

Business Plan 2022/23

Year One of a nature-rich future



NatureScot
Nàdar Alba

Scotland's Nature Agency
Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba

Protect. Restore. Value



Introduction

NatureScot is Scotland's nature agency. We work to improve nature in Scotland and inspire Scotland's people to care more about it. This is the first annual business plan in support of *A nature-rich future for all* – our Corporate Plan for 2022-2026.

A lot has changed in the last 4 years. What has become clearer than ever though is that nature and the climate are in crisis. It is also clear that the link between the nature crisis and the climate emergency is so strong it makes no sense to tackle both separately. Big problems need big, bold actions. The Scottish people have laid down the challenge to get on with it. The Scottish Government along with nations around the world, is responding with new agreements, policies, investments and action. But, we need to urgently pick up the pace.

Our vision is clear. A nature-rich future is the only credible one for Scotland and it means radically changing how we use the land and sea to meet nature's needs and to unleash the power of nature to solve our problems. Nature must be the first choice in helping people in Scotland to deal with the impacts of climate change and other problems in society. To achieve this we will focus on three priorities:

- **Protecting Nature** by expanding protected areas, regulating species management, and delivering effective planning advice on land and at sea
- **Restoring Nature** through a new biodiversity strategy, restoring peatlands, aiding nature's recovery and transforming farming
- **Valuing Nature** so that the many benefits it provides to society can in turn attract public, private and social enterprise expertise, support and financing for both protection and restoration

We know that we cannot deliver a nature-rich future on our own. So, we want to work with partners across Scotland's public sector. We also need to work with managers of the land and sea, local communities and businesses, and with the third sector towards a net zero nature-rich future.

We know that if we restore nature it can also contribute as much as 40% of the carbon emissions reductions needed to fuel Scotland's drive for net zero carbon emissions by 2045. Overall management of the land and sea must be in line with limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Meanwhile, we must build our resilience and adapt to the warming that is already happening.

It's important that no-one is worse off in the shift to a nature-rich, net zero Scotland. It is equally important that its benefits are shared equally. This means investment in nature needs to create good jobs, strengthen communities and support businesses.

That will lead to significant change. We won't have a nature-rich future unless we value nature more. Human, social and economic capital are all necessary ingredients for our prosperity. Natural capital is now being added to that list. Decision makers and investors will do things differently if society, and its institutions, rules and regulations place more value on the benefits of nature.



Grey seal haulout at Tentsmuir NNR. ©Lorne Gill/NatureScot

2022/23 Focus

The Scottish Government's Environmental Strategy for Scotland states that "We have a clearer picture than ever before of the crises in our climate and our natural world. Global assessments have highlighted the scale and urgency of action needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change and to halt the loss of the Earth's biodiversity." Our vision of a nature rich future for all aligns with the Strategy's vision of 'One Earth. One home. One shared future'.

With the Scottish Government, we lead on the development and delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. The strategy is due to be launched in late 2022. It will guide our efforts to protect and restore nature in Scotland for the rest of this decade.

To deliver our work we promote nature-based solutions, which deliver multiple benefits and can help to fix societal problems. Working with nature will provide benefits for both human well-being and biodiversity.

Our Natural Capital are the elements of nature that provide benefits to people – species, habitats, soils and seas and we use it to ensure that we account for all the benefits that nature provides. It also ensures that we can account for damage to nature.

Using the Just Transition principles we will support a net zero and climate resilient economy in a way that delivers benefits to all. And by applying a place based approach to our work will help achieve a thriving, healthy and safe Scotland where people are connected with, and benefiting from nature.

The Programme for Government (PfG) further supports this by committing to deliver a 'Fairer, Greener Scotland'. We will respond to the commitments in the PfG through a range of activities:

- Promote land management practices which protect and enhance nature through the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme programme by improving water quality, managing flood risk and mitigate and adapt to climate change and improve public access

- Delivering deer, grouse and wildlife management solutions to protect sites, species and support effective land management
- Protect 30x30 on land and sea with a further 10% highly protected in marine areas to safeguard our ecosystems
- Support the development of at least one new National Park which will preserve the natural environment
- Deliver a new £13m Nature Restoration Fund supporting projects that address the biodiversity and climate crisis by putting Scotland's species, woodlands, rivers and seas back on the road to recovery
- Steer the delivery of ScotWind developments to help promote Scotland as a world leader for offshore wind
- Further advance the Natural Capital Pilot Programme
- Lead peatland restoration to restore the millions of hectares of peatland in poor condition across Scotland

Our priorities focus on Protecting, Restoring and Valuing Nature. During 2022/23 we will focus on keys area of work to significantly progress us towards our Corporate Plan goals. All of our work is supported by the NatureScot Way approach, inspiring others and putting our expertise at the heart of Scotland's future. To evidence delivery of our annual Business Plan, we have included key performance indicators which cover the areas of work. Our progress against these will be reported through our Annual Report and Accounts.

