# Tackling the nature emergency

## Consultation on Scotland's Strategic Framework for Biodiversity

September 2023

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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# Ministerial Foreword

We are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis. The facts are beyond doubt: nature is declining fast. It is estimated that 1 million species across the world are at threat of extinction. Here in Scotland, nearly half of our species have decreased in abundance and 11 per cent are under threat of extinction. Nature has an intrinsic value, but its complex diversity and abundance of life is also central to our survival as a species. Our economy, jobs, health and wellbeing depend on it. Restoring biodiversity is crucial in tackling the climate crisis, and tackling the climate crisis will be essential for restoring biodiversity. Across the world, ocean and land ecosystems remove about 50 per cent of the carbon emissions that are produced by us each year.

The Scottish Government is committed to restoring Scotland's natural environment and supporting thriving communities and wildlife alike. In December 2022 we published our draft Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, setting out our clear ambition for Scotland to be Nature Positive by 2030 and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity by 2045. The Strategy was published in draft form to allow us to incorporate the outcomes from COP15 and meet our international obligations.

We have begun to make significant progress in recent years, but it is clear that we need to go further and faster. The Biodiversity Strategy sets out our high-level ambition and will be supported by a series of 5 year rolling delivery plans. This consultation is seeking your views and input on the final version of the Strategy, and the first delivery plan, which sets out the key actions we need to take.

The Strategy will also be supported by a Natural Environment Bill which will set out the framework for statutory targets for nature restoration. These targets will demonstrate whether delivery actions have been effective and will hold the Scottish Government to account. Part B of this consultation is seeking your views on the framework for statutory targets, as well as other legislative proposals that will help to halt biodiversity decline. These proposals include changes to the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 in order to strengthen the leadership role of National Parks in tackling the interlinked crises of climate and biodiversity.

To reverse the biodiversity crisis, we will need high level strategic leadership, alongside responsible public and private investment to achieve our outcomes. This must include a whole-of-society approach which engages communities, business and decision makers alike.

We want to ensure that the development of these proposals is open, fair and transparent. This consultation is a chance to provide your views on the impact these

proposals could have on you and your communities. Your input will pave the way for this critical action to deliver a restored and thriving natural environment in Scotland. I look forward to hearing from you.

**Lorna Slater MSP**
**Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity**

# Responding to this consultation

We are inviting responses to this consultation by **14 December 2023**.

You are not required to answer every question in the consultation. The consultation is set out in sections to help you identify matters in which you may have a particular interest.

Please respond to this consultation using the Scottish Government's consultation hub, Citizen Space. Access and respond to this consultation online at the consultation page of the gov.scot website.

You can save and return to your responses while the consultation is still open. Please ensure that consultation responses are submitted before the closing date of 14 December 2023.

If you are unable to respond using our consultation hub, please send your response along with a completed Respondent Information Form, which can found at the end of this document, to:
By email: biodiversityconsultation@gov.scot
Or by post:

Nature Division
Directorate for Environment and Forestry
Scottish Government
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

**Handling your response**
If you respond using the consultation hub, you will be directed to the About You page before submitting your response. Please indicate how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are content for your response to published. If you ask for your response not to be published, we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise. If you are unable to respond via Citizen Space, please complete and return the Respondent Information Form included in this document. To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy.

**Next steps in the process**
Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public, and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material, responses will be made available to the public at Citizen Space. If you use the consultation hub to respond, you will receive a copy of your response via email. Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us. Responses will be published where we have been given permission to do so. An analysis report will also be made available.

**Comments and complaints**
If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to the contact address above or at biodiversityconsultation@gov.scot

**Scottish Government consultation process**
Consultation is an essential part of the policymaking process. It gives us the opportunity to consider your opinion and expertise on a proposed area of work. You can find all our consultations online at Citizen Space. Each consultation details the issues under consideration, as well as a way for you to give us your views, either online, by email or by post.

Responses will be analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. We will publish a report of this analysis for every consultation. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.

# Introduction

This consultation is seeking views on a range of topics and proposals related to biodiversity and tackling the nature emergency in Scotland.

It covers three parts of the Biodiversity Strategic Framework:

1. The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy which sets out our vision to halt and reverse biodiversity loss;
2. The first five-year Delivery Plan which contains the actions to deliver the vision; and
3. The proposed Natural Environment Bill which will provide a framework for establishing statutory nature targets to drive delivery and the transformational change we need.

This consultation document is set out in two parts. **Part A** is consulting on the final draft of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, the first five-year Delivery Plan, and policy frameworks for Nature Networks and protecting at least 30% of our lands and seas by 2030 (30 by 30).

**Part B** of this consultation seeks your views on proposals related to tackling the nature emergency that will require legislation, specifically statutory targets for nature restoration and changes to National Parks legislation.

### The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy

In December 2022, the Scottish Government published its draft Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. It set out a vision, outcomes and 33 priority actions designed to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

These outcomes and actions are framed around high-level objectives to:

- Accelerate restoration and regeneration;

- Protect nature on land and at sea, across and beyond protected areas
- Embed nature positive farming, fishing and forestry
- Protect and support the recovery of vulnerable and important species and habitats;
- Invest in Nature; and,
- Take action on the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

The Strategy was published in draft to ensure that the outcomes of COP15 could be incorporated into a final strategy. An updated version is included here for final review.

**The Delivery Plan**

The Strategy will be underpinned by a series of five-year Delivery Plans. The plan is comprehensive and ambitious – it contains over 100 actions which taken together represent a **step change** which will accelerate the **pace** and **scale** of our efforts to address the biodiversity crisis. The delivery plan encompasses actions across different sectors and policy areas on the premise that only by mainstreaming biodiversity in the same way as we do for climate will we be able to drive the step change needed to deliver our vision.

**This consultation is seeking your views on the first five-year Delivery Plan**.

**Nature Networks and 30 by 30 Policy Frameworks**

The Biodiversity Strategy includes a commitment to protecting 30% of land and seas for nature by 2030 and ensuring that every local authority area has a nature network to improve ecological connectivity across Scotland.

Policy frameworks for delivering these commitments have been developed through a co-design process, involving over 100 organisations and individuals representing a diverse range of interests. These frameworks set out a vision and key principles which will guide the further development and delivery of policy.

**This consultation is seeking your views on the policy frameworks.**

**The proposed Natural Environment Bill**

The Bute House Agreement includes a commitment to passing a new Natural Environment Bill in the current parliament. A key element of the Bill will be the introduction of legally binding **nature restoration targets**[1]**.** These targets will drive forward action to tackle the nature emergency and provide a clear accountability

[1] 'The Bute House Agreement', Shared Policy Programme, "Working Together to Build a Greener, Fairer, Independent Scotland", August 2021

framework for ensuring we deliver on the commitments set out in the strategy. Statutory targets will nest within a wider monitoring framework, measuring progress against our domestic and international obligations and commitments, primarily the Kunming/Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).[2]

**This consultation is seeking your views on the policy framework and the process we have identified for developing statutory targets.**

The proposed Natural Environment Bill may also be used as a vehicle for other legislation relating to biodiversity and nature restoration. This may include changes to the legislation governing Scotland's National Parks. Last year's public consultation on the future of National Parks in Scotland highlighted the important role of National Parks in tackling the climate and biodiversity crises, as well as welcoming visitors and supporting local communities and businesses. The current legislative framework for National Parks is the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 ('the 2000 Act') is over twenty years old. In order for existing and new National Parks to respond most effectively to today's societal challenges, the underpinning legal framework needs to be updated and refreshed.

**The consultation is seeking your views on a number of proposals to update National Parks legislation.**

Consultations on other policy areas proposed to be included in the Bill will take place later in 2023 and may include proposals for legislation required to deliver our 30 by 30 commitment, and proposals to implement the recommendations of the Deer Working Group.

## The Proposals

This consultation paper covers a number of inter-related policy areas and you do not have to answer every question. Efforts have been made to structure the document to make it accessible to the reader, acknowledging that some will have an interest in all the proposals while others will wish to focus on those of greatest interest to them. The document, and questions in Citizen Space, are structured as follows:

| Section | Subject |
|---|---|
| One | Scottish Biodiversity Strategy |
| Two | Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan |
| Three | Nature Networks Delivery Framework |
| Four | 30 by 30 Delivery Framework |
| Five | Impact Assessments for Part A |

[2] Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (cbd.int)

| | |
|---|---|
| Six | Statutory Targets for Nature Restoration |
| Seven | National Parks |
| Eight | Impact Assessments for Part B |

# PART A

# Section One: Scottish Biodiversity Strategy

## Introduction

The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045: tackling the nature emergency sets out the compelling evidence of long-standing global and Scottish biodiversity loss and our high-level goals for biodiversity: **to be Nature Positive, halting biodiversity loss by 2030 and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity across the country by 2045.** This is embodied in the **Strategic Vision:**

> By 2045, Scotland will have restored and regenerated biodiversity across our land, freshwater and seas.
>
> Our natural environment, our habitats, ecosystems and species, will be diverse, thriving, resilient and adapting to climate change.
>
> Regenerated biodiversity will drive a sustainable economy and support thriving communities, and people.

The Strategy identifies a series of **outcomes** which capture what success looks like across our landscapes and marine environments and five high level **objectives**, with a sixth now identified, which embody the action we need to take to achieve those outcomes:

1. Accelerate restoration and regeneration;
2. Protect nature on land and at sea, across and beyond protected areas
3. Embed nature positive farming, fishing and forestry
4. Protect and support the recovery of vulnerable and important species and habitats;
5. Invest in Nature; and,
6. Take action on the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

The draft strategy was published for consultation on 12 September 2022, resulting in 1,289 responses (including 1,010 in response to two campaigns by the RSPB and the Woodland Trust). An analysis of comments made, and a summary of the Government's response to them is now available at https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781835212813.

The draft strategy is published again here, alongside our draft Delivery Plan and proposals for elements of the proposed Natural Environment Bill. Only minimal amendments have been made to the draft strategy at this stage (correction of

typographical and factual errors and updating of the table of international targets to incorporate the Kunming / Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework which was agreed in December 2022). We are not therefore seeking further views on the strategy document but include it here to provide the link from strategy to delivery plan. The final Strategy and Delivery Plan will be published together, incorporating changes in response to this and previous consultations.

# Section Two: Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan

## Chapter 1

## Introduction: From Strategy to Delivery

The Scottish *Biodiversity strategy to 2045: tackling the nature emergency* sets out the compelling evidence of long-standing global and Scottish biodiversity loss. The Strategy sets our goal: **to halt biodiversity loss and be Nature Positive by 2030 and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity across the country by 2045.**

This is embodied in the **Strategic Vision:**

> By 2045, Scotland will have restored and regenerated biodiversity across our land, freshwater and seas.
>
> Our natural environment, our habitats, ecosystems and species, will be diverse, thriving, resilient and adapting to climate change.
>
> Regenerated biodiversity will drive a sustainable economy and support thriving communities, and people.

The Strategy identifies a series of outcomes which capture what success looks like across our landscapes and marine environments.

A series of rolling delivery plans will ensure our approach is agile and dynamic and responding to conditions on the ground or at sea. This is the first draft delivery plan. It outlines the actions we need to take to set us on the path to meeting the 2030 milestone and delivering the vision. We anticipate refreshing and publishing delivery plans approximately every five years.

This Delivery Plan was developed through a modelling process. It was developed with the input of experts, scientists and key stakeholders. These actions were refined through discussion with policy experts, delivery partners and stakeholders. The full process is detailed here.

The resulting set of actions forms the basis for this Delivery Plan. They are organised under the **five objectives** set out in the strategy:

1. Accelerate restoration and regeneration;
2. Protect nature on land and at sea, across and beyond protected areas;
3. Embed nature-positive farming, fishing and forestry;
4. Protect and support the recovery of vulnerable and important species and habitats;
5. Invest in Nature; and,

We have added a sixth objective to capture a broader set of actions:

6. Take action on the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss

These objectives align broadly with the drivers of biodiversity loss identified by UN advisory body IPBES[3] and the Global Biodiversity Framework's Goals and Targets.

Actions under each of the objectives in the Delivery Plan includes a landscape or seascape code that identifies which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely (see list of codes below). Some of the actions are universal and contribute to several outcomes. Others are more specific to landscapes or marine environments. To filter the list of actions by landscape and seascape code, please view this alternative format for the tables.

**Landscape and Seascape Codes:**

Woodlands –

Coastal –

Freshwater –

Urban –

Uplands and Peatlands –

Soils –

Agriculture –

Marine –

Overarching -

[3] Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

# Chapter 2

# Objective 1: Accelerate Restoration and Regeneration

The actions set out in this Chapter align with CBD Goal A and Targets 2, 6 and 9. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration aims to prevent, halt, and reverse the degradation of ecosystems across our land and seas.

Large-scale ecosystem restoration on land and sea is at the heart of our efforts to tackle the nature-climate crisis. Healthy and restored ecosystems will massively contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions and help us adapt to the climate change which is already happening. The restoration of ecosystems in urban areas is also important, requiring changes to the way we plan and manage the green and blue spaces of our towns and cities (**Chapter 3**).

Work is already in progress across Scotland to restore and regenerate ecosystems and habitats including for example ambitious woodland creation and peatland restoration programmes but we urgently need to **accelerate** and expand the **scale** of our efforts.

### Proposed Key Actions

Detailed actions contributing to Objective 1 are contained in the Delivery Plan tables on page 18. The most significant are summarised here. We will:

- **Introduce Statutory Nature Restoration Targets –** The Natural Environment Bill will put in place a framework for statutory nature targets.

- Identify and facilitate partnership projects for **six large scale landscape restoration areas** with significant woodland components by 2025 and establish management structures with restoration work progressing by 2030.

- **Implement the Scottish Plan for INNS Surveillance, Prevention and Control** and secure wider support measures to enable long-term effective INNS removal at scale. INNS management and damage costs increase rapidly over time as new species arrive and established ones continue to spread due to many factors, including as a consequence of climate change. Investing in prevention provides economic returns up to fifty times higher than trying to manage an INNS after it arrives.

