

Environment Bill briefing



- *Talking to your Westminster MPs about how they can help put nature into recovery.*

Public concern over the environment has reached a record high. There has never been a greater demand for leadership and action to halt the unprecedented decline of nature.

Why do we need action now?

For decades wildlife has been getting less and less common, on land and at sea. The wild places we do have are scarcer, smaller and more isolated. Incredibly, recent analysis shows that *one in seven species are at risk of extinction* in the UK today.

We all depend on nature, and nature depends on us. A healthy, wildlife-rich natural world is invaluable in its own right and critical to our own wellbeing and prosperity. But the loss of green spaces and wild places near where people live and work, is making it harder for those benefits to be realised. *We need a wilder future.*

What needs to happen?

Nature is in critical condition... but we have a plan to put it into recovery starting with new legislation. We have laws to protect nature (although these have not always been effective). But we have never had laws to support *putting nature back*.

To tackle the devastating decline we are all seeing, there needs to be a *Nature Recovery Network* set in law.

The Wildlife Trusts have long called for ambitious new laws for nature's recovery and we welcome the Government's commitment to introduce the first Environment Bill in over 20 years. But the current draft doesn't yet meet the ambition required to turn nature's recovery from aspiration to reality. **We are calling on the Government to include the creation of a Nature Recovery Network in the final Bill.**

Why we need an ambitious Environment Bill

97%

of wildflower meadows have been lost in the UK since the Second World War.

55%

Children who grew up with greener surroundings are 55% less likely to develop a mental disorder later in life.

14%

of our rivers are considered to be in good ecological condition.

56%

of species have declined across the UK between 1970 and 2013.

189th

 /218 countries

The UK ranks one of the lowest in the world for biodiversity intactness.

More about our vision for a Nature Recovery Network:
www.wildlifetrusts.org/nature-recovery-network

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Your MP can make a real difference as the Bill moves through the parliamentary process. They need to know that their constituents support our vision, too.

What is a Nature Recovery Network?

A Nature Recovery Network (NRN) starts by mapping the existing spaces where wildlife thrives, and where new habitats can be created, to connect these in a network that extends across landscapes, joining with others to form a national network through which wildlife can be restored. It aims to stitch our tattered natural fabric back together.

Government and public bodies can use Nature Recovery Network maps to:

- target **investment** in action for nature where it will be most effective;
- identify where regulations should be **enforced to protect nature**;
- help them meet **targets** for environmental improvement and nature's recovery by showing where activity is best delivered; and
- boost **integration** between national and local land-based regulation, spending, investment and action ensuring better value for public money.

What must the Environment Bill contain?

To meet the scale of the crisis nature is currently facing, the new Environment Bill must:

- enable the creation of a Nature Recovery Network by putting **a duty on local authorities and public bodies** to contribute to its delivery and to map and join-up important places for wildlife.
- establish **bold and legally binding targets** for delivering and monitoring healthy air, clean water and thriving wildlife; reducing waste and plastic pollution and our global footprint and setting five-year milestones and reporting progress made on these
- create **a strong - and independent - environmental watchdog** to ensure environmental standards are maintained as we leave the EU, with multi-year budgets and which gives Parliament a greater say on approving its funding and appointments

Please ask your MP to do everything in their power to ensure the Environment Bill will meet the challenge wildlife is facing today.

For more details about a Nature Recovery Network and how we can all bring about a wilder future together check out our website:
wildlifetrusts.org/wilder-future

