The Wildlife Trusts



Nature Without Borders

The importance of local action for global targets

IUCN | Member

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Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) near the Isle of Man, photographed by Dr Lara Howe, Marine Officer, Manx Wildlife Trust. Among the world's great long-distance travellers, Manx Shearwaters migrate between 12,000-18,000 miles a year to nest on small islands and rugged coasts across the British Isles, including Cornwall, Devon, the Isles of Scilly, Ireland, the Isle of Man, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The species captures both the international importance of The Wildlife Trusts local conservation work, and our reliance on global partnerships to help ensure these remarkable birds continue returning to our shores.

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Nature does not recognise borders: birds migrate, seas link coastlines and climate change is reshaping habitats and species distribution at a continental scale.

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Foreword

Nature knows no borders. It crosses oceans and mountains, continents and timezones—and so does the impact of the work we do.

From tiny European eels navigating 4,000 miles to the Sargasso Sea, basking sharks cruising between Cornwall and the Canaries, Perthshire and Rutland-born ospreys fishing in the Gambia River and painted ladies crossing the Strait of Gibraltar, so much of our so-called British wildlife only spends a fraction of its time with us. Addressing nature loss needs to be a collaborative effort across nations, which is why the UK is working together with nearly 200 other countries to protect our shared biodiversity as part of the Kumming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030.

The Wildlife Trusts, while rooted in local action, is part of this global conservation movement. Our Trusts are custodians of globally-important habitats, from peatbogs to chalk streams, and the ripples of our work can be felt far beyond reserve boundaries. The Wildlife Trusts' international relevance has long been part of our identity as a movement: we were a founding member of The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1948, and we continue to champion that mission to restore nature at a global scale on land and at sea.

Our federated structure sets us up incredibly well for this. Grounded in our communities, we are trusted to bring people together, to listen, share knowledge and turn global ambition into real action on the ground. In short, we are a local, national and international movement for nature.

Like migration routes, this is a two-way process. As we restore wildlife and habitats in the places we know and love, so we learn from others doing similar work in other Trusts and around the world, comparing notes on wins, challenges and solutions.

The effects of the climate and ecological emergencies are being felt across the globe. Climate breakdown is affecting species—changing feeding, breeding and migratory habits—as well as impacting the natural systems and services that we rely on. The United Nations conventions on biodiversity, climate, land degradation and migratory species are highly relevant for The Wildlife Trusts, and it is crucial that we play our part in contributing to their delivery. This document reinforces our place within a much bigger story: one in which nature's recovery depends on cooperation, learning and action between counties, countries and continents. By recognising the interconnected roles of local people as stewards of nature at an international level, we can protect and enhance nature's global community, to which we all belong.



Craig Bennett
Chief Executive,
The Wildlife Trusts

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL
United Kingdom

"It is wonderful to have a federation of such deeply-rooted conservation Trusts looking outward to share their hands-on expertise and support our global nature challenges. Civilisation depends on nature, and we need all the voices and collective action possible to ensure a thriving future."

Jonathan Hall
Managing Director
Conservation International UK

I am delighted to be the first Director of International at The Wildlife Trusts and to introduce this document setting out our international contribution and ambitions. While the role is new, our international relevance is not. The Wildlife Trusts—as one of the founding members of the IUCN in 1948—have been contributing internationally for decades, with individual Trusts working locally to conserve migratory species, restoring globally-important habitats and building relationships with partners and NGOs in other countries.

As a federation we are proudly multi-national, with Trusts in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the Crown Dependencies of Alderney and the Isle of Man. Our priority remains on the ground delivery for nature in the places we know best, whilst recognising that climate change and biodiversity loss are global issues we must play our part in tackling locally. This document is not about adding a separate international agenda alongside our existing work: it is about recognising international relevance as a golden thread running through what we already do, and being more deliberate about where The Wildlife Trusts can learn, contribute, collaborate and lead. The Wildlife Trusts core focus will always remain the UK, whilst ensuring we are playing our part strongly within the global conservation movement.



Leigh Morris
Director of International,
The Wildlife Trusts









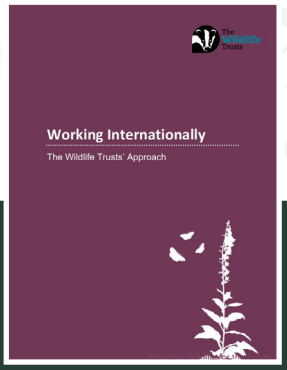








Our international objectives and way of working



The primary focus of The Wildlife Trusts is the delivery of nature conservation and restoration locally, through our federation of 46 independent Wildlife Trusts based in every part of the UK, on Alderney and in the Isle of Man. Our work everywhere feeds into a wider global agenda, as reflected in the third strategic goal in our Strategy 2030: '*nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems*'.

Read our full Strategy 2030:
wtru.st/Strategy-2030

International runs as a golden thread through all areas of our work through four international objectives:

Our International Way of Working

Everything we do internationally conforms to our values and principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) working. Our International Way of Working document ensures what we do is wanted, needed and subsequently carried out in a highly equitable, inclusive and community-centred way.

We work globally through invited, equitable partnerships rooted in our values and commitment to inclusion. Indigenous and local knowledge guides us, with strong community and youth engagement. Through Team Wilder we share power and support community-led action. Mutually planned exits and culturally respectful communication ensure we build lasting, trusted international relationships.

1 **Deliver conservation locally that contributes to the global biodiversity and climate challenges and targets—*Global to Local***

2 **Support international conservation action—*Local to Global***

3 **Maximise our international networking, partnering, and knowledge exchange**

4 **Hold our governments (national and sub-national) to account on their international targets and obligations**

Our four nations and crown dependencies

The Wildlife Trusts have worked 'internationally' for decades, with The Wildlife Trusts in Alderney, England, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales championing nature and leading on conservation within the English counties, devolved nations and Crown Dependencies.

There are 37 Wildlife Trusts across England, five Welsh Wildlife Trusts, the Scottish Wildlife Trust, Manx Wildlife Trust, Alderney Wildlife Trust, and Ulster Wildlife. Together with the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, we make up The Wildlife Trusts movement

Ulster Wildlife
Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland sits at a distinctive ecological and political position, where nature recovery must be understood across landscapes, seas and jurisdictions. Working within Northern Ireland and across the border counties of Ireland, Ulster Wildlife connects local conservation action with UK, Irish and European environmental frameworks.

The coastlines, peatlands, loughs, lowland grasslands, ancient woodlands and marine habitats of this region are internationally important, supporting species and delivering on carbon storage, water regulation and climate resilience. The coastal and marine environment is part of a wider Irish Sea and North Atlantic system, supporting seabirds, marine mammals, seagrass, maerl and more.

