



Scottish
Environment

LINK

Corporate Strategy 2012-15

Foreword by Dr Deborah Long, Chair

2012 is LINK's 25th anniversary. As a community of environmental NGOs we have achieved a great deal fulfilling our core roles of sharing information, being the forum for discussion for our sector and taking forward joint action where this adds value to members' own work. The vision of LINK's founders, some of whom are still involved through their organisations or as Honorary Fellows, proved itself a long time ago. LINK continues to achieve more, year on year, with the combined resource of its members who see the wisdom of working together. It is a truism that if LINK did not exist it would be necessary to invent it. Assessing our operations over the last three years to inform the current next strategy period, members have comprehensively endorsed the value of our community. In this challenging funding environment, for our organisations and for the environment, it is even more important for us to nurture the relationships that underpin our collective, supportive effort. Our diversity as eNGOs has always been our strength, drawing on a huge community of interest with different expertise, approaches, concerns and connections. In the years ahead we need to use our diversity even more intelligently, without feeling hidebound to arrive at consensus where the context makes this inappropriate or unachievable.

The strategic objectives we set ourselves in 2009: to make Scotland sustainable, to be a strong voice for the environment, and to be an efficient effective and accountable network still stand. Our strategy has not fundamentally changed. These are very tough times for the environment; long term requirements to protect and enhance our 'natural capital' are more than ever prey to shorter term thinking, precisely when all the evidence shows that we need to move rhetoric firmly into reality. Our role as eNGOs is to focus minds on the longer term, to make the case clearly and persuasively, which we must improve upon, and to speak out, mindfully and robustly, when Scotland falls short on its responsibilities. This we will do, backed by the support of our 500,000 members.

Since my involvement with LINK and especially since 2009 as Chair, I continue to be inspired by and privileged to work with this extensive community of committed, idealistic realists, who work with such enthusiasm for the greater public good.



The Strategy

This document sets out Scottish Environment LINK's corporate strategy for the period 2012 to 2015. Reviews in early 2012 of LINK's role and impact among a range of internal and external contributors (members, trustees, politicians, funders, civil servants, journalists, partners and others) confirm that LINK's existing strategic objectives remain valid. The existing strategy has been refreshed in the light of findings from that review.

1. About LINK

LINK is the forum for a very diverse range of citizen-led, non-governmental organisations, mainly charities, sharing the common interest in contributing to a sustainable future, in Scotland and globally. Established 25 years ago, LINK is a member-led network, with over 30 organisations whose collective membership care deeply about our environment and how that is managed. Members include land managers, service providers, campaigners, policy experts on issues like agriculture and wildlife through landscape, recreation and health, to justice and governance.

The sheer diversity of these bodies is a huge asset in LINK's contribution to public policy debate. Through LINK, they have developed an authoritative collective voice, based on their combined expertise. LINK enables increased efficiency among the network, reduced duplication of effort, and a focal point for contacts in Scotland's environment community. The network benefits from the involvement of organisations with unpaid, passionate and knowledgeable supporters as well as others which employ professional staff with a range of specialist expertise.

Together, the member organisations engage with half a million supporters, which is a powerful endorsement of LINK's legitimacy. Collective work depends on the active participation of our member organisations in task forces and other LINK forums, as well as in representing the environmental community's interests on a range of stakeholder groups, providing evidence to inquiries, and in taking their turn in LINK's internal governance. LINK is governed by a Board of trustees who work closely with the network's President, convenors and staff. LINK has a complex structure (see Annex) and the term 'LINK' refers to all parts of the network working together – ie member organisations, Board and staff. Where the terms 'we' and 'our' are used, these refer to the LINK network as a whole. LINK employs a small staff¹ team based in Perth and Edinburgh who support the network.

