



Route Map to Recovery— Fixing Nature in the UK

The Global Biodiversity Framework and
what the UK needs to do to implement it

Global Biodiversity Framework

Context & Key Messages

The interconnected crises of biodiversity loss and climate change are accelerating, with growing impacts on communities, food systems, infrastructure, public health and national security.¹ The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, while increasing climate impacts like drought and flooding are exposing the poor condition of ecosystems and reducing their ability to provide essential services such as clean water, flood protection and carbon storage.

In 2022 the world united to set a collective ambition to save nature and recognise its key role in stabilising the global climate. At the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Global Biodiversity Framework was agreed by 196 countries. It provides the global plan to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and achieve a world living in harmony with nature by 2050.

CBD COP17, taking place in Yerevan in October 2026, marks the first major global stocktake of progress towards the Global Biodiversity Framework.

The UK's seventh National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity², paints a worrying picture, finding the UK is on track to meet just 3 of the 23 Global Biodiversity Framework targets by 2030—with insufficient or unknown progress on others. With only four years remaining, there is an urgent need to accelerate delivery.

This report assesses policy progress across 16 of the 23 Global Biodiversity Framework targets in the UK, devolved nations and Crown Dependencies. Drawing on The Wildlife Trusts' policy insights on these targets, it identifies welcome examples of progress, while highlighting areas where delayed action or backtracking puts the UK itself, and our global commitments, at risk.

Key Messages

The UK is not on track to meet the Global Biodiversity Framework targets by 2030. Governments must significantly accelerate delivery across all relevant targets if biodiversity loss is to be halted and reversed this decade.

Implementation is the priority. Many of the policies needed are in development or in place, but they must be backed by funding, regulation, accountability and delivery mechanisms commensurate with the scale of the challenge.

Devolution presents a major opportunity to accelerate delivery. National, devolved, regional and local governments must be enabled and resourced to deliver nature recovery, working alongside communities, land managers, businesses and civil society in a whole-of-society approach.

Nature recovery must be embedded across governments. Biodiversity loss and climate change are as much economic and social challenges as environmental ones—these issues require further integration across all areas of Government, ensuring nature is treated as essential national infrastructure.

Spatial planning, protected area recovery and climate resilience require urgent action. Governments must accelerate delivery of 30by30, strengthen ecological networks on land and at sea, reduce major pressures such as pollution, and scale up nature-based solutions to support both climate mitigation and adaptation.

Investment in nature is an investment in prosperity, security and resilience. Protecting and restoring nature, in the UK and globally, is vital to strengthen food and water security, reduce climate risks, improve health, underpin economic resilience and national security.

COP17 must be an acceleration moment. The next four years will determine whether the UK delivers on its commitments to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030. We don't have time to repeat the missed targets of previous decades. The measures needed are largely known; the challenge now is urgent and sustained implementation.

Reducing threats to biodiversity

Targets

1. Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss
2. Restore 30 per cent of all degraded ecosystem
3. Conserve 30 per cent of land, waters and seas
4. Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity and manage human-wildlife conflicts
7. Reduce pollution to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity
8. Minimise the impact of climate change on biodiversity and build resilience

Spatial planning—Targets 1, 2, 3, 8

Context

The UK has made progress in embedding biodiversity into spatial planning, but significant delivery gaps remain. England has introduced a Land Use Framework and the majority of Local Nature Recovery Strategies have been published, while Wales and Northern Ireland have developed or proposed complementary planning frameworks. In England, there is a delivery plan for 30by30 on land³, but detail on the assessment process and implementation are still not decided. There is no plan for how 30by30 will be calculated or delivered at sea. In addition, marine spatial prioritisation remains incomplete across much of the UK. Weaknesses in planning policy and implementation continue to undermine nature recovery on land and at sea.

Actions

- **Strengthen strategic land-use planning.** England's Land Use Framework should now move rapidly into implementation, with clear priorities for land-use change, delivery of 30by30, and greater clarity on where nature recovery, food production and development should take place. Northern Ireland should progress its commitment to develop a Land Use Framework by 2027.
- **Embed nature recovery into planning decisions.** Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a major step forward in identifying locally agreed priorities for habitat creation and restoration in England, with 43 of 48 strategies now published. Their success will depend on being fully integrated into local planning, investment for delivery and supportive land management decisions. Regulations requiring planning authorities to take account of Local Nature Recovery Strategies—a duty introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023—must be introduced as soon as possible, supported by guidance that steers development away from important sites and priority restoration areas.
- **Maintain and strengthen protection for nature in the planning system.** Existing nature protections must not be weakened. The UK Government should strengthen protection for Local Wildlife Sites through the National Planning Policy Framework, while Wales should improve the application and enforcement of protections for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), particularly where development threatens irreplaceable habitats.