Cross-border collaboration is important: shared catchments, mobile species and connected marine ecosystems facing the common pressures of pollution, invasive species, habitat loss and climate change all require cooperation across the whole island of Ireland and beyond.

Manx Wildlife Trust
Isle of Man

As a self-governing Crown Dependency and the world's first entire nation recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere, The Isle of Man provides a distinctive model for integrating nature recovery, cultural heritage and sustainable development across a whole jurisdiction.

The Island is at the heart of migratory routes for birds, marine mammals and fish, while its waters support important populations of basking sharks, grey seals and seabirds. These are a direct link to neighbouring nations.

Through practical conservation, advocacy, research and public engagement, Manx Wildlife Trust works with partners locally and internationally to deliver nature recovery at a national scale. The Isle of Man's Biosphere status provides a powerful platform for testing and sharing approaches that balance environmental protection, community wellbeing and economic resilience.

Island nations can be agile, ambitious and innovative, providing lessons that are relevant far beyond their shores.

The Welsh Wildlife Trusts
Wales

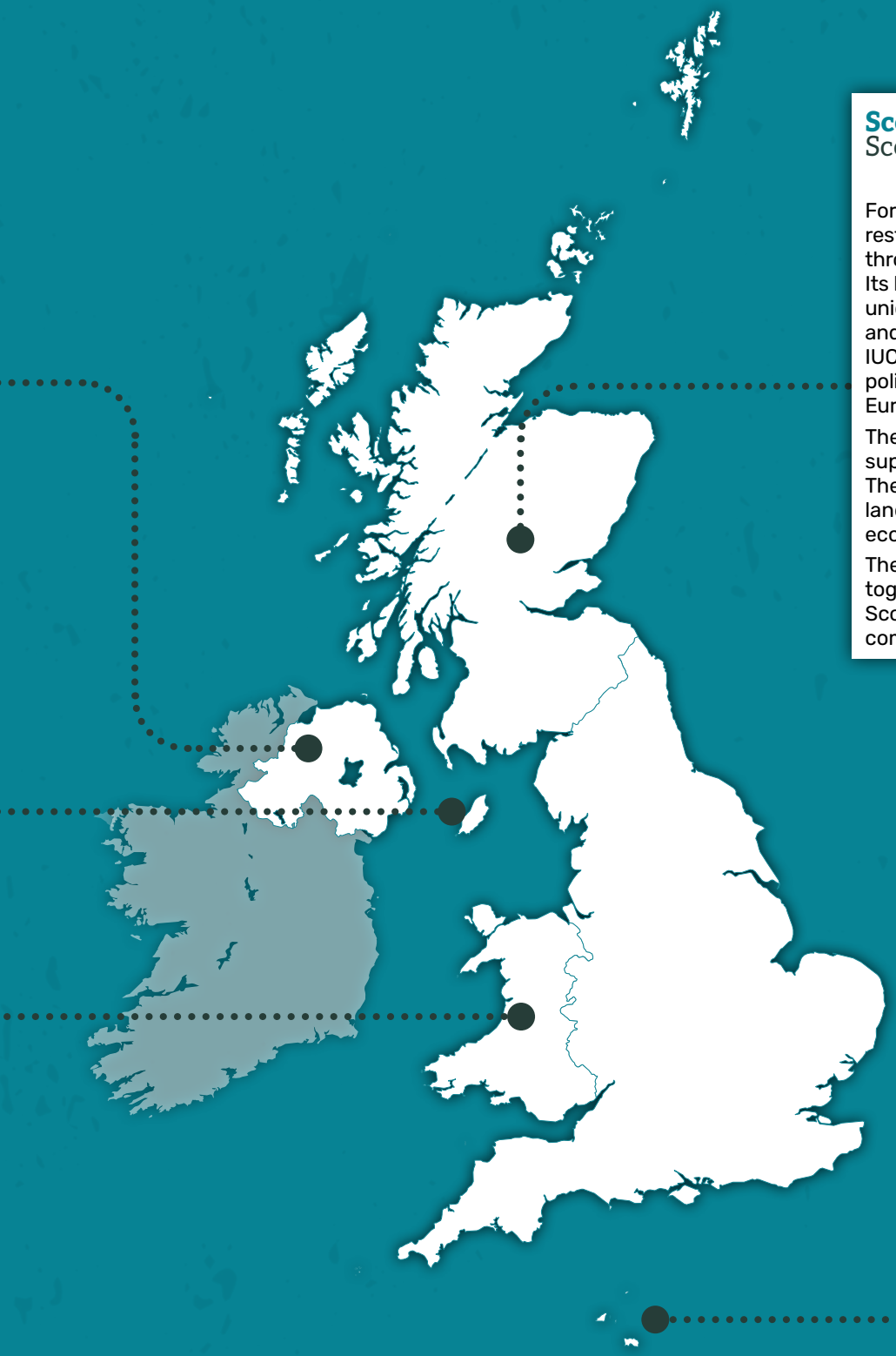
Wales' rare temperate rainforests, nature-rich estuaries and carbon-storing uplands have international significance, which is reflected by international and European designations including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar wetlands, World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves and Global Geoparks.

Its waters support cetaceans, turtles, sharks and bluefin tuna, while Skomer, Skokholm and the seas off Pembrokeshire are home to half the global population of Manx shearwater. Meanwhile its estuaries provide safe harbours for tens of thousands of wintering and migratory waterbirds, wildfowl and waders from around the world.

This gives Wales a major responsibility for nature at a global scale. European funding, particularly LIFE, restore habitats, tackle invasive species, improve woodland and marine management, and share best practice across borders.

Currently, work is developing with partners in Norway to explore the return of white-tailed eagles.

The five Welsh Wildlife Trusts (North Wales, Montgomeryshire, Gwent, Radnorshire, and South and West Wales) are represented nationally by Wildlife Trusts Wales.



Scottish Wildlife Trust
Scotland

For more than 60 years, the Scottish Wildlife Trust has protected and restored Scotland's wildlife by championing nature recovery, delivering landscape-scale restoration through collaboration and practical action, and inspiring people and communities to act for nature. Its land and seas support remarkable wildlife, from globally important seabird and seal colonies to unique mosses, lichens and liverworts. These habitats and species are recognised through national and international protected areas. Scotland holds over 20% of the UK's peatlands, and by hosting the IUCN UK Peatland Programme, the Trust advanced pioneering global collaboration on the evidence, policy and practice needed to secure peatland recovery at scale. Scotland also holds much of Europe's finest temperate rainforest (a rare habitat benefiting both biodiversity and climate).

The Scottish Beaver Trial, jointly led by the Trust and the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, with support from Norwegian partners, paved the way for the UK's first licensed mammal reintroduction. The Trust-led Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape initiative has become one of Europe's largest landscape restoration partnerships. Its innovative, community-based approach to large-scale ecological restoration has been highlighted internationally, including by Rewilding Europe.