Among LINK's collective achievements are:

- proactive engagement in the development of sound environmental policy across a wide spectrum of issues including climate, flooding, landscape, the outdoors, health, wellbeing and nature
- professionally staging events allowing advocacy, discussions amongst policy stakeholders, and celebration of the role which the environment plays in Scotland's society and economy
- mature relationships with decision-makers in Government and Parliament and with other sectors on environmental and sustainability themes, including environmental governance.
- effective coalition with other partners on key issues, notably with Stop Climate Chaos Scotland
- informed collaborative approaches to cross-border responsibilities notably UK marine legislation via coordinated advocacy with the other Links in the UK and with UK government
- promoting good governance

LINK is a registered Scottish charity and a company limited by guarantee. Our income comes from member subscriptions and project-funding, from Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Government and independent grants. The funding leverages a significant multiplier effect in LINK's capacity as a result of the time and expertise contributed by member organisations through their involvement in LINK.

¹ At June 2012, 6.37 FTE including 2 full-time marine project staff.

2. Our Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

Our vision is to secure, through the collective efforts of our members and by inspiring others, the sustainable development of Scotland where all aspects of the country's environment are valued to enhance the quality of life for all.

Mission

LINK will be a dynamic network helping members to achieve their aims and collective goals by sharing knowledge, encouraging discussion on key concerns, building consensus where appropriate, and taking action together.

Values

Central to LINK's strength and identity are our shared values – the fundamental beliefs that underpin the network. LINK's values shape our identity as a network, the way we engage with others and establish high standards for member and staff cooperation in pursuit of our goals.

In our work with others, we believe in the importance of:

- a. **Quality of life** as an indicator of national well-being.
- b. **Justice, participation and transparency** in public governance and decision-making.
- c. Maintaining **independence** from party-political or funder agendas.
- d. The **legitimacy** that comes from representing the members' joint supporter base
- e. Recognising **environmental limits** and the rights of future generations
- f. Integrating **local, Scotland-wide and global perspectives**.

Networking principles

Within the network, we espouse these principles:

- a. Acting with **integrity** and **professionalism, with Action** based on an in-depth understanding and analysis of issues, following highest standards of evidence and dialogue.
- b. **Democracy** – We are a member-led network and each member organisation has an equal opportunity to contribute on issues of governance and strategic direction.
- c. **Diversity** - a major source of our strength comes from the diversity of the organisations involved in terms of their sizes, experience, expertise, supporter bases and differences in approach. This can mean that consensus is not always an appropriate ambition.
- d. **Trust, respect mutual learning** and mutual accountability as a basis for effective and healthy member relationships and maintaining standards.
- e. **Equal opportunities** in the network's governance, operations and as an employer.
- f. **Realism** - balancing ambition with collective capacity to make the best use of resources.

3. Strategic Objectives

Three strategic objectives set our direction and focus:

- Advocating for a sustainable Scotland
- Being a strong voice for Scotland's citizen-led, environment community
- Operating as an effective, efficient and accountable network

3.1 Advocating for a sustainable Scotland

Strategic Objective: Promote policies that will place sustainable development at the heart of Scotland's approach to policy at all levels. By this we mean "...development that meets the needs of the present without



compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"². Through LINK, members play a crucial role in pressing for sustainability to be understood and kept high on the agenda of government and other key decision-makers. **To achieve this, we will:**

- a. Ensure that members have a shared understanding of sustainability³ and sustainable development and recognise their importance to the environmental and associated cultural heritage of Scotland and its people, and conveying their importance to Scotland's wellbeing clearly and persuasively.
- b. Identify and act on opportunities to influence key decision makers concerning the development and implementation of policies which support sustainability and robustly hold government and its agencies, and local government, to account for decisions and commitments relating to the environment and sustainability.
- c. Strengthen the understanding of other institutions and the Scottish public about sustainable development and its importance to the country's environment, economy, culture and well-being.
- d. Maintain sustainable development on the policy agendas of all the main political parties and hold these parties to account in terms of their commitments on the environment and sustainability.
- e. Invest more of our collective resources in dialogue and alliance with interested parties in the wider policy community which share a commitment to sustainability.

3.2. Being a strong voice for Scotland's citizen-led environment community

Strategic Objective: Build capacity and create opportunities for LINK members to speak effectively on issues of collective concern.