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TAKING ACTION FOR NATURE

- **Deliver marine spatial prioritisation.** England has yet to publish a Marine Spatial Prioritisation Programme, Wales lacks prioritisation within its National Marine Plan, and Northern Ireland's updated Marine Plan and Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan remain in their draft forms, with the former not yet publicly available to stakeholders. All three administrations should adopt strategic, ecosystem-based marine spatial planning to align nature recovery with energy, transport, fisheries and other marine uses.
- **Support marine ecosystem restoration and recovery.** Wales has identified opportunities for marine restoration through mapping of inshore restoration potential and investment through Marine Fund Cymru. In England opportunities for marine restoration have been mapped through the multistakeholder Restoring Meadow Marsh and Reef (ReMeMaRe⁴) programme. While there are opportunities for saltmarsh and seagrass restoration, these habitats face increasing threat from sea level rise and stronger storms. The best option for nature recovery at sea is removing pressures such as damaging fishing practises.



Meeting 30by30 and Species Recovery—Targets 2, 3, 4, 7

Context

The 30by30 target 3 is a cornerstone of the Global Biodiversity Framework and represents the minimum area of land, freshwater and sea that should be effectively conserved and managed to support resilient ecosystems and species recovery. However, success depends not just on reaching 30 per cent coverage, but on ensuring protected areas are well managed, in good ecological condition, and connected into functioning nature recovery networks.

Progress across the UK is currently insufficient to meet the target by 2030. England has published a 30by30 Delivery Plan and criteria for land to count towards the target, Wales has established the Naturfa programme to identify Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs)⁵, and Northern Ireland has embedded 30by30 within its Environmental Improvement Plan. However, protected site condition remains poor, designation of new sites is slow, and management of Marine Protected Areas does not match policy ambition. The Isle of Man illustrates the implementation gap, with only 4.36 per cent of the terrestrial area under full legal protection—one of the lowest figures in Europe. While new investment and some species recovery initiatives are welcome, delivery has not yet matched the scale of biodiversity decline.

Actions

- **Deliver a connected and effectively managed 30by30 network.** Governments must move beyond area-based metrics and focus on delivering a connected, resilient and effectively managed ecological network across at least 30 per cent of land, freshwater and sea. This requires significant investment to restore protected sites to favourable condition, alongside incentives that encourage landowners, businesses and communities to contribute to nature recovery.
- **Strengthen delivery of 30by30 on land.** In England, implementation of the 30by30 Delivery Plan must be accelerated, with clear arrangements for site assessment, monitoring and long-term management. Government-owned land should make a greater contribution to delivery. In Wales, increased funding is needed to expand Naturfa sites identification, improve the condition of protected sites and accelerate SSSI designation. Northern Ireland should co-design and publish a 30by30 Framework (led by Northern Ireland Environment Agency) and Action Plan (led by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs), with SMART targets to drive implementation and dedicated resource allocated to 30by30 delivery.



- **Improve marine protection and management.** Marine delivery remains a major weakness across the UK. All governments must publish a clear pathway for calculating and delivering 30by30 at sea. Effective management measures must be rapidly implemented across all Marine Protected Areas, including action to remove damaging activities that are incompatible with 30by30 objectives. In Wales, the Marine Protected Area Network Completion is also needed, while Northern Ireland should complete and implement management plans for its inshore and offshore protected areas by 2028 and 2029 as outlined within their Environmental Improvement Plan⁶.
- **Accelerate species recovery programmes.** The UK Government's £60 million investment in England's Species Recovery Programme is a positive step, but substantially greater and sustained investment will be needed to meet species recovery targets. Species Conservation Strategies promised under the Environment Act 2021 should be published urgently and informed by Natural England's assessment of priority species recovery needs. Wales and Northern Ireland should accelerate delivery of commitments within the Nature Networks Programme and draft Nature Recovery Strategy respectively.
- **Tackle invasive non-native species.** Action on invasive non-native species remains insufficient across the UK and is undermining efforts to recover native wildlife. Governments should increase investment in monitoring, prevention, eradication and control programmes, finalise pending Pathway Action Plans, and implement overdue Marine Invasive Species Action Plans in Northern Ireland.
- **Support species reintroductions and ecosystem recovery.** Governments should streamline evidence-based species reintroductions, enabling initiatives such as beaver releases to contribute more rapidly to species recovery, ecosystem restoration, climate resilience and natural flood management.