Protecting Nature

Strengthened protection of existing biodiversity

The degradation of nature threatens our society and the wellbeing of future generations. A nature-rich future starts with halting biodiversity loss by protecting what we have now.

During 2022/23 we will:

- Develop a new approach to protecting 30% of Scottish land and sea by 2030 helping to protect biodiversity and strengthening the range of protected areas
- Support the development of at least one new National Park
- Deliver species management recommendations developing new deer management legislation and revised beaver, and white eagle management frameworks
- Deliver an enabling and responsive licensing service including developing new licencing approaches for grouse moor management and muirburn
- Deliver invasive non-native species controls and reduce the biodiversity impacts of established invasive non-native species
- Engage and influence the planning and other regulatory regimes including marine planning and fisheries management frameworks to ensure they deliver for nature and climate



White-tailed eagle. ©Lorne Gill/NatureScot



What does success look like?

- More of Scotland is under additional legal protection and plans are being prepared to secure additional protection
- New frameworks to manage species conflicts are in place which secure species protection
- Greater protection for nature is secured through activities relating to development management, fisheries and marine management

Key Performance Indicators

- Reducing Deer Numbers
- Area (hectare) of woodlands restored
- % of licenses issued that comply with the conditions required of them
- Number of MPAs that we have monitored
- Are we seeing raptors where we should be?

Digging in a Mink trap, North Uist. ©Lorne Gill/NatureScot

Restoring Nature

Halt the loss of Biodiversity by 2030 and restore nature by 2045

Protecting the nature we have will not be enough to secure or maintain net zero, or to turn the corner into a nature positive future, for the sake of what it provides for us and its intrinsic value. We must also restore nature's lost abundance and variety.

During 2022/23 we will:

- Co-lead the production of the new Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and develop statutory targets to drive implementation of a new Natural Environment Bill
- Deliver an increase in the hectares of peatland put on the road to recovery
- Develop new approaches, with SG and other delivery bodies, to achieve a step-change in the scale of peatland restoration
- Deliver a new £13m Nature Restoration Fund targeted at high impact nature recovery projects and drawing in greater investment from the private sector
- Trial agriculture transformation through Piloting Outcome Based Solutions scheme and a Farm Biodiversity Audit test programme and delivery of the Agri-Environmental Scheme
- Deliver investment through the Scottish Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund (SMEEF) to promote recovery and enhancement of our coasts and seas



A peatland restoration site at Glenfeshie. ©Lorne Gill/NatureScot



What does success look like?

- We have shaped a world leading strategy to restore Scotland's biodiversity with an ambitious action plan and broad support for delivery
- More nature is on the road to restoration through delivering a range of existing and new financial incentives
- We have developed a natural capital assessment template and biodiversity audit that will enable all farmers to take action for nature

Key Performance Indicators

- Area (hectares) of enhancements through Scottish Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund
- Hectares of land managed under plans supported through agricultural support schemes (future measure (% of plans meeting targets)
- Area (hectares) improved for habitats and species through the nature restoration fund
- Ares (hectares) of peatland put on the road to recovery

Tufted vetch near Wester Moss SSSI by Stirling. ©Lorne Gill/NatureScot

Valuing Nature

The value of nature is reflected throughout public and private sector policy, strategy and investment towards a wellbeing economy

We will come to value nature for what it does for people, as well as its intrinsic value, fully accounting for it in what we do. Doing so will create the conditions to do more to protect our natural capital and to secure wider investment in nature.

During 2022/23 we will:

- Help develop the new regulatory, policy, market and institutional infrastructure needed on Private Investment in Natural Capital and establish a programme of investment readiness support
- Develop a spatial investment prospectus for Scotland and pilot an initiative on our own land with a biodiversity metric to guide and verify natural capital public and private investment
- Promote understanding and awareness of skills and capacity needed to protect and restore nature and realise its role in addressing societal problems
- Refine, adapt and re-test the Land Holding Natural Capital Assessment Template and develop a Landscape Scale Natural Capital Assessment tool.
- Build the resilience of our National Nature Reserves to support visitor management pressures and ensure positive experiences for visitors



Lichen translocation project at Creag Meagaidh NNR. ©Lorne Gill/NatureScot



What does success look like?

- Increased capacity for nature based skills development in the nature sector in support of a green recovery
- We have a clear set of investment ready proposals for private investment
- Our people related activities strengthen engagement to protect and restore nature

Key Performance Indicators

- Nature-based jobs and skills opportunities
- No. of landholdings undertaking a publicly supported natural capital approach
- National Nature Reserves online engagement
- Hectares of Green Infrastructure improved

The NatureScot Way

Our passion, inspiration and expertise will put nature at the heart of Scotland's future

Our Shared Values are the foundations we build everything on. Our Shared Experience is how we collectively realise our values and Our Shared Behaviours are how we live our values.

