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This statement provides an update to the Loch Lomond, The Trossachs and Breadalbane Prospectus that was one of a suite of documents published in 2002 to guide the future management of the natural heritage towards 2025. It identifies significant changes in policy drivers or legislative context, new mechanisms or changed priorities and the implications that these have for the objectives and actions for the natural heritage. The Update should be read in conjunction with, and follows the same structure as, the original document (available at www.snh.org.uk).
The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park (LTNP) was designated in 2002, and includes much of the south western part of the area in its boundaries. More detailed information about the National Park is available at [www.lochlomond-trossachs.org](http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org). None of the area within this prospectus falls within the boundary of the now designated Cairngorms National Park, though a boundary review is planned.

The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority (LTNP) has co-ordinated the development of a number of Plans and Strategies for the Park. The most important of these is the National Park Plan. The Plan sets out a 25-year vision, a set of long-term Strategic Objectives, and also a 5-year prioritised Action Plan to be delivered by the Park Authority and its partners, including SNH. The Park Authority currently operates a Natural Heritage Grant Scheme for Land Managers and voluntary and community groups to help deliver the objectives of the Plan. The Plan is consistent with the relevant themes of this Loch Lomond, The Trossachs and BreatheBalean Prospectus, and complements this Prospectus by setting out a more detailed set of objectives and actions which aim to deliver natural heritage priorities in a manner that is integrated with the delivery of wider social, economic and cultural objectives. In addition to the Park Plan, the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority has also led the preparation of a number of subject-specific plans and strategies. These set out in more detail how particular areas of work will be delivered and are referred to in this Update where relevant.

### Description

The Rivers Teith and Tay are now designated as Special Areas of Conservation, the former for salmon and lamprey, and the latter for salmon, lamprey and otter.

### Key influences on the Natural Heritage

#### Climate Change

Our understanding of climate change is improving. An increase in winter rainfall and/or extreme rainfall events is becoming apparent and this is leading to demands for better protection of communities from the effects of flooding, temperature regimes and hydrological changes creating algal blooms, and drying out of wetlands, whilst mountain habitats and associated species may present either a threat or an opportunity.

A number of Objective and Actions refer to agri-environment schemes, provided an effective delivery framework for work to benefit designated sites, and the Woodland Grants Scheme. RDC - Rural Priorities now provide a key source of integrated support for land managers, and embrace almost all the funding under these previous schemes.

#### Agricultural and Sporting Activity/ Forestry and Woodland Development

The introduction of the Single Farm Payment in 2005 has removed the link between production and payment, in 2002, including passage of The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, and the development of a National Planning Framework (1 & 2) whose national priorities must be reflected in development plans. This provides a check on a more development plan-led system. The Scottish Government is rationalising the Scottish Planning Policy and National Planning Policy series into a single statement of national planning policy. The new consolidated Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) will be published in late 2009. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive was implemented in Scotland in 2006, placing a requirement on all public sector bodies to assess the environmental implications of all new plans, programmes and strategies. These measures will have an impact on development patterns in the area.

#### Conservation Policy

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act (NCA) came into force in Scotland in 2004, and places a biodiversity duty on all public bodies to have regard to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. The NCA also strengthens the system of protecting SSSI in a way that promotes positive management. The National Park will shortly publish a Habitats and Species Enhancement Plan as part of a National Park Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

### Objectives and Actions

A number of Objective and Actions refer to agri-environment schemes, provided an effective delivery framework for work to benefit designated sites, and the Woodland Grants Scheme. RDC - Rural Priorities now provide a key source of integrated support for land managers, and embrace almost all the funding under these previous schemes.

#### Objective 3 - To restore the full potential range and maintain the viability of upland and woodland species, including golden eagle, ptarmigan, capercaillie, black grouse, spotted flycatcher, tree sparrow, pine marten, otter, red squirrel, mountain ringlet butterfly, pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly.

The strengthening of wildlife protection provisions under the NCA should help to address the issue of wildlife crime.

#### Objective 4 - To restore the biodiversity of lochs, rivers and wetland habitats and species, including lampreys, Atlantic salmon, pout, Arctic char and water voles.

The catchment plan for Loch Lomond has now been completed and has led into the development of the LTNP Rool. A Conservation Management Plan for the Endrick Water has also been produced.

#### Amend 1st Action: Implement the Water Framework Directive through Area Advisory Groups and the production of Area Management Plans for the Tay, Forth, Angus and Clyde as part of River Basin Management Plans. Within the framework, we have taken a strategic approaches for... (maintain original list).