Tackling Pollution—Target 7

Context

Pollution remains one of the most significant drivers of biodiversity loss across the UK, affecting rivers, soils, seas and wildlife. While governments have introduced new measures on water quality, pesticides, chemicals, marine noise and plastic waste, progress remains uneven and environmental outcomes continue to lag behind policy ambition. Public concern remains high, creating an immediate opportunity for a step change in action.

There have been positive developments, including investment in reducing wastewater nutrient pollution, restrictions on some neonicotinoids, new controls on marine noise, deposit return schemes to tackle plastic waste and the promise of a Clean Water Bill for England. However, most water bodies still fail ecological standards, agricultural pollution trends remain unclear, regulation of harmful chemicals is limited, and many freshwater and marine habitats continue to be damaged by pollution. Chalk streams, for which the UK holds a global responsibility, remain particularly vulnerable to both pollution and over-abstraction.

Actions

- **Strengthen enforcement and accountability.** Implementation remains the biggest challenge. Reversal of the under-resourcing of environmental regulators and watchdogs (alongside introduction of this function in Northern Ireland and Wales) is key—ensuring they have the powers, funding and political backing needed to monitor pollution, undertake inspections and enforce penalties when environmental laws are breached.
- **Deliver ambitious water reform.** England's Clean Water Bill must drive a more strategic, catchment-scale approach to tackling pollution from sewage, agriculture and development. Governments should strengthen protection for chalk streams, support river catchment partnerships and ensure water policy contributes to long-term ecosystem recovery.
- **Halve nutrient pollution by 2030.** Progress towards reducing nutrient pollution remains unclear, with no evidence yet that nutrient loads from agriculture are falling. To meet the Global Biodiversity Framework target, Governments need to implement stronger agri-environment schemes, wider use of riparian buffers, improved soil management and targeted catchment action. Nutrient trading schemes should move beyond neutrality and contribute to nature recovery.
- **Raise ambition on pesticides.** The UK Pesticides National Action Plan is a welcome step, but the target to reduce pesticide impacts by 10 per cent by 2030 is insufficient. Governments should strengthen reduction targets, align more closely with evolving European Union restrictions where appropriate, and increase support for integrated pest management and regenerative farming.
- **Apply the precautionary principle.** The decision to end the use of three neonicotinoids in England demonstrated stronger protection for pollinators, but subsequent approval of another neonicotinoid highlights continuing weaknesses in decision-making. Assessment processes should be strengthened to ensure full consideration of impacts on wildlife, water and protected sites before any exemptions are granted.
- **Accelerate action on harmful chemicals.** While a small number of 'forever chemicals'⁷ (PFAS) and other persistent chemicals have been restricted, most remain uncontrolled and UK regulation lags behind international best practice. Governments should strengthen the PFAS Action Plan, move beyond voluntary measures and accelerate restrictions on harmful chemicals that accumulate in ecosystems.



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- **Reduce marine pollution and underwater noise.** New requirements to reduce noise from marine development are welcome, but stronger action is needed to tackle underwater noise and land-derived and shipping pollution. Governments should adopt a source-to-sea approach to reduce pollution entering marine ecosystems and introduce robust, enforceable standards for underwater noise.
- **Cut plastic pollution.** Deposit return schemes and the ban on plastic-containing wet wipes are important milestones. Governments should build on these measures through further action to reduce single-use plastics, improve recycling systems and prevent plastic waste entering rivers and seas.