We need to ensure that our messages influence the debates and decisions shaping Scotland's future. These messages will generally have greater influence if we speak in unison, with authority and together with other interest groups on the issues about which we care passionately. **To achieve this, we will:**

- a. Regularly identify the top network priorities from members' collective concerns and address these strategically, finding ways for the LINK voice to be profiled above members where this matters to achieving the collective goal.
- b. Develop robust advocacy strategies around these issues, ensuring the highest standards possible in terms of evidence and context, looking to the long term needs of the environment.
- c. Communicate these effectively, recognising the need for relationships of respect with our audiences, whilst employing appropriate tactics to secure sound environmental decision-making.
- d. Review the environmental 'narrative' and how we communicate this, so as to win hearts and minds and turn rhetoric to reality. Use our high level contacts and our Honorary Fellows to communicate the narrative more widely.
- e. Widen LINK's representation to important parts of the wider policy arena where the environment voice is currently absent.
- f. Invest more in encouraging members to invest their expertise, experience, access, profile and funds for the joint achievement of this common vision.
- g. Invest more at trustee and ambassadorial level to improve the funding environment for eNGOs, which celebrates the diversity of the citizen-led sector, recognises the real contribution it makes to Scotland, and legitimises public sector support for that.
- h. Ensure that LINK taskforces have good advice on the range of appropriate advocacy tactics and regularly review these in relation to their work, drawing for advice on trustees, staff and others.
- i. Consider carefully gaps in our policy focus that could undermine the sector's credibility.
- j. Invest more in developing relationships with parliamentary clerks and officials, and in facilitating avenues for contact for LINK members.
- k. Assess the network's approach to elections work and campaigns and implement findings.

² WCED (1987) Our Common Future: The World Commission on Environment and Development, Oxford: OUP – "The Brundtland Report"

³ Sustainability embraces all aspects of the environment with which LINK works.



- l. Continue to underpin the capacity and confidence of members to engage in public policy development through information exchange, policy workshops and training.
- m. Invest in building community among members in other disciplines including marketing, membership, communications and public engagement.
- n. Develop members' consensus-building capacity by:
 - 1. nurturing mature and robust strategic relationships between member organisations,
 - 2. encouraging discussion among members on internal relationships, and
 - 3. where consensus is not possible by acknowledging the differences in our views maturely internally, and expressing these confidently externally.
- o. Develop stronger strategic alliances with organisations working in the wider policy community where this offers the opportunity to present an even wider united voice to decision-makers.
- p. Express discontent to partners in Government and beyond where our community's voice and expertise is not being respected.

3.3 Operating as an effective, efficient and accountable network

Strategic Objective: Ensure that LINK is well governed and managed and resourced with active member participation and strong mutual accountability.

As a network, we are most influential when member organisations play an active role in shaping the direction of LINK's work, governing the network's operations and contributing their staff's expertise, as well as other resources, to the pursuit of agreed priorities. **To achieve this, we will:**

- a. Ensure the network remains relevant and accountable to members through systems for governance, planning and implementation.
- b. Encourage and support the active involvement of member organisations in all aspects of the network's activities, via trustee outreach to members regularly to discuss their prospects, capacity to engage, as well as assess the health of the sector.
- c. Ensure leadership roles of trustees, President, senior staff, convenors are clear & mutually supportive.
- d. Invest more in network communications that help everyone involved in LINK to know what they can have, help network action to be coordinated and efficient, contribute to trust within the network, and confidence in living with divergent views on some issues.
- e. Use network and taskforce meetings to regularly identify appropriate tactics, allies, and target audiences in the wider policy community.
- f. Evaluate key activities and, with Board lead, ensure the network identifies and applies lessons to improve performance.
- g. Assess at Board level the business model for LINK operations and staffing in the years ahead in relation to aspirations and potential funding trajectories. Continue to seek resources from a diverse range of sources, to enable LINK to demonstrate a high degree of leverage to all funders. Seek continuance of public sector funding for LINK in support of the contribution of the independent expertise delivered as a service to public life, arguing for a broad vision of strategic support for the sector by central government and highlighting the considerable return on investment this offers.
- h. Maintain equitable levels of member subscriptions that enable the network to maintain autonomy and fulfil agreed objectives.
- i. Foster an understanding that LINK is a genuine community of interest, through use of network opportunities and in communications abroad.
- j. Ensure that everyone actively involved in LINK receives an adequate induction and invest more in strategic planning and delivery (including advocacy) of collective work.
- k. Facilitate, coordinate and evaluate the work of LINK's task forces and other working groups.
- l. Ensure that our staff employment, management and Board governance practices are consistent with recognised good practice in the voluntary sector.
- m. Ensure that all our operations as LINK are carried out in an environmentally sustainable way through having appropriate policies in place and implementing them.