- **Increase resilience in coastal and marine systems by reducing key pressures and safeguard space for coastal habitat change.** Actions that provide naturally functioning coastal habitats and landforms will reduce key pressures on the coast and allow for natural change and adaptation to sea level rise and coastal erosion. Tackling marine litter and plastics, noise, other marine

contaminants and seabed disturbance will provide healthier marine ecosystems that can maximise support for biodiversity.

- **Substantially reduce deer densities across our landscapes in parallel with ensuring sustainable management of grazing by sheep to improve overall ecosystem health.** Reducing herbivore impacts is one of the biggest levers we have in Scotland for reducing biodiversity loss and enabling regeneration at scale. It is a pre-requisite for many of our nature restoration activities including peatland and woodland restoration.

  We will work with the deer management sector to secure average densities of 2 deer per $km^2$ in priority woodland, 5-8 deer per $km^2$ in the Cairngorms National Park, and more widely a maximum of 10 deer per $km^2$ nationally by 2030. This will require a minimum increase of 25-30% on current cull levels sustained over several years. Careful alignment of incentives and regulatory levers will be needed to achieve optimal herbivore densities and reduced grazing and browsing impacts to support biodiversity outcomes.

  We will explore how best to support optimal herbivore densities to enhance biodiversity outcomes in the uplands.

- **Implement a Programme of Ecosystem Restoration –** The Habitat Map of Scotland (HabMoS) gives extensive detail on globally and nationally important habitats and ecosystems.[4] Alongside our peatland restoration programme, the restoration of Scotland's Rainforest has already been identified as a priority for restoration and we will further develop a funding and investment model to deliver this. We will also identify species assemblages and species which require action beyond that focussed on the restoration of their ecosystem, and update the Scottish Biodiversity List (Chapter 5).

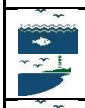
- **Enhance water and air quality and undertake water management measures to enhance biodiversity and reduce negative impacts.** We will address pollution, water and air quality, and extremes of water availability, through a range of mechanisms to support the restoration of ecosystems and provide wider societal benefits.

- **Ensure Grouse-Moor management sustains healthy biodiversity.** The Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Bill is addressing raptor

[4] The programme of ecosystem restoration will include the following ecosystems: Montane and arctic-alpine scrub, heath and grasslands; Oceanic bryophyte-rich upland heaths; Peatlands; Temperate (Atlantic) rainforest; Caledonian pinewood; Other ancient woodlands of all types; Species rich grasslands; Rivers, riparian woods, freshwater lochs, ponds and freshwater wetlands; Machair; Coastal dunes and shingle; Saltmarsh; Estuaries; Maritime cliff habitats; Urban ecosystems rich in native plants and ponds; Marine habitats included on the Priority Marine Feature list; Island ecosystems especially vulnerable to Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) or outstanding for nature.

persecution and the use of muirburn to ensure it is undertaken in an environmentally sustainable manner by trained individuals.

| Code[5] | Action |
|---|---|
| | **Introduce statutory nature restoration Targets** |
| | • Drive cross sectoral action by introducing a framework for statutory nature restoration targets in the proposed Natural Environment Bill (scheduled to be introduced in this parliamentary session). |

| Code | Introduce a Programme of Ecosystem Restoration |
|---|---|
| | • Identify and facilitate partnership projects for six large scale landscape restoration areas with significant woodland components by 2025 and establish management structures with restoration work progressing by 2030. |
| | • Develop the new Register of Ancient Woodlands, to include locational data, a definition of the required 'protected and restored' condition of ancient woodlands, and a process for recording ancient woodlands that reach the required standard. |
| | • Support landowners to protect and restore priority ancient woodlands by 2030, where the initial priority list is those protected/designated woodlands that are currently in unfavourable condition. |
| | • Develop a strategic approach for restoring Scotland's Rainforest by 2024<br>○ Building on the work of the Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest agree and publish a strategic approach<br>○ Working with partners produce a framework for funding and support for SG delivery in priority areas<br>○ Investigate the application of technology to improve monitoring and follow up work. |
| | • Develop best practice guidance on measures for upland restoration to regenerate peatlands, increase native woodland cover, manage grazing, protect certain target species and priority habitats, and increase habitat heterogeneity. |
| | • Develop a national peatland monitoring framework that incorporates on-site and remotely sensed assessments of biodiversity indicators, climate resilience and associated functions within the wider landscape, hydrological and ecological network contexts. |
| | • Following consultation in early 2023, continue on-going work towards implementing a ban on the sale of peat in Scotland. |
|  | • Publish a plan for marine and coastal ecosystem restoration, including prioritising habitats and locations suitable for restoration by 2025. |
| | • Deliver additional protection for spawning and juvenile congregation areas, and for species which are integral components of the marine food web, such as sandeels by 2028. |

[5] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Develop a new approach to marine biodiversity monitoring, including testing through pilots, covering both state and pressure work. This will include a review of the Scottish MPA Monitoring Strategy (2028).<br>STATE:<br>○ Develop and implement a co-ordinated programme of benthic habitat surveillance;<br>○ Extend existing plankton monitoring programmes;<br>○ Undertake targeted monitoring of fish species that are integral components of marine food webs to enable better assessment of the effects of prey availability on seabird and marine mammal populations.<br>PRESSURE:<br>○ Continue to develop bycatch and entanglement surveillance schemes;<br>○ Extend the requirement for Vessel Tracking and Monitoring Systems across the whole commercial fishing fleet by 2026, and increase capacity and capability in related compliance monitoring and protection;<br>○ Extend current monitoring programme for marine litter to include monitoring of microplastics;<br>○ Work with marine users to establish an effective risk-based monitoring and surveillance programme for marine INNS. |
| | • Implement a programme of measures to restore catchments and rivers through River Basin Management Planning to achieve 81% of water bodies at 'Good' or better condition by 2027. |
| | • Convene stakeholders to implement local and national catchment restoration initiatives, developing best practice through demonstration sites and the provision of expert advice by 2030. |

| Code[6] | **Implement Scottish Plan for INNS Surveillance, Prevention and Control.** |
|---|---|
| | • Take action to ensure pathways for the introduction and spread of INNS are managed to prevent or reduce their rate of introduction and establishment, and prevent further damage to ecosystems. To include:<br>i. reducing the rate of establishment of known or potential INNS by at least 50% by 2030 compared to 2020 level; and,<br>ii. detection of priority INNS through increased inspections and vigilance of citizen scientists and eradicated or contained before they become established and spread. |
| | • Develop and implement a pipeline of strategic INNS projects to coordinate the control of priority INNS at scale, to eliminate or reduce the impacts of INNS in at least 30% of priority sites by 2030. |
| | • Raise public awareness of the impacts of INNS and embed INNS biosecurity practice across industries and recreational activities linked to the most important pathways of introduction and spread by 2030. |

[6] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Develop best practice guidelines and a voluntary code of conduct for INNS biosecurity suitable for supporting marine habitat restoration by 2025. |
| | • Complete feasibility study of eradication / managed control of marine INNS and develop and implement a rolling programme of island INNS management, focussed on targeted removal of predators impacting on nesting seabirds. |

| Code[7] | **Improve Resilience in Coastal and Marine Systems by reducing pressures and increase and safeguard space for coastal habitat change** |
|---|---|
| | • Identify and address gaps in current evidence on coastal habitats, through research and monitoring as an enabling action for all coastal biodiversity actions (2024-2028) and fund research commencing in 2024 into better quantifying the adaptation benefits of coastal landforms and habitats to maximise biodiversity benefits. |
| | • Develop Coastal Change Adaptation Plans (CCAPs) which promote:<br>o National, regional, and local partnerships which deliver adaptive coastal management with benefits for flood and coastal change management and biodiversity.<br>o Promotion of naturally functioning coastal landforms and habitats to reduce pressures, allow recovery and improve their health and resilience to enable natural functioning and associated biodiversity benefits.<br>o Embed Dynamic Coast's "sea level rise" predictive adaptive management approach (to forecast coastal and flood changes) including in public engagement via local partnerships, to allow opportunities to be identified to safeguard and create dynamic natural, biodiverse habitats. |
| | • Investigate scope to identify and create appropriate coastal accommodation space to promote recovery and adaptation, and explore funding options enabling future strategies and plans to protect dynamic natural biodiverse coastal habitats. |
| | • Reduce marine litter and marine plastics:<br>o Implement the Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland through a 6 year action plan, published in 2022;<br>o Develop a waste management scheme to improve recycling routes for the end of life fishing gear by 2027<br>o Enable improved plastic pellet handling and management across the plastics supply chain to reduce pellet loss, and provide guidance to support pellet clean up in the environment by end 2025 |
| | • Contribute to the OSPAR action to agree a regional action plan by 2025, setting out a series of national and collective actions and, as appropriate, OSPAR measures to reduce noise pollution. |
| | • Develop policy by 2028 to address contaminants that exceed OSPAR threshold values. |

[7] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| Code[8] | **Substantially reduce deer densities across our landscapes in parallel with ensuring sustainable management of grazing by sheep to improve overall ecosystem health** |
|---|---|
| | • Introduce new deer legislation which will modernise the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 and introduce new powers for intervention for the purposes of enhancing or restoring nature, including preventing biodiversity loss, by 2025. |
| | • Establish a national deer management programme including monitoring capacity. |
| | • Set deer cull to level at which habitats and ecosystems can recover and regenerate and deer densities are maintained at sustainable levels and appropriate to context by 2030;<br>• Broad targets of 2 deer per $km^2$ in priority woodland, 5-8 deer per $km^2$ in Cairngorms National Park and 10 deer per $km^2$ nationally by 2030. |
| | • Explore how best to support optimal herbivore densities to enhance biodiversity outcomes in the uplands. |
| | • Establish mechanisms to ensure new and existing woodlands are designed to enable effective and safe deer management such as within revised FGS by 2027. |

| Code | **Enhance water and air quality. Undertake water management measures to enhance biodiversity.** |
|---|---|
| | • Ensure River Basin Management Plans include actions to limit pollution and improve water quality achieving Good status in over 90% of waterbodies by 2030. |
| | • Ensure contaminants of emerging concern that may impact on biodiversity are identified through existing mechanisms with an additional system in place by 2030 that uses Scottish data to identify new problems. |
| | • Contribute to the reform of UK chemicals regulations by 2030. |
| | • Support projects and programmes (2023-2030) that complement regulation to address emerging or novel contaminants in the water environment, e.g. The One Health Breakthrough Partnership on pharmaceuticals and the water industry's Chemical Investigation Programme. |
| | • Implement actions in The Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 strategy by 2026. |
| | • Take an adaptive approach to abstraction and flows management to protect freshwater biodiversity from the impacts of water scarcity in response to future climate change pressures, using the Controlled Activity Regulations and review of abstraction. |
| | • Continue to invest in improvements to the wastewater service to improve freshwater biodiversity by upgrading 40 wastewater treatment works and 24 intermittent sewage discharges, as required, by 2027. |
| | • Develop a mechanism to promote positive management of rural and urban sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for biodiversity benefits. |

[8] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Maintain the long term monitoring of the freshwater environment in addition to being enhanced and supplemented by new developing technologies such as eDNA when available. |

| Code[9] | Ensure Grouse Moor management sustains healthy biodiversity |
|---|---|
| | • Introduce legislation and develop a licensing approach to grouse moor management.<br>• Develop with stakeholders a new Code of Practice on grouse shooting to ensure moorland management supports biodiversity by 2025. |
| | • Introduce legislation and revise Muirburn Code to regulate the use of all muirburn and only allow burning on peatland by exception for limited purposes by 2025. |

**Question 2a: Have we captured the key actions needed to deliver the objective: accelerate restoration and regeneration?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
……
……
……
……
……

**Question 2b: Are the key actions, to support the objective: accelerate restoration and regeneration, sufficient to put Scotland on track to ending the loss of biodiversity by 2030?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
……
……
……
……
……

[9] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

**Question 2c: Which actions do you think will have most impact?**

Please state the actions and explain the reasons for your response:

……
……
……
……
……

# Chapter 3

# Objective 2: Protect Nature on Land and at Sea across and beyond Protected Areas

These Actions align with CBD Goal A and Targets 1, 2, and 3.

Halting biodiversity loss by 2030 and adapting to climate change requires a step change in action to protect and restore habitats for the long-term and ensure they are well connected. Areas that are protected for nature through legal designation and other mechanisms, and the nature networks they form a part of, form a vital backbone for nature recovery across the wider land and sea. Protected areas provide benefits for society through capture and storage of carbon, provision of local employment opportunities and support to health and wellbeing. They provide a wide range of environmental services including pollinator services, water quality and flood management.

## Key Actions

The set of detailed actions underpinning Objective 2 are set out in the Table below.

Most significantly we will:

- **Ensure that at least 30% of land and sea is protected and effectively managed to support nature in good health by 2030 (30 by 30).** Areas that are protected for nature through legal designation and other mechanisms contribute to protecting the most important areas for biodiversity, ecosystem functions and services.

  On land, currently 18.2% is formally designated, meaning we need to protect approximately 990,000 additional hectares for nature, through a combination of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and formal designations. This does not mean removing people or all activity from this land, rather it is about developing an approach to sharing our land to create positive outcomes for our biodiversity. We have engaged extensively with stakeholders to develop a policy framework for 30 by 30 which sets out the vision and principles underpinning its implementation. We will continue to engage with stakeholders to build an implementation road map which will include guidance on how we will operationalise OECMs in Scotland. The proposed Natural Environment Bill will provide the opportunity to put in place any legislative provisions necessary. Framework for 30 by 30 in Scotland - Draft | NatureScot

  Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) already cover 37% of our seas. We will put in place fisheries management measures for those sites in the Marine Protected

Area (MPA) network that require them, increasing the level of protection to support the recovery and resilience of Scotland's Seas. We will continue our engagement with stakeholders, developing a new pathway and timetable for enhancing marine protection.