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Taking action for nature and climate—Target 8

Context

Climate change impacts on nature and people are intensifying. The UK has set strong climate targets, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 81 per cent by 2035 compared to 1990 levels, and to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, as enshrined in the Climate Change Act 2008⁸. Progress has been made through record growth in renewable energy (including recent approval of plug-in solar) and the phase-out of coal-fired power, but the UK remains off track to meet its near-term 2030 target⁹. **Acceleration of action on electrification, and rapid progress on sectors such as surface transport, buildings, industry and land use are key going forward—ensuring climate action and nature recovery go hand in hand.**

While nature-based solutions are essential for both climate mitigation and adaptation, delivery is not matching need. Peatland restoration is progressing but is vulnerable to changing levels of support, particularly in the uplands, while woodland creation is falling short of targets. At sea, Northern Ireland's draft Climate Action Plan 2023-27¹⁰ and Blue Carbon Action Plan 2025-30¹¹ highlight the importance of nature-based solutions and climate resilient Marine Protected Areas, whilst conservation objectives for these areas in English waters are weak on climate risk and proactive work to build their resilience. UK-wide adaptation remains a major policy weakness, with current adaptation policies and delivery are inadequate to address growing climate risks to nature, land and food systems.

Actions

- **Deliver a step change in UK energy generation—a home-grown, nature-positive transition to net zero.** Maintaining emission reduction targets and accelerating decarbonisation are critical priorities, to limit the overshoot of 1.5°C, and the scale of climate change impacts on human lives and on nature. This requires accelerating the phase out of fossil fuels and scaling-up renewable energy sources that are best in terms of cost, impact on the environment, and national security. In England, devolution should extend to the expansion of localised energy production. Solar and terrestrial wind must play a central role, with all appropriate levers, to accelerate scale up.

Strategic spatial planning is essential to ensure all energy deployment supports both climate and nature objectives. Offshore renewable development must avoid harm to marine ecosystems and protected sites, ensuring climate action contributes to, rather than undermines, nature recovery.

- **Put nature at the heart of climate resilience.** Nature must be prioritised in climate strategies and delivery at all levels. Wetland restoration and nature flood management increased woodlands and urban tree cover, healthy marine and coastal habitats and regenerative agricultural systems reduce flood and drought risks, store carbon and increase resilience of wildlife, communities and the economy.
- **Ensure cross-government leadership and accountability.** Prioritisation of nature in climate resilience must be embedded across governments through stronger leadership, coordinated delivery and transparent monitoring of investment. This should include a dedicated Minister for Climate within the UK Cabinet Office and Nature for Climate Resilience units within mayoral authorities and devolved administrations.
- **Prioritise investment in nature-based solutions.** Actions on both mitigation and adaptation are urgent, mutually reinforcing and interdependent¹²—and *nature-based solutions can deliver both*. Governments must increase and stimulate investment in nature-based solutions across terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments to reach the scale needed to achieve net zero, placing increased emphasis natural carbon storage, including peatlands, nature-rich woodlands and blue carbon habitats.
- **Accelerate peatland recovery.** Peatland restoration remains one of the most effective opportunities for reducing the impacts of climate change and for nature recovery. Governments must safeguard both funding and delivery capacity to accelerate restoration efforts (such as Northern Ireland’s commitment to restore peatlands through forest-to-bog projects), ban burning on upland peat and legislate to end the extraction, sale and use of peat and peat-containing products.
- **Strengthen adaptation for nature.** Current adaptation measures do not match the scale of climate risks facing species and ecosystems. Governments should strengthen adaptation planning and monitoring for protected sites, landscapes and wildlife, supported by long-term funding, monitoring and delivery mechanisms.



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Meeting people’s needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing

Targets

9. Manage wild species sustainably to benefit people.
10. Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture fisheries and forestry.
11. Restore, maintain and enhance nature’s contributions to people.
12. Enhance green spaces and urban planning for human wellbeing and biodiversity.

Supporting nature friendly farming and fisheries—Target 10

Context

Sustainable agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry must play a key role in delivering nature recovery. Across the UK, almost 70 per cent of land area is used for agriculture. The UK Government has committed £2.7 billion annually to Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes in England until 2029, and 69 per cent of England’s agricultural land is now within an ELM agreement. **However, current funding and uptake remain insufficient to deliver the scale of change needed**, while the new agri-environment schemes in Northern Ireland is still in development. Wales has established a new Sustainable Farming Scheme under the Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023, but most funding is directed towards entry-level actions, limiting its potential to drive significant biodiversity gains.

