UTILITY OF ALLOCATION AS A MECHANISM TO MANAGE NITROGEN IN THE ABSENCE OF AN UNDERSTANDING OF ATTENUATION

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The allocation of nitrogen losses to land is seen as a necessary practice within nitrogen management frameworks. Allocation of a "number" to a hectare of land has variously been advocated as providing certainty and equity between land users. However, allocations are typically done in a manner that average nitrogen attenuation between the root zone and an instream monitoring point at 50%.

This analysis looks at the 50% assumption and compares it to other assumptions to test its usefulness as a nitrogen management framework.

Changing the assumption pertaining to attenuation and the effect that has on the utility of allocation as a nitrogen management framework is discussed as well as corresponding effect on the notion of certainty and equity.

Suggestions are made as to how the resource management field can avoid short term limitations in knowledge about attenuation while still reducing N loss to water.

Editor's Note: A manuscript has not yet been submitted for this presentation.