- **Expand the role of National Parks and ensure they act as exemplars of biodiversity protection and recovery.** Scotland currently has two National Parks and plan to designate at least one more by 2026. We are consulting on a refreshed purpose for our National Park authorities which will emphasise their role in addressing the climate and nature emergencies. New Partnership Plans set out ambitious visions and targets with respect to nature restoration and place an increased emphasis on the role of the Parks' communities, third sector organisations and the public and private sectors in the implementation of those Partnership Plans.

- **Fulfil the potential of National Nature Reserves (NNRs) for nature recovery.** As well as providing places for nature to flourish, Scotland's 43 NNRs are important gateways to nature, providing opportunities for all of Scotland's people to experience and enjoy the best of Scotland's habitats and wildlife. We will identify opportunities for expansion or the designation of new NNRs. Working with the NNR partnership, we will ensure these sites are managed as key building blocks for Nature Networks across Scotland.

- **Expand and enhance Nature Networks and ecological connectivity.** By 2030 each Local Authority in Scotland will have a spatially defined Nature Network. Important areas for biodiversity, other sites of local importance for biodiversity (e.g. Local Nature Reserves) and areas being restored for nature will also contribute to Nature Networks. They will provide a range of opportunities for more people, especially those in urban areas, to experience and connect with nature. We have engaged extensively with stakeholders to develop a policy framework for nature networks which sets out the vision and principles underpinning its implementation. Framework for Nature Networks in Scotland - Draft | NatureScot

- **Champion new planning and development measures for protecting and enhancing biodiversity.** NPF4 is Scotland's national spatial strategy and has the climate and nature crises at its heart. It sets out our spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy. We have identified several key actions which will ensure NPF4 secures positive effects for biodiversity such as exploring options for developing a biodiversity metric .

- **Enhance biodiversity in Scotland's green and blue spaces.** The green and blue spaces within and around our buildings and settlements, particularly in our urban areas, provide important places for both people and nature, many of which can be enhanced for biodiversity. We will establish a new National Charter with a clear vision for improving biodiversity in our urban green and blue spaces, and support delivery through strategies and plans that promote best practice management, wider sharing and greater understanding.

| Code [10] | Action |
|---|---|
| | **Ensure that at least 30% of land and sea is protected or conserved and effectively managed to support nature in good health by 2030 (30 by 30)** |
| | • By 2030, ensure that at least 30% of land and sea is protected or conserved, as protected areas or Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), and effectively managed to support nature restoration. |
| | • Develop and implement a monitoring regime to ensure that Protected Area sites deliver their objectives. |
| | • Put in place fisheries management measures for those sites in the MPA network that require them by 2025, increasing the level of protection to support the recovery and resilience of Scotland's Seas. |
| | • Develop and implement an adaptive management framework for the MPA network by 2028. |
| | • Assess the network of marine protected areas in respect of the resilience of marine biodiversity to climate change by 2026, based on a regional assessment by OSPAR. |
| | • Establish a programme to enable protected woodlands to be brought into favourable condition with clear targets and a clear framework for decision making. |

| Code | Expand the role of National Parks and ensure they act as exemplars of biodiversity protection and recovery |
|---|---|
| | • Designate at least one new National Park by 2026. |
| | • Strengthen the powers and governance of our National Parks by 2026. |
| | • Ensure National Parks, National Nature Reserves and protected areas are exemplars in better delivery of biodiversity outcomes by 2030. |

| Code | Fulfil the potential of National Nature Reserves (NNRs) for nature recovery |
|---|---|
| | • Actively use the NNR suite to develop, deliver and demonstrate best practice in wildlife management – putting in place five demonstration examples by 2025. |
| | • Identify and realise opportunities for expansion of existing NNRs or the designation of new ones – identifying a range of sites by 2026 and designating those considered suitable by 2028. |

[10] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

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|---|---|
| | • Adapt the planning and management of NNRs in response to the impacts of climate change on nature – putting in place refreshed management plans for NNRs by 2028. |

| Code [11] | Identify, expand and enhance Nature Networks and ecological connectivity |
|---|---|
| | • Ensure nature networks are implemented in every Local Authority area to provide connectivity between important places for biodiversity, deliver local priorities and contribute to strategic priorities at regional and national scales by 2030. |
| | • Undertake mapping of opportunities for creating local-authority-wide Nature Networks by 2030. |
| | • Incorporate and embed Nature Networks into policy frameworks and decision-making processes as a component of Local Development Plans and Regional Land Use Partnerships nationally by 2030. |
| | • Support local authorities in their land use decision making to deliver overall positive outcomes for biodiversity and the creation of nature networks, through developing toolkits, including a nature networks mapping tool and development of training by 2025. |
| | • Develop an open source platform for blue and green infrastructure and other nature assets in urban areas to support approaches to valuing and financing blue and green infrastructure. |

| Code | Champion new planning and development measures for protecting and enhancing biodiversity |
|---|---|
| | • Explore options for developing a biodiversity metric or related tool, specifically for use in Scotland. |
| | • Raise awareness and promote the Developing with Nature guidance to support delivery of NPF4 policy 3c and develop user-friendly version of the guidance. |
| | • Publish new guidance to support delivery of NPF4 (policy 3) biodiversity policy and to support wider work on building skills and capacity on biodiversity and nature across the planning system. |
| | • Include a requirement within the development management process (under NPF4) for management and maintenance plans for blue/green infrastructure to be routinely submitted (and finance secured) demonstrating how the design and maintenance of these areas will contribute to lasting positive effects for biodiversity. |
| | • Develop a consistent approach to assessing existing and potential biodiversity value of green and blue spaces and measuring, |

[11] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

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|---|---|
| | monitoring and demonstrating long-term positive effects for biodiversity and agreed approach to standardised monitoring has been provided to Local Authorities by 2030. |
| | • Ensure that information on soil health is considered in planning decisions, to support development proposals that protect soil from damage, and that minimise soil sealing and enhance soil quality. |
| | • Provide guidance for Scottish Planning Authorities on sustainable use and management of soil in planning processes (2030). |
| | • Ensure that development relating to renewables and essential infrastructure provides positive effects for upland biodiversity and peatland habitats, by developing clear guidance on NPF4 requirements for delivering positive effects for biodiversity. |

| Code [12] | Enhance biodiversity in Scotland's green and blue spaces |
|---|---|
| | • Prepare and implement nature-positive amenity grassland management strategies for the public estate in town and cities by 2030, incorporating improved technical guidance for practitioners and access to suitable machinery for local authorities. |
| | • By 2030 broker the agreement of a National Charter with all stakeholders for nature-positive green and blue space management which includes a definition of 'nature-rich places' as part of a national campaign to increase awareness of more nature-positive green and blue space management. |
| | • Every local authority should consider the need to prepare and implement a vision for surface water management including appropriate actions for blue green infrastructure by 2030. |
| | • Every new transport and active travel infrastructure project should incorporate elements of blue-green infrastructure (and seek opportunities for enhancing/expanding blue green infrastructure) by 2030. |
| | • Prepare and implement Wee Forest Vision and Delivery Plan. |
| | • Work with social housing providers, developers and homeowners to promote and share good practice for residential gardens to better support biodiversity by 2030. |

**Question 2d: Have we captured the key actions needed to deliver the objective: protect nature on land and at sea across and beyond protected areas?**

- Yes
- No

[12] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 2e: Are the key actions, to support the objective: protect nature on land and at sea across and beyond protected areas, sufficient to put Scotland on track to ending the loss of biodiversity by 2030?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 2f: Which actions do you think will have most impact?**

Please state the actions and explain the reasons for your response:
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# Chapter 4

# Objective 3: Embed Nature Positive Farming, Fishing and Forestry

These Actions align with CBD Goal A and Targets 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6.

70% of Scotland's land is classified as agricultural land and woodlands and forestry cover 19% percent. We won't halt biodiversity loss and address the impacts of climate change without significant changes to the way we use and manage these resources.

### Farming

Historically incentives have supported a model of production which often had a negative impact on biodiversity.

*The Vision for Scottish Agriculture puts biodiversity upfront alongside other key outcomes. We will transform how we support farming and food production in Scotland to become a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture.*

We recognise that many farmers and crofters already support and enhance biodiversity and we want to build on that. Over 3,000 farms for example are tackling the nature-climate emergency with the support of funding from the Agri-environment Climate Scheme (AECS).

This delivery plan includes actions which will be incorporated into the new agricultural support system to help farmers and crofters transition to practices generating substantial regeneration in biodiversity, ecosystem and soil health and significantly reduce carbon emissions, while sustaining high-quality food production.

This will align with the Agricultural Reform route map and build on existing support, for example, through AECS, actions such as soil testing under Preparing for Sustainable Farming, our partnership work with NatureScot through Farming with Nature and the advice and support available under the Farm Advisory Service.

### Forestry

Scotland is leading the way on forestry. Forest and woodland cover in Scotland has increased from a post-industrial low of around 5% to 19%. While our productive forests provide carbon and biodiversity benefits, the urgency of the nature crisis demands this is increasingly matched by an improvement in the quality of nature in forests and an expansion of natural regeneration. Large-scale action is now needed to reduce the negative impacts from grazing, invasive species, climate change and

novel pests and pathogens. We need to improve the biodiversity benefits from all woodlands, with a specific focus needed on our most valued and protected natural woodlands.

### Fishing

Scotland's Marine Assessment 2020 identified direct pressures on the condition of the marine environment in Scotland's seas associated with bottom contacting and other fishing across the majority of marine regions around Scotland. The actions in this plan reflect and build on Scotland's Fisheries Management Strategy's vision for delivering responsible and sustainable fisheries management. Collectively, delivery of these actions will support the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management that minimises adverse impacts on non-target habitats and species.

## Key actions

The set of detailed actions underpinning Objective 3 are set out in the Table below. Most significantly we will:

- Ensure increased uptake of high diversity, nature-rich, high soil-carbon, low intensity farming methods while sustaining high quality food production.
- Introduce an agricultural support framework which delivers for nature restoration and biodiversity alongside climate and food production outcomes.
- Shift at least half of all funding for farming and crofting from unconditional to conditional support by 2025 with recipients of support to deliver on targeted outcomes for biodiversity gain and low emissions production.
- Ensure that forests and woodlands deliver increased biodiversity and habitat connectivity alongside timber and carbon outcomes.
- Implement further fisheries measures in vulnerable marine ecosystems and Priority Marine Features outside of MPAs.
- Implement a sustainable approach to sea fisheries, using best available scientific advice, and minimising adverse impacts on non-target species and habitats.
- Implement Scotland's vision for sustainable aquaculture to minimise negative impacts on biodiversity.

| Code [13] | Action |
|---|---|
| | **Ensure increased uptake of high diversity, nature-rich, high soil-carbon, low intensity farming methods while sustaining high quality food production** |
| | • By 2030 increase the uptake of integrated pest management across Scottish agriculture to minimise risks and impacts of pesticides to the environment in line with the UK National Action Plan on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides. |
| | • Revise and update Scotland's Soil Framework and action/implementation plan by 2030. |
| | • Develop evidence-based Soil Health Indicators (SHIs) that can be considered for inclusion in Whole Farm Plans and forest management plans. |
| | • Undertake an evidence-based update of information/advice on biodiversity management currently available to farmers/land managers to ensure it is up-to-date, clear and easily accessible by 2030. |
| | • Improve information for land managers on how to assess soil erosion risks and implement measures to avoid erosion (and other impacts on soil health related to climate change), including: i) raising awareness about the impacts of extreme rainfall / drought events on soils; and ii) mapping soils that have been subject to anthropogenic degradation and are candidates for soil improvement programmes by 2027/28. |
| | • Develop and promote clear guidance for practitioners on soil compaction and ensure that by 2030 farm and forestry machinery contractors are engaged in ensuring appropriate use of equipment, uptake of decision-making tools and training, to minimise and ultimately avoid compaction damage to soils. |
| | • Set up monitoring frameworks to assess change in soil health, based on evidence from the Strategic Research Programme (2022-2027). |
| | • Reduce inputs of nutrients to freshwaters that cause enrichment impacts on biodiversity, by controlling diffuse pollution through effective nutrient management under agricultural reform and priority catchment work under RBMP (current plan 2022 – 2027); and by controlling point sources through the Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR). |

| Code | Introduce an agricultural support framework which delivers for nature restoration and biodiversity alongside climate and food production outcomes |
|---|---|
| | • From 2025 farmers and crofters will be required to adopt the following practices as the foundations of the whole farm planning approach to qualify for agricultural payments: soil testing, animal health and welfare declarations, carbon audits, biodiversity audits and supported effective business planning. |
| | • Implement actions specifically benefitting farmland species as part of ongoing support and the new agricultural payments framework by 2030, backed by advisory support. |

[13] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

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|---|---|
| | • Adjust rural support mechanisms to incorporate requirements to protect and enhance soil health, promote control of soil erosion/compaction and maintain/ enhance soil organic matter through appropriate balance of input/outputs and nutrient levels. |
| | • Ensure that rural support mechanisms incorporate a mandatory requirement for a farm-level biodiversity audit in return for support, moving towards shifting 50% of direct payments for farming and crofting to climate action and funding for on farm nature restoration and enhancement by 2025. |
| | • Ensure that farmers and crofters can access tools, information and advice necessary to produce an integrated biodiversity audit as part of the Whole Farm Plan from 2025 as a pre-requisite to claiming support. |

| **Code** [14] | **Implement further fisheries measures in vulnerable marine ecosystems and to protect Priority Marine Features outside MPAs** |
|---|---|
| | • Deliver further fisheries management measures for Priority Marine Features identified as most at risk from bottom-contacting mobile fishing gear outwith MPAs by 2025. |
| | • Introduce fisheries closures to protect Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems in offshore waters between 400-800m depth by 2027. |
| | • Identify high-risk areas and/or gear types for bycatch and entanglement of sensitive marine species. |
| | • Develop and implement a suite of technical and spatial measures to reduce levels of discarding of 'unwanted' fish catch alongside measures to reduce bycatch of sensitive marine species to ensure sustainable fisheries. Consultation on measures in 2023/24 with implementation by 2026. |

| **Code** | **Implement a sustainable approach to sea fisheries management, using best available scientific advice and minimising adverse impacts on non-target species and habitats** |
|---|---|
| | • Consult on implementing the inshore cap and options for other sustainable fishing management controls. |
| | • Develop 21 Fisheries Management Plans (as set out in the Joint Fisheries Statement) to increase or maintain sustainability of fish stocks. |
| | • Work with stakeholders to focus on identifying practical, achievable actions to reduce pressure on habitats most at risk or most extensively impacted by 2028. |