Progress at sea is similarly mixed. The ban on sandeel fishing in the English North Sea and in all Scottish waters is a significant step for marine ecosystem recovery, but many fish stocks remain subject to unsustainable catch limits with 58 per cent of total allowable catches set by the UK for 2026 being set above scientific advice¹³. There has been some welcome progress on fisheries restrictions but progress on reducing fisheries bycatch remains slow, and many Fisheries Management Plans lacking sufficient ambition to support nature recovery.

Actions

- **Increase investment in nature-friendly farming.** Farmers manage around 70 per cent of the UK’s land and are central to delivering biodiversity recovery, climate resilience and long-term food security. Public investment in nature-friendly farming should increase to £5.9 billion¹⁴ to meet the scale of the transition required, with greater support for habitat restoration, species recovery and ecosystem services alongside food production.

In England, this must include a significant expansion of Higher Tier Environmental Land Management agreements and Landscape Recovery projects. In Wales, a greater proportion of Sustainable Farming Scheme funding should be directed towards the Optional and Collaborative layers. Northern Ireland should finalise and launch its new scheme, reversing the decline in agri-environment participation and expanding delivery through Farming with Nature.



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- **Target funding where it delivers the greatest benefit.** Governments should accelerate plans to spatially target farming incentives towards priority areas for nature recovery, water quality improvement and climate resilience. Funding should support joined-up delivery at landscape scale rather than isolated interventions.
- **Deliver fair and sustainable food systems.** Governments should introduce stronger regulation to eliminate unfair supply-chain practices that can undermine farmers' ability to adopt sustainable land management. There is a need for nature-friendly food production and healthier, more sustainable diets.
- **Eliminate damaging fishing practices in protected areas.** Bottom trawling and other damaging activities must be removed from Marine Protected Areas where they are incompatible with conservation objectives. Pending effective regulations and management measures should be implemented urgently across the UK and Crown Dependencies to ensure protected areas are genuinely protected. Northern Ireland's planned reforms to fisheries legislation should include stronger penalties for environmental damage to improve compliance and deterrence under the proposed Fisheries, Aquaculture and Water Environment Bill¹⁵.
- **Align fisheries management with scientific advice.** Sustainable fisheries management requires catch limits to be set within scientific advice. Governments must ensure all Total Allowable Catches are consistent with advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and strengthen Fisheries Management Plans, so they contribute to ecosystem recovery rather than simply stock management.
- **Reduce bycatch and strengthen marine protections.** Governments should accelerate action to eliminate bycatch of sensitive species across inshore and offshore fisheries and strengthen monitoring and enforcement. Northern Ireland's planned reforms to fisheries legislation should include stronger penalties for environmental damage to improve compliance and deterrence under the proposed Fisheries, Aquaculture and Water Environment Bill and with links to relevant marine conservation strategies such as the draft Elasmobranch Conservation Strategy¹⁶ and the Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2035¹⁷.

Enabling healthy communities—Targets 11, 12

Context

When nature thrives, so do we. Healthy ecosystems and access to nature are essential for public health, climate resilience and economic prosperity, while nature and access to green and blue spaces is a glue that unites communities. England's Local Nature Recovery Strategies provide an important framework for identifying priorities for nature recovery and targeting habitat creation and enhancement. Wales' Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 similarly places resilient ecological networks and green infrastructure at the heart of spatial planning. However, these frameworks are yet to significantly influence decision-making and wider planning reforms have delivered limited additional gains for nature. Meanwhile, unequal access to nature is negatively impacting life expectancies in the UK, and England's long-awaited Access to Nature Green Paper has yet to be delivered.

You can read The Wildlife Trusts' new paper, *Unlocking nature for all*.¹⁸

Governments are beginning to invest in nature-based solutions that benefit both people and wildlife, including a £25 million Natural Flood Management programme and commitments to improve public access to rivers and nature. Research shows every £1 invested in NFM delivers a £10 return over 30 years and multiple benefits¹⁹. Yet while, nearly 7 million homes are at risk of flooding in the UK, and we face increasing exposure to drought conditions²⁰, delivery remains slow, green infrastructure standards are inconsistent, and many communities still lack access to high-quality natural spaces. Stronger integration of nature into planning, health, education and water policy is needed to safeguard communities and prosperity in a changing climate.



