



## Diffuse Pollution – Reducing the Risk

*“Every loss of soil and nutrients is a loss to the farm business”*

Clean and healthy water is an integral part of Scotland’s culture. We need to ensure its protection for our drinking water, the success of our world-renowned products, our important wildlife, and our tourism and leisure industry. Diffuse pollution has been identified as one of the key impacts to our water environment.

### Reduce pollution risk at source by:

- Timing fertiliser application to avoid heavy rainfall.
- Planning fertiliser application using Risk Assessment for Manures and Slurries (RAMS) and PLANET Scotland. This could save you money.
- Minimising soil erosion.
- Minimising dirty water around the steading.
- Ensuring contractors and farm workers are aware of the rules.

### Reduce the risk of run-off by:

- Managing soil structure and compaction.
- Managing tramline and farm track run-off.
- Keeping clean and dirty water separate on the farm steading.
- Providing an adequate vegetated buffer zone.
- Creating bankside woodlands, shelter belts, hedges and wetlands.



*Examples of good (L) and poor (R) soil structure.*



*Vegetated buffer zones can protect water quality.*



*Applying slurry to meet crop demand can make best use of nutrients on the farm.*

# Diffuse Pollution – Reducing the Risk

Farming and other industries in Scotland are dependent on clean and plentiful water. Diffuse pollution, driven by rainfall and land management, can damage our water quality.

## Good practice to protect water quality

Most pollutants only become a problem once they leave the field or stading. There are key steps you can consider to reduce pollution risks and keep on the right side of the regulations, for example:

- Making best use of inputs, e.g. nutrients from manures and fertilisers.
- Identifying high pollution risk areas on the farm.
- Managing drainage appropriately.
- Protecting watercourses through buffer zones or changes to current practice.
- Protecting soils; land management affects the speed water runs off the land taking soil and nutrients to watercourses.
- Understanding threats to water quality in your area. Are you within a bathing water, drinking water or catchment important for wildlife?

## How can you benefit?

Reducing diffuse pollution risks from your farm can:

- Make your business more efficient; for example, nutrient planning optimises fertiliser use.
- Improve water quality on your farm.
- Improve efficiency. Better use of resources could increase the resilience of farming to climate change, floods and droughts.
- Keep you on the right side of the regulations and help to protect your farm payments.

## Need more information?

More detailed guidance is available, for example The 4 Point Plan (contains RAMS), the Farm Soils Plan and PEPFAA code. PLANET Scotland is a free nutrient management tool that also ensures you comply with NVZ Action Programmes.

For additional information about reducing pollution risks and benefitting the farm business, see [www.farmingandwaterscotland.org](http://www.farmingandwaterscotland.org) Alternatively speak to your agricultural consultant.



This fact sheet is intended to act as a reminder of the rules. To see the rules in more detail, see [www.farmingandwaterscotland.org](http://www.farmingandwaterscotland.org)