

# Nature in brief

## 5: Living Landscapes



Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape — Mark Hamblin 2020VISION

A **Living Landscape** is a recovery plan for nature championed by the Scottish Wildlife Trust. It is a new way of thinking about how we manage land to do more for **wildlife, people and the economy**. In a truly Living Landscape, **ecosystems are restored** and **society benefits** from the vital **ecosystem services** that our environment provides. Living Landscapes encapsulate the principles of the **Land Use Strategy** and show how **multifunctional land use** can work in practice.

The Scottish Wildlife Trust, working in partnership, is already demonstrating action on the ground through two Living Landscape projects – one is located in north-west Sutherland and the other is in the central belt at Cumbernauld.

The **Cumbernauld Living Landscape** aims to reinforce and expand existing **green networks** and **reconnect** the people of the town to their natural environment. Local people will have increased access to **green, biologically diverse and pleasant** spaces as well as gaining **health benefits** from new active travel networks. It will help wildlife by providing new **habitats** which are **linked** across the urban landscape. The project will also increase the **desirability** of the area to live and work as well as providing new **opportunities for local business**.

The **Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape (CALL)** is one of the **biggest** conservation restoration projects ever attempted. By working in partnership, the CALL project aims to stop the dramatic decline in wildlife and demise in quality of natural habitats in this area. Restoration at this landscape scale is **already creating jobs** in silviculture and peatland restoration. By **working together**, communities will also benefit from improved **‘natural services’** which will provide **cleaner water** and a more **attractive landscape** on which to expand **wildlife tourism**.

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### What the Scottish Government can do:

- **In line with the new Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (SBS), champion biodiversity** across all government directorates be they involved in health, economy, transport , planning etc.
- **Introduce minimum biodiversity standards for new developments** that will also help meet climate change adaptation goals and increase the “liveability” of an area for residents and workers.
- **Design agri-environment schemes under the Scottish Rural Development Programme** that promote collaborative working between landowners to create habitat networks.
- **Implement a National Ecological Network for Scotland** and build on the great work already started by the Central Scotland Green Network.
- **Ensure the revised National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy** are aligned to the Land Use Strategy and the new SBS.
- **Develop a suite of high level Ecosystem Health Indicators** at national and regional level which will provide an annual ‘report card’ on the health of Scotland’s natural environment
- **Visit and support these fantastic projects.**