

#11 Actions needed to help save nature in Scotland by 2030

1. Expand Scotland's native woodlands



Native woodlands are an iconic part of Scotland's landscapes and are important places for wildlife, but they are under pressure and in decline. Restoring existing woodlands and planting native trees in the right places can play an important role in a green recovery, creating nature-based jobs and delivering benefits for nature and our climate.

2. Ensure sustainable, low-impact fishing



Healthy coasts and seas should be full of diverse marine life, but our seas are under pressure with many species being fished beyond sustainable levels. To protect and restore marine life, we must end overfishing. Long-term sustainability will provide stability to coastal communities that depend on fishing and allow everyone to enjoy the benefits provided by healthy marine environments. The reliable supply of locally caught seafood is also essential to reduce carbon emissions while creating food security.

3. Licence driven grouse moors



Scotland is renowned for its birds of prey, such as the iconic golden eagle. As top predators these species are key indicators of the health of our environment. However, evidence is clear that wildlife crime is restricting the range and numbers of golden eagles, hen harriers, red kites and peregrines. Licensing can protect these species from bad practice and illegal activity.

4. Manage deer populations effectively



Deer are a natural part of our landscapes in Scotland, but there are no natural ways of keeping deer populations at sustainable levels. A lack of effective deer management can prevent regeneration of woodlands and restoration of peatlands that are important for both nature and climate. Reducing overgrazing pressure and trampling from deer will help these key habitats to thrive.

5. Make developments net positive for nature



The built environment has a direct impact on nature and climate. We need to transform our planning system so that all new developments have a positive, rather than a negative, impact on nature. Wherever people live and work they should have access to nature. Integrating communities and economies with nature helps protect and restore nature but also has a direct influence on our quality of life and wellbeing.

6. Link wild places through a Scottish Nature Network



Nature networks involve transforming the way we use land. Our most important protected areas for nature should be well managed and teeming with wildlife and then connected with areas of restored habitats, nature-friendly farming, sustainably managed forests and nature-rich greenspace to allow wildlife to move and thrive throughout Scotland's landscapes. This would create a more attractive, healthy and nature-rich nation that provides benefits including ecotourism and access to nature for everyone.

7. End peatland burning and its extraction for horticulture



Scotland's peatlands are one of its best assets for tackling the nature and climate crises, supporting a diverse range of plants and animals and storing more carbon than the Amazon rainforest. However, currently around 80% of Scotland's peatlands are degraded. We must end burning on peatland and the commercial extraction of peat for use in garden compost and work to restore and protect these important and unique places.

8. Improve use of nitrogen fertilisers



Almost half of the nitrogen used in fertilisers is wasted, running off into our soils, our lochs and rivers and then our air when it is released into the atmosphere as climate changing gases (ammonia and nitrous oxide – a gas with 310 times the warming potential of carbon dioxide). A significant reduction in nitrous oxide emissions is essential if Scotland is to meet its net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2045 and ensuring improved use of fertilisers is key to that.

9. Stop the spread of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)



When people move animals and plants around the world and allow them – either deliberately or accidentally – to escape and establish in the wild, there can be serious environmental and health impacts. A Scottish Invasive Non-Native Species Inspectorate and investing in biosecurity would help prevent this spread and the resulting damaging effects on our native wildlife.

10. Support nature and climate-friendly farming



Now that the UK has left the EU, Scotland must design new policies and support systems for Scottish agriculture. Farmers and crofters must be supported to help tackle the nature and climate crises while delivering high-quality Scottish produce. We need policies for farming that puts us on a path to net zero by 2045 and addresses the nature crisis in a fair and planned way.

11. Protect Scotland's seas



Scotland's seas are six times larger than its land mass and our shores make up 10% of Europe's coastline. A wealth of habitats and species, including coral reefs, dolphins and seabirds, are found in Scottish waters. Marine Protected Areas are proven tools for protecting nature. By 2030 we want to see 30% of Scottish seas highly protected and well managed, with at least 10% fully protected from damaging activities.

The Nature Recovery Plan, written by RSPB Scotland, WWF Scotland and the Scottish Wildlife Trust, is supported by organisations across Scotland all asking the Scottish Parliament to take these #11 Actions to help save nature.

Will you join them?

<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-recovery-plan>