The Scottish Wildlife Trust hosted all three World Forum on Natural Capital conferences, bringing together international leaders to advance global natural capital thinking. Building on this, the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital has become Scotland's leading cross-sector network for those committed to valuing and investing in nature.

Alderney Wildlife Trust
Channel Islands

Alderney punches far above its weight for nature. This community of just 2,000 people, on the northern-most of the Channel Islands, holds outright ownership of over 100 square miles of territorial waters, which has made its natural environment one of its most important economic assets.

With such a small government, the Alderney Wildlife Trust must play a central role in the community. The team acts as secretariat for Alderney's internationally-important Ramsar wetland site, a vital base for gannets, puffins, storm petrels and gulls.

Alderney Wildlife Trust is also one of the founders and long-term hosts of the Inter-Islands Environment Meetings, and the Wildlife Island's Conference. These meetings also enable strong partnerships in the UK and France, as so much of this region's rich nature is a shared resource with no concept of political boundaries.

Objective 1 Global to Local

The Wildlife Trusts is part of the global movement to tackle the nature and climate crises and bring forward solutions that are critical to our collective futures and the natural world at large. Alongside our work at local level, we are developing our practical engagement with the international policy frameworks and institutions that guide global action on nature, climate and sustainable development. This is local action for global impact.

United Nations Conventions

The UK is party to the United Nations Rio Conventions, which unite countries for global, collective action on biodiversity conservation, climate change, combatting desertification and conservation of migratory species. Nature recovery is a uniting thread. As a leading and locally-rooted conservation movement in the UK, The Wildlife Trusts play a key role in contributing to delivery of the UK's commitments and holding our governments accountable for progress.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

The Global Biodiversity Framework is THE strategy for conserving and restoring nature and biodiversity on our planet, a landmark agreement of the Convention on Biological Diversity and adopted the CBD Conference of the Parties in 2022. It includes targets to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030: every Trust is committed to supporting the delivery of the Global Biodiversity Framework.



Kunming–Montreal
GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Reducing threats to biodiversity

- **Target 1** Spatial planning
- **Target 2** Restore 30% degraded ecosystems
- **Target 3** Conserve 30% of land, waters and seas
- **Target 4** Conserve species
- **Target 7** Tackling pollution
- **Target 8** Minimise impact of climate change

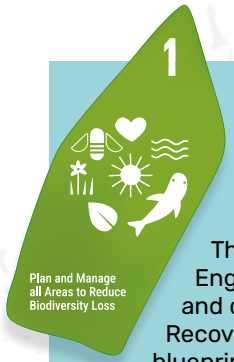
Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing

- **Target 10** Agriculture and fisheries
- **Target 11** Nature's contributions to people
- **Target 12** Nature in urban spaces

Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming

- **Target 14** Biodiversity in decision making
- **Target 19** Mobilise finance
- **Target 20** Strengthen capacity building
- **Target 21** Ensure knowledge is available
- **Target 22** Ensure participation for all

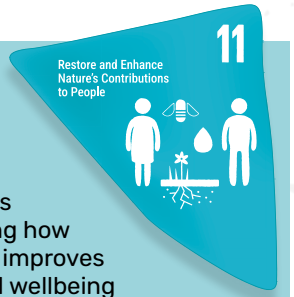
Deliver conservation locally that contributes to the global biodiversity and climate challenges and goals



Planning for locally-led nature recovery

The Wildlife Trusts in England support the creation and delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies: regional blueprints for nature that identify locally-agreed priorities for habitat creation and restoration. They have, for example, chaired working groups, led mapping work, written area descriptions and got the public involved via members and supporters. With 42 of 48 Local Nature Recovery Strategies now published, many Trusts are working to ensure they are fully integrated into local planning—informing land management and investment for implementation.





Fix nature. Fix health.

The Wildlife Trusts are demonstrating how access to nature improves public health and wellbeing by connecting people with their local nature spaces. Analysis by Trusts found that, despite clear evidence that people who live near accessible nature are healthier, happier and live longer lives, 44% of constituencies in England have low access to nature—and areas with the poorest access often overlap with areas of economic deprivation. By working with NHS partners, local authorities and community organisations to deliver nature-based wellbeing programmes, including green prescribing, conservation volunteering and therapeutic outdoor activities, Wildlife Trusts' projects are helping to reduce social isolation, improve mental and physical health, support illness recovery and rebuild people's connection to the natural world.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations in 2015, serving as a global call to action.

The Wildlife Trusts in some ways support all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, with nature recovery being important to deliver all, but our greatest contribution is towards:



UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION 2021-2030

UN Guiding principles that underpin ecosystem restoration

Created in September 2021, the 10 principles are designed to maximize net gains for biodiversity, ecosystem health, and human well-being.

The first principle is 'Global Contribution': which encourages organisations to orientate their local and regional work toward international climate and sustainability goals. The Wildlife Trusts align with all 10 principles, in particular: Benefits to Nature and People; Local and Land/Seascape Contexts.

GLOBAL CONTRIBUTION



Tackling the climate crisis—Nature-based Solutions

Climate change and biodiversity loss are interconnected global issues, and we can't tackle one without addressing the other. Global wildlife populations declined by almost three quarters between 1970-2020, with an ~85% decline in freshwater wildlife, ~1 million plant and animal species facing extinction. Climate change is one of the main causes of these declines. At the same time, the breakdown of delicate natural systems in itself worsens climate change.

In the last 12 months, in the UK and overseas, we have felt the impact of climate change through multiple heatwaves, drought and wildfires. Globally, the last three years (2023-2025) have been the warmest on record.

How we act now, in the UK, matters and helps to determine how great a hold climate change takes on our planet, and our resilience and ability to adapt to it. We must drastically reduce emissions, move away from fossil fuels and restore nature.

At The Wildlife Trusts, we are getting our own house in order and leading by example. This means reducing our own emissions as far as possible, supercharging our nature recovery efforts, building resilience and adapting to climate change across our landholdings, and pooling resources and expertise with like-minded partners.

In the fight against climate breakdown, nature is our greatest ally. Beavers released in Cornwall, restored peatland in Lancashire, farms adopting nature-friendly methods... these local efforts all contribute to reducing global temperatures and adapting to impacts with us already.

The Paris Agreement

Adopted in Paris in 2015, The Paris Agreement is a legally-binding international treaty that commits countries to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

Nature recovery is essential to this, because healthy ecosystems—including those supported by the work of the Wildlife Trusts and partners—store large amounts of carbon and help people and wildlife adapt to climate impacts such as floods, droughts and rising temperatures.