4. How Scottish Environment LINK Works

Who we work with

LINK works with three main groups: governments and other key decision makers; wider civic society including the media; and our own network.

4.1 Governments and Other Key Decision-Makers

- a. LINK works with the Scottish Government, the UK Government the EU and its institutions and other international bodies. Through its carefully targeted work:
- b. LINK promotes the environment and highlights its importance, reflecting its community of members and celebrating the diversity of their contribution to policy and management.
- c. LINK is a source of practical and innovative thinking on environmental issues, a valuable service to Scotland's public life, contributing to and influencing the development and implementation of public policy by:
 1. advocating an integrated approach to policy-making and well-resourced implementation
 2. raising issues of concern with politicians and government and, where possible, proposing solutions to identified problems
 3. promoting governance and the execution of public office consistent with the founding principles of the Scottish Parliament
 4. monitoring and assessing whether policy, funding and implementation measure up to intentions and legitimately holding authority to account
 5. taking collective action where this is necessary to counter specific threats to the environment, or to galvanise support for necessary measures
- d. LINK provides an important gateway into the Scottish environmental NGO (eNGO) community, providing politicians and other decision-makers with access to members' knowledge and expertise, and representation on stakeholder forums.

4.2 Wider Community

LINK works with a wide cross section of society including professional institutions, academics, business, industry and non-environmental NGOs. We aim to invest more network resources in this liaison.

- a. LINK is a source of expertise and innovative thinking on environmental governance and specific policy issues, informing and influencing civic debate.
- b. LINK provides an accessible entry point to the knowledge and expertise of the Scottish eNGO movement.
- c. The network wishes to develop its alliances with individuals and organisations that share its concerns and are willing to collaborate to bring about positive change in the form of government decision-making that reflects genuinely sustainable development.
- d. LINK works with the media and other opinion formers to increase depth and coverage of, and public awareness of environmental and related issues.

4.3 As a Network

LINK is its members working together.

- a. The network uses a range of mechanisms including task forces and forums to inform each other and enable members to speak with a united voice, sometimes by building consensus, and plan how to use our diversity to achieve aims.
- b. Networking through LINK builds the collective capacity to contribute to and influence public policy development through: mutual learning based on sharing knowledge and expertise; developing shared positions on priority issues; joint planning of collective action (we will review joint campaigning); cooperative implementation of plans and monitoring of progress and outcomes.



- c. Whilst retaining their corporate identity and focus, through LINK, members are encouraged to adopt a wider perspective in their work, taking a holistic view of environmental issues, making links to social and economic agendas and placing a local and national focus in the global context.
- d. Agreed standards for working through LINK are set out in the network's operating principles and members hold each other to account for achieving agreed objectives.
- e. LINK staff support the work of the network by providing complementary skills and coordinating LINK activities.

How we work

We have three main ways of achieving our mission: we share our knowledge, build consensus where possible on key concerns; and take action together.

4.4 Sharing knowledge

Knowledge sharing is essential to keep the network informed, stimulate innovative thinking, ensure highest standards of outputs, identify opportunities for taking action and develop integrated solutions to issues of common concern. **We will:**

- a Maintain our strong mechanisms for horizon-scanning to inform our understanding of contexts for our work and ensure good internal awareness of issues and strong evidence base for proposed solutions.
- b Acknowledge that for some issues, information-sharing is the sum of what LINK can provide to members, and that that in itself is valuable in shaping each other's views and individual advocacy.
- c Use monitoring by staff, members, convenors and officer bearers to keep the network informed of potential threats to the environment and opportunities for influence.
- d Reassess how we learn from experience of our task forces, campaigns and case work to ensure the network benefits from collective achievement, applying lessons of what works best.
- e Share our knowledge about environmental issues with other organisations, key decision makers and the public.
- f Continue to engage with experts to inform and broaden our debate.

