

# Nature recovery at heart of Natural England vision for year ahead



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Natural England has outlined its programme to help the nation build back greener in the year ahead within its 2021/22 Action Plan, published today (17 June).

As the nation recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic, the remit and funding for Natural England has been expanded. This will help us establish our vision of creating thriving nature for people and the planet.

Alongside our existing statutory functions, such as improving the condition of protected sites and making further reform to wildlife licensing, our increased responsibilities include:

The Nature for Climate Fund – helping to restore Nature to tackle climate change by administering the new Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme

Parts of the Environment Bill – delivering policies expected within the Environment Bill, including strategic solutions through the planning system, developing Local Nature Recovery Strategies and Biodiversity Net Gain

The Nature Recovery Network - restoring protected sites, species and landscape quality and creating new nature rich places through our Nature Recovery Network Delivery Partnership

Building Back Greener- enabling truly sustainable development and introducing more strategic solutions to avoiding and mitigating environmental harm, as well as to cutting down the time it takes to develop, design and deliver vital housing infrastructure projects.

Farm advice work - supporting the Agricultural Transition, through an expansion in the Catchment Sensitive Farming Project and advising on development of the new Environmental Land Management scheme

Landscapes – new landscapes designations as part of the commitment to protect 30% of our land by 2030

Accessibility – connecting people with nature by investing in our National Nature Reserves and making them more accessible

Chief Executive of Natural England, Marian Spain, said:

This is an important year for nature as the UK builds back greener from the Covid-19 pandemic and our Government makes new pledges for nature in international events such as COP26 and introduces new targets and measures in domestic legislation. I am delighted that Natural England will be at the front and centre with our boosted remit and funding.

We have big ambitions for nature recovery and I look forward to working with our partners to deliver real progress on the ground during the year ahead.

The total budget for the year will be £198 million. 90% of this is grant in aid from Defra, plus £2.5m from other government departments and the remainder from fees, charges and external funding. This is equivalent to an overall 47% increase compared with 2020/21.

The Government's vision in the 25 Year Environment Plan is for England to become the healthiest and most beautiful place in the world in which to live, work and bring up a family. This vision is embedded within our aims and objectives. Our Action Plan for 2021/22 will contribute to thriving terrestrial and marine wildlife, achieving net zero through nature-based solutions, such as peat restoration and tree planting, and increasing the sustainability of farming and fishing.

Our four strategic programmes within the Action Plan are:

Resilient Landscapes and Seas – visibly driving the Nature

Recovery Network; strengthening our investment in protected sites; and commencing an ambitious Landscapes Designations Programme

Sustainable Development – strategic planning advice to ensure nature recovery fulfils its potential to boost climate change mitigation and economic growth

Greener Farming and Fisheries – providing advice to maximise the contribution of future schemes to the Nature Recovery Network and to Net Zero

Connecting People with Nature – tackling barriers to nature to increase accessibility

Read the full Action Plan

for more information.

*Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of GOV.UK, on Jun 17, 2021. For more information subscribe and follow us.*

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