[14] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| Code | Implement Scotland's vision for sustainable aquaculture to minimise negative impacts on biodiversity |
|---|---|
| | • Support SEPA in the implementation of the sea lice risk assessment framework, starting to apply the framework to applications for proposed new farms and expansions of existing farms in the second half of 2023. |
| | • Review the technical standards for fin fish farmers and support work towards zero escapes from farms by 2024. |
| | • Continue to support the implementation of the farmed fish health framework up to 2028. |

| Code [15] | Ensure that forests and woodlands deliver increased biodiversity and habitat connectivity alongside timber and carbon outcomes |
|---|---|
| | • Update woodland management guidance and plans (between 2023 and 2030) to reflect greater emphasis on actions that will improve biodiversity including use of elements from Site Condition Monitoring and Woodland Ecological Condition (WEC) monitoring. |
| | • Restructure woodlands during restocking. Undertake management interventions to incorporate a greater diversity of species, habitats and structure that benefit biodiversity and allow achievement of other forestry management objectives. |
| | • Increase biodiversity through diversifying age and species mixes, increasing woodland extent and connectivity (and edge habitat), increasing deadwood, and managing grazing and browsing to help facilitate natural regeneration and development of a ground/shrub layer as part of Sustainable Forest Management. |
| | • Identify site appropriate riparian buffers using an evidence based approach and implement them through a range of mechanisms including the agricultural reform programme, forestry grants and private restoration initiatives by 2027. |

**Question 2g: Have we captured the key actions needed to deliver the objective: embed nature positive farming, fishing and forestry?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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[15] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

**Question 2h: Are the key actions, to support the objective: embed nature positive farming, fishing and forestry, sufficient to put Scotland on track to ending the loss of biodiversity by 2030?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 2i: Which actions do you think will have most impact?**

Please state the actions and explain the reasons for your response:
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# Chapter 5

# Objective 4: Protect and Support the Recovery of Vulnerable and Important Species and Habitats

These Actions align with CBD Goal A and Target 4.

Scotland has approximately 90,000 species often of international importance. These include many species of mosses, liverworts and lichens, seabirds, raptors, waders, marine mammals, the elasmobranchs (more commonly known as sharks, skates and rays) and wild salmon.

However, our species are vulnerable to the loss and degradation of habitats, to climate change impacts and to outbreaks of disease. The 2021/22 outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) had a significant effect on wild bird populations. Approximately 20,500 dead seabirds were reported across 160 locations between April and September 2022, with the highest mortality reported in gannets, great skuas, common guillemots, kittiwakes, terns and large gulls. Important wintering populations of wildfowl were also severely affected with an estimated 13,200 Svalbard barnacle geese (around one third of the migratory or “flyway” population) dying in Winter 2021/22.

Restoring and regenerating ecosystems and habitats (Objective 1) is the foundation for regenerating and strengthening the resilience of biodiversity at scale. But this will take time – time which many vulnerable species do not have. We will therefore complement our actions to regenerate our seas and landscapes with actions targeted at specific species. This will build on recent success in this area with the recovery of sea eagles, golden eagles and the recent translocations of beavers.

## Key Actions

The set of detailed actions underpinning Objective 4 are set out in the Table below. Most significantly we will:

- **Revise the Scottish Biodiversity List of species and habitats that Ministers consider to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland.** By identifying the species and habitats that are of the highest priority for biodiversity conservation, the Scottish Biodiversity List helps public bodies apply their biodiversity duty. NatureScot and eNGOs have collated data on species vulnerability in Scotland into the Species at Risk database. This work provides an evidence-based link between vulnerable species, known pressures driving decline and their ecosystems, and is a strong foundation for prioritising species based on risk of extirpation or extinction of endemics. Revision of the Priority Marine Feature (PMF) list is a separate process, and we will adopt the revised PMF list by the end of 2025. Inclusion of habitats and species on the

PMF list helps to focus marine conservation action, and also provides policy protection through the National Marine Plan.

- **Develop effective species recovery, reintroduction and reinforcement programmes.** The Species at Risk database will support an evaluation of actions to deliver biodiversity recovery through ecosystem management or targeted species action. This includes an assessment of likelihood of success and level of investment required. This work will inform the development of a prioritised list of species conservation, recovery, reintroduction and reinforcement programmes including support for surveillance and monitoring to manage pathogens and disease, for example, as identified by the Avian Flu Task Force. The Species on the Edge programme is an outstanding example of partnership working to restore biodiversity.

- **Manage existing and emerging pressures to improve the conservation of seabirds, marine mammals and elasmobranchs –** Work is ongoing to complete the Scottish Seabird Conservation Strategy. The Strategy will set out the actions required to address the key pressures on seabird populations, including those related to climate change. The UK dolphin and porpoise conservation strategy is being revised following public consultation and once published it will provide the framework for taking forward key actions. Alongside seabirds and marine mammals, elasmobranchs (sharks, skates and rays) make up the top three globally threatened marine species groups. Targeted research and management actions will be developed to help improve the status of elasmobranchs in Scotland's seas.

- **Implement measures to protect and recover Scotland's wild Atlantic salmon and migratory fish populations –** The Scottish Wild Salmon Strategy sets out the vision, objectives and priority themes for action to ensure the protection and recovery of wild Atlantic salmon populations in Scotland. It is supported by an Implementation Plan. Measures to protect European eel are contained within the Eel Management Plan for the UK.

| Code[16] | Action |
|---|---|
| | **Revise Scotland's list of priority species and habitats for biodiversity conservation** |
| | • Revise the Scottish Biodiversity List of species and habitats that consider to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland. |
| | • Undertake a review of NatureScot's licensing approach for species conservation and management, consider outcomes and develop a programme to implement recommendations by 2024. |
| | • Adopt a revised Priority Marine Feature list at the end of 2025 to align with National Marine Plan 2. |

| Code | **Develop effective species recovery, reintroduction and reinforcement programmes** |
|---|---|
| | • Develop effective species recovery, reintroduction and reinforcement programmes drawing on partnership work on Species at Risk prioritisation, Species on the Edge programme, and evaluation of drivers. For example, continue to support and build upon existing strategies and schemes to protect and expand populations of species such as capercaillie, red squirrel, sea eagle, golden eagle and Eurasian beaver. |
| | • Develop and implement national plans for conserving species groups for which Scotland holds internationally important populations such as lichens, bryophytes, freshwater pearl mussels, and wetland waders. |
| | • Undertake measures to reduce human pressures to give habitats and species (especially specialists; arctic/alpine) more chance of surviving and improve the status of red listed species in Scotland. |
| | • Map genetic diversity risks across Scotland and ensure mitigating genetic diversity risks across Protected Areas and OECMs are included within Biodiversity Action Plans to reduce risks in protected areas by 2030. |
| | • Raise public awareness of science and practice around conservation translocations through public engagement by 2030. |
| | • The Better Biodiversity Data project will develop and build upon the first steps in a strategic approach to the collection, collation and sharing of biological data across Scotland; use of citizen science for monitoring key species will increase. |
| | • Support surveillance and monitoring to manage pathogens and disease risks. |

[16] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| Code[17] | Manage existing and emerging pressures to improve the conservation status of seabirds, marine mammals and elasmobranchs |
|---|---|
| | • Develop and publish a Scottish Seabird Conservation Strategy by 2025 which will deliver action to conserve and increase the resilience of seabird populations. |
| | • Increase promotion of, and compliance with, the Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code. |
| | • Consider the requirement for marine management action to address cumulative impacts of wildlife tourism in key locations by 2027. |
| | • Begin implementation of actions relevant to Scotland in the UK Dolphin and Porpoise Conservation Strategy by 2025. |
| | • Review the approach to and locations of designated seal haul-out sites to ensure important locations are protected by 2026. |
| | • Develop and implement management actions to improve the status of elasmobranchs in Scotland's waters by 2028 and continue to build the evidence base for elasmobranchs in Scottish waters including: distribution, essential fish habitat, population abundance and social interactions. |

| Code | Implement measures to protect and recover Scotland's wild Atlantic salmon and migratory fish populations |
|---|---|
| | • Deliver the actions set out in the Wild salmon strategy Implementation plan 2023-2028 to improve habitat and reduce pressures on salmon and other fish species. |
| | • Undertake research on post-smolt and adult Atlantic salmon migration routes around Scottish coastal areas, and the use of estuarine and coastal habitats by sea trout, shad (Allis & Tawite), smelt, river and sea lamprey and European eel. |

**Question 2j: Have we captured the key actions needed to deliver the objective: protect and support the recovery of vulnerable and important species and habitats?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:

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[17] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

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**Question 2k: Are the key actions, to support the objective: protect and support the recovery of vulnerable and important species and habitats, sufficient to put Scotland on track to ending the loss of biodiversity by 2030?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 2l: Which actions do you think will have most impact?**

Please state the actions and explain the reasons for your response:
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# Chapter 6

# Objective 5 – Invest in Nature

These Actions align with CBD Goal D and Target 19.

To meet the pace and scale of delivering our ambitious biodiversity targets we know that more investment is required. The Scottish Government has increased public investment in nature restoration in recent years, and is now making considerable large scale public investments in nature with the ambitious Nature Restoration Fund and Peatland ACTION fund. Future support for agriculture and the rural economy will also increasingly be designed to deliver nature recovery and to mitigate, and adapt Scotland to, climate change. Forthcoming Scottish Government research will seek to understand more fully the costs of delivering the ambitions of the Biodiversity Strategy.

There has been a significant increase in interest from private investors in nature restoration in Scotland. Our priority is ensuring that such investment is made as part of a values-led, high-integrity market for responsible private investment in natural capital. The Interim Principles for Responsible Investment in Natural Capital sets out the Scottish Government's ambitions for, and expectations of, responsible private investment. These will deliver for economic transformation, climate change and biodiversity, provide community benefits, and support a Just Transition.

The Scottish Government, NatureScot and the National Heritage Lottery Fund recently launched a 'Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland' (FIRNS) fund. FIRNS will support projects that shape and grow private investment and market-based mechanisms to finance the restoration of Scotland's nature. Grants of up to £240,000 will be offered to help develop a viable business case and financial model, to attract investment in suitable projects.

The Flow Country Green Finance Initiative is a locally led partnership seeking to raise public and private funds to restore peatlands at scale. It aims to achieve a multi-use landscape where healthy and restored peatlands support globally significant biodiversity and climate protection, and a lively and prosperous region with high quality jobs. The region is also being considered for allocation of world heritage status by UNESCO.

## Key Actions

The set of detailed actions underpinning Objective 5 are set out in the Table below. Most significantly we will:

- Develop with partners and stakeholders a **Biodiversity Investment Plan**. This will set out the strategic priorities for public investment through the Nature Restoration Fund and other public funds and where we can deliver best value for money. For example, investing in INNS prevention gives higher economic returns than trying to eradicate an invasive species after it arrives.

- Establish a **values-led, high-integrity market for** responsible private investment in natural capital. This will include continuing to develop and enhance the **woodland and peatland carbon codes** to attract and assist additional investment and develop other codes where appropriate. Explore options for the use of biodiversity credits to secure increased levels of responsible private investment in nature including through CivTech Challenge 8.6.

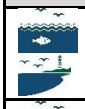
- Explore options for attracting private finance to support the restoration of Scotland's iconic Rainforest (Chapter 2).

- Increase investment in Scotland's Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund (SMEEF) and investment in activities that help restore Scotland's coast and seas.

- **Provide direction on, and investment in, green skills and local economic opportunities supporting nature-based education, nature restoration skills and volunteering –** Financial investment alone will not deliver the transformational change needed to halt biodiversity loss. We will invest in Scotland's workforce and support the development of nature restoration skills as part of a Just Transition.

| Code [18] | Action |
|---|---|
| | **Drive increased investment in Biodiversity and Nature Restoration** |
| | • Develop a Biodiversity Investment Plan for Scotland which supports the delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. |
| | • Maintain and seek to increase investment in nature restoration through our £65 million Nature Restoration Fund. |
| | • Develop the targeting of peatland restoration for cost-effective delivery (i.e. identifying priority restoration projects) including for greater private investment in peatland restoration. |
| | • Scale delivery of the Peatland Action programme, restoring the condition of peatlands as a key ecosystem in line with Net Zero targets and supporting the expansion and upskilling of the peatland restoration workforce. |
| | • Explore and promote complementary funding streams to the Water Environment Fund to restore rivers, particularly in rural environments. |

| Code | Establish a values-led, high-integrity market for responsible private investment in natural capital |
|---|---|
| | • Align the development of high integrity value led markets for responsible private investment in natural capital with the development of public funding streams for biodiversity (e.g. new agricultural support payments, peatland action, etc.) so that we 'crowd in' private investment rather than 'crowding out'. |
| | • Support the development of mechanisms for responsible private investment in biodiversity and development of biodiversity credits (e.g. through Civtech Challenge 8.6 and the Investment Readiness Fund). |
| | • Develop and support a Community of Practice within the Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland to demonstrate what does and does not work through the sharing of new knowledge and approaches. |
| | • Support the development of Woodland Carbon Code/Peatland Code for improved biodiversity benefits and the development of new codes with direct or associated biodiversity benefits. |

| Code | Increase investment in Scotland's coastal and marine environments |
|---|---|
|  | • Increase the investment in activities that help restore Scotland's coasts and seas by 2028. |
| | • Increase investment in Scotland's Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund (SMEEF) and the benefits delivered to Scotland's coasts and seas. |

[18] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| Code [19] | Provide direction on, and investment in, green skills and local economic opportunities supporting nature-based education, nature restoration skills and volunteering |
|---|---|
| | • Establish supported nationwide information and advice for land managers on biodiversity management including best practice and innovation through the complimentary tier of the new agricultural payment framework. |
| | • Develop guidance to support a programme of training/education for land managers to support best practice on: peatland and woodland restoration; deer and livestock management; integrated land management best practice; and, species and habitat management. |

**Question 2m: Have we captured the key actions needed to deliver the objective: invest in nature?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 2n: Are the key actions, to support the objective: invest in nature, sufficient to put Scotland on track to ending the loss of biodiversity by 2030?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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[19] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); O (Overarching)

**Question 2o: Which actions do you think will have most impact?**

Please state the actions and explain the reasons for your response:

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# Chapter 7

## Objective 6: Take Action on the Indirect Drivers of Biodiversity Loss

These Actions align with CBD Goal B and Targets 14, 15, 16 and 18.