#### Amend 3rd Action: Prevent incursion of sika deer into the joint policy agreed between agencies.

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Climate Change

Our understanding of climate change is improving. An increase in winter rainfall and/ or extreme rainfall events is becoming apparent and this is leading to demands for better protection of communities from the effects of flooding. Freshwater systems are likely to experience increasingly significant changes in temperature regimes and hydrological regimes, with nutrient release from sediment creating algal blooms, and drying out of wetlands, whilst mountain habitats and associated species may suffer from the shift towards warmer and wetter conditions in the uplands. These issues present either a threat or an opportunity to the natural heritage, depending on whether sustainable management is followed rather than a reliance on hard engineering, for example through the use of coastal realignment projects where the sea is allowed to flood certain coastal areas or where whole catchments are managed to accommodate flooding.

Scottish Climate Change Act sets out clear and demanding Scottish emissions targets. The Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Framework is also under development.

Key influences on the Natural Heritage

Climate Change

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Agricultural and Sporting Activity/ Forestry and Woodland Development

The introduction of the Single Farm Payment in 2005 has removed the link between production and the following Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform. In order to qualify farmers must demonstrate cross-compliance, increasing the focus on sustainable land use practices. Changes to EU agricultural policy has led to a reduction in sheep numbers in this area in recent years.

Since Spring 2008, the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2007-2013 has become the main source of funding and support for land management and rural development in Scotland, and replaces existing support mechanisms such as the Natural and Cultural Funds and Forestry Grant Schemes. Environmental benefits are delivered through Rural Development Contracts – Rural Priorities (RDC-RP), and land managers must adhere to cross compliance and GAEC (Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions). The Government’s priorities for RDC-RP are reflected in a set of regional priorities under the SRDP. This includes a set of priorities for the Highland, Tayside and Angus region and this is likely to affect future land use in this area. The revised Scottish Forestry Strategy was agreed in 2006, with an increased emphasis on the role of forestry in addressing issues such as climate change through biomass production for energy, carbon sequestration and habitat adaptation/biodiversity, health and education.

The Scottish Government Strategy for Wild Deer includes a vision and objectives to guide the management of wild deer for the benefit of the environment, economy and wider public interests. A number of Deer Advisory Groups have adopted collaborative Deer Management Plans (DMPs), that integrate and coordinate deer control policy and guidance throughout each Group area. Work is also underway to consider a number of designated areas. Freshwater resources are protected under the Deer Act, as defined by the Deer Act, from deer grazing. If a site is damaged, a resolution is agreed with owners and this is often through the mechanism of a DMP.

Fresh Waters

The Water Environment & Water Services (Scotland) Act came into force in Scotland. The Act sets out a long-term framework for the protection, restoration and sustainable management of freshwater resources. The Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture was published in 2003, to guide future development of the industry. As part of this, the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007 covers certain areas of aquaculture and fisheries management. Area Advisory Groups are overseeing the development of River Basin Management Plans. This prospects covers parts of four river basins - Aygill, The Forth, the Tay and the Clyde.

Recreation, Access and Tourism

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code guides the new access rights and responsibilities. This has led to the development of Core Path Plans and a Plan for the Park in the process of being adopted. The National Park has established an Access Forum, and Perth & Kinross Outer Area Forum and Argyll and Bute Local Access Forum now cover much of the area outwith the National Park.

The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park is committed to implementing the principles of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism and has recently submitted a Sustainable Tourism Framework and Action Plan.

Development

A programme of planning reform has been underway since 2002, including passage of The Planning etc (Scotland) Act in 2006, and the development of a National Planning Framework (1 & 2) whose national priorities must be reflected in development plans. This provides a clearer and more consistent process for planning in Scotland.

The Scottish Government is rationalising the Scottish Planning Policy and National Planning Policy series into a single statement of national planning policy. The new consolidated Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) will be published in late 2009. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive was implemented in Scotland in 2006, placing a requirement on all public sector bodies to assess the environmental implications of all new plans, programmes and strategies. These measures will have an impact on development patterns in the area.

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The strengthening of wildlife protection provisions under the NCA should help to address the issue of wildlife crime. CARSE: the local Biological Records Centre previously based in Stirling is no longer in operation.

The Wild Deer Strategy includes policies for the control of sika deer populations through active management where strong local support exists.

Amend 1st Action (8th bullet): implements the initiatives and policies in the now published Loch Lomond and Trossachs Local Forestry Framework report and promote the development of Local Forestry Frameworks outwith this area.

There are also proposals for Forest District Strategic Plans, one of which covers Tayside.

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**Natural Heritage Futures Update**

**Loch Lomond, The Trossachs and Breadalbane**

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*Front cover: Aerial view of Loch Lomond from the south (© P&A Macdonald/SNH)*

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