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Actions

- **Make nature a core part of national infrastructure. Nature should be recognised as critical infrastructure underpinning public health, climate resilience, economic prosperity and national security.** Governments should require all major policies, plans and infrastructure decisions to consider and enhance natural assets alongside built infrastructure. This should include national infrastructure projects.
- **Deliver greener places for people and wildlife.** Mandatory green infrastructure standards should be introduced across the UK. All new developments should provide at least one-third green cover and ensure everyone can reach a high-quality natural space within a 15-minute walk or wheel at most, and within five minutes as target²¹. Local authorities should use Local Nature Recovery Strategies and equivalent frameworks to identify opportunities to create and retrofit green infrastructure in existing communities—and to tackle inequality in nature access. In England there are sharp disparities in the provision of accessible green spaces, between constituencies²². The most affluent 20 per cent of council wards have five times the number of parks per person than the most deprived 10 per cent of wards²³.
- **Reform water management through catchment-scale planning. Water needs to be recognised as a strategic national resource.** Governments must accelerate water management reform based on whole-catchment planning, restoring rivers, wetlands and floodplains to improve water security, reduce flood risk and support biodiversity—including a target for thriving wild beaver population(s) in every river catchment. Emerging regional water planning partnerships provide an opportunity to embed nature-based solutions and local leadership into long-term water management.
- **Deliver resilient ecological networks.** Governments should strengthen delivery of ecological networks through spatial planning. In Wales, this requires full implementation of Future Wales 2040 commitments on green infrastructure and ecological connectivity. Across the UK, planning policy should identify, protect and restore nature-rich corridors that connect habitats and communities.
- **Establish a right to a healthy natural environment.** Everyone should have the right to access a healthy, nature-rich environment. In England, the Government should deliver on the proposals in The Wildlife Trusts' Access to Nature Green²⁴ paper, which offers steps to strengthen legislation and policy to improve access to nature, particularly for disadvantaged communities, ensuring equitable access to its health and wellbeing benefits.
- **Integrate nature into health services.** Having nature-rich spaces in and around NHS and other health and care settings can create calmer, healthier environments that support patients, staff and visitors, helping people feel better and recover well. This all means that, with nature in their lives, people stay healthier for longer, reducing demands on the NHS. Green Social Prescribing should be rolled out more consistently across the NHS and devolved health systems as part of a preventative approach to healthcare. Evidence shows referral to take part in a nature-based activity delivers positive results—improving mental health and saving the National Health Service money²⁵. Economic analysis published by The Wildlife Trusts shows there are much greater cost savings to be achieved if nature-based health and wellbeing programmes are delivered at scale²⁶.
- **Ensure every child can learn in nature. Access to nature is essential for children's health and educational outcomes, improving physical activity, mental resilience, behaviour, attendance and attainment.** Yet opportunities for outdoor learning remain insufficient, and many pupils lack regular contact with nature. Nature-based learning urgently needs to be reflected in development plans and across the curriculum. Government education departments and Local Authorities should ensure every pupil has access to at least one hour of outdoor learning each day, alongside targeted support, nature-rich school environments and teacher training to maximise its impact.

Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming

Targets

- 14. Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at entry level.
- 15. Business assess, disclose and reduce biodiversity-related risks and negative impacts.
- 18. Reduce harmful incentives by at least \$500 billion per year and scale up positive incentives for biodiversity.
- 19. Mobilise \$200 billion per year for biodiversity from all sources, including \$30 billion through international finance.
- 21. Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action.
- 22. Ensure participation in decision-making and access to justice and information related to biodiversity for all.



Integrating nature into decision-making—Targets 14, 21

Context

Integrating biodiversity into decision-making across government is essential to delivering the Global Biodiversity Framework. While some progress has been made as a result of England’s Environmental Improvement Plan 2025, the Land Use Framework; Northern Ireland’s Environmental Improvement Plan and the 2026 enactment of its Environmental Principles Policy Statement, and the establishment of the Office of Environmental Governance Wales, implementation remains inconsistent and insufficient. The Office for Environmental Protection continues to conclude that England is off track to meet key environmental targets, with biodiversity objectives too often overruled by decisions in sectors such as housing, infrastructure and energy.

Governments across the UK are taking steps to improve coordination, data and accountability, including plans to modernise environmental datasets and strengthen spatial planning. However, major gaps remain. Monitoring of protected sites, both on land and at sea, is chronically underfunded, environmental data remains incomplete in some nations, and nature is still not consistently reflected in economic and fiscal decision-making. Without stronger cross-government coordination, improved evidence and sustained investment, delivery of biodiversity commitments will remain at risk.