PARIS2015
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE
COP21•CMP11

Slowing the flow and storing water

The Wildlife Trusts are implementing natural flood management measures to mitigate the impacts of flooding by reducing downstream peak water flow levels in streams and rivers. This includes creating ponds and wetlands and reintroducing beavers which create these habitats for us. Peatland restoration, planting trees on floodplains, building 'leaky dams' and re-wiggling rivers and streams slows water flow. Re-wetting and storing water in the landscape is also vital for building resilience to drought and wildfires, protecting both wildlife and people.

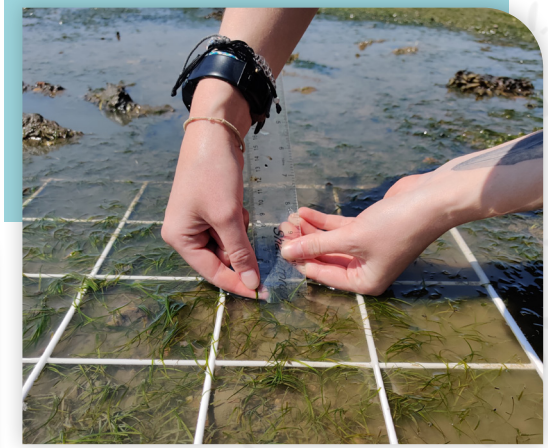
Rivers 2040 is an ambitious project that reimagines our river catchments. This vision starts with the River Trent, which represents one of the UK's greatest opportunities for large-scale river restoration. Funded by Intact Insurance, the project brings together the expertise of the eight River Trent Wildlife Trusts, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) and the Trent Rivers Trust to shape an inspiring vision for river restoration. Floodplains reconnected, nature and people returning to the river, and the value, health and resilience of rivers recognised in national, regional and local policymaking. This will be a blueprint for river restoration across the UK and draws inspiration from successes from around the world.



Protecting our coasts

We are implementing coastal nature-based solutions to conserve and restore important habitats and species and protect wildlife and communities from storms, flooding, saline intrusion, erosion and sea-level rise.

Essex Wildlife Trust is delivering nature-based solutions with international relevance through seascape restoration in the Thames Estuary. By restoring seagrass, saltmarsh and coastal grazing marsh, they are improving carbon storage, supporting migratory birds and helping coastal communities adapt to climate change. Using dredged sediment to expand islands and create habitat for beach-nesting birds, including little terns, the Trust is showing how local action can deliver for nature, people and climate. Evidence from the Blackwater and Colne Estuary Species Recovery Project and Saltmarsh Flux Tower is also informing carbon markets, policy and wider learning on blue carbon restoration.



IUCN Nature based Solutions

Food and water security

Farmland managed with, not against, nature keeps the soil we need to grow food healthy and productive, reducing our need for carbon-costly imports. We are working with farmers and land managers to embrace nature-friendly farming, to improve their farm's outputs, profits and resilience to climate-related events like flood, drought and pests. This includes agroecological practices, wetter farming (paludiculture) and peatland restoration.

The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester & North Merseyside is showing how lowland peat recovery can work alongside sustainable farming. At Winmarleigh Carbon Farm, water levels have been raised and more than 150,000 sphagnum plants established on former drained peatland, reducing emissions, protecting carbon stores and creating wetland habitat.

The Trust is testing wetter farming and paludiculture with farmers, researchers and businesses, including food crops and Typha for bio-based products. This local innovation demonstrates how restored peatlands can support climate action, biodiversity recovery, better water management and rural livelihoods, with lessons relevant to global land-use change.



Removing and storing carbon

Through the likes of peatland restoration, woodland protection and creation and urban tree planting we are protecting existing carbon stocks and implementing nature-based solutions for carbon removal, through which ecosystems capture and store carbon dioxide. Carbon is also captured and stored in coastal and marine habitats, such as muddy sediments, seagrass meadows and saltmarshes.

The Wildlife Trusts for **Cumbria**, **Lancashire** and **Yorkshire** are part of a coalition leading the restoration of The Great North Bog—an ambitious, landscape-scale initiative. The aim is to restore and protect approximately 7,000 km² of peatland across the Protected Landscapes of northern England, in what will be the largest collaborative peatland conservation effort in the UK, and one of the largest in Europe.



Enabling action

Working with others, The Wildlife Trusts help drive action and prioritise nature-based solutions. We do this through landscape-scale partnerships and working with communities, businesses, farmers and landowners. We also develop international partnerships, enabling knowledge exchange and collaboration around nature-based solutions.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust's research with Cubico and Broxted Estate and Solar Farm showcases how, if approached correctly, the climate and nature crises can be tackled together. More than 12 years of monitoring at this site demonstrates how well-designed and responsibly-managed solar farms can both support nature recovery and generate clean electricity for the local area. The solar farm has generated over 350 GWh of clean electricity since 2013, avoiding thousands of tonnes of carbon emissions. At the same time, the site has seen a 41% increase in biodiversity, with six Red-listed and 13 Amber-listed Birds of Conservation Concern recorded in the restored habitats surrounding the solar farm, including the internationally-threatened turtle dove.



The Rothbury Estate

The Rothbury Estate is a 9,500-acre landscape of national and international importance: a future exemplar of nature recovery at a scale. This ambitious project will safeguard rare species whilst conserving and restoring habitats, improving access for people and becoming the beating heart of a 40-mile nature corridor across Northumberland. Working alongside local communities, it will demonstrate how nature recovery, regenerative farming and rural economies can thrive together. With its rich heritage, remarkable wildlife and global relevance to conservation challenges, Rothbury will become a leading global example of people and nature flourishing side-by-side.



Objective 2

Local to Global

As a collective of 47 charities with 4,400 staff, over 33,000 volunteers and nearly a million members, we have a wealth of knowledge and experience, gained through decades of practical conservation work. This reservoir of skills and knowledge is valuable in supporting others globally.

There are four areas where we aim to make the greatest contribution. More details on the work that make up these areas can be found on the following pages.

Peatland restoration



One ocean



Support international conservation action



United Kingdom Overseas Territories

Migratory species

IUCN | National Committee United Kingdom

Peatland Programme

IUCN UK Peatland Programme

Leading peatland conservation in the UK and beyond

Leading peatland conservation in the UK and beyond

The IUCN UK National Committee Peatland Programme, hosted by The Wildlife Trusts, is a world-leading partnership for peatland conservation, restoration and sustainable management. It brings together governments, statutory agencies, NGOs, academics and practitioners to turn science into practical action, shape policy and champion the many benefits of healthy peatlands for climate, nature, water and people.

Peatlands are among the world's most important ecosystems. When healthy, they store vast amounts of carbon, support wildlife, improve water quality and help reduce flooding. When damaged, they release greenhouse gases and lose many of the ecosystem services that provide support to people and nature. Peatland restoration is one of the most powerful nature-based solutions available to tackle the climate and nature crises.