4.5 Building consensus

For Scotland's environment NGOs to have influence, we need to give strong and confident voice to our collective messages, and to be clear also when we have not consensus around an issue. **We will:**

- a Ensure that collective positions add value to the contributions to policy discussions made by individual member organisations.
- b Avoid the problem of 'lowest common denominator' positions by allowing adequate time for discussion, listening carefully and patiently to each others' views, and engaging in robust debate.
- c Where consensus is not possible, we will all be clear about the differences in our approaches and work to maintain mutual trust and community, whilst pursuing our independent lines of advocacy, and being clear with external audiences
- d Invest in maintaining mature, trusting working relationships to ensure we have a healthy, supportive and robust forum for discussion. We will bring breaches of these principles to each others' attention in a supportive and collegial way.

4.6 Taking action together

Collective action is most effective when it is carefully targeted, timely, based on a thorough understanding of the issues and well-organised. **We will:**

- a Demonstrate ownership of the network by collectively providing financial and people time to ensure that agreed aspirations are adequately resourced.



- b Use task forces as the main mechanism for identifying and discussing issues, achieving consensus where appropriate and taking collective action. Each task force and group is required to develop a strategy on what it will do and who it will work with.
- c Invest more in assessing the tactical strengths of members engaged in a task force to ensure their contributions are mutually supportive and effective advocacy choices, seeking advice from trustees and others where needed.
- d Make it clear to all audiences which of the member organisations have signed up to specific LINK task force position statements. LINK's operating principles outline what is required.
- e Extend LINK's representation on influential external forums using reps and network ambassadors.

5. Leadership, governance, management and resourcing

LINK is a member-led network and its members are the source of its leadership as well as its subject. To make this a reality requires all members to take an active role in setting direction, providing resources and expertise, and implementing plans to achieve objectives. Equally importantly, being member-led requires holding ourselves accountable for taking agreed action - either directly or by delegating to others the authority to act on the members' behalf, through LINK's structures of governance and management. ***In order to make a reality of being a member-led network we will:***

- a Ensure that regular opportunities are available for all members to contribute to decision-making on key network issues.
- b Provide regular opportunities for members to discuss with trustees their capacity and prospects.
- c Encourage Board membership that is representative of member organisation diversity and maintains the current balance of trustees active in the network and those from a wider pool.
- d Encourage member organisations to plan to stand for election to LINK's board in future.
- e Use Congress to engage with a range of people from member organisations (including CEOs and members' trustees) to strengthen members' awareness and ownership of the community that is LINK.
- f Trust the Board and the vested authority in senior staff to take an important leadership role on behalf of members, overseeing the implementation of this strategy and identifying where the stronger collective voice is needed, beyond members' own visions.
- g Ensure the President is well briefed to carry out his ambassadorial role, and knows when to seek higher profile for LINK.

In order to be a genuinely autonomous voice, LINK needs to have a secure, diverse and independent funding base. ***In order to maintain a sustainable funding base which also safeguards the independence of our voice we will:***

- h Maintain a system of accounting that distinguishes "essential services" from other work, and seek to ensure that a significant proportion of the cost of essential services is covered by income provided by or generated by members.
- i Maintain an equitable 'band' system for member subscriptions in accordance with LINK's subscriptions policy and update member subscriptions in line with agreed increases in annual percentage increments.
- j Seek funding from external sources supportive of LINK's purpose and strategic objectives in accordance with LINK's fundraising strategy, including from the public sector for the public benefit from the service that LINK delivers.
- k Continually promote the benefits of membership to member organisations and communicate our achievements to all.



