

Tackling the Nature Emergency – Consultation on Scotland’s Strategic Framework for Biodiversity.

The Scottish Government has released a consultation to **gather views on the impacts of biodiversity policy proposals**. This includes;

- The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy delivery plan – actions need to meet the goals of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy
- Nature Networks and 30 by 30 delivery frameworks
- The introduction of Statutory Nature Targets through the Natural Environment Bill
- Updating National Park legislation

The [consultation document](#) has over 70 questions so to make it easier and less time consuming to complete, Scottish Wildlife Trust have pulled out the key questions we believe are the best place for **you to express your views** on biodiversity in Scotland. **This paper gives you the summary information on these questions to help inform your response.**

To simplify the process further, we have produced an [online form](#) which will **create your customised consultation response**. This will be emailed to you first for checking and sending on to the consultation clerk and ideally your MSP.

We hope as many people as possible will take the opportunity to respond to the consultation. We all have the chance to influence the future of Scotland’s biodiversity and support the recovery of our land and seas, while creating long-term, sustainable “green-collar” jobs and hugely improving the resilience of communities, as well as the quality of life of present and future generations. The nature crisis affects us all and we now have an opportunity for everyone to be part of the solution.

Questions from the consultation

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

Key actions for delivery plan Objective 1: Accelerate Restoration and Regeneration

- Introduce statutory nature restoration targets
- Implement a programme of ecosystem restoration
- Identify and facilitate partnership projects for six large scale landscape restoration areas
- Implement the Scottish Plan for Invasive Non-Native Species Surveillance, Prevention and Control
- Increase resilience in coastal and marine systems by reducing key pressures and safeguard space for coastal habitat change
- Substantially reduce deer densities across our landscapes in parallel with ensuring sustainable management of grazing by sheep to improve overall ecosystem health

- Enhance water and air quality and undertake water management measures to enhance biodiversity and reduce negative impacts
- Ensure grouse-moor management sustains healthy biodiversity

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

Key actions

- 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.

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

Shared vision for Nature Networks –

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.

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

Shared vision for 30 by 30 –

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.

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

The proposed Natural Environment Bill includes a framework for statutory targets for nature restoration, which will be binding on the government. Statutory targets are seen as a crucial element of the accountability framework supporting the high-level goals of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

Well-formulated statutory targets are essential for providing a clear long-term direction, driving focused action, and avoiding perverse incentives or resource misallocation. The consultation seeks

input on the early-stage development of the targets policy framework. Expert advice from advisory groups will guide the formulation of targets, which will undergo further consultation before parliamentary presentation.

The proposal suggests establishing the framework in primary legislation while specifying detailed targets in secondary legislation to allow flexibility and adaptability in response to changing circumstances.

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

The following criteria is being proposed 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 6d - Is the list of potential target topics sufficiently comprehensive in terms of the focus of proposed target areas and overall scope?

This list is the illustrative of the possible topics that could be developed into SMART statutory targets.

- 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 7b - Do you agree with these suggested changes to the 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) (ii) protect and enhance the cultural heritage and historic environment assets within the National Park.
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You can respond to this consultation directly using the Scottish Government's consultation hub, [Citizen Space](#). Please ensure that consultation responses are submitted before the closing date of 14 December 2023.

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