The Programme has helped define the UK's response. Its landmark UK Peatland Strategy, launched in 2018, provided the first shared, long-term vision for peatland recovery across the UK and has helped establish common goals across the research, policy and practitioner communities, as well as providing a focus for peatland landscape restoration. The Programme brings together the UK peatland community through its annual conference, policy work, evidence reviews, guidance and parliamentary engagement.

Its influence now extends well beyond the UK and is recognised internationally for practical innovation, including Eyes on the Bog: a simple, affordable and scientifically robust approach to long-term peatland monitoring that can be used by land managers, volunteers and communities. First developed in the UK, Eyes on the Bog is now expanding internationally, including into the Italian Alps.

The Wildlife Trusts' global leadership is strengthened further by our people. Dr Rob Stoneman, Director of Landscape Recovery at The Wildlife Trusts, is Chair of the International Mire Conservation Group, a global network of peatland specialists working across almost 60 countries to promote mire and peatland conservation and exchange knowledge, and a steering group of the United Nations Environment Programme Peatland Action Initiative. Together with the Programme's leadership within IUCN specialist networks and international policy discussions, this places The Wildlife Trusts at the heart of global peatland action.




IUCN
CHERY
Accelerating NbS Globally: The IUCN-Chery Partnership for People and Planet







"Conservation is a global endeavour. By engaging with the international conservation agenda and learning directly from pioneering projects elsewhere, we have challenged ourselves to think more ambitiously and plan further ahead for nature's recovery."

Charlotte Harris
Chief Executive
Cheshire Wildlife Trust

Migratory species

The Wildlife Trusts play a vital role in conserving migratory species that visit all 46 place-based Trusts. The cuckoos calling across our heathlands, the swifts above our cities and the hummingbird hawkmoths in our gardens spend more than half their lives away from our shores. And with some of our annual visitors facing increasing challenges overseas, safeguarding their wintering and summer breeding grounds, and migration routes is as critical as the work we do to protect them while they are with us.



Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust

The Eelscapes project supports critically endangered European eels, whose numbers have fallen by 98% since the 1980s due to habitat loss, drained wetlands and migration barriers. Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust works with the Environment Agency and WWT to restore wetlands and reconnect River Severn habitats for eels and other wildlife. European eels hatch in the Sargasso Sea, migrate thousands of kilometres to Europe, then return to breed after years in freshwater. Eelscapes also supports natural flood management, better water quality and improved ecosystem resilience across the Severn catchment.



Manx Wildlife Trust and The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales

Adult Manx shearwaters travel 15,000–20,000 miles each year between the British Isles and waters off South America. The Calf of Man once held one of the world's largest colonies, but brown rats introduced after a shipwreck wiped it out entirely. Since 2012, Manx Wildlife Trust and Manx National Heritage have removed invasive rodents, and the birds have returned. Skomer Island, managed by the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales, now supports around 350,000 pairs of Manx shearwaters. Both Trusts monitor populations annually.

CMS
CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES

Ymddiriedolaeth Natur De a Gorllewin Cymru Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales

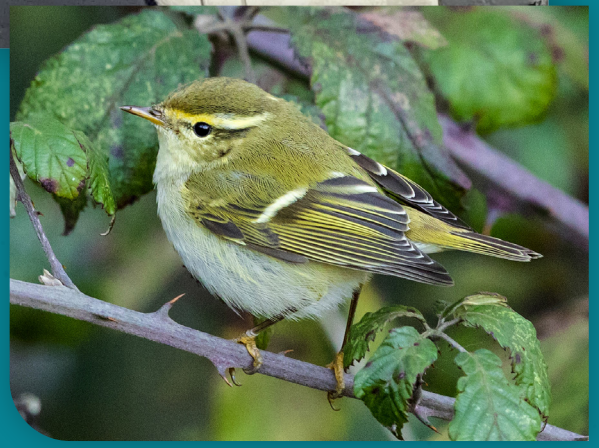
Manx Wildlife Trust
Treisht Bea-Feie Vannin

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

The Receiver Station at Gibraltar Point, established in 2023, detects Motus-tagged migratory bats and birds passing within range. The data improves understanding of migration routes, timing and flight speed, helping identify pressures and guide protection at this important Lincolnshire coast staging post. Records include a Dutch yellow-browed warbler, a blackbird tagged in Norway, and evidence that Nathusius' pipistrelle bats cross the North Sea.





"Lincolnshire has long been influenced by its proximity to continental Europe. Our reserve at Gibraltar Point has been at the forefront of conserving migratory species, including shorebird protection for little terns, for over 50 years, and a bird observatory for over 75 years, tracking changes in migration behaviours.

New thinking continues to be shared by international partners, through visits and by inspiring new generations."

Paul Learoyd
Chief Executive
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust



Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust

Ospreys migrate thousands of miles each spring and autumn, relying on safe habitats throughout their journey. Once common in the UK, they became extinct as a breeding bird in England in the 19th century. In 1996, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust launched a pioneering translocation project at Rutland Water. Nearly 30 years later, it has fledged its 300th chick and inspired projects in Devon, Dorset and Cumbria. Rutland's ospreys spend most of their lives in West Africa, so the Trust is building links with bird guides, conservationists and communities along the migration route. Protecting this species depends on action across its journey.

Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust

"We have much to learn in looking beyond our borders, be it landscape-scale rewilding, urban nature renewal, or understanding how to coexist with once-lost species such as beavers, wildcats and perhaps one day lynx, too."

Nick Bruce-White
Chief Executive
Devon Wildlife Trust



Wilder Humber

North Sea Wildlife Trusts

The Irish Sea Network

Marine conservation—one ocean!

Our seas are part of one connected ocean, and what happens here matters globally. The Wildlife Trusts are at the forefront of practical marine recovery: across the federation more than 130 people work in marine conservation, making The Wildlife Trusts one of the Europe's largest marine conservation movements. Our work combines evidence, policy advocacy, practical restoration, public engagement and long-term partnership to help restore healthy, resilient seas.

Even inland Trusts play a part. We work from source to sea, recognising that rivers, coasts and offshore waters are connected, and that pollution or development upstream has consequences downstream and beyond.

This work directly supports global conservation agendas. For instance, our advocacy for well-managed Marine Protected Areas, ecosystem-based marine planning and protection of blue carbon habitats contributes to the global goal of protecting and effectively managing at least 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030.

Regional collaborations such as the North Sea Wildlife Trusts, the Irish Sea Network and the South Coast Marine Recovery Programme bring Trusts and partners together. This enables shared evidence, coordinated advocacy and practical action at the scale nature needs.

Citizen science is central to our approach. Volunteers, coastal communities and sea users collect vital data on marine species and environmental change, strengthening scientific understanding while building a deeper public connection with the ocean. Campaigns and events such as National Marine Week inspire people to love and speak up for the seas that sustain us.