6. LINK's structure and systems

LINK has evolved a suitable structure, staff team and efficient systems for governance and management to enable the network to achieve its objectives. **We will:**

- a. Continue to operate with a small core staff, complementing and supporting member engagement.
- b. Use the board sub-group mechanism for more of the detailed consideration of issues for the board agenda, to bring recommendations to Board.
- c. Use our operating planning and political strategy reporting processes to ensure an appropriate level of horizon-scanning, analyse needs and opportunities, and consider fresh approaches.
- d. Maintain an office that is geographically convenient given our widely distributed membership and a base for our parliamentary staff accessible to the Scottish Parliament.
- e. Develop ways to encourage our honorary fellows and other contacts friendly to our aims, to act as ambassadors and advance the agenda in the wider policy community.

6.1 Planning and priority-setting

As a complex network, we have developed effective and efficient structures and procedures for planning and setting priorities. LINK members, using the corporate strategy and annual planning process, set objectives for the network and take collective responsibility for their achievement. **To ensure efficient planning and priority-setting we will:**

- a Use our three strategic objectives to provide the overall structure and rationale for LINK's annual plans and priorities.
- b Use our established planning cycle as the focus for forward planning, integration of work and regular reviews of progress, and assessment of tactics.
- c Ensure that the Board provides members with an overview of current governance issues following board meetings .
- d Ensure that task forces regularly flag up key concerns to trustees and ambassadors which they can help to pursue through opportunities they have for contact with decision-makers.
- e Collectively ensure that decisions reflect consensus on issues and tactics as well as realism about the resources available to the network as a whole.
- f Clarify priorities for the use of staff time as part of the forward planning process and communicate this to task forces and political strategy discussions, project steering groups, members and staff.
- g Communicate regular reports on all activity to all those involved in LINK via the operating plan and other routes.

6.2 Decision-making

The principles that govern LINK decision-making are participation, transparency and accountability and are described in our operating principles. **In order to apply our principles in practice we will:**

- a Promote to members the range of opportunities for member participation in decision-making through the LINK governance, management and planning mechanisms.
- b Ensure that Board decisions are communicated clearly and promptly to all those actively involved in LINK and that key points are communicated to member CEOs.
- c Regularly review the implementation of agreed decisions and mechanisms for mutual accountability.

6.3 Staffing

LINK's staff play a vital role in support and coordination. Given the sustainable funding challenge ahead, core staffing will remain modest in complement, with key roles kept under review by the Board. **We will:**

- a Make the most efficient use of staff time by providing clear guidance about their priorities and their delegated authority to act.



- b Ensure that all LINK staff work have individual work plans that reflect LINK's strategic priorities and receive adequate training, regular supervision and annual appraisal.

6.4 Coordination

Coordination is particularly important in our network as there is a high degree of decentralised authority delegated yet we must also demonstrate coherent and integrated thinking through our work. **To maintain strong coordination we will:**

- a Ensure that LINK meetings, the Operating Plan, and regular communications result in adequate coordination between task forces, project steering groups and political strategy discussion.
- b Encourage member body, task force, staff and board involvement in network meetings to strengthen coordination, encourage mutual learning and support and develop an integrated approach to issues.
- c Maintain good political strategy reporting and ensure best possible awareness of the wider contexts to environmental decision making.
- d Assign staff members to taskforces for an overview role which facilitates x-cutting coordination.

6.5 Communication

Communications – both internal and to external audiences – are crucial to LINK's effectiveness. **We will:**

- a Continue to communicate clear and well-targeted messages to specific audiences.
- b Continue to press for sustainable development (Brundtland definition) to be placed at the heart of Scotland's decision-making.
- c Ensure that all those actively involved in LINK are made aware of the corporate strategy, annual priorities and progress on these. LINK main reps have a responsibility to ensure their CEOs and boards are apprised of progress and priorities.
- d Review use of LINK websites, newsletter and promotional materials to inform our audiences (including the internal players) of the value of LINK's work.
- e Continue to draw mainly on members' media resource for TF media work.

