Effective Rainfall. This is the proportion of rainfall that does not run-off, is not evapotranspired but drains through the soil zone, transporting available nitrate that has been leached.

#### **Q. Can I change the value of my atmospheric N deposition in atmosphere?**

- A. Atmospheric dry and wet nitrogen deposition rate varies across the country according to a number of factors, including the presence of local point sources such as power plants and other heavy industry. The NLT uses a rate taken from maps of total nitrogen deposition (dry and wet) developed by UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH, 2016). From the 5km resolution CEH maps, average values have been estimated for each 100km OS grid square. These results can be found in the "Atmospheric Deposition" worksheet in the NLT and the default value adjusted by choosing the OS grid square that covers the majority of your land area.

The average annual deposition for the majority of the Poole Harbour catchment covered by sheets ST, SU, SY is 20kg/ha. The appropriate deposition rate for your land area should be used in your NLT calculation. Further data source for Poole harbour can be found on the APIS website. This figure should not be changed from the value included in the tool for the OS square you farm.