Through research partnerships, specialist monitoring, marine planning, restoration projects and strong public engagement, The Wildlife Trusts are helping shape a future where marine wildlife can recover, coastal communities are more resilient, and the UK plays a key role in global ocean conservation.









The South Coast Marine Recovery Programme is bringing the seas of the south coast of England back to life by reducing the pressures on these special habitats and helping people understand and engage with their seas. Working across five Wildlife Trusts (Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire & Isle of Wight and Sussex), together with The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), the programme brings together ecological evidence, community knowledge and diverse voices from across the region to address pressures including fisheries, water quality and recreation.

For Britain's seas to thrive once more, it's going to take bold ideas, big questions and recovery delivered at scale—this needs the input of local people. Their voices will direct local action which can influence new approaches to wider marine governance. Here is an opportunity to look at successes overseas, where bold approaches have enabled significant change.



The Isle of Man Small Shark Tagging Programme is a long-term citizen science project run by Manx Wildlife Trust and DEFA to improve understanding of local shark, skate and ray populations. Working with trained recreational anglers, the project tags and releases sharks, records biological data and monitors recaptures to track movements, distribution and population trends. In 2025, 123 sharks were tagged, mainly tope, bringing the programme total to 809 tagged individuals since 2013. Recaptures across the British Isles and Europe (including Southern Spain and Portugal) demonstrate the highly migratory nature of these species and highlight the importance of international conservation, evidence-based fisheries management and marine protection measures.



Isle of Man Shark Tagging Programme

Sussex Kelp Recovery Project

The Sussex Kelp Recovery Project, chaired and co-ordinated by Sussex Wildlife Trust, is the UK's largest marine rewilding initiative. More than 96 per cent of Sussex kelp forest has been lost, despite kelp providing vital habitat for fish, supporting biodiversity, improving coastal resilience and helping regulate the climate. A pioneering fisheries management measure, the Sussex Nearshore Trawling Byelaw, removed bottom-towed fishing gear from over 300km² of seabed, removing a major barrier to recovery. The Sussex Kelp Recovery Project partners monitor the change and work collectively to reduce barriers to recovery.

George Short, the Sussex Kelp Co-ordinator recently attended a COP31 planning meeting in Istanbul, advocating for global recognition of kelp forests within UN climate frameworks, which could unlock international commitments to kelp conservation and restoration worldwide.



Manx Wildlife Trust
Treisht Bea-Feie Vannin

Alderney Wildlife Trust

"In 2023-24, our partnership with Manx Wildlife Trust enabled Leigh Morris to provide much-needed horticultural training in Montserrat, while Education Officer Beth Penhallurick connected students in Montserrat and the Isle of Man. Such exchanges should be encouraged across UKOTs."

Sarita V Francis
Executive Director
Montserrat National Trust



UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies

The UK's influence on biodiversity also includes the Crown Dependencies of the Channel Islands and Isle of Man, and 14 UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs) across the globe. The Wildlife Trusts support them on specific programmes.

UKOTs are globally important biodiversity hotspots, holding over 90% of the UK's unique species, many found nowhere else on Earth. Their exceptional wildlife and habitats are highly vulnerable to climate change, invasive species and habitat loss, making long-term conservation and locally led capacity-building essential.

The UK has a crucial responsibility for these UKOT species and habitats. We are exploring ways we could contribute more to the delivery of the UKOT Biodiversity Strategy, published by the UK Government in 2025. There are more than 30 small independent conservation organisations based within the UKOTs, with whom we are aiming to build relationships and exchange knowledge.

Our federated structure, experience across small conservation charities, Crown Dependencies, projects and programmes, and our strong values of local community engagement sets us up well to support conservation in the UKOTs. Here, our guiding aim is to work alongside existing organisations and respond to locally-identified needs, while upholding local rights and ensuring communities retain decision-making power over the stewardship of their lands and seas.

"We are excited by the recently-signed Memorandum of Understanding between The Wildlife Trusts and the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum with whom we work closely. We believe The Wildlife Trusts' federated structure and background in supporting small conservation organisations, coupled with their strong values of the importance of including and working with local people and communities, could create impactful additional opportunities for future work in the Chagos Archipelago."

Sarah Puntan-Galea
Director of the Chagos Conservation Trust



Manx Wildlife Trust are partnering with the **Montserrat National Trust (MNT)** to exchange knowledge, support horticultural upskilling and connect Montserrat's only secondary school with Ballakermeen High School in the Isle of Man. MWT Education Officer Beth Penhallurick visited Montserrat and co-delivered sessions in person and online, with pupils from the schools sharing insights about their islands. Leigh Morris, formerly CEO of Manx Wildlife Trust, was invited to deliver horticultural training to the MNT, local farmers and the Montserrat Government. This 'twinning' model could be expanded through the connection of other Wildlife Trusts with organisations across the UKOTs.



"We know our islands, our communities and the conservation challenges we face, but small organisations can often be stretched in terms of capacity and resources. The Wildlife Trusts bring access to a remarkable network of experience and expertise that can help strengthen the work already happening in the Territories."

Myles Darrell
Head of Natural Heritage
The Bermuda National Trust

Inter-Island Environment Meeting (IIEM) is an annual event, hosted in the Channel Islands or Isle of Man, bringing together organisations from the Crown Dependencies, UKOTs and other UK islands. It provides a valuable forum for building relationships and sharing knowledge between individuals and organisations working in small island conservation. The Wildlife Trusts are strongly represented by Alderney and Manx Wildlife Trusts (who have both previously hosted the IIEM) and other Trusts including Hampshire and Isle of Wight and Isles of Scilly.



"The Wildlife Trusts demonstrate how local leadership, community ownership and shared purpose can create an extraordinary national movement for nature. UKOTCF has witnessed this same principle across the UKOTs where each Territory brings unique knowledge experience and ambition yet achieves far more through collaboration. Together, our networks can unlock an unparalleled exchange of knowledge skills and support accelerating conservation action."

Catherine Wensink
Executive Director
UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum

OVERSEAS TERRITORIES
CONSERVATION.UK

The UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF) works to support the coordinated conservation across all UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs) and Crown Dependencies (CDs), and the benefitting of this by local communities. Its mission is carried out by:

- raising awareness of the rich biodiversity of the UKOTs
- offering assistance and support to conservation bodies within the Territories
- representing their interests and providing a voice in the UK, including to Parliament
- facilitating knowledge sharing through working groups, webinars, and conferences

In August 2026 The Wildlife Trusts signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UKOTCF as the first step in our partnership towards super-charging their support for their members, which include the independent conservation organisations in the UKOTs and Crown Dependencies.