The *IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* sets out the drivers of biodiversity loss, including the five 'direct drivers' of loss which are prominently covered in chapters 2 – 6; and the equally important 'indirect drivers' of biodiversity loss. The latter are the key underlying causes of biodiversity loss and they include aspects of our culture and behaviour, demography, economy and governance, institutions, and technology. The IPBES report have identified these to be **people's disconnect with nature** and the consequent **lack of recognition for the value and importance of nature**. This manifests itself in unsustainable production and consumption patterns. The relationship between the direct and underlying drivers is important. Attempts to fix the direct drivers without addressing the underlying indirect causes will be inefficient or likely to fail.[20]

These indirect drivers transcend a wide range of policy areas. The Environment Strategy provides the overarching framework for tackling many of the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss. It aims for a just transition to a net zero, nature-positive Scotland with a circular economy. Of primary importance are Scotland's Climate Change Plan and Scotland's forthcoming Climate Adaptation Programme – Nature and Nature based Solutions are at the heart of these. The majority of climate change policy commitments and actions tackle the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss specifically unsustainable production and consumption patterns. For example, of the 61 specific climate change risks set out in the Climate Change Risk Assessment, to which the upcoming Climate Adaptation Programme will respond to, at least a third of risks need a nature-based response.

New commitments and legislation on the circular economy will be key to addressing unsustainable production and consumption patterns. Across all of what we do – we need a new approach for building society's awareness of the importance of Nature, strengthening the systems and mechanisms we have for valuing Nature and engaging communities and society in the identification and implementation of solutions – all fundamental for a Just Transition. Actions on the indirect drivers

[20] See also the report from the James Hutton Institute and NatureScot - https://www.nature.scot/doc/naturescot-research-report-1309-understanding-indirect-drivers-biodiversity-loss-scotland

https://www.nature.scot/doc/understanding-indirect-drivers-biodiversity-loss-scotland-summary

require influencing 'levers of change' (e.g. strategies, plans, policies, legislation, guidance, standards, and regulations).

## Key Actions

The set of detailed actions underpinning Objective 6 are set out in the Table below. Most significantly we will:

- **Engage and strengthen the connection between people and communities and nature –** We must widen public awareness and increase understanding of the actions needed to protect and restore nature on land and sea. We will provide more opportunities for people to experience and care for nature so that people's understanding of the role of nature in our daily lives is improved. Nature positive developments and stewardship of public, community and private land are vital to ensure far more people are actively working for nature recovery – and reaping the rewards.

- **Embed biodiversity and nature in curriculum development –** Knowledge of nature must be seen as key to prioritise decisions ahead, not just as a subset of science. Major changes are underway in the education system. Implementation of these reforms and plans provides the opportunity to embed the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and confidence needed across all sectors to develop practices and take decisions which are compatible with a sustainable and more equitable future**.** These competencies, as well as a range of practical skills will be essential to Scotland reaching its climate and nature targets.

- **Mainstream and integrate biodiversity policy across government and address unsustainable supply and demand to reduce biodiversity impacts** – In Scotland the Environment Strategy has begun to tackle the global footprint of consumption and the challenges and opportunities of shifting to a wellbeing economy. Implementation of actions emphasise the importance of Just Transition and changing patterns of consumption across a wide range of topics.

  The Scottish Government's National Performance Framework can support this step change. Subject to final decisions on the Government's future legislative programmes, proposed legislation on land reform, well-being, and sustainable development and human rights to a healthy environment will provide the statutory framework to support it. Starting with the forthcoming National Marine Plan 2, further effort is needed in the marine environment to ensure biodiversity and sustainable developments are effectively built into decision making at all levels.

- **Address unsustainable supply and demand to reduce biodiversity impacts** Halting the loss of biodiversity requires action beyond traditional conservation and management measures. Recent research has pointed to the importance of sustainable natural resource consumption and trade, reduced food waste and more plant-based human diets having major positive influences on halting

biodiversity loss by 2050. This also has relevance to the Environment Strategy for Scotland.

- **Make Space for Nature** Running campaigns to encourage and support people to:

  Encourage nature into our lives
  - Provide water and homes for wildlife
  - Plant hedgerows and creating gaps in fences
  - Avoid using artificial grass, paving or decking

  Give our time for nature
  - Undertake regular citizen science activity
  - Join a conservation volunteer group
  - Encourage positive action for nature by public and private sectors

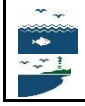
  Reduce our impact on nature
  - Use only peat-free garden products
  - Follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code
  - Take the steps we can to reduce our carbon foot print each year

| Code [21] | Action |
|---|---|
| | **Engage and strengthen the connection between people and communities with nature** |
| | • Develop a communication and engagement programme by 2024 to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of biodiversity and its links to climate change and the changes needed to ensure a just transition to a net zero and nature positive Scotland. |
| | • Increase public connection and action for nature through expanding the reach of the Make Space for Nature campaign and develop a national nature volunteer and citizen science frameworks by 2025. |
| | • Encourage more community ownership of local and national nature reserves and other land managed for nature by 2030 by promoting best practice and helping to build capacity. |
| | • Work with stakeholders to complete a review of opportunities for increasing community participation in safeguarding marine biodiversity by 2026. Secure resources and begin piloting new approaches by 2028. |
| | • Promote and interpret new evidence and understanding relating to climate change and its relevance to Scotland's marine biodiversity to ensure good understanding by the general public. |
| | • Promote Scotland's Geodiversity Charter and raise awareness of the role of geodiversity in the delivery of valuable geosystem services that serve the needs of biodiversity conservation and restoration by 2024. |

| Code | Embed biodiversity and nature in curriculum development |
|---|---|
| | • Progress delivery of the outdoor learning elements of the Learning for Sustainability Action Plan, including nature connectedness and learning, to meet Target 2030 so every 3 – 16 place of education becomes a Sustainable Learning Setting. |
| | • Explore opportunities to further develop Curriculum for Excellence nature-based resources, and prepare new material on nature and nature based solutions to be included in the new Learning for Sustainability portal by 2027. |
| | • Publish an Update to the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan by the end of 2023 to ensure it remains in line with our economic and climate ambitions. |

| Code | Mainstream and integrate biodiversity policy across government |
|---|---|
| | • Increase the effectiveness of mainstreaming biodiversity on land and at sea through:<br>- The National Planning Framework<br>- Agricultural Reform Programme |

[21] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

| | |
|---|---|
| | - Climate Adaptation Programme<br>- Land Reform Programme<br>- Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation<br>- Climate Change Plan<br>- National Marine Plan 2<br>- Progress by 2026, the mainstreaming of biodiversity including through the review of the National Performance Framework. |
| | • Develop our understanding within government and more widely of the application of just transition principles in moving towards a nature positive blue economy alongside net zero commitments. |
| <br>  | • Develop a decision-making framework within NMP2 that supports marine ecosystem recovery through appropriate management of other supported marine activities by 2026.<br>• Develop policies and objectives within NMP2 that support the mitigation of and adaptation to the impacts of climate change by 2026. |

| Code [22] | Address unsustainable supply and demand to reduce biodiversity impacts |
|---|---|
| | • Ensure the range of actions to tackle biodiversity loss and deliver a circular economy (through the Circular Economy Bill and Circular Economy & Waste Route Map) are complementary and co-ordinated. |
| | • Support global and regional efforts to enable business to more effectively monitor and report on their national and global impacts on biodiversity. |
| | • Review the Biodiversity Duty Reporting system by 2024, with a view to aligning with climate change reporting including consideration of voluntary engagement by business sector. |
| | • Subject to final decisions on the Government's future legislative programmes, place specific requirements on public bodies and local government through Bills on Land Reform, Wellbeing and Sustainable Development, and the incorporation of the human right to a healthy environment in the Human Rights Bill to:<br>- assess and act to reduce the impact of their decisions (including procurement) to achieve sustainable development goals,<br>- act in an inclusive, public and transparent manner, and<br>- build the human right to a healthy environment into decision making and in time, comply with the right, to ensure healthy ecosystems and biodiversity in Scotland. |
| | • Work in partnership with the fishing industry to deliver fishing practices that are consistent with receiving accreditation. |
| | • Develop a climate change audit / impact assessment approach for marine policy making to ensure the most recent evidence is taken into account by 2028. |

[22] **Landscape/Seascape codes:** We have indicated which outcome's logic model the action originated from, however, many actions will apply more widely. (Woodlands); (Coastal); (Freshwater); (Urban): (Uplands and Peatlands); (Soils); (Agriculture); (Marine); (Overarching)

**Question 2p: Have we captured the key actions needed to deliver the objective: take action on the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 2q: Are the key actions, to support the objective: take action on the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, sufficient to put Scotland on track to ending the loss of biodiversity by 2030?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 2r: Which actions do you think will have most impact?**

Please state the actions and explain the reasons for your response:
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# Section Three: Nature Networks Policy Framework

## Introduction

Improving ecological connectivity to create fully functioning, healthy and robust ecosystems, where animal and plant species can move and adapt to pressures is a critical part of the nature restoration agenda. Nature Networks can bring benefits to nature and people, such as clean water, flood mitigation, natural cooling and health and wellbeing. A framework for Scotland's Nature Networks was developed through a co-design process with over 100 organisations and individuals representing a diverse range of interests. The full draft Policy Framework and outputs of the co-design workshops can be found on the Nature Scot website.

Our **shared vision** for Nature Networks is:

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| By 2030 Scotland will have evolving, flexible and resilient Nature Networks connecting nature-rich areas allowing wildlife and natural processes to move and adapt to land use and climate change pressures. The networks will help build people's connection to nature, providing biodiversity-rich spaces that deliver local benefits, and meet the priorities of local communities for nature. |

Nature Networks will be developed as long term features of local and regional landscapes, which support nature restoration and provide multiple benefits for society. The **guiding principles** to be used by implementation partners in delivering Nature Networks are:

| **Delivering Nature Networks** |
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| • Nature Networks will be delivered from the bottom up, addressing local needs and objectives in support of national outcomes for nature and people. |
| **Governance and decision making** |
| • Governance of Nature Networks will be transparent, democratic and accountable and with inclusive and diverse representation. There will be a focus on empowering and equipping delivery partners from across sectors. |
| **Participation, engagement and communication** |
| • Engagement with partnerships and communities will be inclusive and empowering.<br>• Communications will include simple and unifying messaging on Nature Networks with a focus on building people's connection with, and fostering a stewardship of, nature.<br>• Scotland's public bodies will be exemplars, supporting the delivery of Nature Networks on their land. |
| **Knowledge and skills** |

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| • Nature Networks will be developed using and sharing local knowledge, experience and best-practice and will support the growth of green skills and jobs. |
| **Data, mapping and monitoring** |
| • We will be adaptive in our approach to delivering Nature Networks and use the opportunity to improve our understanding of developing effective ecological connectivity.<br>• Monitoring approaches for Nature Networks will be developed with, and for, stakeholders to inform management and action that maximises effectiveness of the network.<br>• We will employ innovation and best practice in data collection, management and use.<br>• Mapping and use of data will be collaborative and holistic in approach. |
| **Finance and resources** |
| • Public and private finance and funding will be delivered through properly resourced, clearly directed, long-term, simple and accessible means.<br>• Funding and finance will be based on the principles of fairness, trust and transparency through collaborative working.<br>• Funding and finance vehicles will be coherent and will continue to be maintained. |
| **Policy and Mainstreaming** |
| • Policy and planning levers will be used to safeguard Nature Networks and provide long term assurance<br>• Coherence across the policy landscape will be maintained.<br>• Mainstreaming Nature Networks, and wider biodiversity targets, at all levels of government and across the whole of society to encourage shared responsibility, efficient use of resources and delivery of multiple benefits (additionality) |

We are working on a **Nature Networks toolbox** which will be a 'live' resource for delivery partners to facilitate the design and implementation of nature networks at the local and regional level. Further work on next steps – including engagement with specific groups, e.g. Local Authorities – will continue over the coming months.

**Question 3a:** Do you have any comments on the Nature Networks Framework?

Please provide any comments:

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# Section Four: 30 by 30 Policy Framework

## Introduction

The Global Biodiversity Framework included a commitment to ensure that at least 30% of land and sea is effectively conserved for nature by 2030. The full definition is stated as Target 3 in the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) reads;

> Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.

## 30 by 30 in Scotland

All of society has a role to play in delivering this commitment and Scotland is committed to working with communities and stakeholders to develop an implementation route map. The first step has been to co-design a policy framework which sets out the vision and a set of guiding principles. The 30 by 30 draft Policy Framework and outputs of the co-design workshops can viewed on the Nature Scot website.

