LINK is the umbrella body for environmental, non-governmental, citizen-led organisations operating in Scotland. Its role is to provide a forum for information-exchange, discussion between members and with other sectors, and facilitation of joint action to add value to the work of the members. This in turn enables the network of members to work smarter on the basis of cooperation and trust across a diverse range of agendas, and towards the shared goal of an environmentally sustainable Scotland. The engine house of LINK’s work is its policy-focussed task forces, made up of member organisations collectively advocating around particular topics. These are established by members, self-supporting, led by convenors from the active membership.

LINK was established in 1987 by fourteen founding member organisations. A number of these bodies had worked successfully together on a planning inquiry in earlier years and saw the benefits of broader association; most of them remain involved now. Twenty-eight years on, LINK is the acknowledged intermediary for the eNGO part of the voluntary sector in Scotland. Collectively, its members span nature conservation, recreation and landscape, cultural heritage and wider environmental concerns, representing a combined membership of almost half a million people. LINK contributions to development of thinking, policy and legislation for the environment in Scotland have been recognised and welcomed by a number of Scotland’s politicians over the years. LINK has effectively influenced various Acts since Scottish devolution, including: Land reform (Access), National Parks, Environmental Assessment, Water Environment & Water Services, Climate Change, Marine, Planning, Nature Conservation, Environmental Liability Directive and Regulatory Reform.

LINK’s strategic objectives are to: advocate for a sustainable Scotland; present a strong voice for the environment; and act as an effective, efficient and accountable network.

To advance its case, LINK builds common ground across the wider Scottish policy community, with faith groups, unions, business and industry and other NGOs. Relationships at the international level are nurtured through membership of Civilscape, IUCN, EEB\(^2\) as well as members’ own channels, and LINK works closely with sister organisations\(^3\) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland on key areas of pan-UK significance. The value of connection with Scottish local groups engaged in environmental issues is clear and LINK looks to maintain links at this level on key issues.

LINK’s profile with the public is not high, its role being to facilitate the combined work of its members. It is an independent, apolitical organisation, whose largest single income source is membership subscriptions. It is member-led, with democratic structures designed to assist these member organisations, large and small, to benefit from their engagement. LINK’s members, staff and office bearers work to operating principles\(^4\) which guide the mechanics of joint operations.

Looking ahead, changing global and domestic factors create new environmental challenges. Current economic circumstances affect eNGO capacity at the same time as greater demands for their expertise result from a weakened public sector. Meantime, the devolving nature of politics in the UK has implications for the environment as it does for other areas of policy. The ‘slow-burn’ strand of LINK’s work which keeps an eye on environmental governance in legal, judicial, regulatory and civil terms will remain important in these contexts.

---

1. [http://www.scotlink.org/about/link-member organisations/](http://www.scotlink.org/about/link-member-organisations/)
2. International Union for the Conservation of Nature; European Environmental Bureau
3. [Wildlife and Countryside Link, Wales Environment Link](http://www.welenvironmentlink.org) and [Northern Ireland Environment Link](http://www.nienvironmentlink.org)
LINK is governed by a volunteer Board drawn mainly from the membership, bringing together hands-on experience of engaging in the network with other skills and experience. In addition, our Honorary Fellows, who have significantly contributed to LINK’s standing and development before retiring or moving away from the network, support our work and goals in various ways.

A small staff of 6.3 FTE, led by the Chief Officer, supports and services network activity, including its Marine and Flourishing Scotland projects. Core staff are based in the Perth HQ and our Edinburgh office while project staff are hosted by member organisations.

LINK’s core funding comes from Membership Subscriptions, grants from Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Government and various Charitable Trusts. Organisations which are not eligible for membership of the network can back LINK as Supporters, contributing modest funding and getting the opportunity to network with members at events throughout the year.

LINK is a Scottish Charity under SC 000296 and a Scottish Company Limited by guarantee and without a share capital under SC 250899.

Scottish Environment LINK
Registered office: 2 Grosvenor House, Shore Road, PERTH PH2 8BD
Tel. 01738 630804
Email: jen@scotlink.org
Web: www.scotlink.org & www.savescottishseas.org