Objective 3

Maximise our international networking, partnering, and knowledge exchange

CEC Commission on Education and Communication

SSC Species Survival Commission

CEM Commission on Ecosystem Management

WCPA World Commission on Protected Areas

CEESP Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy

WCEL World Commission on Environmental Law
Commission Mondiale de Droit de l'Environnement
Comisión Mundial de Derecho Ambiental

Climate Action Commission

IUCN—playing our part

In 1948 The Wildlife Trusts were one of the founding members of the IUCN—a heritage we are immensely proud of. Positioned at the top of the global nature conservation pyramid, the IUCN is the world's largest environmental network, providing leadership, support, resources and knowledge-sharing opportunities for their 1600 members from over 160 countries.

The work of the Wildlife Trusts contributes to the IUCN 20-year Strategic Vision, whilst multiple Trusts and staff members are engaged in collaborative work through IUCN Commissions and national and specialist working groups.

As each Trust is connected to each other and to the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (the central coordinating charity of The Wildlife Trusts federation), so The Wildlife Trust movement is connected to the IUCN. Staff from The Wildlife Trusts are members of the IUCN Expert Commissions and represent us in the UK committees. All our nature reserves are on the IUCN Contributions for Nature platform (the global GIS map for nature conservation impact). The Great Fen and Sussex Kelp Recovery Project were two of the first sites in the world to be accredited with the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions. The IUCN UK Peatland Programme is world-leading in its peat conservation and restoration delivery. Our seat at the IUCN World Conservation Congress allows us to be a voice on global issues and table motions relevant to the UK.

IUCN National Committee United Kingdom

IUCN | Member

The Wildlife Trusts look forward to being an even more active member of IUCN, both globally and within the UK as a member of the IUCN UK Executive Committee.

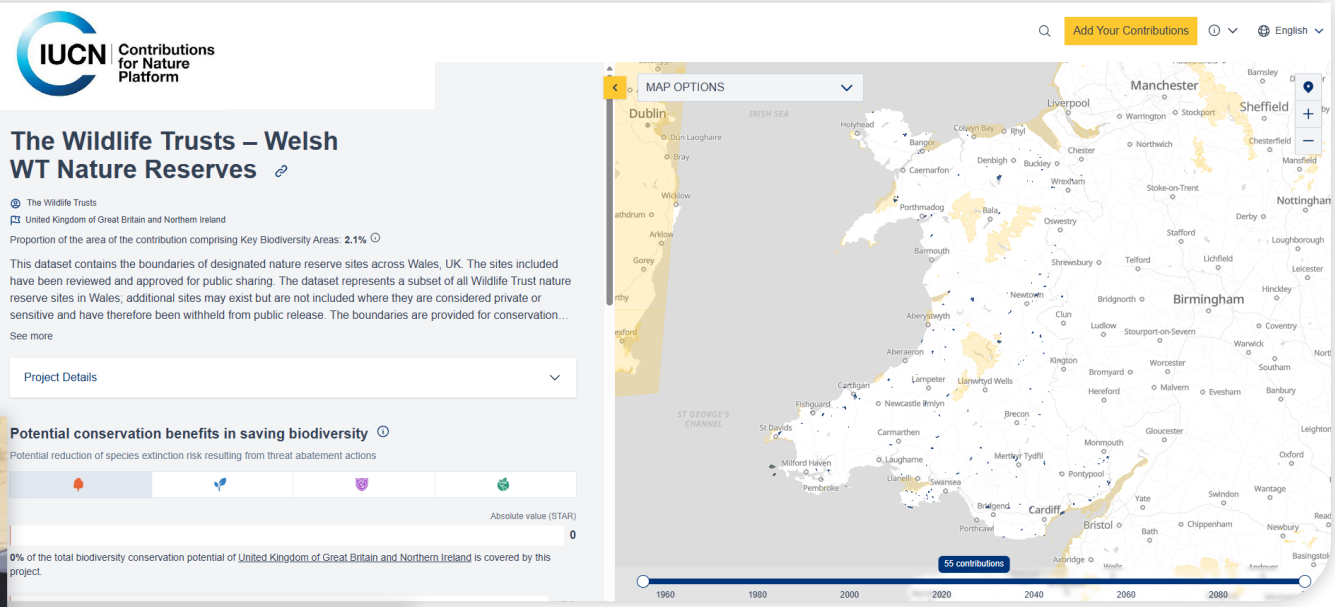


IUCN Academy

The IUCN Academy is an online training platform, offering courses from introduction to professional certificates across the breadth of conservation topics. Eleanor Short, Climate Change Manager at The Wildlife Trusts, has completed the Professional Certificate on the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions during autumn 2026. She says: *"This course has provided me the skills and knowledge needed to apply the global standard for nature-based solutions at The Wildlife Trusts. Alongside peers from around the world, I have learned how to evaluate nature-based solutions, including how projects address societal and environmental challenges, and together we worked through practical examples to identify improvements to nature-based solutions design."*













IUCN RED LIST

IUCN | Member

International learning

Learning from others internationally is crucial for The Wildlife Trusts, helping ensure that what we deliver and advocate for in the UK is informed by global best practice, while reducing the risk of duplicating effort or reinventing the wheel.

Throughout the history of The Wildlife Trusts there are excellent examples of us learning internationally. Recent examples include:

"Through IUCN we help shape global standards for nature recovery, and Seeing is Believing gives us the chance to experience those challenges first hand. Stepping into other landscapes and returning with fresh insight and renewed ambition is invaluable. These international programmes broaden our perspective, deepen our ambition and make us better leaders as we pull together to deliver 30by30."

Sarah Jane Chimbwandira, MBE
Chief Executive
Surrey Wildlife Trust

"Nature does not recognise borders and boundaries, and neither should our ambition for conservation. International learning and collaboration help us bring the very best ideas home."

Debbie Tann, MBE
Chief Executive
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Seeing is Believing: Netherlands

In 2023 we organised the first Seeing is Believing trip to the Netherlands to view large-scale landscape and river catchment restoration. The trip was so well received that it inspired our Rivers 2040 programme. It was then repeated with more from our federation being able to see the impact of rewilding in the Netherlands. The following trip to Paris in 2025 was just as inspiring, to see how this leading capital city has embraced urban greening and nature, then in 2026 the trip took colleagues to Romania to see expansive grazing, wonderful wildflower pastures and to understand the culture that enables this.





Seeing is Believing: Romania

The Wildlife Trusts partnered with the regenerative agriculture charity Pasture for Life (PfL) to take a group of Wildlife Trust staff and PfL farmers to Romania for another study tour in 2026. Sharing experiences between farmers and conservationists, surrounded by incredible wildflower meadows, traditional farming techniques and novel approaches to rural regeneration, was a transformational experience for all involved. But far from being a lament over the wildlife and ways of life we have lost in the UK, by learning from international examples we are now able to question the status quo and build a shared vision of a more nature-rich future.