The co-design process involved over 100 organisations and individuals representing a diverse range of interests. Through these discussions the following Vision for 30 by 30 in Scotland was agreed:

**By 2030 at least 30% of Scotland's land will be protected or conserved for biodiversity, delivering for people and climate. Sites showcase the best in nature restoration, protection and in mitigating and adapting to climate change. They help protect the rare and vulnerable, as well as delivering diverse, complex, and resilient ecosystems that provide important services that benefit everyone far into the future. These 30 by 30 sites are integrated into the wider landscape, acting as the beating, nature-rich hearts of Scotland's Nature Network and beyond.**

## Guiding Principles to Deliver 30 by 30 in Scotland

The co-design process enabled participants to first identify challenges and barriers to implementing 30 by 30 and then to develop the principles needed to overcome them.

| Key Themes and Principles for Delivery of 30 by 30 |
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| **Theme 1 – Site Selection, designation, safeguarding and governance** |
| • Area-based conservation will provide adequate protection or conservation to the area of importance it covers.<br>• The approach to 30 by 30 sites will be simple, clear, transparent and flexible in governance and application.<br>• Approaches to the selection and objectives of 30 by 30 sites will be strategic, forward-looking and dynamic. |
| **Theme 2 – Land Management** |
| • Management must be adaptive, dynamic, and responsive, operating at the necessary scales (spatially and temporally).<br>• The policy and legislative landscape in Scotland will be integrated/coherent and better reflect the value of biodiversity to all of Scotland.<br>• Those responsible for the management of Scotland's land will be empowered to work collaboratively and equipped with skills needed to champion good management within their own sectors. |
| **Theme 3 – Funding and Finance** |
| • Established and prospective 30 by 30 sites will be considered as priorities for funding and investment.<br>• Public and private funding and finance will be delivered through properly resourced, clearly directed, long term simple and accessible means.<br>• Funding based on the principles of fairness, trust and transparency through collaborative working.<br>• Build and maintain coherence in statutory and public funding. |
| **Theme 4 - Participation engagement and communication:** |
| • The value of 30 by 30 sites for nature and people is clear.<br>• Collaboration is key.<br>• Land owning public bodies will manage their land to contribute towards 30 by 30. |
| **Theme 5 - Monitoring** |
| • Monitoring should prioritise the identification and assessment of the most important factors for maintaining the health and resilience of 30 by 30 sites, while also taking into account gaps in knowledge.<br>• Monitoring will be designed with and for stakeholders to ensure it is iterative and informs ongoing and adaptive land management decisions.<br>• Monitoring will use a combination of traditional methods and emerging technologies, with a focus on maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of data |

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| collection and analysis, while also ensuring that data quality and accuracy are maintained.<br>• Monitoring must meet national and international reporting obligations. |
| **Theme 6 – Policy and Mainstreaming** |
| Outputs from this theme of work were incorporated into the above themes with policy and mainstreaming requirements embedded into the specific areas of work. |

**Question 4a:** Do you have any comments on the 30 by 30 Framework?

Please provide any comments:
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# Section Five: Impact Assessments - Part A

## Introduction

In screening for Impact Assessment we have considered both the overarching Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (SBS), and the first five year Delivery Plan. With the exception of the Strategic Environment Assessment, much of the detail needed to carry out full impact assessments is not available at this stage, and in many cases specific impact assessments will need to be made as the policies to deliver upon each action are developed.

The implementation of actions to deliver upon the SBS does not sit in isolation, it involves a wide range of Scottish Government policy areas - including agriculture, forestry, marine, planning, peatlands and flooding, as well as biodiversity. There is also a strong link to Climate Change – both mitigation and adaptation - where nature-based solutions can often bring multiple benefits, for example to carbon capture and storage, flood mitigation, habitat restoration, biodiversity loss, and providing clean air and water. We are committed to reaching a nature-positive, net zero Scotland in a way that is fair, and leaves no-one behind, and Just Transition principles are at the heart of all that we do. This means that we are working together across policy areas, as well as with our local government colleagues, local communities and the whole of society, to ensure the benefits of addressing biodiversity loss are realised. This engagement helps to inform the various impact assessments, which in turn inform policy development.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a method of considering and broadly evaluating the likely impact of a public plan, programme or strategy on the environment. A meaningful SEA can help to avoid or minimise any negative environmental impacts and enhance positive ones. Scottish public bodies or those exercising functions of a public character (Responsible Authorities) may prepare plans that are likely to have significant environment effects (either positive or negative). The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 ('The 2005 Act'), requires them to undertake a SEA in such cases.

In Scotland, public bodies including the Scottish Government are required to assess, consult on, and monitor the likely impacts their plans, programmes and strategies will have on the environment. This helps to better protect the environment, aims to ensure that any development is sustainable and increases opportunities for public participation in decision-making.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report has been prepared in relation to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan, and will be consulted on alongside this consultation document.

The full SEA report is available here - https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781835212783

In relation to the Environmental Report for the Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan, we are seeking your views on:

**Question 5a:** What are your views on the accuracy and scope of the environmental baseline set out in the environmental report?

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**Question 5b:** What are your views on the predicted environmental effects as set out in the environmental report?

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**Question 5c:** What are your views on the reasonable alternatives as set out in the environmental report?

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**Question 5d:** What are your views on the proposals for mitigation and monitoring of the environmental effects set out in the environmental report?

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## Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment

Business and Regulatory Impact Assessments (BRIA) help to assess the likely costs, benefits and risks of any proposed primary or secondary legislation, voluntary regulation, codes of practice, guidance, or policy changes that may have an impact on the public, private or third sector. Following an initial screening of the SBS and the Delivery Plan we recognise that there are gaps relating to specific biodiversity actions, likely to include Nature Networks, Protected Areas, tackling INNS, etc., and will undertake a more detailed BRIA as these policies are further developed.

Due to the complex interaction between climate and biodiversity there is a need to integrate across policy areas and understand the effects of actions as set out in the SBS and Delivery Plan, the Climate Change Plan and the Climate Change Adaptation Plan, upon business; as well as where business can take advantage of the opportunities that nature restoration and climate adaptation bring. This complex interaction also includes Just Transition principles, i.e. the need for the private, public and third sector to adapt rapidly in making the transformational change needed. Further work on this complex area is needed and will need to consider any existing BRIA for specific policy drivers.

**Question 5e:** Do you think that any of the provisions in the SBS or Delivery Plan will have any adverse effects on business?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 5f:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the Delivery Plan to benefit business?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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## Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment

The Fairer Scotland Duty is set out in legislation in Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010. It came into force in Scotland from April 2018. It requires Scottish Ministers and named public bodies to actively consider what more can be done to reduce the 'inequalities of outcome' caused by 'socio-economic disadvantage' when making 'strategic decisions'. The Duty seeks to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and reduce the inequalities that are associated with being disadvantaged. This is a complex, multidimensional problem, closely related to poverty.

An initial screening on socio-economic impacts of the SBS has raised the potentially positive and negative impacts including:

- Access to affordable housing;
- Access to green space;
- Creation of green jobs.

Further analysis will be undertaken including gathering of supporting evidence and identification of mitigating actions which will be published alongside the final publication of the strategy.

**Question 5g:** Do you think that any of the provisions in the SBS or Delivery Plan will have any adverse effects on socio-economic equality?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:.
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**Question 5h:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the Delivery Plan to benefit socio-economic equality?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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## Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a tool to help to anticipate the needs of diverse groups when making decisions about projects, policy or service delivery. Conducting an EQIA helps to:

- Think about equality in the early stages of planning, which improves service delivery and employment practice.
- Ensure that no one is excluded from the delivery of our services and implementation of policies.
- Anticipate the consequences of our actions and consider the effects of our decisions on different communities, individuals or groups.
- Identify whether a business activity is likely to affect groups of people in different ways.
- Ensure decision-making includes a consideration of the actions that would help to avoid or mitigate any negative impacts on particular protected groups.
- Make decisions based on evidence.
- Meet our Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty.

In carrying out the EQIA for the Strategy, the effects of implementing the policies were considered for the nine protected characteristics recognised in the Equality Act:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex

- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Gender Reassignment
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity

Due to the strategic nature of the SBS and Delivery Plan, we have undertaken an initial screening to assess specific impacts on people with protected characteristics. In delivering the SBS we assume the environment would be generally improved for all people across Scotland, by factors such as better natural flood management, actions to adapt to, and mitigate, the effects of climate change, and the requirement for green skills and jobs to support nature restoration. It is anticipated that EQIA requirements will be further assessed as the policies to deliver the actions in the Strategy and Delivery Plan are developed.

**Question 5i:** Do you think that any of the provisions in the SBS or Delivery Plan, will have any adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 5j:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the Delivery Plan to benefit people with protected characteristics?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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## Islands Communities Impact Assessment

Scotland's islands have unique biodiversity, therefore in developing the SBS and associated Delivery Plan, consideration needs to be given to the particular habitats that occur on islands, and the species that inhabit the isles; as well as the people living and working in our island communities. It is a legal duty under the Island (Scotland) Act 2018, to consider any new policy, strategy or service, which is likely to have an effect on an island community - through the Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA).

Initial screening of the SBS and Delivery Plan actions indicates that the primary areas of impact to Island Communities centre around some of the elements set out in The National Islands Plan (2019) [A Fair, Integrated, Green and Inclusive Plan - The National Plan for Scotland's Islands - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)], namely:

- Environmental wellbeing and biosecurity
- Climate change and Energy
- Empowered Island Communities and Strong Local Partnerships
- Education

Further assessment of the impact upon Island Communities on the individual actions set out in the Delivery Plan will be necessary as these policies are developed.

**Question 5k:** Do you think that any of the provisions in the SBS or Delivery Plan, will have any adverse impacts on island communities?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 5l:** Are there any additional actions, or changes to existing actions, which can be taken through the Delivery Plan to ensure that there are no adverse effects for Island communities?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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## Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

The Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) is a process which identifies any anticipated impact on children's human rights and wellbeing of any:

- proposed decision, including budgeting decisions
- development of policies and services

A CRWIA asks a range of questions to encourage and guide thinking around potential impacts so that as policies and rationale for decision are developed, children's rights and welfare are fully considered, and mitigation can be considered if negative impacts are determined from the assessment. This includes questions around impact on:

- specific groups of children
- potential positive and negative impacts
- how children have been engaged to obtain their views and inform decisions made

Due to the strategic nature of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan, it has only been possible to complete a partial CRWIA. This is because it is not possible to determine specific impacts on children's rights and welfare at this point. In delivering the SBS there is a general assumption that the environment for all would be improved as described previously. It is anticipated that full CRWIA will be developed as the policies to deliver the actions in the SBS and Delivery Plan are further developed.

**Question 5m:** Do you think that any of the provisions in the SBS or Delivery Plan, will have any adverse impacts on child rights and wellbeing?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:

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**Question 5n:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the Delivery Plan to benefit child rights and wellbeing?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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# Section Six: Statutory Targets for Nature Restoration

## Introduction

This consultation deals with three parts of the Scottish Government's Biodiversity Strategic Delivery Framework:

1. The overarching Scottish Biodiversity Strategy which sets out our high level vision to be nature positive by 2030, and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity across the country by 2045,
2. The underpinning five-year rolling Delivery Plans which will set out the detailed actions we need to take to achieve the vision set out by the Strategy and
3. The proposed Natural Environment Bill

A central part of the proposed Natural Environment Bill is a framework for statutory targets for nature restoration (hereafter referred to as statutory targets). The statutory targets will be binding on government, in the same way that climate change targets require the Scottish Government to work towards meeting our net zero target.

As outlined in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, statutory targets will form a key element of the accountability framework, which in turn will support the delivery of the Strategy's high-level goals.

Putting nature restoration targets on a statutory footing is complex and requires a robust and transparent approach. Done well, statutory targets will signal a clear long-term direction of travel, and drive and focus action. If targets are poorly formulated however they can create perverse incentives, lead to a misallocation of resources and undermine actions. We are therefore consulting at an early stage of development on the targets policy framework.

In conjunction with this consultation, we will be seeking expert advice on the most appropriate suite of targets. That advice will come initially from the Scottish Biodiversity Programme Advisory Group (PAG), a group of external experts covering a range of academic disciplines that has been convened to advise on the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. NatureScot's Scientific Advisory Committee (NatureScot SAC) will then review the recommendations from the PAG and provide advice to Ministers.

The PAG will continue to play a key role in developing the indicators and quantifiable values for targets, again with a role for the NatureScot SAC. The proposed set of detailed targets, with indicators and values, will then go out for **further consultation** prior to it being laid before parliament to be delivered through secondary legislation.

## Context for Statutory Targets

Previous efforts to address biodiversity loss has produced some good but limited results and analysis has shown that we need to:

- Work more strategically and at scale;
- Focus on ecosystem health and landscape scale regeneration as well as on management for individual species;
- Systematically mainstream biodiversity across sectors and the wider policy landscape;
- Ensure sufficient investment;
- Strengthen accountability for delivery.[23]

Successful targets will be ones which incentivise and drive actions to address these critical shortcomings: incentivising transformative change; ensuring that biodiversity is factored into policy development at all levels of government (often referred to as 'mainstreaming biodiversity'); providing a clear signal of the Scottish Government's long-term commitment to addressing the biodiversity crisis; and putting accountability for achieving goals onto a legislative footing.

Statutory targets will nest within a wider monitoring framework, to monitor progress against our domestic and international obligations and commitments, including primarily the Kunming/Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).[24]

## Placing Targets on a Statutory Footing

Given the complexity of putting nature restoration targets on a statutory footing, careful consideration is needed as to how targets are set within legislation (i.e. what detail sits in primary and secondary legislation). Statutory targets set the long-term commitment of government and if they are going to drive the transformational change needed to tackle the biodiversity crisis, then it is essential they provide clear focus and are ambitious and stretching.

For statutory targets to be effective it is also necessary they are able to adapt and change as our knowledge and understanding increases. Given the complexity and inter-relatedness of nature and the uncertainty of impacts such as climate change on it, it is difficult to accurately predict the impact of our actions into the future.

We therefore propose that the Natural Environment Bill should establish the framework for targets, and that this will include the high-level topics (e.g. species abundance and habitat quality) that targets will be required to be set against. The detail of the targets, such as the quantitative figures, will then be provided in

[23] See Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, pg. 48
[24] Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (cbd.int)

secondary legislation. This approach allows for targets to be agile and adapt to unforeseen circumstance and ensures parliamentary scrutiny in maintained.