Actions

- **Accelerate delivery of biodiversity commitments.** Governments must move from strategy to implementation. England’s Environmental Improvement Plan 2025 and its 13 delivery plans must be backed by adequate funding, clear accountability and transparent reporting. Similar commitments across the devolved nations require defined delivery mechanisms and sufficient resources.
- **Embed nature across governments.** Nature recovery and climate resilience should be treated as whole-of-government priorities. Biodiversity objectives must be integrated into decision-making across housing, energy, transport, infrastructure and economic policy, rather than remaining the responsibility of environment departments alone.



- **Strengthen regional and local leadership.** Devolution in England provides an opportunity to embed climate and nature responsibilities at a more local level. Unitary authorities, mayoral administrations and local government should be supported and required to coordinate action through dedicated climate and nature resilience functions.
- **Invest in monitoring and accountability.** Long-term funding is needed to monitor protected sites on land and at sea, assess ecological condition and track progress against targets. Without robust monitoring, governments cannot effectively target action or demonstrate delivery of biodiversity commitments. Governments should recognise, stimulate and invest in citizen science initiatives that collect significant quantities of ecological data, increase nature literacy and provide health, wellbeing and educational benefits for local communities. This would help collect vital data for 30by30, both on land and at sea, including invasive-non-native species, climate change indicators and on protected sites.
- **Integrate nature into economic decisions.** Natural capital should be reflected in economic and fiscal decision-making. Governments should account for nature’s contribution to prosperity, resilience and public wellbeing, alongside the costs of environmental degradation and the benefits delivered by nature-based solutions. **Investment in nature recovery must be recognised as necessary, not a ‘nice to have’.**
- **Support strong environmental governance.** Independent watchdogs, including the Office for Environmental Protection and the new Office of Environmental Governance Wales, must be adequately resourced and empowered to scrutinise performance, enforce environmental law and hold public bodies accountable for delivering nature recovery.
- **Improve environmental data and planning tools.** Good decision-making requires good evidence. Governments must accelerate efforts to modernise environmental datasets, improve data sharing and deliver national spatial tools that support decision-making across land use, marine management and infrastructure planning.

Business and finance—Targets 15, 18, 19

Context

Delivering the Global Biodiversity Framework will require a significant increase in both public and private investment in nature, alongside action to reduce harmful financial flows and business impacts on biodiversity—evidenced in detail in the IPBES Business and Biodiversity Assessment²⁷. Progress has been made in England through Biodiversity Net Gain, nutrient neutrality schemes and increased environmental investment by water companies and other infrastructure sectors. Nutrient neutrality has enabled more than 35,000 homes to be built while avoiding additional nutrient pollution, although only a small number of schemes deliver net environmental improvements beyond offsetting.

Across the devolved nations, progress is less advanced. Northern Ireland has committed to explore Biodiversity Net Gain and develop a Biodiversity Finance Plan by 2027, while Wales is developing a Nature Finance Strategy and associated governance frameworks. UK wide, private investment in nature remains far below what is needed, nature-based solutions continue to face barriers to investment. Internationally, whilst the recent announcements of UK investment in the Tropical Forest Finance Facility and £330 million for the Global Environmental Facility are very positive, the UK's international biodiversity finance commitments have been significantly impacted by reductions in Official Development Assistance. **This weakens the UK's contribution to global biodiversity and climate objectives—which will have knock-on impacts domestically.**

Actions

- **Require business action on nature.** Introduce mandatory requirements for businesses to measure, act and disclose on nature, equivalent to existing expectations on climate change. Nature reporting should become a core part of corporate governance and decision-making.
- **Establish a clear reporting framework.** Integrate recommendations from the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures and the IPBES Business and Biodiversity Assessment into UK Sustainability Reporting Standards, providing businesses and investors with a consistent framework for action and disclosure.
- **Scale high-integrity nature markets.** Support the growth of UK carbon and nature markets, increasing investor confidence and incentivising investment in high integrity projects with an enabling fiscal, policy and regulatory environment, and prioritising nature-based solutions in public investment programmes. In England, blending of
- **Redirect finance towards nature recovery.** Public and private spending should be aligned with nature recovery objectives, with greater focus on investments that restore ecosystems, build climate resilience and deliver environmental and social outcomes. Harmful subsidies and financial incentives that contribute to biodiversity loss should be phased out, redirecting resource to schemes that reward habitat restoration, species recovery and ecosystem services.
- **Deliver international biodiversity finance commitments.** The UK should commit to delivering its fair share of the Global Biodiversity Framework commitment to mobilise international biodiversity finance for developing countries. This should include restoring one third ring-fenced for nature-based solutions within international climate finance and ensuring overseas investment and aid are aligned with climate and biodiversity goals.