"The 'Seeing is Believing' trips have inspired the next stage of our vision to restore the river Trent in Staffordshire. The scale of the river restoration work in continental Europe, including the Rhine and Meuse, opened our eyes to what's really possible if you think big, and left us asking 'if they can do it in the Netherlands, why can't we do it here?' "

Julian Woolford
Chief Executive
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust





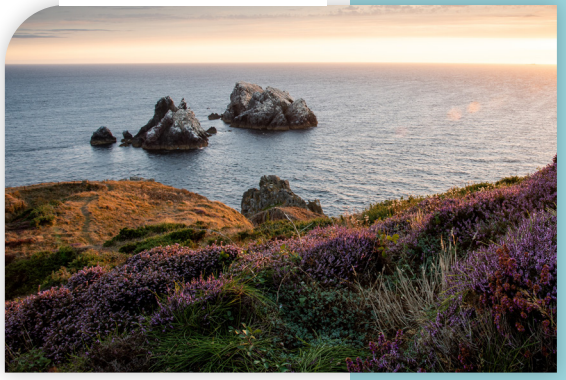
The EUROPARC Federation

connects protected areas across Europe, giving The Wildlife Trusts valuable access to international learning, policy insight and practical partnerships. Through this network, we can bring fresh ideas into our UK work while sharing our experience of community-led nature recovery with a wider European audience.

In 2025, 10 early-career Wildlife Trust staff attended the EUROPARC Conference in Lithuania, themed Nature for People, People for Nature. The conference exposed them to new approaches to protected area management, community engagement and large-scale restoration, building confidence, skills and international connections.



unesco
Man and the Biosphere Programme



UNESCO Biosphere Reserves Nature and people thriving together

Across the UK and Isle of Man, Wildlife Trusts are helping shape seven UNESCO Biosphere Reserves into living landscapes and seascapes where nature and people thrive side by side. From the Isle of Man to Scotland, Wales, Devon, Sussex, and Hampshire & Isle of Wight, Biosphere Reserves enable partnership at scale—connecting protected places with the land and sea beyond, and turning global conservation ambition into local action.

Churchill Fellowships

A few individuals from The Wildlife Trusts have been made Churchill Fellows, to enable them to learn overseas and bring the knowledge back to the UK. These include Ioan Thomas, Wildlife Trust of Beds, Cams and Northants (1968); Ian Francis (1986), conservation of Greenland white-fronted geese; Lynne Farrell, Cumbria Wildlife Trust (1986), rare plant conservation; Tor Lawrence, Sussex Wildlife Trust (2003), community and voluntary sector land management systems; Rachel Remnant, Hampshire & Isle of Wight WT (2016), Reviving traditional meadow skills; and Leigh Morris, RSWT (2026), accelerating urban nature for people and wildlife.

the CHURCHILL fellowship

PROUD TO BE A 2026 CHURCHILL FELLOW

Objective 4

Hold our governments and devolved administrations to account on their international targets and obligations

The Wildlife Trusts have a long and proud history of speaking up for nature in the corridors of power, amplified through 46 locally-rooted Trusts and almost one million members. The lived experiences we can draw from, the evidence we obtain and the results we see in the places we manage, are invaluable fuel for our conversations with leaders, helping shape nature's recovery and advocate for change both in the UK and around the world.

We view our role as a constructive, critical friend to the UK Government and devolved administrations. We support ambition where it is strong, provide practical insight from delivery across the federation, and challenge governments to meet their international obligations for biodiversity, climate, landscapes and migratory species where progress is lacking.

For example, we have advocated for investment in nature and nature-based solutions, adaptation support services and unblocking or enacting delayed policies which will boost climate resilience. We regularly submit our adaptation progress reports under Defra's Adaptation Reporting Power, most recently supporting the third National Adaptation Programme.

International engagement matters, especially at key moments such as COPs, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, IUCN World Conservation Congresses and other global gatherings. These forums allow us to build relationships, align advocacy with partners, share the practical experience of our federation and influence decisions that shape nature recovery far beyond the UK.

At the same time, we challenge ourselves hard on when we travel, especially when flying is involved. We only attend international meetings in person where there is a clear purpose, a significant opportunity for impact, and where our contribution is genuinely additive or requested by partners. Wherever possible we use lower-carbon travel or engage from the UK. By being selective, purposeful and transparent, we aim to ensure our international advocacy reflects both our ambitions for nature and our responsibility to reduce our own environmental impact.



Kunming–Montreal
GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Convention on Biological Diversity

United Nations
Framework Convention on Climate Change





ipbes

Global Youth Biodiversity Network UK

IUCN World Conservation Congress
Abu Dhabi 2025



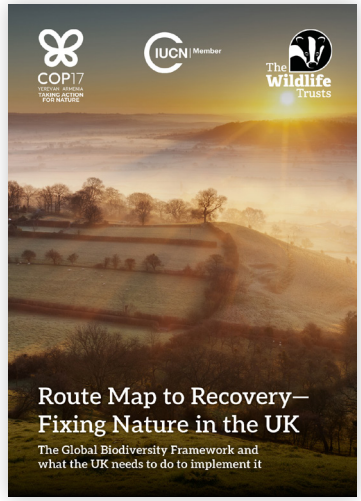




"Addressing global biodiversity challenges requires collaboration across governments, statutory bodies, civil society and local communities. Organisations such as The Wildlife Trusts play an important role in connecting local conservation action with wider environmental objectives, and partnership working remains essential to achieving positive outcomes for nature."

Dr Gemma Harper OBE
Chief Executive,
Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)





"Global targets are only met when countries meet them locally. And in a complex and fast changing World, working with the whole of society, and tackling inter-related issues—like nature loss and climate change—together, are key to success. With the intensifying impacts of these crises on our wildlife and on society, the clock is ticking on turning ambition to action. Recognising this, I am delighted that The Wildlife Trusts is increasing its engagement with key international policy frameworks and initiatives, to hold the UK Governments account for delivery on their global commitments."

Zoe Quiroz Cullen
Head of Climate and International Policy
The Wildlife Trusts

The Wildlife Trusts are making the world wilder and helping to ensure that nature is part of everyone's lives. We are a grassroots movement of 46 charities and one central charity, with more than 945,000 members and over 33,000 volunteers. No matter where you are in Britain, there is a Wildlife Trust saving, protecting and standing up for the natural world. With the support of our members, we care for and restore over 2,600 special places for nature on land and run marine conservation projects and collect vital data on the state of our seas, connecting local action to the global mission to restore nature and tackle climate change. Every Wildlife Trust works within its local community to inspire people to take action to create a wilder future where nature plays a central role in addressing local and global issues.

The Wildlife Trusts

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IUCN | Member