6.6 Induction

All those involved in LINK (and particularly new member representatives, Board members, convenors and staff) need to be aware of the network's purpose and strategy; its structures and systems; the people who are involved in the network and its achievements. **We will continue to:**

- a Provide all members with a comprehensive induction to the network. The induction will reinforce the importance of our corporate strategy as a framework for LINK objectives, plans, structure and systems.
- b Provide all new task force convenors with a comprehensive induction to LINK as above, with emphasis on TF operations and opportunities.
- c Provide all new trustees with a thorough induction into their responsibilities and provide at least 3 yearly opportunity for feedback and mutual appraisal of their experience with the Chair.

6.7 Acting sustainably

Operating sustainably is a core value for our network. It is important for us to lead by example by showing how individuals and organisations can translate these values into practice. **We will:**

- a Implement our environmental policies and practices in relation to network operations in support of our aspiration for a sustainable Scotland.
- b Continue to encourage and assist member organisations to develop and implement similar procedures.



7. Evaluating progress – Key Performance Indicators

We will regularly monitor and evaluate progress towards achievement of our strategic objectives to strengthen our performance; we will learn from experience and improve the quality of our work; and we will enable mutual accountability within the network for the achievement of agreed goals; become more adaptable, and be accountable for the use of our resources. **We will:**

- a Work to the KPIs set out below.
- b Improve measurement of outcomes (impact) of LINK's work.
- c Refine where appropriate, our procedures for planning, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating our work. These include the development of an annual operating plan with agreed objectives, key performance indicators and targets that enable monitoring and review of performance on outcomes.
- d Use 'After Action Reviews' following key interventions of task forces (including where additional LINK resources have been allocated).
- e Strategically review our network and operations every three years, involving independent assessors where required.

The key performance Indicators (KPIs) below are chosen to help LINK define what progress will look like in terms of impact of our work and of the healthiness of our forum, and assess that progress. They address our impact (what influence we are having) and our outputs (what we do, for which audiences, how often).

Strategic Objective 1: Advocating for a sustainable Scotland

Outcome KPIs:

1. Scotland scrutinises delivery of environmental commitments more than before.
Eg: Parliament scrutinises delivery against appropriate targets in Scotland's National Performance Framework; National Planning Framework 3 reflects Government's environmental commitments; Marine Act implementation is robust about environmental principles; marine renewables strategy is developed in response to agreed monitoring policy; and other 'asks' for example the proposals set out in LINK's 'Governance Matters' publication, are met.
2. Government shows commitment to delivering cross-compliance consistently across departments in ways that respect the needs and importance of the environment.
Eg: principles of the land use strategy guide decisions being made by Government and Ministers on NPF3, in the reform of CAP, and in other related policy areas

Output KPIs:

1. LINK manifesto asks, refreshed and published 5-6 months ahead of elections and reflecting needs in respect of a representative range of policy areas of interest across LINK, are picked up by parties' manifesto-writers and are reflected in the manifestos of the main political parties.
2. External stakeholder groups in which LINK is involved contribute to policy development for Scotland which respects the needs and importance of a healthy environment.
3. LINK events attract desired audiences (from among decision-makers, opinion formers and wider civic Scotland) and contribute to development of policy which respects environment.

Strategic Objective 2: Being a strong voice for the environment

Outcome KPIs:

1. LINK positions are understood and influence national policy with environmental governance in Scotland improving. *Eg., we pick up citations in the official record of Parliament, we get affirmative feedback at meetings with decision maker and when we seek critiques of our work.*
(base line at 2010-2012 is 'not so good', evidenced in LINK's 'Environment & Law' and 'Governance Matters' reports)
2. LINK continues to have good, regular access to decision-makers including relevant Ministers and these players want (or know they need) to know LINK's views. *Eg. regular meetings with Environment Minister continue, LINK is involved in all relevant forums, issues raised by LINK at meetings with decision-makers and opinion-formers are taken forward by policy makers.*

**Strategic Objective 2: Being a strong voice for the environment - Continued**

Output KPIs:

1. Collective position statements (including briefings, publications) are published by LINK to decision-makers and civic society on key priorities reflecting the range and diversity of interests across the LINK network.
At least 15 per year, with at least 5 signatories each, drawn from at least 8 task forces in which at least 3 members are actively involved and which meet at least 4 times a year
2. Face-to-face exchanges between representatives of LINK and decision-makers and opinion-formers (MSPs/MPs/MEPs, Ministers, senior government officials and business leaders) on agreed key policy priorities indicate that LINK positions are respected and of influence. At least 25 exchanges per year reflecting breadth of LINK agenda.
3. Internal seminars/workshops/trainings on current issues or skills needs are arranged by LINK for members, are well attended and give positive feedback about the value in terms of knowledge exchange and capacity building. At least three per annum.