During 2022/23 we will:

- Develop and roll out tools to facilitate better collaboration including new intranet and more M365 functionality
- Pilot new ways of working through networked teams and job families to increase flexibility and agility, supporting staff with the development of new skills required to deliver our ambition and create a workforce fit for the future
- Take forward our estates strategy to ensure that our workplaces and how we use them are fit for purpose in a changed world and aligned with our net zero ambition
- Make better use of our corporate and environmental data to inform our decision making through a renewed focus on business intelligence
- Continue to increase the diversity of our workforce and those enjoying nature through partnership action and our programme for youth employment





What does success look like?

- Strengthened reputation
- Improved leadership capability across NatureScot
- Strengthened performance culture
- We deliver our 6% annual emission reduction target towards Net Zero by 2035
- Successful Corporate Plan launch
- Progress on resourcing

Key Performance Indicators

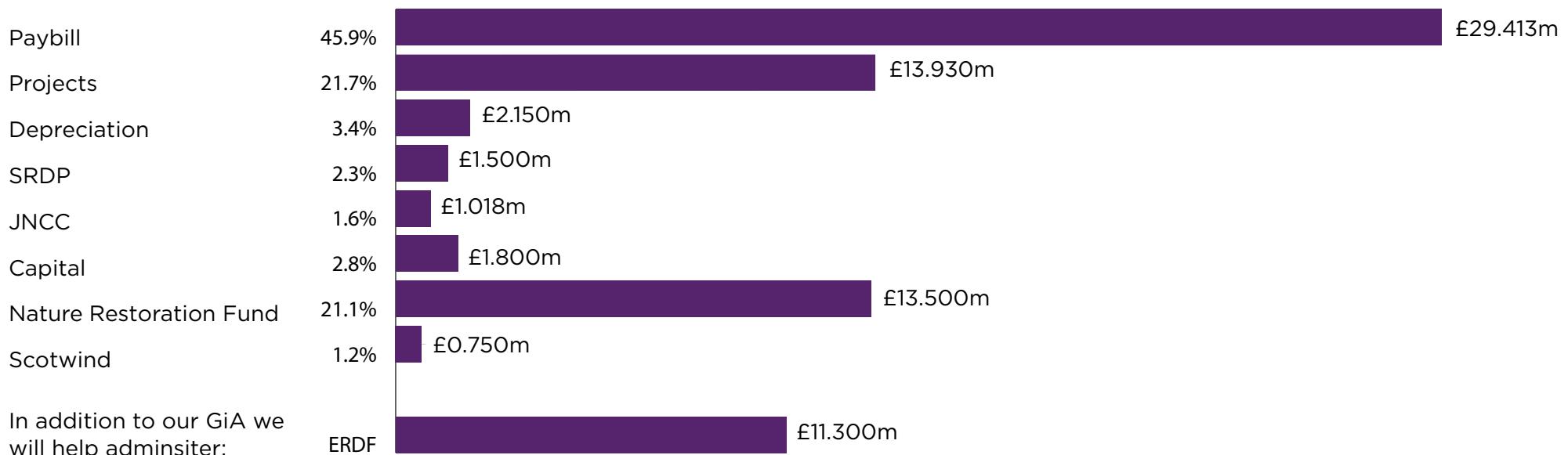
- % of workforce diversity
- % of emission reduction
- Reach in mainstream media
- Impact of public facing campaigns

Our Resources

Our funding comprises our Grant-in-Aid of £49.561m plus additional ring-fenced funding for a Nature Restoration Fund and Scotwind Licencing increase our total budget to £64.061m. We also have additional funding that we receive or administer to support and deliver our strategic priorities. Together this provides us with £75.361m to invest in nature.

This investment will contribute to a range of Government priorities, and deliver across all our Outcomes. Through our role in supporting the Agri-environmental Climate Scheme, and administering the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), in 2022/23, we facilitate the distribution of a one-year commitment of around £4m in agriculture and rural development, and around £11.300m ERDF funding, providing investment in green infrastructure and tourism.

Our budget



Our total Grant-in-Aid from Scottish Government for 2022/23 is £64.061m.

Resourcing our plan

Each year we set out to deliver the Outcomes from our Corporate Plan. To do this our resources are allocated through the activities we undertake. These activities provide an emphasis on flexible working across the organisation. The tables opposite show the budget and resource allocation by these activities for 2022/23.

Protecting Nature	£m	FTE
Marine Ecosystems	0.955	23
Protected Areas	1.111	65
Supporting Good Development	0.215	67
Wildlife Management	2.810	66

Restoring Nature	£m	FTE
Biodiversity & Geodiversity	1.151	57
Sustainable Coasts and Seas	0.043	25
Natural Resource Management	0.179	36

Valuing Nature	£m	FTE
People and Places	1.306	43
National Nature Reserves	1.111	65

NatureScot Way	£m	FTE
Workplace Facilities and Services	2.193	24
People and Organisational Development	0.312	32
Finance, Planning and Performance	0.025	38
Information and Cyber Security	0.375	20
Technology and Digital Services	1.711	38
Communications	0.319	23
Executive Governance	0.112	7

Total	£m	FTE
	13.930	627

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