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public environmental land management funds with market mechanisms must be permitted where needed to fully finance nature restoration. Northern Ireland should progress proposals for Biodiversity Net Gain and deliver its Biodiversity Finance Plan, while Wales should translate its nature finance principles into a strategy with practical measures that unlock private investment for high integrity projects and programmes.

Local leadership and inclusion—Target 22

Context

Effective implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework requires a genuine whole-of-society approach, with people and communities able to participate in decisions that affect nature. Global Biodiversity Framework Target 22 commits governments to ensuring access to information, justice and participation in biodiversity-related decision-making for all.

The UK's reporting on Target 22 has largely focused on support for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities through international engagement, including support for land rights and inclusive conservation action. However, the UK's international influence has been reduced by cuts to Official Development Assistance. Within the UK, Scotland has adopted a broader interpretation of the target, emphasising a whole-of-society approach to delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, supported by policies designed to strengthen community involvement in land, coastal and marine decision-making. Despite this progress, meaningful public participation remains inconsistent, under-resourced and rarely measured across the UK. Programmes such as the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Sea the Connection²⁸ project is a practical example of action, increasing the ocean literacy of coastal communities and capacity to engage in marine planning and protection.

Actions

- **Enable communities to act for nature recovery.** Governments should recognise communities as essential partners in delivering nature recovery. Local people often hold deep place-based knowledge and strong connections to their natural environment, making community stewardship a powerful tool for restoring nature and building climate resilience. As devolution progresses, notably with new focus in England, biodiversity recovery should be embedded within local growth and resilience agendas, with dedicated resources to support community participation, leadership and long-term stewardship, supported by access to information and effective routes for accountability.
- **Strengthen rights for community management, participation and access to nature.** Devolution provides the opportunity to rethink UK framing of Target 22, with an increased domestic focus, including expansion of community ownership and stewardship of nature-rich spaces. Measures such as a community right to buy or lease green and blue spaces for nature and climate resilience, under the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026, must grant community groups the right of purchase for nature spaces of local value when they are put up for a sale. This should include land that is of value to the community because it provides access to nature.



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Time to Accelerate

The UK is not on track to meet the Global Biodiversity Framework targets by 2030—delay that is putting our natural world and our national security at risk.

Now is the time to accelerate. With just over three years until 2030, and the real time impacts of biodiversity loss and climate change intensifying, we must act with urgency on implementation. Recognising—and prioritising—the critical role of nature as national infrastructure.

The actions outline above are designed to help governments of the UK to prioritise key steps to meet the challenges of the moment, and to get back on track in driving nature recovery that benefits us all. Fixing nature fixes so much more.

For more information on this report, please contact:

Zoe Quiroz Cullen
Head of Climate and International Policy
RSWT
zqcullen@wildlifetrusts.org

Katherine Hawkins
Nature Policy Manager
RSWT
khawkins@wildlifetrusts.org



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The Wildlife Trusts are a federation of 47 charities, 46 individual Wildlife Trusts and a central charity, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. Together we have more than 940,000 members, 39,000 volunteers and 3,600 staff across the UK. We share a vision of nature in recovery, with abundant, diverse wildlife and natural processes creating wilder landscapes where people and nature thrive.

Wildlife Trusts care for—and have restored—some of the most special places for wildlife in the UK. Collectively we manage more than 2,300 nature reserves, operate 123 visitor and education centres and own 29 working farms. We undertake research, we stand up for wildlife and wild places under threat, and we help people access nature.

We work with businesses who are committed to being nature positive and take action to help restore 30% of land and seas for nature by 2030.

The Wildlife Trusts

- ✉ enquiry@wildlifetrusts.org
- 🖱 wildlifetrusts.org
- 🌐 The Wildlife Trusts
- 📘 @wildlifetrusts
- 📷 @thewildlifetrusts