Strategic Objective 3: Efficient effective accountable network:

Outcome KPIs:

1. LINK's annual Operating Plan reflects considered discussion and agreement around strategy, priorities and integration, and engages at least 75% of the membership in its delivery.
Eg., annual strategic planning meeting gives members a platform to present on their directions, allows the network to collectively sign off on 4-5 priorities for joint work ahead with up-to-date intelligence about goals and working contexts, ensures areas for cross-working are clearly sign-posted with the leads (responsible for integration) identified.
2. The network is live to the diversity of member interests and views within it, has a robust internal process for dealing with both consensus and where consensus does not exist, and more confident in expressing LINK positions.
Eg., internal discussion (TF meetings, Network meetings, Board meetings) regularly identifies where consensus matters and where consensus is not a goal. Members are encouraged to be clear about differences and impact of these, and to see that diversity as a strength and ensure their advocacy capitalises on the diversity. TF planning more explicit on strengths within them via Operating Plan. Reporting strategic decision on priorities clearly internally, using network meetings, board report, meeting notes, trustee contact with members etc.

Output KPIs:

1. An annual operating plan of the network's intended work is prepared with Member, Taskforce and Board input, and this is subject to quarterly review and interrogation, and six-monthly evaluation.
2. The percentage of funding sourced from members holds steady at 50%-60% of the cost (annually reappraised) of 'essential services' with no over-reliance on any other single source of funding but a basket of complementary funding which allows LINK to pursue objectives and retain its independence.
3. There is proactive engagement by all members across at least 3 areas of LINK policy & governance activity annually (75% base line at 2012)
4. Citizen-led, national NGOs with shared ambitions for a sustainable Scotland want to be members of LINK (base line 34 at 2012) – it being unthinkable for solvent would-be-member bodies to go it alone.

LINK is a Scottish Charity SC000296 and a Scottish Company Limited by guarantee and without a share capital under company number SC250899.

LINK is supported by subscriptions from its member organisations and supporters, and sponsored by grants from Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Government, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and other charitable trusts.

Registered office: 2 Grosvenor House, Shore Road, Perth PH2 8BD



Annex 1: LINK Member Organisations at September 2012

Archaeology Scotland
Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland
Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group
Bat Conservation Trust
Buglife
Bumble Bee Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation (Scotland)
Cairngorms Campaign
Friends of the Earth Scotland
Froglife Trust (Scotland)
Hebridean Whale & Dolphin Trust
John Muir Trust
Marine Conservation Society
The National Trust for Scotland
North East Mountain Trust
Planning Democracy
Plantlife Scotland
Ramblers Scotland
RSPB Scotland
Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society
Scottish Campaign for National Parks
Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association
Scottish Native Woods
Scottish Ornithologists' Club
Scottish Raptor Studies Group
Scottish Wild Land Group
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Soil Association Scotland
Sustrans Scotland
Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
Woodland Trust Scotland
WWF Scotland



Annex 2: LINK Task Forces and other Groups at September 2012

Board subgroups

Employment and Human Resources
Funding Strategy
Succession Planning (as required)

Active task forces

Agriculture
Climate Adaptation
Deer
Economics
Freshwater
Governance (incl. Legal Governance sub-group)
Landscape
Marine
National Parks
Planning
Sustainable Land Use

Forums

Fundraising (Scottish Environment Fundraisers Forum)
Parliamentary
Wildlife
Woodlands

Other steering groups

Congress Steering Group
Scottish Environment Week Steering Group



Annex 3 – LINK Organisational Structure