**Question 6a: Do you agree with this approach to placing targets on a statutory footing?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## The Targets Framework

There are three key aspects to developing a framework for statutory targets for nature restoration in Scotland. These are how we:

- **Select and set statutory targets** – the form of statutory target (i.e. the type of target, number of targets and timescale for the target) and the criteria to be taken into account when selecting and setting targets.
- **Review statutory targets** – getting this right is critical to ensuring statutory targets will be agile and adaptive, remain effective and avoid poor or even perverse outcomes in the long-term.
- **Report on statutory targets** – this aspect will determine how targets will be reported on, including the role of an Independent Review Body (IRB).

## Part 1: Process for Selecting and Setting targets

This first step in the process will identify the **criteria** for the selection of targets and the **form** of targets.

The targets will need to be both considered on their own merits but also as part of the wider **suite of targets**, to ensure that collectively they are a sufficient measure of whether we are delivering the Strategy vision and outcomes. The next step in selecting and setting statutory targets will therefore articulate the high-level topics that we will require targets to be set to. For example, there may be a target focused on the long-term outcome for species abundance.

The third step is to assign **indicators** and quantifiable **values** to the proposed suite of targets. A key part of this step will be to identify any risks or issues around using particular metrics or indicators, to ensure we have a robust approach. Setting the right values will be an important and complex process and expert advice will be sought.

As noted above, it is proposed the Bill will place a duty on Ministers to set targets on various topics that will be specified in the Bill, while the detail, in particular the quantifiable values, will be set out in secondary legislation.

**Criteria for Selecting Targets**

We propose the following criteria be taken into account in the selection of targets:

- Alignment with the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy high-level goals and outcomes.
- Alignment with the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) targets, metrics and indicators.
- Alignment with EU's environmental standards including with the proposed Nature Restoration Law.
- Synergy with existing and forthcoming Scottish Government legislative frameworks and strategies, e.g. the emissions reduction targets; Climate Change Plan, and Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (SCCAP).
- Targets that will galvanise cross sectoral and cross portfolio action.
- Targets that are SMART (Specific. Measurable. Ambitious. Realistic. Timebound) in line with CBD guidance.

**Question 6b: Do you agree with the criteria set out for the selection of targets?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**The Form of Targets**

We have initially considered the merits of the following types of targets:

- **Outcome targets** which demonstrate whether activities have achieved the desired overall effect;

- **Output targets**, which focus on whether actions are being delivered; or

- **Input targets**, which are focused on resources, such as money, equipment or people devoted to creating an output.

Targets that focus on achieving high-level outcomes are less prescriptive about how to reach the desired goals and have been shown to produce the best results.[25] However, it can be difficult to demonstrate that an outcome has been delivered – particularly in complex systems such as the natural environment – and whether actions in train will deliver the desired outcome. An example of an outcome target would include:

- X% increase in the abundance of species by a specific date.

Outputs are the activities that are aimed at delivering the outcomes. While both are firmly based in evidence (i.e. 'if I do X, then Y will happen'), outputs are relatively more straightforward to measure than outcomes. However, they are less responsive to changing evidence about the best way to achieve an outcome and may create undue focus on specific aspects of a programme. Examples of output targets in nature restoration would include:

- X hectares of peatland restored by specific date;
- invasive species removed from Y hectares of ancient woodland by a specific date.

Input based targets can be useful in some circumstances but are generally a crude and imprecise measure in terms of delivering complex outcomes. They can severely constrain agility in adapting to dynamic elements such as environmental shifts. Examples of input targets would include:

- £X spent on nature restoration within a specific timeframe.

**We propose Scotland's statutory targets should include a combination of outcome targets and output targets.**

**Question 6c: Do you agree statutory targets should include a combination of outcome targets and output targets?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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[25] Jill Rutter & William Knighton, Legislated Policy Targets, Institute for Government, 2012

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**Examples of Potential Target Topics**

Building on analysis which NatureScot undertook, on reporting on delivery of international targets included in the Global Biodiversity Framework, we have brought together a list of potential topic areas for statutory targets for Scotland. These are set out below for illustrative purposes.

As noted above, in deciding which of these topics would form the most appropriate suite of statutory targets, we will be seeking advice from external experts. Those recommendations, alongside the views expressed in responses to this consultation, will provide the basis of advice that will inform the final suite of target topics to be included in the Bill. The resulting set of detailed SMART targets that will be developed from the suite of topics will then go out for **further consultation** prior to being laid before parliament to be made by secondary legislation.

The list below is not exhaustive or definitive and is included for indicative purposes only. It will be open for our external experts or for Scottish Ministers to suggest alternative topics not included here. Some topics may not ultimately be selected as suitable for **statutory** targets, however, this does not mean that we are not taking action on these fronts. The health and progress of all topics will be monitored, as part of obligations in our Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan and other environmental commitments.

- Ecosystem integrity (condition, ecological function, diversity, resilience)
- Areas of ecosystems under restoration
- Ecosystem connectivity
- Habitat quality/condition
- Habitat extent
- Protected area extent
- Protected area condition
- Species abundance
- Species distribution
- Species extinction risk
- Invasive non-native species (INNS) – reduction and control
- Mainstreaming biodiversity
- Nutrient Pollution
- Pesticide and hazardous substances pollution
- Investment in biodiversity
- Population of exploited species
- Indirect effects of species exploitation

- Nature Based Solutions
- Natural Capital

**Question 6d: Is the list of potential target topics sufficiently comprehensive in terms of the focus of proposed target areas and overall scope?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response. If you answered “No”, please provide details of any target topics which you think are missing from the list.

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**Question 6e: Do you have any other comments on the list of potential target topics?**

- Yes
- No

If you answered “Yes”, please provide your comments below.

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**Number of Targets**

Biodiversity is a complex set of inter-connected systems – and it is not possible to identify a single quantifiable apex target – the equivalent of NetZero in the climate world. In the same way that it is not possible to identify a single target that describes whether a person is ‘healthy’ (a doctor may consider a range of factors such as immune response, cardiovascular fitness, mental health, blood pressure etc.), setting targets for nature restoration is therefore complex.

The challenge is to find a suite of targets that enable us to track the overall status of biodiversity. In so doing we need to avoid the risk of setting statutory targets for ‘everything’. Whilst this might be comprehensive and reflect the complexity and inter-

connectedness of biodiversity, it would also be disproportionately bureaucratic and burdensome. Putting an excessive number of targets into legislation also risks diluting public and political focus and weakening accountability.

We propose the smallest feasible number of targets which reflects the complexity of nature restoration.

**Question 6f: Do you agree with the proposal to have the smallest feasible number of targets which reflects the complexity of nature restoration?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Timescale for Statutory Targets**

Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy sets out a high-level, long-term vision for reversing biodiversity loss by 2030 and substantially restoring and regenerating biodiversity in Scotland by 2045. This is, in part, because actions to address biodiversity loss can take a long time to have an impact. However, that must not diminish the urgency of the need to take action. The purpose of statutory targets is to drive those actions now and sustain them through the duration of the strategy timeframe.

There are a range of relevant factors in considering the timescale for targets including: the type of targets, the urgency of action they are aiming to galvanise and the timeframes for monitoring and reporting (it can take up to 2-5 years for collection, collation and publication of relevant data). Options considered for timescales for statutory targets included: three-yearly; aligned with 5 year delivery plans; and aligned with the 2030 and 2045 timescales set out in the Strategy.

We propose alignment of targets with the 2030 and 2045 timescales of the Strategy, with the option to include interim values with specified dates.

**Question 6g: Do you agree statutory targets should align with the 2030 and 2045 timescales set out in the Strategy?**

- Yes
- No

- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## Part 2: Process for Reviewing Statutory Targets

Given the complexity of measuring biodiversity, it is important that we are able to adapt statutory targets. For example, it may be beneficial to change how they are monitored to use new, more effective technology. It is also possible that progress is made more quickly than anticipated, and additional or alternative targets are considered desirable. Equally it may be that circumstances change in unforeseen ways leading to scientific evidence indicating that one or more of the targets have become, for example, no longer relevant and therefore are no longer a good use of public funds.

Therefore, it is proposed that a review and adjustment process will be set out in the Bill. We are proposing that Scottish Ministers will be required to seek and publish external expert advice before making any adjustments, with relevant input from an Independent Review Body. Such adjustments would be done by statutory instrument, with appropriate Parliamentary oversight.

**Question 6h: Do you agree the Bill should allow for the review of statutory targets?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## Part 3: Process for Reporting on Targets

For meaningful accountability, clear and regular reporting on progress towards meeting targets is required. The Scottish Government is already required to report to Parliament every three years on the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy in Scotland[26].

We propose to align reporting of progress on achieving the targets with existing reporting cycles.

**Question 6i: Do you agree that reporting on targets should align with existing Biodiversity reporting requirements?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Independent Review Body**

We think it is appropriate to designate an Independent Review Body (IRB) who will have the function of reporting on Scottish Government's progress in meeting the statutory targets.

The IRB would have to be:

- independent from Scottish Ministers;
- able to provide, or source, expert advice; and
- cost effective for the public purse.

We propose that enabling powers be included in the Natural Environment Bill to allow Scottish Ministers to designate a body as the IRB.

[26] Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, all public bodies in Scotland are required to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their responsibilities. Section 2A of the 2004 Act. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 requires public bodies in Scotland to provide publicly available report every three years, on the actions which they have taken to meet this biodiversity duty.

**Question 6j: Do you agree that an Independent Review Body is needed to report on Government's progress in meeting the statutory targets?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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# Section Seven: National Parks

## Background

It is 20 years since Scotland's first two National Parks in Loch Lomond & Trossachs and Cairngorms were created. They are home to some of the country's most outstanding scenery, they host precious habitats such as Atlantic rainforest and high altitude moorland and grassland and they support thousands of rare and internationally important birds, mammals, insects, fungi and plant species.

Both National Parks support the communities living within them, they promote local employment and they welcome, educate and manage millions of visitors. For example, Cairngorms National Park attracts over two million visitors each year and tourism is a very important aspect of the local economy, accounting for around 43% of employment in the area. Cairngorms Connect, the UK's largest habitat restoration project, employs over 60 members of staff and has generated around £3.9 million of investment.

Scotland's National Parks are more important now than ever before. Sadly, the evidence tells us that Scotland, in common with the rest of the UK, has not done enough over the last 20 years to prevent the continuing decline in biodiversity. The 2019 State of Nature Scotland report indicated that 49% of Scottish species have decreased in abundance and 11% of species are threatened.

Working with partners and their local communities, our National Parks can be exemplars in contributing towards Scotland's ambitious targets to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and reverse declines by 2045. Equally, they have a vital role to play in the transition to a net zero economy in a way that is fair and inclusive for local people.

National Parks can help drive the adoption of nature-based solutions – such as restoring degraded peatland and expanding woodland – in order to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change in a way that is fair and inclusive to those living and working in their areas. They can encourage nature friendly farming, forestry and marine use. They can support sustainable tourism and visitor management. They can support their local communities, for example by creating new employment opportunities and promoting green skills and jobs. And they can help to generate and channel inward investment into the precious natural resources in their areas.

That is why the Scottish Government has committed to the designation of at least one new National Park in Scotland by 2026.

## Current legal framework for National Parks

Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority and the Cairngorms National Park Authority were established as executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) under the provisions of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 ("the 2000 Act").

The 2000 Act sets out four National Park aims:

(a) to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
(b) to promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
(c) to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public; and
(d) to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

The role of each National Park authority is to co-ordinate the delivery of these four statutory National Park aims, and in this way ensure a sustainable future for these areas. Each park authority is required to prepare a five-year National Park Partnership Plan. These plans set out how all those with a responsibility in each park, across public, private and voluntary organisations will coordinate their work to address the most important issues in relation to nature, people and place.

Section 9(6) of the 2000 Act states that, if it appears to the National Park authority that there is a conflict between the National Park aims, the authority must give greater weight to the first aim (to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area).

Each park authority is governed by a park authority board. The role of the board is to agree long term objectives for the National Park and to govern the work of the park authority. Park authority boards are made up of members that are appointed by Scottish Ministers, members that are elected locally and members that are nominated by the local authorities in the park area.

## Proposed Changes

In 2022 the Scottish Government consulted widely on the future of National Parks in Scotland. The analysis of these public consultations can be found here and here. These consultations have shown that many people want to see new National Parks in Scotland. Recent public opinion surveys in Scotland indicate that 89% of people support the creation of new National Parks and that 74% of people want to see more nature restoration within National Parks.[27] The consultations have also highlighted the important leadership role of National Parks in tackling the interlinked crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, whilst also welcoming visitors and supporting local communities and businesses.

[27] Survation Scottish Rewilding Alliance Survey November 2022

It is therefore important that both existing and new National Park Authorities have the legal framework and powers they need to fulfil this leadership role. It is also important that existing and new National Parks have effective and efficient governance, ensuring that the membership of their boards is diverse, that it reflects and represents local communities whilst also bringing relevant skills, expertise and experience into the organisation. And it is essential that the legal framework which sets out the overarching purpose and aims of our National Parks is fit for purpose in order to respond to today's societal challenges, in particular the interlinked biodiversity and climate crises.

## Purpose of National Park Authorities

The current purpose of a National Park authority in Scotland, as set out in the 2000 Act (see section 9(1)), is "*to ensure that the National Park aims are collectively achieved in relation to the National Park in a coordinated way*".
Given the urgency of the biodiversity and climate crises, and the leadership role of National Parks, we are proposing that, in addition to the collective achievement of the National Park aims, the statutory purpose specifically refers to nature restoration and tackling climate change.

**Question 7a: Do you agree that the purpose of National Park authorities should be amended in order to emphasise the important leadership role that National Park authorities need to play in restoring nature and in mitigating and adapting to climate change?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## Aims of National Parks

In order to support the proposed new purpose of Scotland's National Park authorities, we are also proposing to make some changes to the statutory National Park aims.

**First National Park aim**

Currently, the first National Park aim is "*to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area*".
We propose updating the language and having two separate aims along the following lines so that these aims would seek to:

(i) Protect, restore and enhance the natural assets, biodiversity and ecosystems within the National Park;
(ii) protect and enhance the cultural heritage and historic environment assets within the National Park;

**Question 7b: Do you agree with these suggested changes to the first National Park aim?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Second National Park aim**

Currently the second National Park aim is "*to promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area*". In light of the leadership action that is required of Scotland's National Parks to restore nature and tackle climate change in a way that is fair and inclusive to individuals and communities living and working within the park area, we propose changing this aim along the following lines so that the aim would seek to:

(iii) promote the sustainable management of the area's natural resources to maximise the benefits for the environment, climate, economy and people.

**Question 7c: do you agree with the suggested change to the second National Park aim?**

- Agree

- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Third National Park aim**

Currently the third National Park aim is "*to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public*".
Scotland's existing National Parks attract millions of visitors each year and they work hard to improve accessibility, inclusion, visitor safety and responsible tourism. Given the importance of biodiversity and the natural environment to our physical and mental health and wellbeing, we propose changing this aim along the following lines so that the aim would seek to:

(iv) promote public understanding and enjoyment of the area's natural and cultural assets, supporting sustainable tourism and visitor management, inclusion and improved accessibility for all.

**Question 7d: Do you agree with the suggested change to the third National Park aim?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Fourth National Park aim**

Currently the fourth National Park aim is *"to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities".*

Our National Parks are ideally placed to help support the necessary transition to a greener economy in a way that is fair and inclusive to local communities. This includes supporting the growth of nature-based jobs and skills, investing in the area's natural capital and working with communities and businesses to help them transition to net zero whilst supporting and developing the local wellbeing economy.

Therefore, we propose changing the fourth National Park aim along the following lines so that the aim would seek to:

(v) promote the sustainable economic, social and cultural development and wellbeing of the area's communities.

**Question 7e: Do you agree with the suggested change to the fourth National Park aim?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## The National Park 'principle'

Section 9(6) of the 2000 Act states that "*if, in relation to any matter, it appears to the authority that there is a conflict between the National Park aim set out in section 1(a) and other National Park aims, the authority must give greater weight to the aim set out in section 1(a)"* (that being the aim to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park area).

We propose retaining this principle and applying it to the amended first aim that we are proposing (that is, to protect, restore and enhance the natural assets, biodiversity and ecosystems within the National Park). This would allow greater weight to be

given to the protection and restoration of natural assets, biodiversity, and ecosystems within the National Park if there was a conflict between the aims.

**Question 7f: Do you agree that the National Park 'principle' set out in section 9(6) of the 2000 Act should be retained? This would mean that, if there is a conflict between the National Park aims, greater weight should be given to the first aim which would seek to protect, restore and enhance the natural assets, biodiversity and ecosystems within the National Park.**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Relevance of the National Park aims and the National Park principle to other public bodies operating within National Parks**

National Park authorities work in partnership with a wide range of public sector bodies and other organisations operating within the National Park area in order to achieve the National Park aims and to implement National Park plans. To support the collective achievement of the National Park aims, we propose that public bodies operating within the National Park should have regard to the National Park aims and the National Park principle.

This duty would apply to public bodies operating in National Parks for a purpose that is devolved to Scotland. The duty should not conflict with or displace responsibilities that are the primary remit of these public bodies.

**Question 7g: Do you agree that public bodies operating within the National Park should have regard to the proposed National Park aims?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 7h: Do you agree that public bodies operating within the National Park should have regard to the National Park principle?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## Duty on public bodies to support implementation of National Park Plans

Section 14 of the 2000 Act states that National Park Authorities, local authorities and any other public body or office holder must, in exercising functions that affect a National Park, have regard to the National Park Plan.

National Park Plans are the management plans for National Parks and they are approved by the Scottish Ministers. These plans are developed by the National Park Authority in collaboration with public bodies and other partners operating within the National Park area.

We propose that this duty on public bodies should be strengthened so that public bodies operating within the National Park have an obligation to actively support and contribute to the implementation of National Park Plans, for example in relation to expanding woodland, restoring peatland and important habitats, maintaining the fabric of historic buildings, developing nature-based jobs and skills, encouraging

nature-friendly farming, addressing housing needs, managing visitor pressures, improving public transport and active travel and increasing accessibility.

This duty would apply to public bodies operating in National Parks for a purpose that is devolved to Scotland. The strengthened duty should not conflict with or displace responsibilities that are the primary remit of these public bodies.

**Question 7i: Do you agree that the duty on public bodies operating within National Parks should be strengthened so they have an obligation to support and contribute to the implementation of National Park Plans rather than having regard to these plans?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## General powers of National Park Authorities

The powers and functions of each National Park are set out in the relevant designation order for that Park. National Park authority powers include management rules, byelaws, land acquisition powers, managing access to the countryside and planning powers. For example, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park authority is responsible for deciding all planning applications in the National Park area. The planning system in the Cairngorms National Park is managed by the National Park authority and the five local authorities which operate in the National Park area, with the Park Authority 'calling in' and deciding those applications which are big or particularly important to the National Park.

### Enforcement of byelaws

National Park Authorities have the power to create byelaws in order to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the area, to prevent damage to the land and to ensure public safety and enjoyment in the National Park. The purpose of these

byelaws is to prevent irresponsible behaviours with formal enforcement being a last resort.

Examples of existing byelaws in Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park include measures to tackle anti-social behaviour, and to improve public safety on Loch Lomond. The National Park Authority has recently consulted on a series of changes to the existing Loch Lomond byelaws in order to make further safety improvements in response to changing recreational uses and to minimise potential danger to the public from irresponsible navigation.

Currently, the only way to enforce the byelaws is through reports to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). Prosecutors in Scotland have a range of options for dealing with reported offending, including taking no action, warning letters, financial penalties, diversion from prosecution, as well as commencing court proceedings.

An alternative, proportionate and streamlined approach to byelaw enforcement could be provided by empowering National Park Authorities to be able to issue fixed penalty notices for byelaw breaches. These powers could ensure improved compliance and behaviour change while also providing a more proportionate means of enforcement when needed. Staff in Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park already have the powers and many years of experience in issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for littering offences under an amendment to the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

We are therefore proposing that National Park authorities should be given the power to be able to enforce the contravention of National Park byelaws by issuing fixed penalty notices.

**Question 7j: Do you agree with the proposal that National Park Authorities should be able to enforce byelaw breaches within National Parks by issuing fixed penalty notices rather than referring them to local Procurators Fiscal?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 7k: Do you think that any other changes should be made to the general powers of National Park authorities?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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## Governance of National Parks

Scotland's existing National Parks are each governed by a National Park Authority (known as a "board"). The role of the board is to set the strategic direction of the National Park, to agree its long-term objectives and to direct the work of the authority in line with the National Park aims and the National Park Plan. Boards are currently made up of members that are appointed by the Scottish Ministers, members that are elected locally and members that are nominated by the local authorities in the park area. The size and composition of boards is set out in schedule 1 of the 2000 Act.

In order to provide bold leadership and ensure that National Parks are at the forefront of efforts to restore nature and tackle the climate crisis, it is essential that National Parks have effective and efficient governance. National Park Authority boards should be large enough to ensure diversity, a broad range of relevant skills and local representation. However, they should not be so large that decision making is difficult and costs to the taxpayer are disproportionate for the size of the public body.

Cairngorms National Park Authority currently has 19 members whilst Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority has 17 members. These boards are much larger than other Scottish public bodies such as the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (which currently has 10 members), Visit Scotland (which currently has 8 members), Historic Environment Scotland (which can have between 10 and 15 members) and Scottish Enterprise (which can have between 8 and 11 members). We propose making the following changes to the size and composition of National Park authority boards in order to maximise their efficiency, diversity and relevant skillset:

(i) The board should have no fewer than 8 members and no more than 15 members.

(ii) Approximately half of the board's membership should be comprised of (a) members elected through direct elections to the board (i.e. members elected in a poll in an electoral area wholly or partly within the National Park); and (b) members nominated by local authorities in the National Park.

(iii) Approximately half of the board's membership should be directly appointed by the Scottish Ministers based on their skills, experience and their national perspective on issues facing National Parks including biodiversity and climate action.

(iv) As far as possible, greater diversity should be achieved across each board's membership, with consideration given to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

(v) The Convenor and Deputy Convenor should be members of the respective board and they should be appointed by Scottish Ministers (rather than being elected by the board). Given the growing importance of National Park authorities and their significant role in response to the biodiversity and climate crises, these appointments should seek to balance local representation with the relevant skills, expertise and experience required to successfully lead a National Park authority.

(vi) The exact size and detailed composition of each National Park authority's board should be set out in the relevant Designation Order for that National Park.

**Question 7l: Do you agree with the proposed changes to the governance of National Parks?**

- Agree
- Partially agree
- Partially disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Please explain the reasons for your response:
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**Question 7m: Do you have any other comments that you would like to make about the aims, powers and governance of National Parks?**

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# Section Eight: Impact Assessments – Part B

As we develop the proposals to create statutory targets for nature restoration and changes to National Parks legislation, we will carry out impact assessments. The aim of these assessments is to identify issues that may affect some groups more than others and to consider how we will address any issues that are raised.

The assessments also explore what impacts the proposals will have on business and the environment. In addition, we need to ensure the proposals comply with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

This section seeks views on the potential impacts of proposals to create statutory targets for nature restoration and to amend National Parks legislation.

We recognise that some proposals contained in Part B of this consultation will have greater impacts than others and that there may be some areas where there are minimal impacts.

Given this, when answering the questions below it would be helpful if you could set out the specific proposals to which you are referring when describing any impacts which you think should be considered.

**Human Rights**
The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law. It means that public authorities, such as the Scottish Government, must not act in a way which is incompatible with the rights set out in the ECHR. It is therefore vital that we consider how the proposals will impact on human rights.

**Question 8a:** Do you think that any of the proposals in Part B, will have any adverse impacts on human rights?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 8b:** Are there any additional actions, or changes to existing actions, which can be taken through the proposals in Part B to ensure that there are no adverse effects for people's human rights?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Equalities**
The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Scottish Government and other public bodies when they are exercising their functions to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it. For the purposes of the Public Sector Equality Duty, a 'relevant protected characteristic' means age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Public Sector Equality Duty includes a requirement for the Scottish Government and other public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

**Question 8c:** Do you think that any of the proposals in Part B, will have any adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 8d:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the proposals in Part B to benefit people with protected characteristics?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Fairer Scotland Duty**
The Fairer Scotland Duty came into force on 1 April 2018 and places a legal responsibility on named public bodies, including the Scottish Government, to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.

This means that as well as considering the impact on people with protected characteristics, the Scottish Government must consider how any proposals will impact on people depending on their economic background.

For example, if proposals would have a specific impact on people with low incomes or who live in a deprived area.

**Question 8e:** Do you think that any of the proposals in Part B will have any adverse effects on socio-economic equality?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:

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**Question 8f:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the proposals in Part B to benefit socio-economic equality?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Island communities**
Section 7 of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 states that a relevant authority – which includes the Scottish Ministers – must have regard to island communities when carrying out its functions. Scotland's islands face particular challenges around distance, geography, connectivity and demography, so it is important that this is considered when developing the proposals in this consultation.

It is also important that we ensure that the islands receive fair and equitable treatment and that policy outcomes are tailored to their unique circumstances.

**Question 8g:** Do you think that any of the proposals in Part B, will have any adverse impacts on island communities?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 8h:** Are there any additional actions, or changes to existing actions, which can be taken through the proposals in Part B to ensure that there are no adverse effects for Island communities?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Child Rights and Wellbeing**
The Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the child wellbeing indicators under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, apply to all children and young people up to the age of 18, including non-citizen and undocumented children and young people.

It is important that we consider how these proposals may impact on children's rights and wellbeing.

**Question 8i:** Do you think that any of the proposals in Part B, will have any adverse impacts on child rights and wellbeing?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 8j:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the proposals in Part B to benefit child rights and wellbeing?

- Yes

- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Business**
A Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) is used to analyse the cost and benefits to businesses and the third sector of any proposed legislation or regulation.

Some of the proposed Bill provisions are enabling powers and are therefore unlikely to impact directly on the costs and burdens placed on businesses, the public sector, voluntary and community organisations. Your comments will help to inform a BRIA which examines the impact that changes to national parks legislation and statutory targets for nature restoration may have no businesses. This BRIA will be published at the same time as the proposed Natural Environment Bill is introduced. Any secondary legislation that flows from the Bill's primary powers will be subject to a full BRIA and consultation at that time.

**Question 8k:** Do you think that any of the proposals in Part B will have any adverse effects on business?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Question 8l:** Are there any additional actions or changes to existing actions which can be taken through the proposals in Part B to benefit business?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please provide any comments:
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**Environment**
In Scotland, public bodies including the Scottish Government are required to assess, consult on, and monitor the likely impacts their plans, programmes and strategies will have on the environment. This helps to better protect the environment, aims to ensure that any development is sustainable and increases opportunities for public participation in decision-making.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report has been prepared in relation to the proposed changes to National Parks legislation, and will be consulted on alongside this consultation document. The proposals for statutory targets for nature restoration are to introduce a framework for the targets in the Natural Environment Bill, with the detail for the targets, for example numerical values, to be set out in secondary legislation. An SEA will be carried out and consulted on alongside the targets proposed in secondary legislation.

In relation to the Environmental Report for National Parks, that includes the proposed changes to National Parks legislation, we are seeking views on the following –

**Question 8m:** What are your views on the accuracy and scope of the environmental baseline set out in the environmental report?
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**Question 8n:** What are your views on the predicted environmental effects as set out in the environmental report?
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**Question 8o:** What are your views on the reasonable alternatives as set out in the environmental report?

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**Question 8p:** What are your views on the proposals for mitigation and monitoring of the environmental effects set out in the environmental report?

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**Respondent Information Form**

**Delivering Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy - Consultation on the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy's Delivery Plan and Proposals for Legislation**

**Please Note** this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.
To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy:
https://www.gov.scot/privacy/

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

☐ Individual

☐ Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

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The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

☐ Publish response with name

☐ Publish response only (without name)

☐ Do not publish response

**Information for organisations:**

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

☐ Yes ☐ No

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